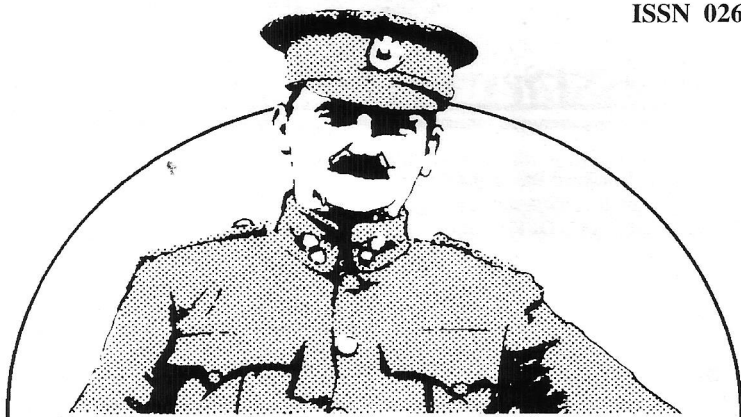


ISSN 0268-778X



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# THE COLONEL

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**Number 97**

**Winter 2009**

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THE QUARTERLY JOURNAL OF THE COLONEL STEPHENS SOCIETY  
*for enthusiasts of the light and narrow gauge railways of  
Colonel Holman F. Stephens*

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**An Index to *The Colonel*** issues 1-96 is available on our website (see below).

**Back numbers of *The Colonel*** from 2 to the latest issue are all in stock. They are available from our Chairman (address above). Price to members is £1 per issue, including UK postage. Discounts for large orders: 21-40 issues 90p each, 41 and more 80p each. Excess postage for overseas orders will be charged at cost. Issue 1 was a single sheet. It can be supplied on request free of charge with any other order, or separately on receipt of an A5-size stamped addressed envelope.

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## Editorial: The Best of Times?

**C**ommenting on a recent research report, national newspapers have been claiming that those born in 1948 are particularly blessed.

"Those of every generation are inclined to believe themselves more fortunate than the previous. But in Britain, 1948 keeps ticking the boxes", commented one paper. "We are, indeed, the blessed people," says the author and broadcaster Gyles Brandreth, who attributes their timely conception to the "bitterly cold and austere" nights during the 1947 fuel crisis. "We missed out on national service. We had the golden age of the Eagle and the Beano together. No other generation had them combined."

I'm a war baby, so slightly older than the baby boomers, but the press coverage set me thinking about our relative fortune in our more circumscribed field - enthusiasts of the Colonel's railways. I suppose we may

be forgiven for being envious of the likes of RW Kidner, JIC Boyd, the Jarvis brothers and Monty Baker, because they experienced our favourite lines when they operated as 'real' railways. But they experienced them in their decline. Whereas we are witnessing a dramatic revival of at least some of them. Not only that, we can read about them in a host of books and magazine articles and watch and listen to them on DVDs.

As for models, who would have thought that you would be able to buy excellent ready-to-run models of Terriers in N, 00, 0 and I gauges? Not to mention a Sentinel vertical boilered machine? As for kits, there is a plethora for Santa to choose from. Enjoy - before the recession really kicks in.

**Ross Shimmion**

**Front cover:** Present limit of construction of track west of Bodiam, looking towards the site of Junction Road Halt.

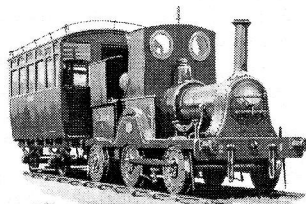
**Photo:** Mark Yonge

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### Nearly Sold Out!

Sales of our Christmas cards have exceeded all expectations. As we closed for press there were just 65 left, so if you hurry you might be lucky, if not, Nigel Bird will substitute notelet cards (pictured below in black & white) to make up your order (a Christmas greeting can be hand written inside them). If this is not acceptable, ring Nigel on 01974 821281 to ascertain availability BEFORE you send your order. The notelets are printed in full colour, as published in *Colonel 96* on page 13.



# WHY DO I MODEL THE COLONEL'S RAILWAYS?

ROBERT KOSMIDER *explains why 'a chap in Adelaide is producing kits for models of the Colonel's railways'.*

'Modelling the Colonel's Railways?' is the now well-established heading in my regular advertisements for Steam And Things. Something prompted our editor to ask me to give a written run down on the 'Why?' Why the Colonel's Railways? My parents are to blame. They had a second home in Selsey, and one of my earliest recollections was taking a walk along Station Street to look for the station. There was no station to be found! I therefore researched 'The Selsey' as some locals called it. There was not much evidence left in the 1950s, books were virtually non-existent. There was one by E. C. Griffiths (*The Hundred of Manhood and Selsey Tramways, later known as the West Sussex Railway 1897-1935*. Rev. ed., The author, 1968, Farnham, first published 1948), and a half dozen or so articles dating back to the early 1900s in the *Railway Magazine*.

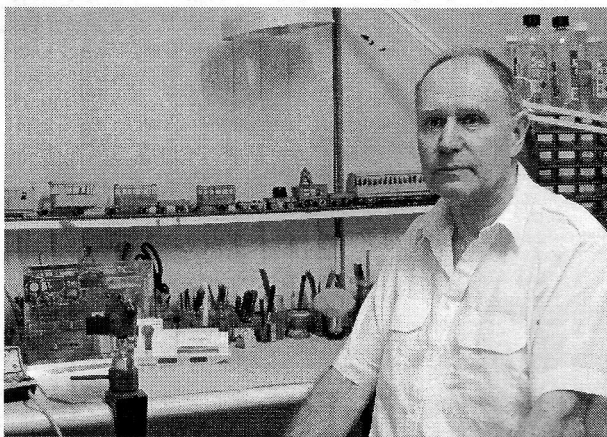
## Fossicking around

I spent many hours fossicking around the various sites which are well known today, as well as a number of other less identifiable areas. I met a number of ex-employees; Ray Apps, the last fireman, and a man (name lost, Smith maybe) who lived in Selsey. He dug up some information for me, including a copy of the report for the SR by E C Cox (which was reprinted in *The Colonel*). My main lasting memory though was the headlong plunge at top speed (on my push bike) into the locomotive pit at Selsey Town.

## Esoteric Railways

In later years my interest in esoteric

railways expanded, hence my general interest in The Colonel's Empire. But when it came to modeling, it had to be the 'Selsey Tram'. However, I had always been a dabbler and experimenter and never really completed anything, rather spending time and money turning and casting my own wheels



for the 2-4-2T *Selsey*, say, instead of buying something suitable off the shelf.

What about my own modelling today? Well, the market is well catered for in kits! So it must be 'The Selsey'! At present a design is set up in one basement-type room as a self-contained layout, with allowance for possible extension into another room and/or garden. I model in 7mm fine scale, and I like building everything, so it all takes time. There are two separate layouts - one on a higher level point-to-point from Chichester to the might-have-been West Itchenor and a lower continuous run, with just Selsey in view. All the boards are down, the track at Chichester is down and wired (successfully!) and all the other points are built, but not yet fine tuned.

As to Steam And Things, my last employer changed my life around about five years ago, as it were. I think I was ripe for a sea change as they say and it seemed only natural that I should try to do something along the model railway / kit production line in my mature years.

### The Selsey 4-wheelers

Prior to this I had been producing a kit for the Selsey / Lambourne Valley 4 wheelers, as a hobby for myself. The prospect of other kits was not even really in gestation. In fact, it was very difficult to get items custom etched over here in Australia and I had about five parties waiting for quite a number of HMST/LVR kits but I couldn't supply.

So when Steam And Things was born it was a necessity to set up with all production in-house and no contracting out. So my years of dabbling and experimenting were useful after all! I do everything in-house that is required to produce the kits: CAD design, etching tool manufacture, etching, master production, casting, transfers design and production etc. The only thing I do not do is the production of the film for the etching tools, but that may well be about to change!

First products were/are 'The Selsey' of course. I have covered all the passenger

rolling stock and motive power that ran from Chichester to Selsey. Locomotive kits are generally well catered for already by others. To supplement the Wolseley-Siddeley and Shefflex railmotors I have the Fords on the blocks at the moment.

### First locomotive kits

My first venture into locomotive kits is both the early version of *Chichester I* and of the 'might-have-been' *Triana 0-6-0T*.

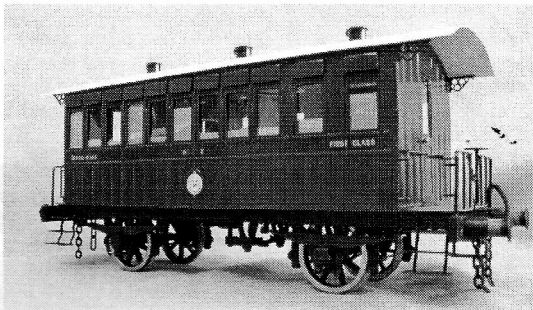
Maybe the latter will be *Chichester III!* Both kits are in development at the moment. I dabble into others of the Colonel's lines, having done items for the K&ESR, S&MR and WC&PLR, either as complete kits or just sides and ends for coaching stock. Much more

can and will be done, time and energy and life allowing, but of course it's the modellers like yourselves that come up with the ideas!

So that's the background to a chap living in Adelaide, Australia, producing kits for the Colonel's railways. Not that strange really as some had originally supposed! •

▲ *Above: the Lambourne Valley 4-wheeler, finished in LVR livery prior to acquisition by the HM&ST.*

◀ *Opposite: Robert Kosmider in his workshop (especially tidied for the shot, he says!) Photos supplied by Robert Kosmider*



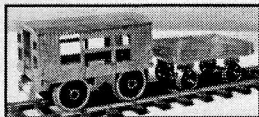
## Modelling The Colonel's Railways ?

Our products include - HMST, K&ESR, RVR, S&MR & WC&PLR. ExLCDR 4wh & 6wh, ExLVR 4wh, Shefflex & Wolseley Railmotors, Pickering Ratcar, Falcon and HN coaches, HN RVR Van and Muir Hill.

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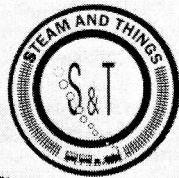
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# EAST KENT RECOLLECTIONS

JOHN SIMMONDS recalls the EKR in the thirties

I was born and lived in Eythorne approximately 250 metres from Eythorne station and became fairly familiar with railway operations around Tilmanstone colliery, Coldred colliery (known also as Guilford colliery), Eythorne, and Shepherdswell station.

## The Locomotives

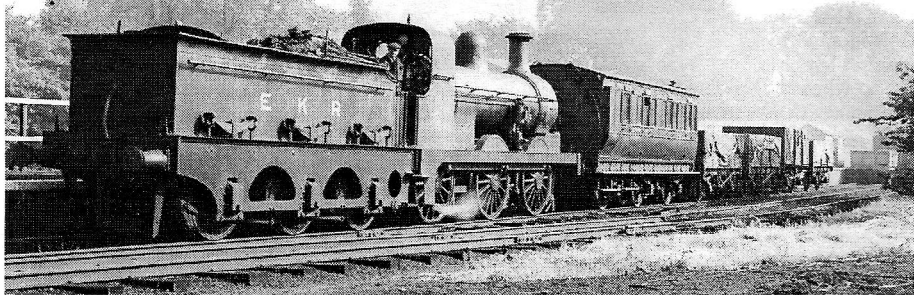
During this period, the locomotives that were familiar to me were: No. 2 *Walton Park*, No. 4 *Kerr Stewart*, No.5 ex-LSWR *Adams Radial*, No.6 *Stirling O1* class, and No.7 ex-LSWR *Beyer Peacock*.

attention wander whenever a locomotive appeared.

## 'The Paddy'

'The Paddy', as the service was known locally, called at all stations and halts, if requested, between Shepherdswell and Canterbury Road, Wingham. The train usually consisted of one carriage, including guard's compartment, one or two vans and several trucks. The service with which I was most familiar was the outward journey, stopping at Eythorne at about 5 pm and returning about 6.50 pm, give or take a few variations

*EKR No.6 ex-SER class O (with O1 boiler) at Shepherdswell, June 1936. Photo: RG Jarvis  
Copyright: Midland Railway Trust*



While my interest was mainly in the locomotives, I often wondered where all the private owner wagons and pre-1923 company wagons originated. I do recall talking to the local coal merchant as to why we were having coal trucks in the siding at Eythorne, many from south Wales, when we were mining coal at Tilmanstone. I learnt that the local coal from the Kent coalfield was very bituminous and, as a result, clinkered up boilers and furnaces very readily and was therefore unpopular with most users.

Most of the boys in the village spent a lot of the time playing in the field immediately to the north of the station, and I was frequently castigated for letting my

in running times! Quite often a van or truck was shunted into or out of a local siding during the course of a journey.

## The Coal Trains

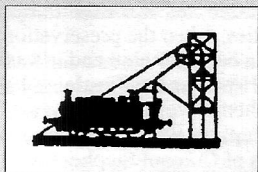
The coal trains running between Shepherdswell and Tilmanstone colliery operated from early morning to approximately mid-day. The locomotives, with one exception, always travelled tender or bunker first from Shepherdswell. On reaching Eythorne, the porter/station foreman manually applied the brake to the leading truck next to the locomotive, and then unhooked the locomotive from the train, the train then entered the Wingham branch whilst the brake was released on the trucks and they ran into the Tilmanstone siding.

The engine returned to the platform and then back onto the trucks now in the colliery siding. The train was then shunted up a stiff incline into the colliery yard. The locomotive then returned to Shepherdswell with a new, fully loaded, coal train.

During this period the line from Eythorne to Coldred was still in existence, mainly overgrown and out of regular use, but as war approached work began on retrieving much of the old mechanical equipment which had been installed at the colliery. For this purpose the old Guilford colliery siding was used and I took every opportunity to go to the Coldred site so I could watch these activities and the train movements along this siding. Shortly after this event the line was lifted and on several occasions I watched the train and workmen lifting and loading the rails onto the trucks. A short spur of this siding was left, which was sometimes used for storing trucks, and latterly, during the war, became one of the sites on the EKR for a rail- mounted gun.●

*Footnote: Rumour has it that, in later years, my youngest brother together with his friend (the son of the local police sergeant ) managed to fix the local platelayers' trolley onto the siding at Eythorne and travel to Golgotha tunnel and back one evening. JS.*

## The East Kent Railway



Ride the Colliery Line from  
Shepherdswell to Eythorne

Booking office: 01304 832042

[www.eastkentrailway.com](http://www.eastkentrailway.com)

## READ ALL ABOUT IT!

As well as being the CSS Treasurer (for as long as I can remember!) I also sell railway books, rare, out-of-print and new (I can supply copies of most of the books reviewed in *The Colonel* - just ask). From my extensive stock of titles I may have what you want. Just ask or go to the website, where 4000+ are listed. I also buy quality books on railways.

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# THE ONES THAT GOT AWAY

ALBYN AUSTIN *regrets that some worthy candidates for preservation and restoration have not survived*

**J**ohn Cant on the Colonel Stephens Yahoo discussion group mentioned an article in the February 2009 *Railway Magazine* on the restoration of the coach portion of the Jersey Eastern Railway Sentinel railcar. He regretted that the power unit was scrapped following use as a brake van on the K&ESR in the 1960s. The power unit had been used in later years at Merstham quarry and brickworks, with a home-built body, before moving to the K&ESR as *Dom* in 1962 with another Sentinel/rebuilt Manning Wardle, 0-4-0T *Gervase*. The original messages can be seen at: <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/ColonelHFStephens/join>

John said that as a lad he had been told about the unit by John L Smith of Lens of Sutton, but had never got round to cycling over to see the unit when it was working. We all know that story. I remembered visiting the K&ESR in about 1970 with a few friends. I was especially keen to have a look at *Dom*, the last survivor of this famous range of steam railcars. There was no sign of it at Rolvenden, but as we were driving away towards Robertsbridge I saw it at the end of a remote siding, far from anywhere, and across a field, looking very rusty and forlorn. With my mates having other more pressing things to do, we didn't stop and I never did see it again. A few years later, on my next visit, it had gone. *Gervase* was also in a poor state, but after 40 years in the shrubbery in bits, and in true Stephens's style, the surviving pieces have been collected and sent up north for repair!

## Quainton Road

I've been told that *Dom* was given to a Sentinel Locomotive Preservation Group, based at Quainton Road, who stripped off a few parts and sadly scrapped the rest. The boiler was in a bad state and there were other problems. All I have are my memory, and a few pictures in that sadly underrated little history of the line by John L Smith, *Rails to*

*Tenterden* (Sutton: Lens of Sutton, 1967). This includes a picture of the old car put on rail wheels in the early days of the preservation society, also mentioned recently on the discussion group

## Mumbles

This prompted some thoughts on other items that had been preserved and then broken up, or did not quite make it into preservation. A few months before my trip to the K&ESR, the same little group of us had visited the Middleton Railway in Leeds, where I hoped to see the last surviving Swansea and Mumbles railway tramcar – the largest ever to run in the UK. This had been used as a coach in the early days of this line. Sadly I was disappointed again. Apparently vandals and neglect had caused it to get into such a poor state that the society had torched it a couple of weeks before our visit. They assured me that the Tramway Museum at Crich had been contacted but had said it was too difficult for them to save, and the hulk had become dangerous. Sic Transit Gloria Mundi to quote from *The Chronicles of Boulton's Sidings* by Alfred Rosling Bennett (London: 1927, reprinted by David & Charles, 1971).

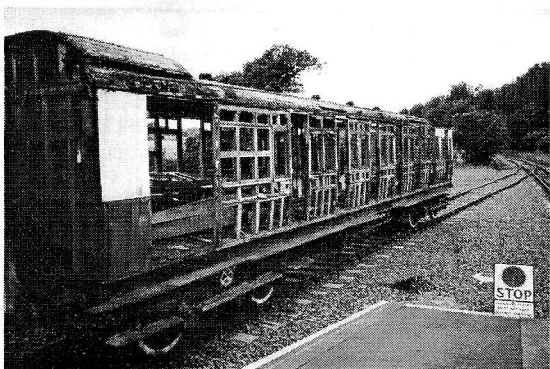
## 'Talesin'

A tragic loss for the Colonel Stephens Society in particular was *Talesin*, the last single Fairlie, from the Welsh Highland. This survived in bits at Boston Lodge until the mid-fifties, when the preservation society declared it a hopeless case and it was scrapped. However the Ffestiniog have redeemed themselves in recent years by building a replica, which runs on light trains. Other items of Colonel Stephens interest were the S&M Royal saloon, broken up at Longmoor as full of dry rot in the fifties, after having been put aside to be kept. Similarly the S&M Terrier *Daphne* was stored by the Southern Railway as the last unrebuilt one left, to be used in a proposed museum,

but sadly it was broken up in the 1940s.

### Wooden coaches

I'm afraid that preserved wooden body coaches have also had a high mortality rate. They have rotted away quietly at numerous preservation societies over the years, till finally quietly turned into kindling for lighting up the locos. Wooden framed ones are not loved by the Railway Inspectorate for general use, and repair, once the rot has set in is very expensive. Also, they soon deteriorate in open storage. I'm afraid the Rye and Camber tramway coach remains that have just been sent to the K&ESR museum, and the sad remnants of the Wolseley railcar body used as a permanent way hut on the S & M show this only too well. The latter became almost totally dilapidated, but the remains may still exist in a barn somewhere on the Welsh borders. Full restoration of these coaches is generally very expensive. The Severn Valley's Great Northern coach that has recently been fully restored cost



£186,000. That was a relatively modern design on a steel underframe with a lot of the bits still in place.

Still we mustn't get too gloomy. It is amazing what has survived. That charismatic little S&M loco *Gazelle* survives in the Colonel Stephens museum, and the former EKR Adams radial tank survives at the Bluebell. It won't be too many more years before this loco celebrates its centenary of being first placed on the scrap line, a rare distinction. There are plenty of other re-

markable survivors when one looks at a list of preserved railway equipment.

### Surplus stock

Also lessons have been learnt. After the loss of the Mumbles car, the ARPS arranged for surplus stock to be widely advertised before scrapping. Sadly this didn't stop a Belgian copy of a Caledonian 4-6-0 being cut up at their national museum a few years back. Nobody thought to contact a Scotsman.

### Points system

The Vintage Carriages Trust [www.vintagecarriagestrust.org.uk](http://www.vintagecarriagestrust.org.uk) has inspired a data base of old coaches and their current status. There is also a points system to highlight their historical importance, rarity, condition, etc. This database highlighted the importance of the Gresley Quad Art set on the North Norfolk Railway and helped get external funding from the lottery to refurbish these coaches which had been beyond the ability of the preservation society to repair. Hopefully no more little gems will be lost, though whether the future for much of this old stock is secure beyond the lifetime of our predominantly middle aged to elderly hobby I do wonder. •

### Postscript from John Cant:

John L. Smith "Lens of Sutton" told me of this unit [*Dom*] at work in Merstham Quarries but we never made a visit to the quarries on our cycles, maybe security was tighter there or the quarry had ceased production but the bridge across the southern portal of the "Quarry Tunnel" of the Brighton main line taking the line (St Peters Siding?) from the quarry down into the Merstham Station area remained for some time in the 1950s, maybe later. There is a photo of *Dom*, picture no.29, in *Steaming Through Surrey* by Peter Hay (Middleton Press, 1988).

*Picture shows SECR Birdcage brake No.1106 (KESR No.60) awaiting restoration at Bodiam. It is now covered in canvas for protection, but restoration has not yet begun.*

Photo: Ross Shimmon

# BRIDGING THE GAP

**TOM BURNHAM** *summarises the history of the plans to reinstate the former K&ESR line between Robertsbridge and Bodiam*

**D**espite the joint statement in *Colonel 96*, [page 14], by the chairmen of the Kent & East Sussex Railway and the Rother Valley Heritage Trust, setting out the situation regarding the track laying west of Bodiam earlier this year, there has been speculation that the two organizations are somehow competing to re-open the line to Robertsbridge.

As someone who isn't an official of either, but has taken an interest in the preservation of the K&ESR for more than forty years, I don't believe that this is the case. As so often happens, the past is the key to understanding the present, and Society members may find it useful to be reminded of how the present situation came about.

## **Legal and political disputes**

Those with longer memories may recall that the original K&ESR Association aimed to preserve the whole of the line from Robertsbridge to Tenterden after it was closed by BR in 1961. During the period from about 1963 to 1969, there were long-drawn-out legal and political disputes with the then Ministry of Transport. One of the Ministry's key objections to reopening was the question of the level crossings on the A21 at North Bridge Street, Robertsbridge, and what was then the A229 "Junction Road" at Udiam. The history of this period is set out in detail in Nick Pallant's book *Holding the Line* (Alan Sutton, 1993). The upshot was that the ministry indicated that they were not prepared to even consider granting a Light Railway Order for the Robertsbridge to Bodiam section, but they would be prepared to consider an application for one covering the line from Bodiam to Tenterden only.

This was naturally disappointing to those who had been members during the 1960s - not least because it ruled out reinstating

commercial passenger and freight services, which was an objective of most preservation societies of the period. However, the decision was accepted, finance was raised and, once a Light Railway Order had been granted in November 1973, the line was reopened in stages from Tenterden to Bodiam, the job being completed in 2000. A new company, limited by guarantee with charitable status, was established to replace the former K&ESR Association; the Tenterden Railway Co., (fairly recently renamed Kent & East Sussex Railway Company - this option hadn't been available in 1971 for various legal reasons).

## **Abandoned claims**

The K&ESR preservationists agreed with the ministry and with East Sussex County Council to abandon claims to the Robertsbridge-Bodiam section (about three miles), and the trackbed from the limit of Tenterden Railway Co ownership, just west of Bodiam, to Robertsbridge was sold by BR to various adjoining landowners. There had been some talk of East Sussex County Council acquiring the Robertsbridge-Bodiam route as a cycle or foot path, but this didn't materialize.

In the 1990s, the climate became more favourable for reinstating the link. This had always been a latent ambition among a section of K&ESR supporters. However, county councils and the Department of Transport were becoming slightly more relaxed about level crossings on main roads. There was also some local concern that Robertsbridge was losing out on tourists after the construction of the A21 Robertsbridge bypass (which also led to the downgrading of Junction Road, now the B2244).

The RVR Company was formed by a small group of enthusiasts with access to fairly substantial funds to buy up sections of the track bed as they came on the market. The group included Gardner Crawley, who had been one of the group of schoolboys

who first suggested preserving the K&ESR in 1961. The TRC (as it then was) was not in a position to do this, as (1) it was a company limited by guarantee, so could not issue ordinary shares to raise money, (2) it had already issued bearer bonds (loans) for the Northiam and Bodiam extensions which would require to be repaid, and (3) it had narrowly survived various financial crises and was reluctant to risk heavy investment in an inevitably very long-term project, which might bring down the present operation if it failed.

The RVR has now acquired about a third of the trackbed and has re-laid track (with considerable K&ESR help) to a high standard west from the ownership boundary near Bodiam, almost as far as Junction Road. However, they do not yet own all the necessary land and some of the remainder will present significant problems. No application has been made for a Transport & Works Order, and the means of crossing the A21 Robertsbridge Bypass has yet to be resolved. There is therefore a long way to go yet, and I don't suppose the national financial situation will make it happen any more quickly.

The declared intention of the RVR is to reconstruct a railway between Robertsbridge and Bodiam, which would then be worked by the K&ESR, as part of its existing line to Tenterden using primarily K&ESR rolling stock. It remains to be seen what form a commercially viable service might take, or what the traffic patterns might be.

### **Potential for rail travel**

There is certainly potential for encouraging some of the many visitors to Bodiam Castle to travel by rail, relieving congestion in the narrow lanes leading to it, and this is one reason why the local authorities and the National Trust are sympathetic to the project. But it is uncertain what impact the reopening would have on traffic on the exist-

ing line, and some people in the K&ESR are sceptical that the average non-enthusiast visitor would want to travel over the full length. But this is very much for the future.

### **A Park and Ride railroad?**

There has been no definite decision on which, if any, of the former intermediate halts at Salehurst and Junction Road should be reopened. A park and ride railroad on the A21 has been mooted, and would certainly require the agreement of the local authorities. Again, the exact details of interchange with the Hastings Direct line at Robertsbridge would be subject to negotiation with Network Rail and Southeastern, or their successors, as the main line train operating company.

The K&ESR would need to invest in additional serviceable rolling stock and add to the facilities on the existing line in order to work a longer route. Again, these requirements would need to be included in long-term development plans.

### **Brake van rides**

The RVR Supporters' Association, with a visitor centre at Robertsbridge, has done much hard work to improve the site there, and aim to provide a brakevan service between Robertsbridge station and North Bridge



**New track, ballast and fencing west of Bodiam.**  
Photo: Mark Yonge

Street crossing, pending the creation of the ultimate through link. I have the impression that there are some tensions between the RVRSA and the RVR Company and its controlling RVR Heritage Trust, but these are not unusual, particularly in organisations where ownership and control are not within the main group of volunteers.

For the record, the K&ESR has a dormant subsidiary company named Robertsbridge 2020 Ltd, but the name doesn't imply any actual commitment to reopening then! At present, this company serves as a means for formal liaison meetings between the boards

# THROUGH CARRIAGE TO TENTERDEN TOWN, 1929

*Robin Gay, in our column 'Test Les', in issue 90 (page 15) asked 'When did the through carriage run onto the KESR and can we show any evidence like a timetable? Les could find no firm evidence, but cited Stephen Garrett's The Kent & East Sussex Railway. 3rd ed., Oakwood Press: 1999 (page 51) and an article by C F Klapper in Colonel 25, page 15. Checking the index to the Tenterden Terrier, I came across a reference to an article by Philip Shaw in issue 40, Summer 1986, which explores the subject in some depth. It is reproduced here by kind permission of the author and editor - Ed.*

One of the most obscure aspects of the Kent & East Sussex timetable in the late 1920s was the reference to a through carriage from London to Tenterden Town via Robertsbridge. The service seems to have commenced with the Summer timetable for 1929, as it appears in Bradshaw for July of that year., but not in

entirely from Bradshaw, and KESR timetables for the period have, unfortunately, not survived in the Railway's archives.

A footnote "through carriage to Tenterden Town is shown [in the Bradshaw July 1929 timetable] against the 5.12pm Cannon Street to Hastings trains on Mondays to Fridays and the 5.20pm Saturdays only from Charing Cross, departing from Robertsbridge at 6.45pm. Arrival at Tenterden was timed for 7.23pm and there is a further footnote to say that the train would run through to High Halden Road and Biddenden with passengers from beyond Robertsbridge, arriving at 8.05pm. Biddenden passengers would have paid very dearly for the privilege of not having to change trains, as the 6.15pm departure from London via Headorn was due there at exactly the same time as the Robertsbridge service, which left London more than an hour earlier. Presumably it returned to Tenterden as an unadvertised empty working later in the evening.

**ROBERTSBRIDGE, TENTERDEN TOWN, and HEADCORN.—Kent and East Sussex.**

Down.		Week Days only.											
Miles from Robertsbridge.	Station.	am	am	am	am	am	am	am	am	am	am	am	am
	Charing Cross Station.												
322	London (Cannon St.) dep.												
322	London (Linda Bidge)												
330	Headorn	7 45		10 25									
	Robertsbridge dep.	11	11	11	11								
3	Junction Road	8 50		11 15		12 45							
4	Bodiam, for Staplecross	8 54		11 25		12 55							
7	Northiam A.	8 58		11 45		1 5							
10	Witnham Road	9 04		11 55		1 14							
13	Witenden	9 12		12 04		1 22							
15	Tenterden Town	9 16		12 08		1 27							
16	Tenterden St. Michael's	9 20		12 12		1 31							
18	High Halden Road	9 27		12 18		1 38							
20	Biddenden	9 30		12 23		1 41							
21	Frittenden Road	9 35		12 28		1 46							
24	Headorn 322, 330	9 45		12 40		1 56							
57	330 London (Linda Bidge) arr.	10 3		12 36		2 55							
68	330 London (Cannon St.)	10 8		12 44		3 04							
69	330 Charing X.	10 15		12 53		3 13							

A Station for Beckley and Sandhurst.      Aa Stop when required.  
 B Runs through to High Halden Road and Biddenden with passengers from beyond Robertsbridge.  
 C Departs at 10.55 am. on Saturdays.      M Motor Car, one class only.      Ma Stops to set down.  
 D Through Carriage to Tenterden Town.      Y Departs 10.53 am. on Saturdays.

the early months, nor in the March 1929 timetable for the line issued by the Kent & East Sussex Light Railway Company. After 1929, all reference to the facility disappeared

Bradshaw is at its most eccentric in not referring to a through carriage in the other direction, but KESR driver, Jack Hoad, who was working on the line at the time, recalls



that it was the 9.51 am from Tenterden Town, arriving at Charing Cross at 12 noon - a fast working by KESR standards, especially via Robertsbridge. Assuming this to be correct, Bradshaw is wrong in referring to the 9.51 am as a "motor car" (railbus) service, as the requirement would have been for a steam train. Jack Hoad remembers coupling up and detaching the coach at Robertsbridge and stabling it at Rolvenden overnight. The facility seems to have been aimed at shoppers with heavy luggage, as the timings would be quite unsuitable for business commuters, even if there were any in 1929. However, with the "down" platform at Robertsbridge being immediately adjacent to the KESR bay, the arrangements made little sense anyway.

Douglas Davis, an independent consultant, who was requested to submit a private report on the working of the line to Colonel Stephens in 1929 wrote "the concluding criticism we would make of the passenger service is the running of a through coach from London to Tenterden Town via Robertsbridge. This coach is one of the latest southern Railway coaches and is attached to a steam train hauling three K&ESR coaches together with a number of goods wagons. The strain on the engine which hauls these trains is enormous, the one Southern coach alone weighing almost as much as the engine, the track suffers accordingly. As a rule there are few passengers indeed who travel by this coach and there are still fewer who make the return journey in it".

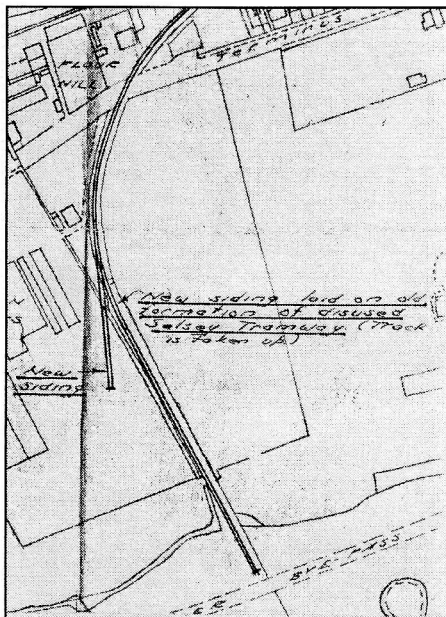
The through carriage may well have survived with limited advertising into the early 1930s, although no photographs of it have ever come to light. From the passengers' point of view, a train via Headcorn would have made more sense, but undoubtedly created insuperable operating difficulties at Headcorn itself.

As with so many anecdotes surrounding the KESR, the mystery remains. Could it be, however, that Colonel Stephens's secret objective was to provide smart, modern carriage accommodation on the line at little or no cost to himself? ●

## GUN SIDING AT CHICHESTER

Gerald Jacobs reports: "a while ago an acquaintance of mine, whilst doing some work in the Plan Arch at Waterloo, came across an interesting engineering drawing of the SR track layout at Chichester. It is fairly well-known that a turning triangle was installed at Chichester during WW2. Probably less well-known is that locations were earmarked for positioning rail-mounted guns. I enclose a copy of the plan. What is of particular interest is the rehabilitation of part of the Selsey Tramway as one of the locations for the guns. I cannot imagine such a gun would have been fired in close proximity to local dwellings. I wonder if the gun was simply stabled there and went out on local forays?

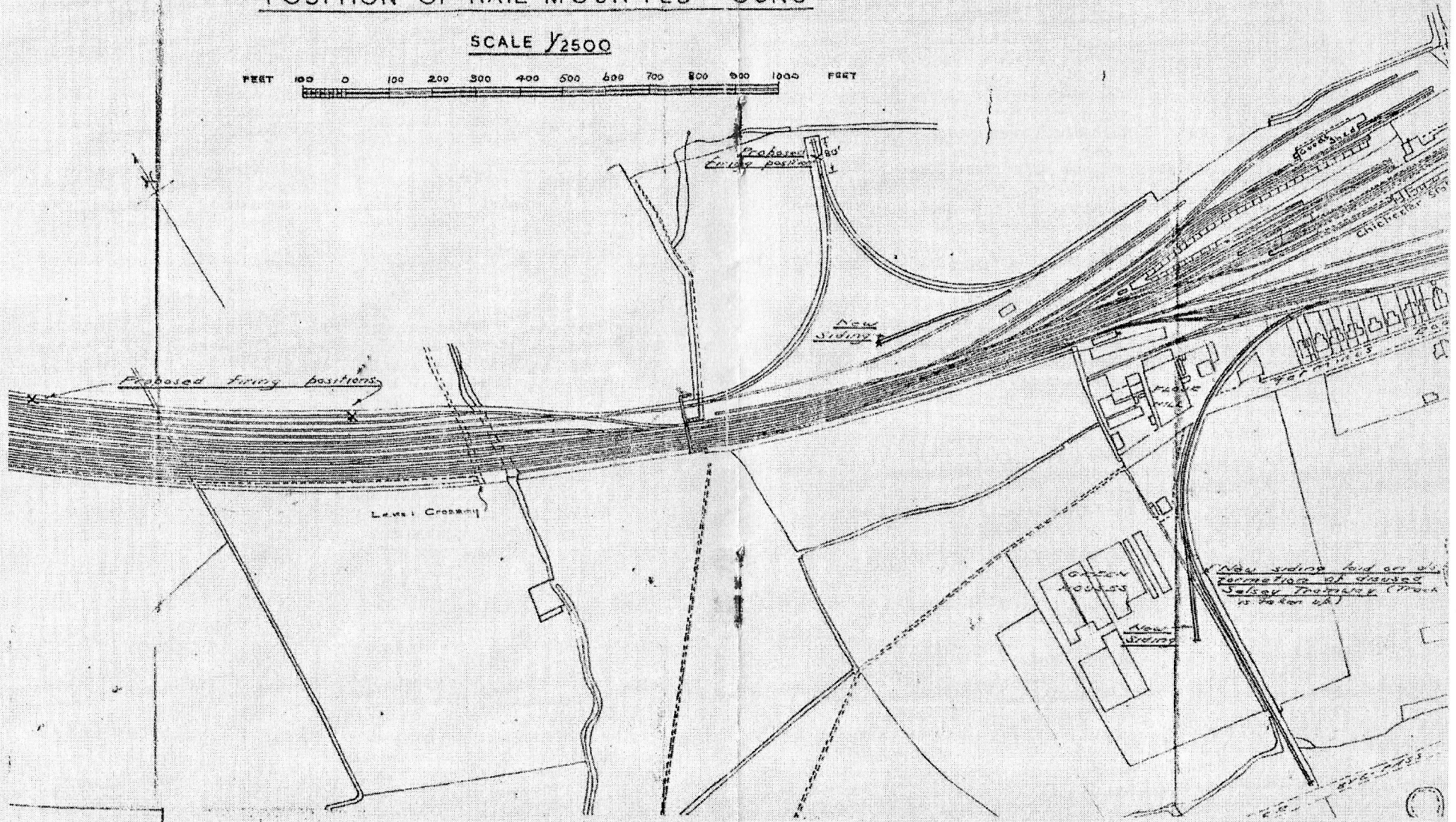
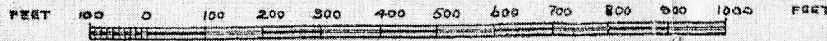
*[These notes, together with the copy of the drawing, were inherited by your present editor from his predecessor, Stephen Hannington. They have been in the files for too long! An enlargement of the detail of the siding appears below; the entire drawing is overleaf. - Ed.]*



# CHICHESTER

## POSITION OF RAIL MOUNTED GUNS

SCALE  $\sqrt{2500}$



R.C.E.4/1.  
13.1912

# THE FINAL CHALLENGE

**MARK YONGE, one of the founder members of the Rother Valley Railway, outlines the progress and success achieved to date in restoring the link between Bodiam and Robertsbridge.**

**I**t was on a summer's day in the early 1990s that I was asked by the commercial director of the Kent & East Sussex Railway to look discreetly into the possibility of restoring the missing link of the railway that once ran between Bodiam and Robertsbridge.

The railway had at that time, reached Northiam, a distance of some seven miles from Tenterden. Suddenly, several supporters who recalled their original dream of a full connection with the main line, started to contemplate the unthinkable. Could we really rebuild this line? Could we seriously cross three roads on the level? How could we possibly find the money to purchase the former track bed in what was a very wealthy commuter area and would the owners agree to sell?

Of the remaining seven miles from Northiam to Robertsbridge, the first three to Bodiam Castle were owned by the K&ESR and awaited re-opening. This was achieved in 2000. The final 3.5 miles had been abandoned since 1961 and the track lifted a few years later.

Well, that was over 20 years ago. Following the commercial director's request, I walked the route of the old line that I recalled from my early dreams of preservation. This was a painful process, so deeply felt was my great disappointment at the truncation of the scheme which I had supported as a teenager. Until then, I knew that to visit the abandoned railway would arouse feelings of deep sadness, so I never did, until that fateful day.

Surprisingly, about two thirds was still recognisable as an unaltered disused railway, albeit devoid of track. Apart from extensive tree growth, it was clear that the line could be re-instated. One mile of the route on the outskirts of Robertsbridge and west of Bodiam had been ploughed into the land-

scape and vanished as if it had never existed. Nevertheless this could easily be re-instated as the original earthworks here had never been substantial. We would need to cross three roads on the level, including a new one that had been constructed since the railway closed.

Seven parcels of land of varying sizes would have to be purchased, including the station yard at Robertsbridge. This was a daunting task and we had no money! In spite of this, with the optimism and enthusiasm of youth, we decided to launch a new company to achieve the task.

## ***The Rother Valley Railway is born***

Thus, with the full backing of the Kent & East Sussex Railway, which helped launch the scheme in their house magazine *The Tenterden Terrier*, (No.55, Summer 1991, pp17,18), the Rother Valley Railway was born. From the outset, the new company was kept as a separate entity from the existing operating railway based at Tenterden. The possibility of failure was too great to risk everything that had been achieved by the K&ESR at the Tenterden end. Later on the Rother Valley Railway was set up as a registered charity. Sometimes in life a little luck is needed and within a few months of the setting up of the company, the first half-mile of trackbed at Robertsbridge came on to the market at a Kent auction house. This had been owned by a property company which had hoped to develop the land for housing. Fortunately for us, they realised that building dwellings on a flood plain was not a sensible idea. One of our generous supporters stepped in and bought this for us. Soon after he followed this by purchasing part of the former Robertsbridge station goods yard from BR. From the beginning, therefore, we had a base and a section of track next to the main line. There were five sections of land

*Continued on page 18 ►*





**MAP KEY**

- |                                     |  |
|-------------------------------------|--|
| <b>1</b> Robertsbridge Station      | Land secured by RVR and under construction |
| <b>2</b> Site of Salehurst Halt     | Land to be acquired                        |
| <b>3</b> Site of Junction Road Halt | Kent and East Sussex Railway               |
| <b>4</b> Bodiam Station             |  |

**Rother Valley Railway map of acquisitions and plans  
Prepared by Mark Yonge.**

► *From page 16*

left to purchase at that time.

### ***A Base at Robertsbridge***

Track and a commercial centre were constructed in the yard at Robertsbridge with a high level of support from what was then Network SouthEast, which has been continued by its successors. A support group, with their own house magazine *The Phoenix* still keeps members and the public informed of progress. Restoration of some items of rolling stock is underway and casual visitors are always made welcome at the shop and café.

### ***Achievements***

At last the scheme is moving forward more quickly. Land purchases, the most daunting aspect of the scheme have proceeded positively thanks to generous donors. The company now owns land at both ends of the route up to the sites of two level crossings. At the Bodiam end the landowners have either sold or agreed to sell the land up to the site of Junction Road Halt, an exciting landmark as it is the first station site to be reached since the company was formed. Of the original seven sections of trackbed that needed to be repurchased, over half have been successfully acquired. Positive negotiations continue on the remaining sections.

Trees have been cleared, new embankments constructed and track re-laid from Robertsbridge station to the first bridge and 850 meters from the end of the existing track at Bodiam towards Junction Road. Fencing has been erected to protect livestock from the movement of works trains.

Support continues from the Kent & East Sussex Railway, which will operate services over the Rother Valley Railway metals once

the line has been constructed. At the KESR board meeting in May this year, a vote for full support for the scheme was recorded by the Board of Directors.

### ***And What of the Future?***

Much remains to be achieved. On the first half-mile of line out of Robertsbridge, no less than five bridges need to be replaced. Further land needs to be purchased to enable the two ends to join up and our level crossing designs need to be approved, not least of which is the A21 trunk road, which is likely to depend on persuading the Department of Transport of the public benefit involved. However, compared to the infancy and fragility of the early scheme, we are sure that success can be achieved. Tenterden is the largest town in Kent without a connected railway. Bodiam Castle is one of the most popular National Trust attractions and has minimal public transport access. The route is essentially clear, as no building has taken place since closure. Connecting the railway to the main line at Robertsbridge offers huge marketing opportunities, to both potential passengers from both London and the south coast. A report commissioned by Manchester Metropolitan University concluded that the restored railway would bring great benefits to the larger local community.

When fully constructed, we can be proud to have re-created the full length and more of the original Rother Valley Railway which was the first railway to have been built under the Light Railways Act of 1896.

For further details, visit our website [www.rvr.org.uk](http://www.rvr.org.uk). ●

## THE ROTHER VALLEY RAILWAY

— ∞ —  
Robertsbridge Station, East Sussex TN32 5DG

### REBUILDING THE RVR FROM ROBERTSBRIDGE TO BODIAM

Visitor centre open Sundays and Bank Holidays 9.30 to 17.00 (or dusk if earlier)

For membership, telephone: 01580 881833, or go to [www.rvr.org.uk](http://www.rvr.org.uk)



## SOCIETY NEWS

# 2010 Members' Weekend at York

**David Powell reports that the jigsaw pieces are falling into place for the 2010 AGM and Members' Weekend, based in York.**

### *National Railway Museum*

The AGM will be held in the Gibbs Lecture Theatre at the National Railway Museum, York at 11.00 am on **Saturday 15th May**. After the AGM we will adjourn for a DIY lunch break. Most members will probably want to use the excellent facilities at the NRM, after which we will reconvene for guided tours of the NRM collection, concentrating on items related to Colonel Stephens. For the rest of the afternoon, members will be free to explore the NRM at their own pace. [www.nrm.org.uk](http://www.nrm.org.uk)

### *Derwent Valley*

For those staying over to **Sunday 16th May** we are arranging a morning's visit to the **Derwent Valley Light Railway** [www.dvlr.org.uk](http://www.dvlr.org.uk) located within Murton Park, some 5 miles to the east of York. Members will then have a number of options. These include spending more time at Murton Park which also hosts the Yorkshire Museum of Farming, Danelaw Dark Age Village and the Brigantium Roman Fort. Entry to Murton Park, which includes the DVLRL, is (2009 prices) £5.50, concessions £4.50. We have then been invited to visit member **Colin Shutt's farm at Howden**, some 20 miles to the south and home to Colin's replica Ford Railmotor.

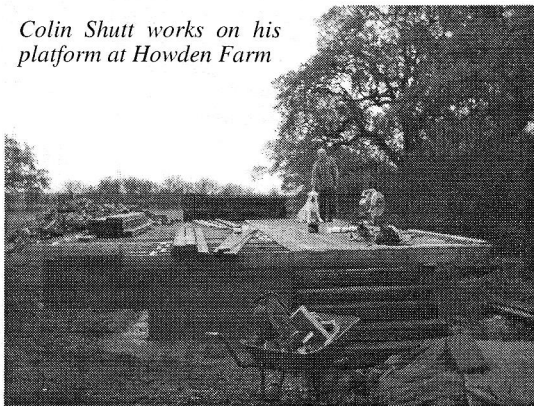
### *Other heritage lines*

Alternatively, members would be free to visit one or more of the other heritage lines in the area, which include the **North Yorkshire Moors** [www.nymr.org.uk](http://www.nymr.org.uk), the **Keighley & Worth Valley** [www.kwvr.co.uk](http://www.kwvr.co.uk) and the **Embsay & Bolton Abbey Steam Rail-**

**way** [www.embsayboltonabbeyrailway.org.uk](http://www.embsayboltonabbeyrailway.org.uk), as they head for home. For those using public transport, if demand warrants it, we will organise a York-Murton-Howden-York mini-bus for the Sunday, the costs of which would be shared by the users.

As with the Saturday, lunch refreshments would be DIY, there is a cafe at Murton Park. More details will be included in the Spring edition of the *Colonel*, when we will be asking for confirmation of attendance for those needing transport on the Sunday. For those members not attending

*Colin Shutt works on his platform at Howden Farm*



but watching the Society's coffers, the only costs which will fall to the Society will be for the AGM venue and some very light refreshments (tea or coffee) on arrival.

### *More information:*

Among the items held by the NRM is the well-known KESR horse bus which ran to and from Tenterden Town station carrying passengers and parcels from 1916 until 1923. A full list of the museum's Colonel-related items appears on the Society's website at: [www.colonelstephenssociety/nrm](http://www.colonelstephenssociety/nrm)

Please note that **Saturday 15th and Sunday 16th May** are the correct dates and not the dates published in the last *Colonel*. •

## SOCIETY NEWS

### Passage to India?

Our secretary and Publicity Officer, **Kerry Baylis**, writes: "A total change of subject now. Nigel Bird made some comments about the Darjeeling Himalayan Railway (DHR) whilst we were talking recently and commented that it is a pity that Colonel Stephens had no input into it as he (Nigel) wouldn't mind having a members' weekend there!

Is anyone interested in a visit? I'm looking at early 2012 as time is needed to save some cash to pay for the trip. Perhaps you could mention this in *The Colonel* to see if any interest is forthcoming from the membership? I don't know whether we could get a discount for a group booking, but it may be worth asking. The cost would be very approximately £2500 per person with a supplement for single travellers. I will act as point of contact".

Kerry's address is on page 2. •

### A Weekend in Wales

Society Treasurer, **Nigel Bird**, writes: "Due to continuing delays with the full re-opening of the Welsh Highland Railway, (as you will have read in *Colonel 96* the planned AGM in the area has been deferred from 2011 to 2012), I thought members (and friends/spouses) may like to have the opportunity to have a ride on the partly completed line and other railways in the area. I am therefore arranging an **informal gathering for September 18th/19th 2010**. Come for either the day or the weekend. A day will allow a full line trip on the Welsh Highland route from Caernarfon to Hafod y Llyn, and maybe on the Welsh Highland Heritage Railway (Porthmadog), where *Russell* is based. Stay the weekend and there will be enough time for a trip on the Ffestiniog and maybe, if I can arrange it, a visit to Boston Lodge works. Further details to follow" •

### Web site hits new high

Web manager, **Bruce Hunt**, reports that in October the number of visitors to our web site reached 2,207, a new high. The most visited page was Rother Valley Railway, followed by Selsey Tramway.

The UK and USA provided most visitors, followed by Germany, 144, and France, 26. We had 18 visitors from Russia and 5 from China. Visitor numbers are now over 26,000 a year. The initial numbers for November are higher than October's record.

Recent additions include some photos of the Kent & East Sussex Railway taken in 1962 and details of some new kits for models of some of the Colonel's locomotives and rolling stock. •

### "The Colonel" in the news

In *Colonel 95* we published an article by Graham Baldwin, general Manager of the **KESR**, entitled 'Robertsbridge or Bust' in which he posed some questions to be answered if trains were to run through to and from Robertsbridge again. *Steam Railway* 367 picked it up under the same heading, but implied that Baldwin was predicting a 'financial disaster' if the project was completed. In his blog on the KESR website Baldwin accused *SR* of tabloid journalism, by distorting an article he had written for 'a small publication' i.e. *The Colonel*'. His letter of protest was published in a subsequent issue of *SR*, but 'who reads the letters pages' he asked. Well, we do!

Also in *Steam Railway* was mention of **Monty Baker's** 90th birthday and the Society's award of honorary life membership to him in recognition of the fact that he is the oldest surviving employee of the KESR and his continuing interest in the study of the Colonel's railways.

It's good to know that our 'small publication' is read in such circles. •

# NEWS

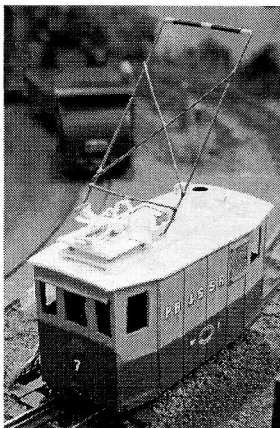
## Sentinel in 4mm

In a surprise move, *Model Rail*, in issue 137, November 2009, announced that it had commissioned from Dapol a 00 gauge model of a Sentinel 100hp 4-wheel vertical boiler engine. No prices or delivery dates are given. But it is based on the preserved Sentinel *Isebrook* which was delivered to the GWR in October 1926. It had previously spent some time on the Shropshire & Montgomeryshire. There is a picture of it with a long freight 'on test at Meole Brace in 1925/6' in Peter Johnson's *Illustrated History of the Shropshire & Montgomeryshire light Railway* (OPC, 2008). In the same book there is a picture of one owned by BQC at Criggion in 1958. ●

## Nantmawr reopens!

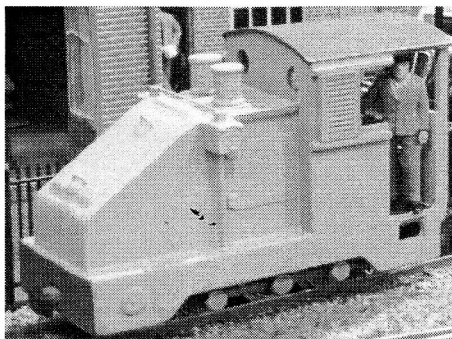
*Heritage Railway* reported in issue 130, November 2009, that steam was set to return to the Nant Mawr branch each weekend in November and December. Believed to be the first steam passenger train on the branch, it can be seen in action on YouTube at: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uFeYa59eTDI> Brian Janes has provided a brief history of the branch on our Yahoo discussion list See page 2 for joining details. ●

## The Pewsey show



**Patrick Collins**, who alerted us to the news of the Sentinel model, put on a small display board promoting the Society at the Wiltshire 009 Group Members' Day at Pewsey in August. Also there was a model by Angus Watkins of what the

Portmadoc, Beddgelert & South Snowdon Railway might have looked like had it been built. Patrick also had his own models of the Snailbeach *Denis* with some SDR hoppers and the prototype Kerr Stuart diesel. ●



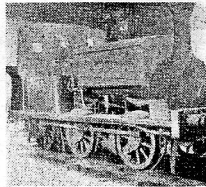
*Photos of the models of the Kerr Stuart diesel ▲ and the PBSSR electric (lower left) are by Lee Bryant.*

## BP&GVR 100 success

**Arthur Davies** reports 'the celebrations [on 14th November] to mark the centenary of the introduction of passenger services, by Colonel Stephens, on the Burry Port & Gwendraeth Valley Railway went very well considering the weather. We had to dispense with all outside activities, but the events in the hall brought around 400 - 500 people together to see the project and the possibility of starting the line up again. Vic Mitchell attempted to get to us on the train. Having left home at 7am he only made Llanelli by just after 2pm. He left the books he brought with Arriva Trains and returned on the next available train home and did not reach Pontyates at all! The short animated film made by local school children and the National Library of Wales is excellent and as soon as it goes on YouTube, I will let you know. We had a good book selling day with Oakwood, Middleton and second hand books'. Unfortunately, neither Nigel Bird nor your editor was able to attend, but we hope to have a full report in the next issue. ●

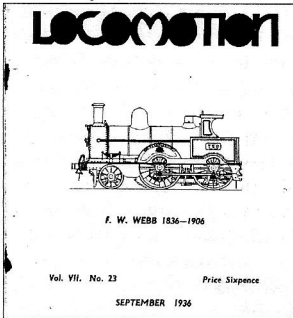
## BLASTS FROM THE PAST

**M**ember **Ian Dack** has sent in so much fascinating material from old (some are very old) magazines that we decided to start this new occasional feature. First out of the envelope were two issues of a title we had never heard of; *Locomotion*, published by the Oakwood Press. The September 1936 (Vol. VII No.23) issue, in a list of key dates in that year, reports under June 30 the 'Sale of the equipment of the **West Sussex Railway** (Selsey Tramway, closed in January last year'. A photo of *Morous* (reproduced right) accompanied the item,



along with the following caption: *Lot 323 at the sale of the West Sussex Railway equipment on June 30 was "Morous" still in Shropshire and Montgomeryshire colours. A Manning Wardle engine, it began as No.1 of the Stratford and Midlands Railway, went to*

*the S. and M., and was transferred from there soon after the war. This locomotive and "Selsey", were both standing in Selsey shed after the sale, although the*



*rails leading out of the shed had been removed!*

The June 1937 issue, in a feature headed 'Light Railway Developments' with the sub-heading 'Gazelle is Out Again', reports: *Hard on the heels of the official announcement that the **Welsh Highland Railway** will probably not work this summer, as its great length renders it uneconomic, comes the news (from E.S.Tonks) that the **Shropshire & Montgomeryshire** miniature 0-4-2*

*engine Gazelle has now been reboilered and is in the paint shops spick-and-span in green paint and brass name-plate. The work of resuscitating this locomotive, which weighs only 3 tons, was begun in 1935; it is apparently to serve its old purpose of a directors' inspection unit. On the other hand, 0-6-0 No.6 Thisbe has been purchased by a scrap merchant, and is being broken up. At Shepherdswell, East Kent Railway, No.2 Walton Park is being reconditioned. On that little-known line the **Snailbeach District Railway** (writes T.R.Perkins), the two Baldwin 4-6-0T are still doing all the work. The Kent & East Sussex Railway traffic is at present being handled by the 0-6-0ST locomotives 4 and 8, ex-S.R. and G.W.R. respectively; the P class 0-6-0T sent down last year proved unable to cope with the trains on the Headcorn section of the line, and was returned after a short trial.*

Also in the pack from Mr. Dack was an article from *Backtrack*, September 2005, on the ICI Light Railway. It includes a short note on the **Weston Point Light Railway**, together with a list of the locomotives employed there and a lovely photograph of Andrew Barclay 0-6-0T *Castner* of 1939 in pristine ex-works condition. Ian remarks that it 'looks a really powerful machine'. The caption claims that it was 'reputed to be the most powerful 0-6-0 engine at use anywhere in the private sector'. If you like a bargain, look out for this year's, (yes 2009), National Railway Museum diary. Not much use now, of course, as a diary, but it includes a superb collection of reproductions of railway posters and evocative photographs taken by the railways' public relations departments. One picture that took my eye was opposite the first week in June: *Changing points, c.1955. Worker operating a Ground Frame on the K&ESR by J G Glick*. The worker in question is waiting for the appropriate moment to pull one of the three levers on the ground frame and is clearly in BR uniform. It confirms the rural atmosphere of the **K&ESR**, but the location is not given, however. ●

*Our regular round-up of the railway press*

## Press Digest

**T**he **Callington Branch** received several mentions in the last issue, and here's another one: *Rail Magazine* 625 for 26 August carried an article by Chris Leigh. Part of a series in which he describes his journeys on branches in west country. Well-illustrated with colour photos taken this year, but as Bruce Hunt points out, it contains a large number of inaccuracies when he treats the history of the line. Elsewhere, we have a review of an excellent DVD on the **WC&P**. *BBC Bristol* covered the launch of the DVD in its regional TV news programme. You can watch it at <http://tinyurl.com/kwsr5b> There's a frightening shot of young children running within inches of a Terrier as it runs along the street. Still with the *BBC*, this time in Devon which covered the ceremony to mark the tragedy at **Bere Ferrers** on 24 September 1917 when New Zealand soldiers alighted from a troop train only to be hit by train coming in the opposite direction. Ten were killed. A full report of the accident and the ceremony at the memorial appears on Bruce Hunt's website: [www.brucehunt.co.uk](http://www.brucehunt.co.uk)

*Railway Bylines* often contains material of interest to Colonel watchers. The September 2009 issue featured a 14-page article on the **Hawkhurst Branch**. With extended captions and 1908 OS maps, many of the images are familiar from Brian Hart's book on the line (Wild Swan: 2000). But if you don't have the book this is worth obtaining. The aerial view of Hawkhurst station on page 463, showing the layout and hundreds of hop poles in the yard is worth the cover price. Inevitably there are several shots of the corrugated iron station buildings. Chris Leigh gets very excited in the October *Model Rail* about a recent Hornby cricket pavilion in their 4mm Skaledale range on the grounds that it looks very similar to a typical Stephens station building. A shot of **KESR's Bodiam** station building is included in the article, in which he demonstrates how to convert the walls from ship-lapped to corrugated iron construction. Quite a messy busi-

ness, as the model is made of resin. He would have saved himself a lot of time and effort if he had based his project on a station on the Headcorn section, say **Frittenden** - they were similar in design, but ship lapped! HFS seemed to have a fondness for **Man-ning Wardle** engines. So it was sad to see in *Steam Railway* 369, November - December that the company's locomotive works in Leeds is likely to be demolished to make way for redevelopment. Apparently it would still be possible to build more MW engines as the drawings are held by the new Hunslet Engine Company. Enclosed with a recent issue of *Welsh Highland Heritage* was a leaflet announcing an appeal for funds for the reconstruction of **Tryfan Junction**. Work has begun to stabilise the building, but it is estimated that £50,000 is required to complete the job. If you want to help with this project, contact John Keylock at Weathervane Cottage, Childswickham, Broadway, Worcs WR12 7HL. *Steam Railway* 367, under the headline '**Ashover** coach races on', reported substantial progress on the restoration of ALR coach No.4 at Midland Railway-Butterley. Destined to run on the Golden Valley Light Railway at Butterley, the vehicle was recovered from Clay Cross Bowls Club in 2007. Richard Barton writes that he has nominated **HFS** as one of the *Kent on Sunday's* 'Top top Kent people'. We wonder how many other people did? Did you know that circus trains still run in the States? There's a stunning photo of an elephant emerging from one in the centre spread of *The Guardian* for 10 August. ●

### Deadlines for 2009/10

Copy for *The Colonel* should be submitted to the Editor by the following dates:

**98: Spring 2010: 15th February**

**99: Summer 2010: 15th May**

**100: Autumn 2010: 15th August**

**101: Winter 2010: 15th November**

These are final dates, but we much prefer earlier receipt if at all possible. ●



# DISPATCHES

*Letters to the Editor*

## Those Terrier Blues

Just got round to reading 'Test Les' in *Colonel 96*. There is a query about Les's statement that the Stephens blue livery was 'dark blue bordered with black and lined in vermilion and white' and Les's comment on this with reference to styles on the current K&ESR. In the Museum we tend to regard the painting on 'Holly' Austen's model of one of the original 2-4-0Ts as definitive. We know that the blue used is authentic as Austen used paint obtained from Rolvenden. The blue is bordered with black with vermilion and white lining. Also we know from photos that there was some variation in the lining with one of the colours sometimes omitted. It probably depended on time available and the whim of the painter. Contemporary K&ESR painting can safely be ignored as this also depends on the time available and the whims of the owner and the painter!

**Brian Janes**  
Via email

## Postscript:

[Brian subsequently reported that a colour photo of the model of Northiam can be found at <http://www.hfstephens-museum.org.uk/museum-and-archives/museum-tour.html>, photo 8 (you need to scroll across at the bottom of the page then click on it to enlarge). "The colour rendition is not too bad to my eyes, given that it is in museum lighting. One of these days we must take it out and get a daylight picture". Unfortunately we cannot reproduce the photo concerned. But when the model of Northiam is re-photographed we will do so. When asked about the current livery of Bodiam he said: "My perception is that No. 3 is painted in too dark a colour which has very little 'life' in it". -Ed.]

## The Colonel's Correspondence

Tom and I thoroughly enjoyed the trip on the S&MR in May for the AGM. It was so well organised, even the weather. [The Lyalls did not stay for the Snailbeach tour on the vert wet Sunday! - Ed]. It was fascinating to see the remains of the Potts.

I just remember seeing it beside the Welshpool line in army days in the late 1950s. Congratulations on the continued flow of interesting articles in *The Colonel*. It's remarkable how much material there is about such an abstruse subject.

As promised, I enclose photocopies of three letters in my possession which were bought when the Festiniog were clearing out old correspondence files. Many of the items appeared to be of insufficient historical interest to go into the archives, so they were selling them to members.

You will notice that one is from the FR, one from the WHR and one from both. I think the remark about the shunter's suit lasting more than a year is an implied rebuke to Portmadoc!

**David Lyall**  
**Cheltenham**

[Only the memo about the shunter's suit is reproduced here-Ed]

**FESTINIOG RAILWAY.**

TELEGRAMS  
G.L. HINDS, MANAGER, SWANSEA  
Cable: THE GREAT S.W.C. Letter.  
TELEPHONE: 14, TONERIDGE

MANAGING DIRECTOR'S, ENGINEER'S, AND  
LOCOMOTIVE SUPPLY OFFICE,  
SALFORD TERRACE,  
TONERIDGE, KENT

On Reference: Yes  No

FR/ST 1167

H. F. STEPHENS, Mem. Inst. C.E.

R. Evans, Esq.,  
Portmadoc.

Dear Sir,

With reference to your stores requisition of the 1st instant, herewith I enclose an order for 1 oilskin suit for Shunter Ellis Jones.

Please sign and return to me the counterfool of the order, also attached, as soon as the suit is received.

This suit ought to last the shunter longer than one year.

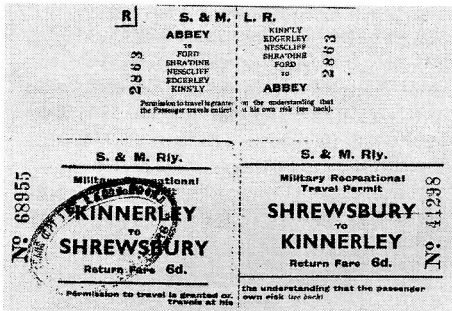
Yours faithfully,

*W. J. P.*

FESTINIOG RAILWAY  
REGISTERED

**Wartime Tickets on the S&MR**

It is generally thought that there were no tickets for travel on the Shropshire & Montgomeryshire Railway during the wartime period of operation by the War Department. [See Colonel 96, page 18 - Ed]. Thanks to my colleague, Geoffrey Croughton, I am able to prove that there *were* tickets during that period. Ticket 2863 (*below*) is on thin white card with extensive conditions absol-



ing the War Department from any liability to a passenger and is dated "21.1.42" in pencil at each end on the back. This is clearly for a civilian and looks as if it was a market facility for travel to Shrewsbury. The other ticket (*above*), actually halves of two tickets, 41298 and 68955, of the same series, is on white paper and undated, although the presumed outward half bears a barely readable unit stamp. Its purpose is self-explanatory, for military personnel making recreational journeys from Kinnerley to Shrewsbury. The late Trevor David also had an example of the return half of this ticket, again undated, but with a unit stamp reading 2No.3 Bn. R.A.O.C./NESSCLIFF/SHREWSBURY". I am not that familiar with wartime arrangements in this area, but I assume that there were other army camps in addition to Kinnerley and it might thus be expected that there were tickets to Shrewsbury for these also.

**Brian Pask**  
 Editor, *Talking Tickets*  
 Transport Ticket Society

**Robertsbridge: What Would HFS do?**

What would Holman Fred Stephens do if Rolvenden Works built a time machine and brought him back from the 1920s to be the KESR's managing director again? He would take simple but effective steps to turn the existing steam operation into one that generates a surplus instead of needing to be subsidised. West of Bodiam he would reinstate a genuine light railway by doing what he was unable to do on the Rye & Camber in the 1890s, or on his other railways in the 1920s, because the technology he needed was not available until after his death.

His strategy would be "no steam trains west of Bodiam". Instead, passenger trains would be operated and marketed as a separate product – Rother Valley Railway – a genuine local transport operation linking the steam railway and castle at Bodiam with Robertsbridge. Trains would be provided by the KESR Class 108 DMU PayTrain from a Park & Ride facility adjacent to the A21 – a simple platform on single track; the same facilities as a Park & Ride bus terminal – to the siding behind the platform at Bodiam, upgraded to a bay platform with cross-platform interchange with the steam trains. RVR track would run alongside the steam headshunt. The line west of Bodiam would be constructed to light, rather than heavy, railway standards. No signalling would be necessary, other than lifting barriers at the A229 road crossing. If traffic warranted, the class 108 DMU could be strengthened to a 3-car (possibly 4-car) unit by insertion of a standard coach (or two), equipped with control circuits, between the driving control cars.

Stephens would assume that the reasons for refusing the original K&ESRPS's Light Railway Order still applied at the A21 and that, until the powers that be are persuaded that, in order to reduce carbon emission from vehicles slogging their way up hills, they need, at their own expense, to raise the A21 above the flood plain, with a slip road down to the roundabout and an Armco steel tube underpass for trains. It would be necessary to operate a separate rail link between his Park & Ride and main line stations.

*Continued on next page* ►

► *Continued from page 25*

The Colonel wouldn't have to look any further than the front cover and centre spread of *Colonel 96* for rolling stock to use on the North Bridge Street section. He would rule out the original *Gazelle* as unsuited to the bank up to the mainline station, but after checking out the RH&DR diesel locos and their builder, would decide that a diesel-electric or diesel-hydraulic replica *Gazelle* would do the job a treat. Until this was available, the Ford diesel might be a suitable alternative. Un-powered London trailer trams with automatic mechanical brakes are in short supply nowadays, but he'd quickly find two almost identical tramcars at Robertsbridge, which only need to have an underframe built for one, plus a few body repairs as well for the other. The RH&DR completely rebuilt its passenger coaches some years ago in its own works, and with their help a couple more trams wouldn't be a problem. With appropriate drive controls fitted, this could provide a 2-car+loco+2-car push-pull unit that would be an immensely popular revenue generator at Robertsbridge, and equally so at Bodiam (on light track between the castle and station) when it was no longer needed at Robertsbridge.

**Tony Adams via email**

### Milepost 2¾ Saved

**Mark Yonge** reports that milepost 2¾ near Junction Road on the line between Bodiam and Robertsbridge was nearly demolished during trackbed preparations. It's now safe in the CS museum. More in next issue. ●

## Appeal for information: Bob Calder, WD S&MR Operating Superintendent

**David Powell** writes: One of our ex-service members, Colonel David Ronald, is working on a new book on the Longmoor Military Railway. He has uncovered a Colonel Stephens-related query. It concerns the late Bob Calder. Major R C Calder RE was the WD operating superintendent for the Shropshire & Montgomeryshire Railway from 1946 until its closure. Before the war, he was a noted WO2 at Longmoor, hence David's interest in him. During his time with the S&M he was well-known in the railway enthusiasts' world, as he would always try to meet visitors to Kinnerley. Sadly he was injured and died as the result of an accident when the line was being de-commissioned.

If you knew Bob Calder or if you can lead David Ronald to someone who did, could you please contact him at  
Dorratur, 9 East Rosdhu Drive,  
Helensburgh GB4 7ST, telephone  
01436 679 569, or

**email dorrator@hotmail.com**

## TREAT YOURSELF FOR CHRISTMAS!

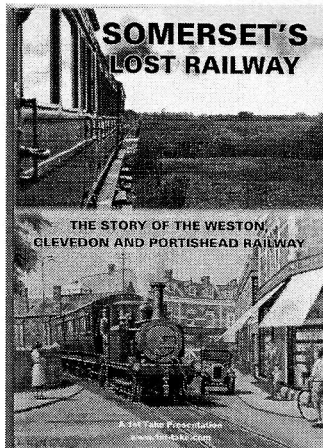
**FOR SALE: 0-4-0 live steam, 5" gauge, complete coal-fired loco based on the Rhymney Valley Railway No.1, similar to that used on the Sheppey Light Railway. Full set of castings and drawings for a 5" gauge "Lion" (Titfield Thunderbolt). Full set of drawings and 2 sets of main frames for 7¼" narrow gauge "Sweet William". All parts to complete the last two items are available from Blackgates Engineering.**

**For details and photos ring Colin Shutt on 01757 630193**

## REVIEW

### Somerset's Lost Railway: the Story of the Weston Clevedon and Portishead Railway. 1st Take DVD, 2009. 90 mins. £13.95.

This DVD is produced by 1st Take of Bristol in conjunction with the WC&P Railway Group and runs for 90 minutes. From the start, I should make it clear that it does not consist of 90 minutes of film of the WC&P; in fact, only about ninety seconds of such film exist.



What we have instead is a well-assembled collection of historical photographs, a small amount of black-and-white film, then-and-now pictures, and interviews with those who were

associated with the railway in its running days and with those who research its history. Some of these last will be familiar to those who travelled to the Society's AGM a couple of years ago and followed the route of the WC&P by bus.

The narration, spoken by Dave Rogers (no relation), and written by Paul Gregory, is clear and informative. The association of 'then' pictures with the current state of the landscape is very nicely done. I for one welcome this, having tried to puzzle this out since I was very young. This was at a time when closed railways were a rarity compared with operating ones – which, I suspect, gives away my age.

It is especially interesting about the bizarre financial and legal status of the railway. Alas, this made attempts to re-open a

length of the railway in the 1950's impossible without an Act of Parliament, which was out of the question at the time.

Just for once, the extra "The Making of the Film" is worth watching. In particular, Andrew Ulyott's EM scale model of Ashcombe Road station is an example for other modellers to aim at. The main chapter uses film of the KESR's Terriers to give an impression of the WC&P's locos in operation, and this section gives a plug for the KESR. Overall, I would highly recommend this DVD to old and new friends of this fascinating railway. It is available for £13.95 including postage from: 1st Take PO Box 1840, Yate, Bristol BS37 4WB 01454-321614 - <http://www.1st-take.com> or The WC&P Railway Group:- [www.wcandpr.org.uk/](http://www.wcandpr.org.uk/)

John M Rogers

## Exhibitions

Alan Bone writes: The Erith Model Railway Society had two excellent exhibitions recently. Attendance was up due in no small part to advertising, including coverage in *The Colonel*. The Bexley show attracted more than 700, up from 400 last year, while the Wilmington attendance was 1500, up from 1250. The club's main show will be held on 23rd and 24th January at Temple Hill CP School, Dartford, DA1 5ND. The local groups of the Stephens heritage railways are expected to attend.

Alan is always looking for model railways with a Colonel Stephens theme to attend the shows put on by the Erith MRS. If you have one and are willing to exhibit in the south east, he would be delighted to hear from you! He is at 32, Iris Crescent, Bexleyheath DA7 8QD.

He has also provided advanced notice of the Rother Valley Supporters' Association model railway exhibition to be held at Robertsbridge Village Hall, Station Rd., Robertsbridge on 8th/9th May. It's also a good opportunity to check out progress at the Robertsbridge end of the RVR. ●



# Jackson's Jottings

## COMMISSIONERS' ENQUIRIES

CHRIS JACKSON *continues his trawl through the Railway Gazette and finds reports on enquiries into applications for LROs.*

April 5 1912 –

### Recent Light Railway Inquiries

The Light Railway Commissioners have recently been holding a series of inquiries into applications for light railway orders. They have sanctioned the following among other schemes, which still require confirmation by the Board of Trade before they are definitely authorised.

(1.) On February 20, the **Haxby to Brandsby** scheme, 9 miles in length, commencing by a junction with the North-Eastern Railway (York and Scarborough main line) at Haxby and running due north to Brandsby. The estimated cost of construction is £33,491, and the earnings are estimated at £5,200 a year. The capital powers are £48,000. The **Easingwold Railway** unsuccessfully opposed the scheme on the ground of competition. It is proposed to construct stations at Sutton-on-Forest, Stillington and Brandsby, and halts at Suet Carr and Marton. The rails will weigh 58 lb., and in order to comply with the Board of Trade rule for dispensing with signalling arrangements there will be only one engine under steam, which will work a shuttle service of about three journeys each way per day. The railway is privately promoted.

(2.) On February 22, the **Richmond (Yorks) to Reeth, in Swaledale**, scheme, a distance of about 10 miles. The line starts from Richmond by a junction with the North-Eastern Railway, which has agreed to work the line subject to a satisfactory junction being arranged and to the formal consent of the Directors. The railway is privately promoted, and its cost of construction on the standard gauge is estimated at £40,307. The earnings are estimated at £4,200 a year, or £8 10s. per mile per week, and the working expenses are estimated at £3,000 per year. The Treasury is prepared to

make a grant in favour of the line if a sufficient portion of the capital be raised locally. There will be an intermediate station at Marske, and halts at Hudswell and Merrick. The worst gradient is 1 in 50 and the sharpest curve 10 chains. The Commissioners' sanction is subject to the financial arrangements being found satisfactory.

(3.) On March 1, the North Staffordshire Railway Company's scheme for light railways between **Trentham Park and Newcastle-under-Lyme**, a connection with an existing mineral line to Apedale, and two short loops connecting up to the mining districts of North-West Staffordshire, and putting them on a direct short route to Trentham. New stations are proposed at Hanford, Springfields, and at Brook Lane, Newcastle-under-Lyme, with halts at Trent Vale and opposite the Stoke workhouse. The cost of construction (double line) is estimated at £117,240, but it is proposed to expend £30,000 less than this amount in the first instance on a single line until it is seen whether a double line is necessary. The sanction of the Commissioners was unconditional. ●

### Notes for contributors

Contributions to *The Colonel* are very welcome. Please send them to the Editor (address on page 2). They may be in the form of a Word document, an email attachment, a floppy disc, a CD or a typescript. Steam age authors may, of course, send them as a manuscript - but please write legibly. Please ensure that photos, either in electronic form or traditional print, are reproducible. Authors are responsible for ensuring that their material is not subject to copyright restrictions ●