

# COLONEL 15

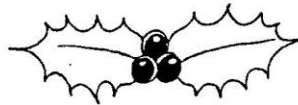


# • THE • COLONEL

NUMBER 15

XMAS 1988

Editorial.....	2
News.....	3
Letters.....	4
Fieldwork: <i>The Caaber Tram today</i> .....	5
I Was There: <i>David Carter on the K&amp;ESR</i> .....	8
Modelling: <i>Getting the Big Engine running</i> ....	10
Keen Talks 1: <i>Ashover renaissance?</i> .....	12
Keen Talks 2: <i>EKR peculiarities</i> .....	14



## THE COLONEL STEPHENS SOCIETY

THE SOCIETY FOR THE ENTHUSIAST OF THE LIGHT & NARROW GAUGE RAILWAYS OF BOLMAN F. STEPHENS



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## WHERE DO WE GO FROM HERE? Editorial

First of all, a merry Christmas to you all, and a special thank you to everyone who has contributed to the Colonel. Unfortunately, time and money tend to get in the way of personal expressions of gratitude, so I take this seasonal opportunity to rectify this omission. It is always a great pleasure to receive any correspondences, even if these do not get published. I hope you will all continue to be as generous with your supply of information and chat in the New Year as in the Old. There would be no Colonel without you.

Which leads me to one of the topics of the recent, historic first committee meeting, which was both fun and informative. What, asked chairman Les, should the Society be doing other than publishing the Colonel? The prospect of a photo library and central archives was discussed, but eventually dismissed.

Why? Because it was felt that this would tie up money and resources unnecessarily. The prevailing opinion was that if the Society kept a record of all known sources of information, including back references to magazines and periodicals; where to get photographs; and what books have been published and by whom, this would be sufficient.

To this end, I am now about to delve into my letters files and compile a list of all those odd little references that people have mentioned over the past couple of years. I shall add to that contacts for photos, and bibliographies with sources wherever possible. This is a more methodical extension of the "Source Notes" idea originally set up by our founder, Andrew Emery.

Seems like a lot of work, and I hope you will all support me in this Herculean task. But I am sure that if we stick at it, in time we could have an enviable catalogue of what information is available where. Let me know what you think - better still, let me know what you know.

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#####NEWS

#### COMMITTEE PLANS FOR THE FUTURE

The Society committee met for the first time at Keen House, the Model Railway Club HQ in London, on December 10. Membership is up 20% on last year to 121, though only half of these have renewed so far. Don't forget: send your subscription in NOW!

Items discussed include the possibility of an exhibition tie-up with one of the established London shows; and an exhibition and conference of our own, probably in Easter 1990.

Also, there will be the AGM in April next year, probably at Keen House again. Full details of this will be in the next Colonel, along with a more detailed account of the committee meeting to provide a basis for discussion.

#### "Arcadia" to bear fruit in March?

John Scott Morgan promises that "Railways of Arcadia", his long-awaited book on the Great Man's railways, is at the typesetters and should be published in March by Paul Waters.

Those familiar with this long-standing saga - the original launch date was to have been November 1986 - will know not to hold their breath. Still, hope springs eternal...

#### Modelling discount for members

Andy Brocklebank, proprietor of the recently opened Brock's Models shop in Leighton Buzzard, is offering a 10% discount on production of a valid membership card. Andy's stock items range from ready-to-run items, kits, accessories and tools to videos and kiddies railway toys. He accepts Access or Visa and the shop's address is 15 Wing Road, Linslade, Leighton Buzzard, Bedfordshire LU7 7NG. Telephone: 0525 851485.

#### Record services planned for K&ESR

Over 830 steam hauled trains, a 13% increase on last year, are scheduled to run on the preserved K&ESR during the 1989 season, beginning March 24. During peak periods, 10 trains a day will run from Tenterden every half hour. This intensive service is made possible by a new passing loop and signalling at Rolvenden.

This greater frequency will allow shorter trains to be run, so that the smaller historic locos such as Terriers and the P Class will be used more often. A two train service will be running on Sundays from May to September, passing at Rolvenden and terminating at Wittersham Road.

#### Chris Leigh calls for help

Chris Leigh, chief editor of Steam Days and ex-editor of the lamented Model Railway Constructor, is looking for information on the locos and coaches of the Bideford, Westward Ho! and Appledore railway. He wants to resolve the fate of the two Hunslet 2-4-2Ts allegedly sunk on passage to France in 1917; and to track down original Bristol RC&W drawings of the line's coaches.

Chris is also planning etched 4mm kits of the 2-4-2Ts, and wonders how many of you would be interested. You can contact him via the editor, at the address at the foot of the opposite page.

Letters#####

### More of the Colonel's men

"IN his Ashover article (*Colonel 14*), Ivor Gotheridge mentions Mr Gafford of the Snailbeach. He is believed to have come to that line from the Bishops Castle. It is open to question as to whether this was a promotion or 'out of the frying pan into the fire'.

"There was also a driver, T. Gafford, on the Weston Clevedon & Portishead, but this is not the same man, as he drove the last train in May 1940, whereas the other Gafford had been with the Snailbeach since the mid-1920s.

"Ivor also mentions driver Harold Skinner. He was of a family who also served two Stephens companies, it would seem. Edward Skinner was a permanent way man on the Selsey from the time of the cutting of the first sod.

"In 1924 the Colonel went in for "all line promotion" and got Edward Skinner to move to Ashover to look after the track. He had three sons, two of whom worked for both lines and the third for the Selsey only."

Jack Burrell, Bristol

### Wagon liveries

"I AM most grateful to you for your good offices in bringing forth the very helpful replies of messrs. M. Green and H. Smith on the wagons of the HM&ST and the PD&SWJR. It is to be hoped that in due course further information on wagon liveries will come to our notice, especially those used by the S&MR and, of course, the WC&PR.

"Meanwhile, members might be interested in the following references taken from *An Index to Model Railway Drawings* by S.A. Leleux (Oakwood Press 1972):

K&ESR brake van and open wagon, *Model Railway News*, page 136 of 1969.

PD&SWJR 6-wheel brake van, *Railway Modeller*, page 174 of 1952 and page 44 of 1960.

"Unfortunately, I do not at present have access to the periodicals mentioned. However, I do happen to have a copy of *The Railway Magazine* for February 1908 which contains an illustrated article on *The Reconstructed East Cornwall Railway*. This includes a half-tone reproduction of 'Contractor's locomotive with one of the new goods breaks (sic) for the PD&SWJR'.

"The brake van shown is very clearly a four-wheeler, rather short, with outside framed timber body lettered P.D&S.W. at approximately three quarters of the way up the side and, below it, N<sup>o</sup> 53, at about half body height. Still lower, at floor height, appears the weight in three groups of digits - to indicate tons, cwts and qtrs - which seems to read 10.13.1.

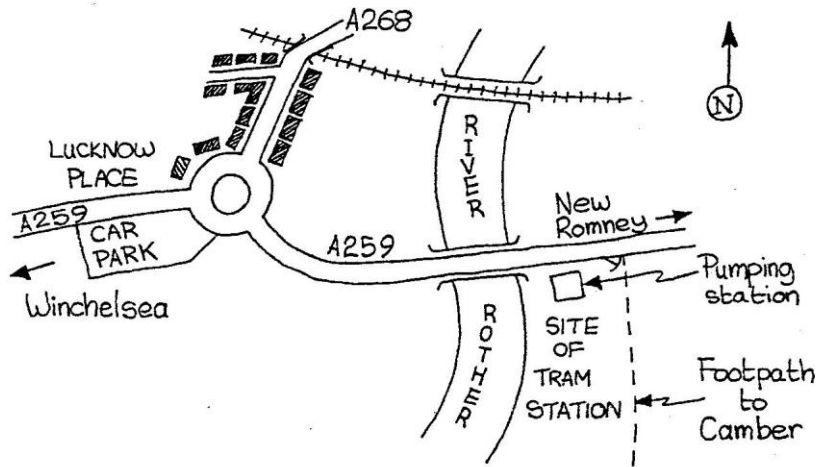
"The vehicle has a roofed over veranda at each end. The typescript says that the vans were fitted with hand brake and vacuum connections, and that there were just two of them, both four-wheeled. The six wheels in the drawing quoted by Leleux is presumably either a later acquisition or else the reference is in error."

Harold Livesey, London

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**WALKING THE TRAM TO CAMBER**

Stephen Hannington describes a present day visit to the Rye and Camber tram, and adds information for would-be modellers

BECAUSE of day-trippers, the Rye & Camber Tramways Company spent £650 extending the line across the golf course towards the beach of Camber Sands. It is still a popular spot today, and it is well worth combining a little Stephens archaeology with a bracing 2½ mile stroll from Rye to Camber. That is how I spent my August Bank Holiday, and I have drawn a map to show you where to start:



If you enter Rye on the A268 (having visited the K&ESR at Tenterden of course), you can park at the Lucknow Place car park, next to the roundabout where the A259 veers off towards New Romney and Folkestone. You then stroll 100 yards or so out along the A259, where you will cross the Monkbretton Bridge (named after a local councillor) across the Rother.

Just over the bridge, on the right, is a pumping station and a footpath signpost saying "Camber 2½ miles". Just beyond the pumping station, to the right of the footpath, is where Rye tramway station was. You have just entered by the station approach road and found a little flat, featureless sheep meadow. Or is it? If you stand in the middle of the meadow and look south towards Camber, you will see a pair of parallel lines running through the grass about five feet apart, like those crop marks, visible from the air, that reveal the foundations of ancient buildings beneath the surface. These lines delineate the course of the Tram: it may be dead, but its ghost can still be seen.

You can follow these mysterious crop marks quite easily, though they will disappear a few hundred yards on, where the

*Field Work*#####

surface of the next field seems to have been slightly raised recently. Never mind: nip across to the footpath, and you will come to the Broadwater Stream drainage channel. There, on your right, you will find the bridge that once carried the tram now hosting a pipeline.

A drawing of this bridge by D.J.Woodcock, who calls it by the much less glamorous name of the Northpoint sewer bridge, was published in issue 43 of *Narrow Lines*, the journal of the 7mm Narrow Gauge Association. Also in that issue are drawings of the petrol locomotive, the Rother Iron Works coach, and Golf Links station building.

Just beyond the bridge, the Amey Roadstone Corporation has dug an enormous shingle pit where once the Tram ran. Skirt this along the path to the right and down to the side of the Rother. If your eyesight is keen enough, you will just be able to make out Golf Links station building 3/4 mile away. The path skirts the pit and brings you out by Gorse Cottage, which was flying the skull and crossbones when I was there. The path has also kindly lead you right back onto the old Tram trackbed.

Here is the part that the Admiralty concreted when it had control of the line. The rails are still embedded in it. You can even see the sleeper positions where they have rotted and the concrete above has collapsed into sleeper-shaped depressions. In places, the old concrete has been dug out and replaced to remedy this. Down the sides of the shallow embankment are the rotting shards of the old sleepers, dug out over forty years after they were entombed, and still carrying the spikes that secured the rails.

The rails are exposed at the start of the concreted section, and you can see how really flimsy they were: about three inches deep. Sleepers were about 6" x 2" in section and placed every two feet or so. Larger point timbering was used: about 10" x 5", and interlaced.

The prize of the trip is Golf Links station, still standing near the jetties where once the Rye fishing fleet moored up, and now occupied by pleasure craft. The station has had extensions built onto its side and back, and its canopied area has been enclosed. Its platform is intact, minus its brick coping, and its run-round loop is still in place, though the points have been taken up. Just beyond is a gate across the end of the concreted section, where some point timbering can be seen.

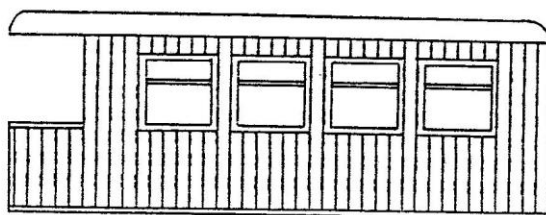
Fast here, there is a little sign that says you may walk across the golf links, and you head off left, away from the river via a stile onto the embankment which curves across the greens. Here, too, you can see the parallel "crop marks" that mark, I assume, the old drainage channels of the tramway. Nothing seems to want to grow on them much, though elsewhere the undergrowth is quite substantial and prickly.

Ultimately, I'm afraid, the trail runs cold. Camber Sands station was never much more than a timber platform and a little wooden hut, and these have disappeared completely. Just beyond where the station should have been is a path running across the end of the links: right takes you across the dunes to the beach;

#####Field Work

and left takes you to the end of a car-park just outside the little collection of houses, shops and cafes that is Camber.

Let me add this as a footnote. All that survives of the Tram's rolling stock is the body frame, underframe and roof of the Bagnall coach at the Chalk Pits museum in Sussex. I have not seen this, but, on my way to Rye I spotted something that looked so very much like a Tram coach that I have sketched it here. It was serving as a sort of holiday cottage on the Pett levels, near Pett Pools, behind Winchelsea Beach south of Rye. One day I will find out what it was...



The mystery coach body at Pett Levels, just south of Rye, now used as a holiday "chalet". Anyone know its history?

MODELLING

There is no shortage of information for would-be modellers of the Camber Tram. The Woodcock drawings mentioned earlier are good quality and to a scale of 1:43. This is a good choice of scale for the tiny Tram: even in this size, the petrol loco scales out at a mere 65 x 35 x 45mm, and the Bagnall coach is 155mm over the buffers. I procured photocopies of these drawings from the Association's sales officer Eric Gresty in return for a first class stamp. He might do the same for you if you ring him on 0924 370784.

Drawings of Camber, the smaller of the Tram's two Bagnall 2-4-0Ts, both coaches and the sand wagons, later converted to open coaches, are available from Brian Clarke. He trades as Saltford Models, purveyor of tiny industrial loco kits, from 11 Penn Gardens, Bath, Avon BA1 3RZ.

These are to 4mm scale, and are crude but adequate. The difference in scale between these and Woodcock's is striking: Camber is a mere 40mm long over the headstocks in 4mm scale!

Finally, Hugh Smith says that a drawing of Victoria, the larger Bagnall appeared in issue 84 of The Narrow Gauge, but you'll have to chase him up to find out more details. My thanks to Hugh for his help in compiling the above information.

Track plans of the stations (not to scale) are given in Peter Harding's booklet, as are a good selection of photographs. You can contact him at Mossiel, Bagshot Road, Knaphill, Woking, Surrey GU21 2SG#

*I Was There#####*

**AN ANCIENT GIFT FROM THE K&ESR**

David Carter remembers a couple of journeys on his favourite light railway shortly after Nationalisation

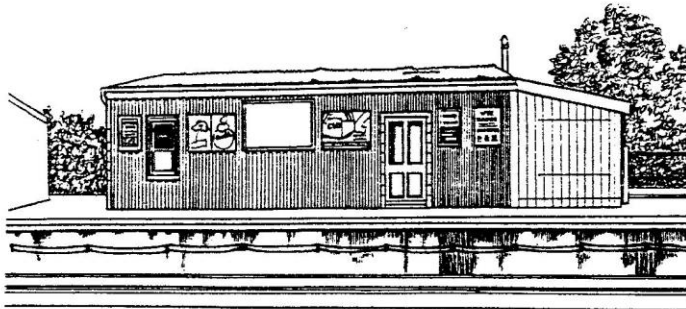
BEFORE its closure to passengers in 1954, I was fortunate enough to visit the Kent & East Sussex Railway on two occasions. The first was in the summer of 1949, when we travelled from London Victoria to Headcorn by Maidstone & District coach on a fine hot day in July. Unfortunately, the timing of the return journey would not allow a trip on the K&ESR, but I was able to spend a very pleasant time at Headcorn station. I saw several main line expresses for the coast pound through, usually hauled by Bulleid pacifics.

I photographed the platform buildings, signal box and goods shed and made sketches and notes about track layouts. There were a lot of wheelsets occupying a siding at the eastern end of the K&ESR platform, possibly the result of the scrapping of various vehicles at that time.

The second visit to the K&ESR was during the family holiday at Hastings in 1950. My father and I made the complete return journey from Robertsbridge to Headcorn. The train consisted of one ex-SR coach, number S3093: a brake third corridor with the brake end towards Headcorn.

From Robertsbridge to Rolvenden, the train was in the charge of a now forgotten tank engine. From Rolvenden to Headcorn and return, we were hauled by a Class 01 0-6-0 tender engine number 31048, which ran tender first to Headcorn. I made the most of the interval at Rolvenden, whilst locos were changed, to photograph

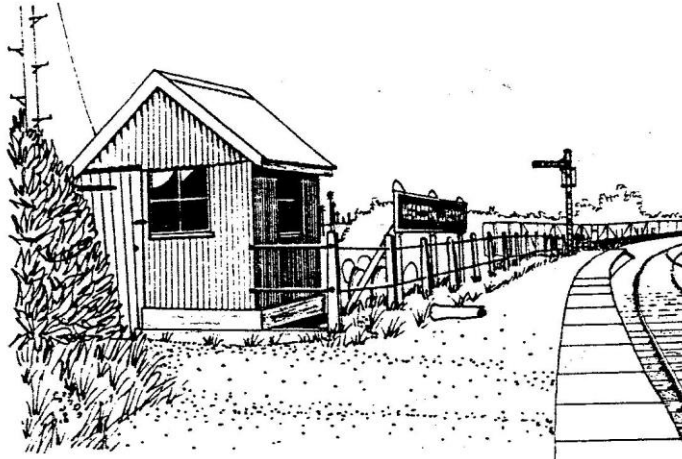
A rare back view of the Kent & East Sussex waiting room at Headcorn Junction. This was remarkably well travelled for a building! Lawson Finch has a picture of it standing at Northiam station during the building of the Rother Valley Railway; and it also did a temporary turn as Tenterden station building before finally coming to rest at Headcorn.





##### I Was There

What passed for a signal box on the K&ESR: a similar "signal hut" stood at Tenterden and has since been moved down to Rolvenden by the Tenterden Railway Company. Les Darbyshire has done a scale drawing of it, of course.



various buildings and some of the vehicles standing on grass covered sidings.

I particularly remember the train travelling through a green tunnel formed by trackside trees, probably between the River Rother and Northiam station. At times, the trackside bushes brushed against the coach, highlighting the hazard of leaning out of the coach window.

The busiest part of this branch line appeared to be the engine crew. My father and I seemed to be the only passengers most of the time. In the goods yard at Tenterden, behind the main platform, there was a grounded van body with the faded paint inscription S.E.C.R. still just discernable on the side, and there were some magnificent trees on the platform.

At Rolvenden, on the return journey, we had a conversation with the station's general factotum, mainly about the railway as it was in previous years. His parting gesture was to give me a faded blue envelope. It was a packet of six K&ESR publicity postcards. The envelope had company information printed on it, and each postcard had its individual tissue paper cover. The cards depicted places of interest in the vicinity of the K&ESR.

I still treasure this fine memento of an interesting day's travel on my favourite light railway#

*The postcard packet which David was given that day in Rolvenden was reproduced on page 17 of Colonel 11*

Modelling#####

## GETTING THE BIG ENGINE RUNNING

Stephen Hannington looks at matters beneath the footplate on his 4mm scale model of the K&ESR's ex-LSWR Saddleback number 4

FOR the Big Engine's rebuilt chassis, I decided to have another bash at using finescale wheels. Previously, I had tried Alan Gibson's products, but had problems - stop me if you've heard this before - with quartering. In frustration, I gave up, and reverted to the simpler to use Romfords.

But this time, I was forearmed with wrinkles revealed in the Model Railway Journal. It's all there in detail, so I won't repeat it here. Suffice to say that you use two-part coupling rods and work on two axles at a time.

Some thoughts on wheel standards in 4mm scale: with the small wheel diameters typical of light railway prototypes, the need for finer scale outlines is even more obvious than in mainline locos. This philosophy extends to spidery track - and ultimately perhaps to deliberately bumpy track and compensation or springing. It seems to me that F4 type standards are especially relevant to our type of modelling.

But apart from wheels, what was wrong with the old chassis? Firstly, pickups: these were simple phosphor bronze strip wipers which were very prominently mounted (but they did work). Secondly, I wanted to fit a flywheel to the motor, after encouraging results with a similarly equipped Terrier. Smooth, slow running is essential on a model of a snail's-pace light railway. Thirdly, I wanted to mount the motor clear of number 4's open-sided cab; and finally, full brake rigging was to be added.

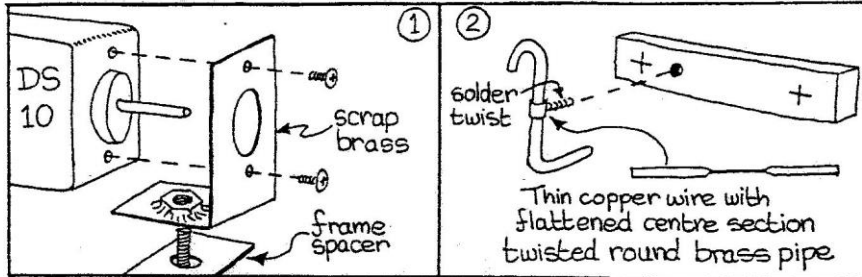
For pickups, I chose Alan Gibson's plungers, except where the motor was in the way, since they are invisible on the finished product. Plungers, I had previously discovered, need very flexible leads, otherwise the lead adds excess stiffness which impedes operation. After much fruitless searching, I ripped the cartridge leads from the pickup arm of an old record deck. These have all the stiffness of wet string, which is perfect.

Nonetheless, these plungers can stick sometimes if you don't clean out the insulating bushes with a suitable drill bit. The backscratching pickups dictated by the intrusion of the gearbox require pcb strips to be glued to the top rear of the frames, which is best done before assembly of the frames.

In fact, a considerable amount of time was spent figuring out where all the bits and pieces would go: for example, the motor mount, frame spacers, plunger holes, pcb busbars and so on. Plungers, busbars, wipers and wiring were all installed on the frames before assembly. Next time, I am going to go back to good old backscratchers on a demountable assembly so that this aspect can be tackled completely separately to chassis squareness and free running.

The drive cheme is a DS10 with flywheel driving through Mike Sharman's 40:1 gearbox on the rear axle, which means that only a small portion of the gearbox is visible in the cab. However, it meant that the motor ran the risk of exposure under the boiler - hence the split body construction detailed in the last issue.

##### Modelling



The frames were assembled, with the driven axle and gearbox in position, using Kemp 12mm, screw fixing frame spacers. This gives a fair amount of sideplay on the wheels in my chosen EM gauge, but the pickups control this reasonably well. Romford wheel were fitted temporarily to sit the assembly level on plate glass, and afterwards Sharman wheels were fitted and quartered.

After a final check for levelness, a piece of nickel silver was soldered across the frames through which the motor was fixed. The arrangement is shown in diagram 1. After a test directly wired to a spare controller to make sure the quartering really was right, the motor was wired up and tested on the track. Bingo: it ran first time!

Handy hint: to file the Sharman coupling rod washers down to the correct depth (which is not very much at all), use the coupling rods themselves to hold the washers onto a flat surface whilst filing. That way they are held firm, and you can see exactly when they are the right depth: with just a little proud of the rod boss.

Now the brake gear. All the components are supplied in the kit, etched from nickel silver. The only modification was to the brake shoe hangers. The etched shoes are totally unconvincing and, being metal, run the risk of short circuits. So they were snipped off and replaced with shoes made out of plastic. These were added after the metal parts had been soldered up, for obvious reasons.

Finally, the buffer beams were added across the ends of the frames, glued to small angle plates soldered to the frames. The beams were two layers of 40thou plastic - on the prototype they were of wood, looking the worse for wear, which can be replicated in the plastic. The kit solution of folding them up from an etching was a non-starter as far as I was concerned. Washer plates were made out of paper, and boltheads were tiny cubes of 10thou plastic.

The buffers were modified by drilling small holes in the centre of the heads. This sounds tedious, but sellotape over the heads prevented the drill bit from slipping while the heads were held in a miniature vice. Square base plates were made from 10thou plastic for the shanks, again with plastic chip boltheads in each corner. Vacuum pipes were added as in diagram 2, and screw couplings were added.

That completes the bodywork: painting and finishing details will be in the next issue#

*The Keen Talks 1#####*

**CAN THE ASHOVER LIGHT LIVE AGAIN?**

In the final part of his dissertation on the Ashover Light Railway, Ivor Gotheridge considers the case for resurrection

AFTER the last passenger train ran in 1948, the Clay Cross company wrote to the Railway Executive asking to wind up the Ashover Light Railway. There were three points made: first, the railway and the quarry were completely worn out and the company could not continue to supply stone. Secondly, it had been supplying the stone at a loss for two years to the railway executive. Thirdly, could Clay Cross be excused from the future contract which it had already signed? The Railway Executive agreed and in March 1950, the line closed.

This my favourite narrow gauge line and I am interested in the possibility of re-opening it. The ground has rather been taken from under our feet because the Midland Railway Trust at Butterley are now laying a two foot gauge, steam worked line, only a matter of about 5 miles from Ashover.

From Clay Cross on the Ashover line up to Chesterfield Road is a very steep uphill gradient, and there is no hope of running passengers trains up there. And the land there is being used for the Clay Cross company car parks. From Holmgate to Clay Lane the land is a public park and recreation ground and the local councillors are interested in running a miniature railway through the park: that is a possibility.

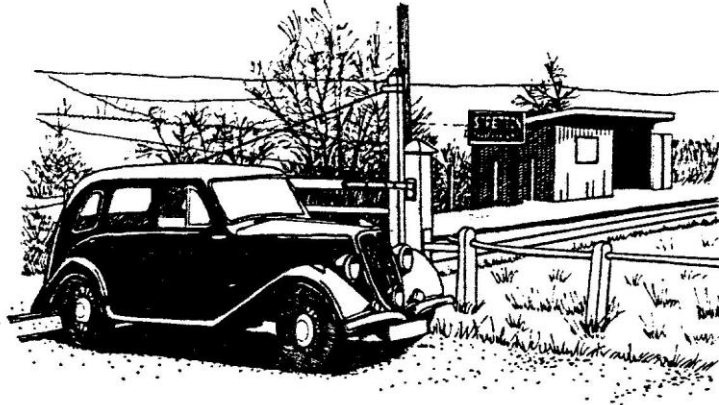
From Clay Lane to Stretton the land has been fragmented, sold to lots of different people and they certainly will not all agree on having a railway. From Stretton to Ford the land has been sold to the owner of Oxford Hall and he leases it to the farmers. He approached them on my behalf and their attitude is they certainly don't want their land being cut up by any railway.

From Ford to Milltown, the route of the line is under a reservoir. There's been a dam put across the valley and the Oxten reservoir occupies the site. So right through Woolly and Hurst Lane the Ashover line is under water. The Clay Cross company still owns Fallgate yard and Fallgate Station is still standing. I have asked the Clay Cross company several times: could we open a narrow gauge railway through if we fence it off from the quarry working there? The answer is always no.

The Butts Field at Ashover has been bought by a Mr Sandhand. He has put public conveniences there, three phase electricity, water and sewage. But planning permission for everything for that field has been refused. So it is a white elephant. Apparently Mr Sandhand can use the field on about 10 occasions per year for any purpose he likes. There are motor cycle scrambles, clay pigeon shooting, a bonfire on November 5th and car boot sales.

I have been in touch several times with the planning department about the possibility of running a miniature railway again through the Butts Field at Ashover. There are two objections: desecration of the neighbourhoods and approach by motor vehicles. Considering the railway ran for 25 years and nobody objected, it would not be much of a desecration of the neighbourhood. It is right down in the valley behind trees and on

#####The Keen Talks 1



Stretton station: the line here has been split up and sold

Bank Holidays and Sunday afternoons there is a small diesel engine and a couple of coaches running up and down.

The planning department agrees that is not the primary objection. They will not have any extra traffic coming into Ashover village. It has got to come the other way from the main Matlock to Chesterfield road, and car parks must be provided.

How about getting some engines and rails? You are probably aware that two Baldwin engines have been brought back from India. One is at Dutson RAF museum and one is at Amberly. It has cost £10,000 to bring each one and it has cost another £10,000 to put them into working order.

In the Orpington - Knockholt area is Hewitts Farm, a very large pick-your-own farm. They have bought a rather large two foot gauge miniature railway, an engine that used to work on Walton-on-the-Naze pier and two coaches. They laid it out in summer 1987 without planning consent.

And now you can guess what has happened: Bromley council refusing planning consent and it looks as though they are going to give an order to remove it all. The owner of the farm has taken it on appeal to a higher authority. If that appeal is refused then the train and the track will have to be removed. As it stands they overordered the track: they have three quarters of a mile of track stacked and not used, two points and a turntable.

They are looking for the best offer approaching £5,000 for the surplus. But if the planning permission is refused then all this lot will be up for sale. It may well be that Butterley want to buy it, but if not there is just a chance of being able to buy it and run it at Ashover.

Most people in the village agree it would be a beautiful site for a miniature railway. Some of them have not got very much to see when you go along on a train, and you might as well read a newspaper. But the Amber valley is a beautiful sight, and most people agree that it would be rather nice#

*The Keen Talks 2#####*

PECULIAR THINGS ON THE EAST KENT

Stephen Garrett traces the trials and tribulations of trying to bring the East Kent Light Railways into being

THE early years in the minutes books of the East Kent Light Railways Company were years of wheeling and dealing - where is the money going to come from? The chairman of the company to begin with, Arthur Burr, didn't attend a meeting for the first year. By 1912, there are indications that things weren't quite as they ought to be in a reputedly run organisation.

The first indication of that is when Malcolm Miller, Arthur Miller's son, requested that the EKLR should pay half the cost of a motor car that had been bought by the Deal & Walmer Coalfield Company. The directors began to get a bit worried; unlike most of the other companies involved in the Kent coalfield, the directors of the EKLR were mainly people who did not sit on the boards of all these other companies. Why that should be, I don't know, but that seemed to distinguish the Light Railways company from all the others.

It soon became apparent that things were going very wrong. The essential problem was that the East Kent Contract & Finance Company (EKC&F), which was very much a creature of the Kent Coalfield Concessions company, had the contract to build the East Kent Light Railways. Not only that, but they also had the power to build any lines that the EKLR might get Light Railway Orders to build.

The EKLR were obliged to issue shares or debentures to the EKC&F for any work which was done. Although there was a time limit during which the EKC&F had to build the lines, this could be postponed for umpteen different reasons.

It became apparent fairly quickly that things were not going very speedily with the building of the EKLR. They got the first line down, a temporary contractor's line, between Shepherdswell and Tilmanstone colliery, and a line running off that down to Guilford colliery. These could not carry large volumes of traffic and were really only intended for continuing building of the line.

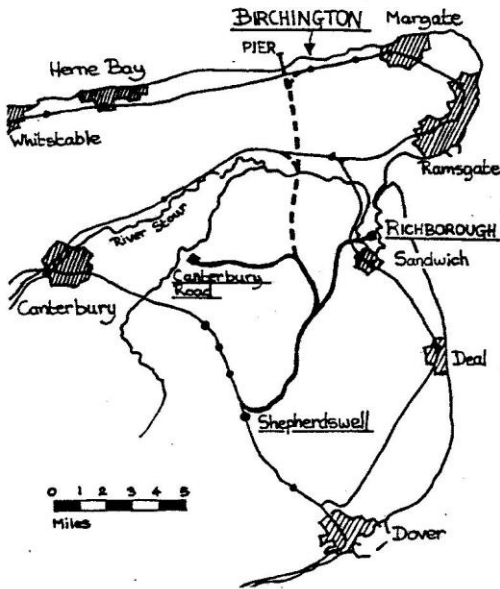
TERRIBLE MESS

The engineer in charge was Holman Stephens, but he was also employed by the EKC&F, so he was in the awkward situation of having to certify to one company that the work he'd done for the other was satisfactory. He also had to arrange the transfer of money from one company to the other.

Things were getting in a terrible mess. For example, the EKC&F was meant to pay parliamentary deposits, but in fact the EKLR found that out of their own pockets. Land was meant to be purchased by the EKC&F, but because they didn't have the ready, the EKLR paid for that too.

It soon became very complicated as to who exactly owned what. In 1913, for example, Snowdown colliery ordered 50 wagons on hire purchase from Wagon Finance, but weren't able to take up the contract. So the EKC&F took it over from them, but being unable to meet the payments, borrowed the money from the EKLR.

#####The Keen Talks 2



What the EKR might have looked like if a certain Mr Phillips had had his way: the broken line indicates his proposal of a link to a pier at Birchington, with connections to both SE&CR North Kent main lines. Having suggested this, he then promptly disappeared again...

All would have gone well if the Tilmanstone and Guilford collieries had gone ahead to produce coal in suitable quantities to make all parties rich; or if the railway had been built to a suitable standard to allow the EKLK to take it over and run trains on it. But the contract said that until the railway was completed, the EKC&F could run trains, but the EKLK couldn't.

So the EKLK was in the position of seeing its engines, carriages and wagons being used by the EKC&F to earn revenue for the latter which didn't seem to be finding its way to the railway company's pockets. And the EKLK soon found its pockets were beginning to get empty: four, five, six years had gone by and still no railway.

By 1915, things had got to such a pass, with the First World War shortage of labour and all the rest of it, that Stephens - who by now seems to have fixed his loyalties much more to the light railway than to the EKC&F - reported that:

"The men taken on for the maintenance of the railway have all been employed for the removal of timber between Snowdown and Wingham collieries."

Presumably the EKC&F was making money out of selling timber from land under which it had the mineral rights, and had pulled all the men from the railway for this task.

In the meantime, the EKLK was having to pay rent and money for lands that they had purchased. In particular, it was paying quite high charges for the use of wharves at Richborough which the railway didn't even reach at that stage. Furthermore, it was



*The Keen Talks 2#####*

in imminent danger of having the wharves requisitioned from under its nose by the War Department. It thus faced the possibility of paying rent for something it couldn't run trains to, and even if it could, the WD wouldn't let them in.

It was all getting very peculiar, and in 1915 the EKLR realised that Arthur Burr had not been seen for a year, so they terminated his appointment, and also that of Malcolm Burr, who appeared to be doing business with the railway from Petrograd.

But these people were still very much the moving force behind all the other companies which were using EKLR money, equipment or employees. The railway company had brought a man called Harrison all the way from South Africa to supervise the construction of certain parts of the line, and the EKC&F had sacked him.

Harrison was not unnaturally besieging the light railway directors as to what exactly he was supposed to do there. At this stage, the railway directors had no money and could not look after him, so they were referring all his requests for assistance to the EKC&F.

**SAVIOUR COMES & GOES**

In December 1915, a possible saviour came on the scene. This was a Mr Phillips, who had a superb scheme for taking the railway not to Richborough but instead up to Birchington on the north Kent coast, near Herne Bay. It would cross the SER and LC&DR lines, linking up to both of these, and go on to a pier to be developed out onto the Thames estuary from which the coal could be carried. He failed to attend meetings after three months, so either he lost interest, or he didn't have the money or whatever. He was just the first of a whole succession of potential suitors.

In 1916, the EKLR was unhappy to find that the EKC&F had sold sleepers that the railway had paid for to build the line, and therefore it was unable to carry on with any work. This was with people that Stephens was now supervising independently, trying to get the line into some sort of shape. The EKC&F had said that it couldn't see its way to doing anything before the war ended.

In June 1916, the railway company actually took over the line, on the grounds that the EKC&F probably wouldn't be able to stop them from doing so. Also, the WD was pressing the EKLR to get the line completed so that they could run trains through to the new ferry port at Richborough, which it was running.

The line was inspected by Colonel Pringle in September 1916. He had some comments to make about its rough and ready appearance, but was prepared to sanction its opening. It actually opened on 16 October 1916.

That was not the end of the matter by any means: what was open was essentially the line from Shepherdswell to Tilmanstone with a bit beyond that. Accounts vary as to how far that bit went. They still had a lot more railway to build, and the EKLR didn't know where they were going to get the money from to do that#

*More of this sorry saga in the next issue*