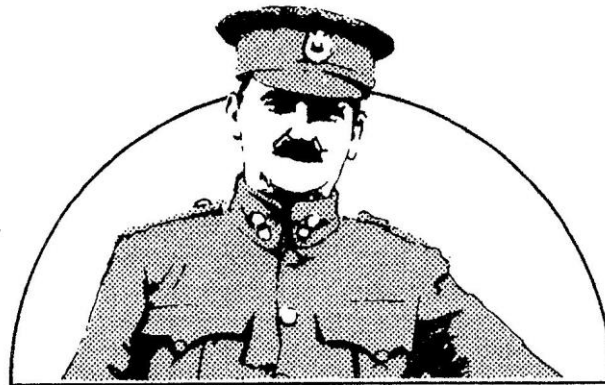


COLONEL 24



• THE COLONEL •

NUMBER 24 SPRING 1991

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THE COLONEL STEPHENS SOCIETY

**THE SOCIETY FOR THE ENTHUSIAST
OF THE LIGHT AND NARROW GAUGE RAILWAYS
OF HOLMAN F.STEPHENS**



THE COLONEL STEPHENS SOCIETY

THE SOCIETY FOR THE ENTHUSIAST OF THE RAILWAYS OF HOLMAN F. STEPHENS

EDITORIAL

A.G.M. Time Again!

As you will see from the Notice in the adjacent column, once again it is time for the Society's Annual General Meeting. As before, it is being held at Keen House, Headquarters of The Model Railway Club, which is a short walk up Pentonville Road from Kings Cross Station.

This year all the Society's Officers are due for re-election, including the once-every-three-years Chairman, so we will be needing some volunteers. Yes, that's right, You, You and You!

This is my fourth "Colonel", and therefore it marks the end of a year's issues. As Stephen Hannington found out, it is surprisingly hard work keeping the Journal running to time and full of good articles, but it is also a very interesting and rewarding task. I certainly have enjoyed my year at the helm, and I hope you have enjoyed the end product. I am willing to continue if you wish me to.

LD

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COLONEL STEPHENS SOCIETY

Notice is hereby given that the 4th Annual General Meeting of the Society will take place at 3 p.m. on Saturday 27th April 1991, at Keen House, Calshot Street, London N1.

AGENDA

1. Apologies for absence
2. Chairman's Report
3. Treasurer's Report
4. Membership Secretary's Report
5. Election of Officers
 - (a) Chairman
 - (b) Treasurer
 - (c) Membership Secretary
 - (d) Publicity Officer
 - (e) Committeeman without portfolio
6. Subscription for 1991/1992
7. Membership for other Societies
8. Any other business

Leslie Darbyshire, Chairman

NEWS AND VIEWS

Good News from Snailbeach

Derek Smith has written in with some good news concerning one of the Colonel's lesser-known lines, the Snailbeach District Railways.

Work will start this month on the first stage of reclaiming former mine workings and contaminated spoil heaps at Snailbeach. Shropshire County Council has purchased 29.5 acres in the village, with financial help from English Heritage. It includes most of the derelict land and buildings left over from centuries of lead and zinc mining. The last active mining took place in the 1940s, and with growing concern about contamination and public safety, a scheme to

improve the area was drawn up by consultants.

Derek has been active over the years in trying to save some part of the old line, so he was delighted to be informed by the land reclamation department that "A start will be made in March on the repairs of the Loco. Shed, to bring it to a condition as near as possible to when it was last in use. After repairs this building will serve as a base for land reclamation or other works."

Members will be pleased to know that one of the last relics at Snailbeach is to be preserved.

Progress at Shepherdswell

Good progress is being made on the East Kent Railway. The track itself has been purchased from BR and a price has been agreed for the purchase of the freehold of the line. The problem is of course to find the money!

Planning permission has been obtained for a timber building adjacent to the E.K.R. platform at Shepherdswell, and the platform itself is to be rebuilt. Three locomotives were on the line by the end of 1990, two diesel - a Fowler and an English Electric - and one steam, "Minnie", a Fox Walker 0-6-0 of 1874.

Mr R.J.E. Bayliff informs me that on 6th/7th

February, a 16-ton steel open wagon (B.R. Diagram 112) was moved by road from Bodiam, K.E.S.R. to Shepherdswell, E.K.R. where it became the first item of rolling stock on the latter's preserved line. One of a large batch built for the S.N.C.F., it returned to Britain to augment B.R.'s 16-ton steel mineral wagon building programme against the wholesale scrapping of the 13-ton wooden mineral wagons. Although its S.N.C.F. and B.R. numbers are unknown and no traces are present, its identity was 124 on the K. & E.S.R. stock list and it bears its "as bought" livery as NCB S4 of Snowdown Colliery, the next station up the main line from its new domicile.

STOP PRESS! K.E.S.R. VINTAGE SPECIAL

Now that the K.E.S.R.'s three vintage 4- and 6-wheel coaches are restored, I have been able to go ahead with the arrangements for the promised "Society Special".

The date for your diary is Sunday July 14th, so make a note of it now. Full details are given on the enclosed booking form.

I will give Society Members and friends

priority for bookings made up to the end of April; after that I will open the list to other groups if there are spare seats left.

The good folk at Tenterden are really putting themselves out to make it a day to remember, so give them and the Society your full support and send off your booking **NOW** to ensure a seat on what promises to be a most enjoyable trip!

BOOK REVIEWS

THE CRIGGION BRANCH by Roger Carpenter. Published by Wild Swan. 49 pages, card covers. Price £5.50. ISBN 0 906867 91 6.

This Wild Swan publication follows their by now standard format, i.e. an outline history, the route described and stock description followed by chapters of general interest.

Although the book only contains 49 pages, each one is full of interesting facts in the form of words and photographs. The outline history does not produce any startling new facts as it resembles E.S.Tonks' book on the line. however, the photographs represent a different picture (excuse the pun - Ed.). This is because a large number of them are from the collection of the late R.K.Cope, most of which I have not seen before.

This book comes well recommended to all Colonel Stephens fans and is well worth the cover price.

IFH

THE WESTON, CLEVEDON AND PORTISHEAD LIGHT RAILWAY by Colin G.Maggs. Published by The Oakwood Press. 160 pages, hardback. Price £12.90. ISBN 0 85361 388 5.

This book is described as an enlarged edition of the one first published in 1964, but that is really an understatement. To all intents and purposes it is a new, and much superior, book.

In eighteen chapters and nine appendices, Colin Maggs covers all aspects of the line with great thoroughness. Starting with the early abortive plans for lines linking the towns concerned, he describes the many trials and tribulations that befell the promoters of the eventually constructed line, and its complex financial history leading to an early receivership. There are excellent detailed descriptions of the line itself, and of the locomotives and stock which ran on it, complemented by a good selection of

Jack Burrell adds:

It is doubtful if the book would have been possible without the efforts of those two fine light railway enthusiasts of the 1930s, R.K.Cope and H.F.Wheeller. The latter took advantage of the specials run on August Bank Holiday Monday 1935 when the line would seem to have come to passenger life again, and thoroughly photographed Kinnerley and the branch.

The six page outline history is spoiled by the statement that in 1909 a small committee visited the East Kent and the Kent and East Sussex, both under construction. Members will know that work on the former did not start until 1911 and the latter was already open. Other factual errors are that the photograph purporting to be "Morous" is in fact of the Manning Wardle loco. used by the contractors, and there was only one Wolseley-Siddeley railcar.

photographs many of which were new to your reviewer. The line's operation is covered, with examples of timetables and of tickets to add interest, while the rather numerous accidents on the line are described in some detail, followed by some amusing anecdotes to dispel the gloom!

This book complements Peter Strange's "W.C.&.P.R.- A Pictorial Record" (reviewed in "Colonel" No.20) and despite a few minor errors contains such a wealth of information that that it should be on the shelves of all true Stephens enthusiasts.

LD

WELSH HIGHLAND RAILWAY ROLLING STOCK DRAWINGS
by Keith Millard & Peter Booth. Published by the 7mm Narrow Gauge Association. 38 single-sided A4 pages in soft covers with spring binding. Price £5.95.

This book, which is No.5 of a series entitled "Narrow Lines Extra", contains 7 pages of text and 31 pages of drawings. Despite the title, the drawings (all at 7mm to 1ft scale) cover locomotives as well as rolling stock, and include subjects from the original W.H.R., its predecessor the North Wales Narrow Gauge Railway and the present preserved line.

So comprehensive is the coverage that your reviewer could not think of anything which ever ran on the W.H.R. (except for Festiniog stock) which is not covered! Even the locos at Cilgwyn Quarry on the Bryngwyn branch ("Jubilee 1897" and "Lilla") which later went to the Penrhyn Quarry are there. So is a Dick Kerr Petrol-Electric of WW1 vintage that

was tested on the line, and the De Winton vertical boilered effort that worked at Moel-y-Gest Quarry.

The text gives a brief (but adequate) description of the subject of each drawing, information on liveries, and a bibliography.

All in all, it is a most useful book and excellent value for money. Where else can you get drawings for under 20p each?

A final query - if this is "Narrow Lines Extra" No.5, what other good things are hiding in Nos.1 to 4?

LD

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I WAS THERE

Derek Smith describes his early visits to one of the Colonel's more peculiar stations, Shrewsbury West

One of the strangest stations in the Colonel Stephens empire was the grand-sounding Shrewsbury West on the Shropshire & Montgomeryshire Railway.

It was situated under a bridge that carried the main Hereford road out of Shrewsbury, at the top end of Belle View and about one mile from the Abbey Station. It was at this point that the S.& M. started its long run at the side of the L.M.S./G.W.R. line, to move away at Hookgate some three miles further on. Indeed the two bridges at Shrewsbury West were fused together although of different type of construction, the G.W.R. bridge being a single arch span of brick and sandstone blocks while the S.& M. had brick side walls, cast iron cross girders and brick arches between the girders. The platform was of earth and ash with timber edging, and was quite low - it was always difficult to join or leave the train.

My first trip on the S.& M. was made in the late 1920s, when after obtaining our tickets my mother and I boarded the Ford railbus standing at the platform in Abbey Station with its engine running and driver Sid Nevett "at the wheel". (Someone told me that he used the wheel to steer the train, and I believed him). After a slow start up the bank from the Abbey, we picked up speed, and some time later came to a halt at Shrewsbury West. It was out on to the platform, show the tickets to Sid Nevett and take the pathway and four steps up on to the

main road. The station was well used, and many folk would leave and join the trains and railbuses there.

Tales do abound of "goings on" while travelling on the line; my memory is of everyone being kind and helpful. One experience I remember was when an old farmer got in the railbus at Abbey. It was obvious he had been drinking as in a loud voice he said "I want to get off at Ford". When we arrived at Shrewsbury West he jumped up, opened the door and fell out on to the platform. Other passengers helped him to his feet, and he then produced a large bottle from an inside pocket that had somehow managed to survive the fall, and insisted that everyone had a drink with him. My mother said she was glad we had left the train, so saving us the ordeal of partaking a drink from the bottle!

Some 300 yards further up the line from Shrewsbury West was the exchange siding with the Welshpool line so by getting off the train at the West station the shunting delay at the sidings was avoided. By travelling on the railcar rather than a steam train this also was missed.

Everything at Shrewsbury West was obliterated some twenty years ago when the bridge was removed and filled in with an embankment, but I still recall happy times there in years gone by.

CHRISTMAS FARE POSTSCRIPT

In the article in the last issue on goods carried by the K.& E.S.R., I asked what were Shintex and Euxesis, which were both mentioned several times in the records. A copy of an advertisement from The Tenterden Terrier in 1984, sent in by R.J.E.Bayliff, explains all.

Euxesis is a brushless shaving cream, and Skintex (not Shintex as I read the rather poor handwriting) is a medicinal cream for the hands and feet. Both are manufactured by Aimee Lloyd & Co. Ltd., of Tenterden, and were despatched all over the country by rail.

ROLLING STOCK OF THE H.M.S.T.

Ron Mann continues his series with the passenger stock

Fortunately the passenger stock of the H.M.S.T. is better documented and has fewer grey areas than the goods stock dealt with in the last issue.

The line opened in August 1897 with three coaches built by the Falcon Engine Co. of Loughborough for the Tramway. (A rare extravagance for the Colonel who seemed to usually purchase other companies' old stock!).

These three were bogie coaches 37 ft. long over buffers and each one seated 48 passengers. Nos.1 and 2 had balconies at both ends while No.3 had a balcony at one end only and a separate brake/luggage compartment forming a boxed-in end at the other. There is an excellent photograph of Coach No.3 in Ref.1, plate 74. Later a fourth coach was built, this time by Hurst Nelson & Co., to the same general style as Nos.1 and 2.

In 1910, three 4-wheeled coaches arrived on the line. These had been built by Brown Marshall of Birmingham in 1897, for the Lambourn Valley railway and were used by that Company until 1904 when they, and the rest of the rolling stock, were sold at auction. Their whereabouts from then until 1910 is unknown. (Three queries - where were they in the period 1904 - 1910, what happened to the fourth L.V.R. coach and did the H.M.S.T. also buy any of the Lambourn goods stock?). These coaches were 26ft. 6in. long overall with balconies at each end, and a wheelbase of 13ft 6 in. The clearest photograph I have found is in Ref.3 and shows L.V.R. No.2 at the Gloucester Carriage and Wagon Co's works in 1901. (I wonder why this coach needed an overhaul after only four years usage?). The three coaches differed in window and panelling arrangements, and their Selsey numbers are not known.

In 1916, four 4-wheeled ex-L.C.D.R. coaches were obtained. Two at least of these were 5-compartment Thirds and one was a 4-compartment First with oval sunken panels on the doors. The latter coach may have been converted later into a 2-compartment Brake since such a coach is visible in several photographs, and it is believed that the L.C.D.R. had no such thing as a 4-wheeled First Brake. One of the Thirds and the "First Brake" were close-coupled. Three of these coaches (two Thirds and the "First Brake") made up the train which was involved in the only serious accident on the line when the locomotive "Chichester" came off the rails and ran down the bank, killing the fireman.

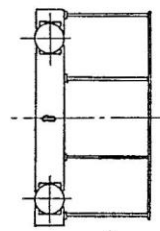
Finally, in 1931, two more ex-L.C.D.R. coaches were purchased from the Southern Railway. (*6-wheeled 5-compartment Third No.1636 and 4-compartment Third Brake No.3639 - Ed.*) These had the very minimum of changes to the paintwork in that only the word "Southern" was painted over and "West Sussex" substituted. Even the S.R. numbers were retained.

Two pairs of the Colonel's petrol railcars saw service on the line with a pair of Ford railcars arriving in 1923 and a pair of Shefflex in 1928. (*The "hybrid" set made up of the Wolseley-Siddeley car and a converted Ford lorry for freight also ran on the line for a while - Ed.*)

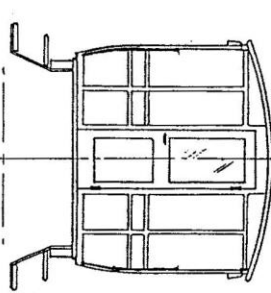
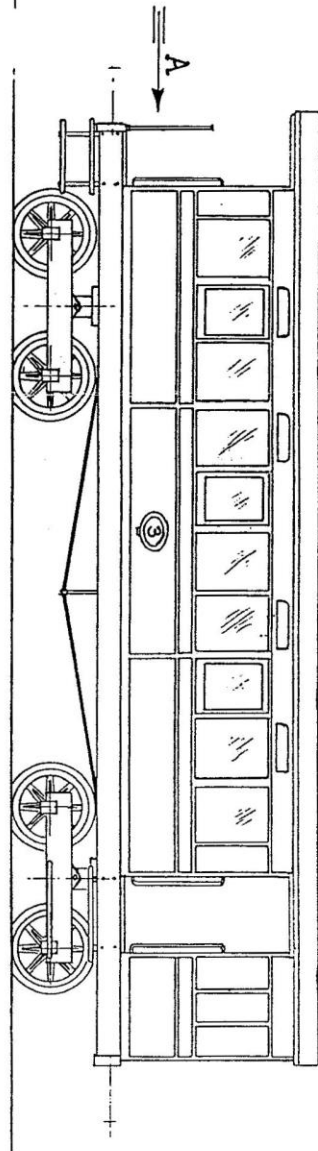
References

1. Branch Line to Selsey - V.Mitchell & K.Smith, Middleton Press.
2. The Selsey Tramways - Edward Griffith
3. The Lambourn Branch - K.Robertson & R.Simmonds, Wild Swan.

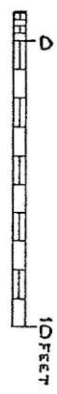
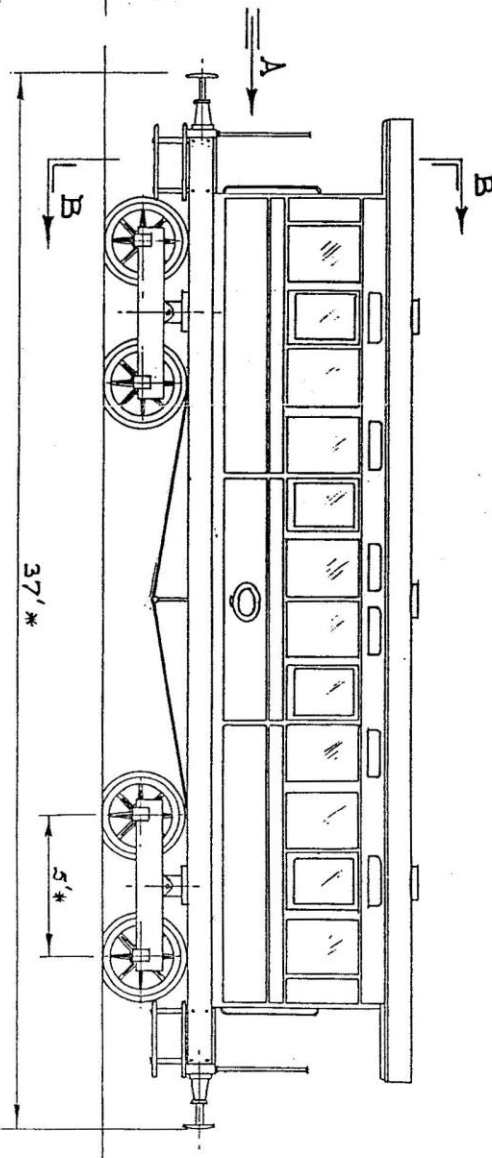
Drawings of the original Falcon cars are given overleaf. Others of the L.V.R. and L.C.D.R. stock will follow in future issues.



VIEW ON 'A'



SECTION BB



E. MANN Nov 1950

HM & STY BOGIE COACHES
BUILT BY FALCON ENGINE CO. IN 1897
THIS DRAWING HAS BEEN PRODUCED FROM PHOTOGRAPHS AND
USING DIMENSIONS * GIVEN IN 'SELSEY TEAMWAYS' BY E. GRIFFITH.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

H.M.S.T. Goods Stock

Can I add a few scraps of information and thoughts to Ron Mann's and your notes concerning H.M.S.T. goods stock, which I hope will be of interest.

Regarding the Jury Brick Company, as far as I know PECO wagons were generally models of real wagons. Also there is a drawing of a Jury wagon in one of A.G.Thomas' booklets. I think I have seen a photo somewhere but can't locate it in any of the P.O. wagon lists I have to hand. From the tare shown on the drawing I would guess it to be a 16 ft. long (or smaller) wagon and one could therefore build a reasonable model. I presume that the Jury Brick Co. was the works near Hunston station which is quite close to Sidlesham Common, and imagine that it closed relatively early as there is no mention of it in E.S.Cox's report on the line.

The Thomas book also includes a drawing of a Corral wagon similar to that on plate 90 of "Branch line to Selsey".

Concerning the ex-G.E.R. open wagons, I think that the view on page 32 of "Colonel Stephens Railways" shows one of the ex-G.E.R. wagons in the background still with the distinctive raised end - therefore at least one of the Selsey examples had this feature in 1900.

Plate 68 in "Branch Line to Selsey" interests me in two respects.

First - the van on the left, is it H.M.S.T.? The caption seems to indicate that it is (but it also calls a sheeted L.B.S.C. open a van). If it is H.M.S.T., is it ex-G.E.R.? It looks more like L.B.S.C. to me.

Second - The H.M.S.T. open on the right. This looks like an ex-L.B.S.C. round end wagon - could it be No.3?

It would be interesting to see an original of this picture.

Another question - were there two of the low roof 8-ton Midland vans at closure rather than one? Studying the various pictures taken at Selsey after closure it seems to me that, unless the stock was moved about for some reason, there were two such vans. One seems to be between L.B.S.C. open No.4 and the big M.R. van, and the other next to the cattle van.

Would this be consistent with Griffiths' book which states that the sale included four eight ton trucks and six box vans? The trucks would be Nos.4, 10, 25 and 26 and the vans two small M.R. (No.24 and one other), one large M.R. (No.21), one L.C.D.R./S.E.R. (No.29), brake van (R.V.R. No.7) and the cattle truck.

Any comments would be welcome.

Finally, regarding the query about petrol supplies, Griffiths states that "in later years a petrol pump was installed outside (Selsey shed) for the railcars". However I can't identify it on any picture I have.

David Churchill, Solihull.

Ron Mann comments:

The Jury Brick Co. models were not by PECO, but were printed wagon sides (with numbers 3,5,7 & 9) made by Collett Models of Southsea in 1970, to fit on to PECO chassis kits.

I also discovered the photograph of the G.E.R. wagon with round ends still in place. You always find another picture after you have written the article!

Model Nameplates and Wagon Transfers

I have contacted POW Sides regarding the possibility of transfers for the B.Q.C. wagons on the S.& M. (See "Colonel" No.23 - Ed.) and also Bill Bedford for the production of nameplates for the Terriers etc. on the S.& M.R. I enclose copies of their replies (See below - Ed.) in case other members may be interested in either transfers or nameplates - perhaps if the Society approached these makers we could get a discount.

Ian Hammond, Bury St.Edmonds

Editors comment:

In summary, Bill Bedford will produce any nameplate at £4 per pair, as long as the lettering shape is on his computer. His letter does not mention any quantity discount, but we

could always try!

POW Sides will produce transfers for any wagon for which adequate prototype information is available. Their minimum charge is £29 for plain lettering and £37 for shaded lettering; for this you get 5 sets in 7mm scale or 8 sets in 4mm. Additional sets to the same design would be very much cheaper, in fact at the normal cost of their standard range, so if a reasonable order could be put together the start-up cost would be much reduced.

Would anyone with an interest in either of these please let me know, and if there is enough demand we may be able to organise something.



The Jury Brick Co. Wagon referred to in David Churchill's letter.

CHRISTMAS QUIZ RESULT

Of the replies received from the Christmas Quiz, only two were all correct so the task of selecting the winner was not too difficult. First "out of the hat" (and by coincidence the first reply received) was Mr.M.Lawson Finch, who has been sent the "fabulous prize" of the Handbook to the Shropshire & Montgomeryshire Railway. Mr.P.J.Bowden also had the correct solution, but I'm afraid there was only one copy of the book. Sorry!

The "Hidden Stations" were Shepherdswell and Waenfawr, and the questions that gave the most problem seem to have been the Welsh ones. Despite its name Llanymynech station was not in Wales, and Llandilo is not on the S.& M. so the answer to No.12 has to be Llandrinio Road. Maenclochog (No.7) is literally "bell rock", but the North Pembroke & Fishguard Railway freely translated it as "Ringing Rock".

WHEN THE RAILCARS WERE NEW

Alan Garden has sent in some fascinating extracts from "The Locomotive Magazine" in the 1920's and 1930's. In this issue we reproduce the first of the articles, which give a contemporary description of the Colonel's introduction of his famous back-to back railcars.

Introduction by the Editor.

The prototype for the back-to-back railcars was probably the single car on an old Wolseley-Siddeley chassis built, probably in Tenterden, at a so far unknown date around 1920. Its appearance on the K.E.S.R. and its later transfers to Selsey and Kinnerley seem to have gone unrecorded by the railway press of the day. The first mention of the railcars was in 1923, when the Ford sets of the K.E.S.R. and the Shropshire & Montgomeryshire Railway were introduced, as described below. The second K.E.S.R. Ford set of 1924, and the Selsey Ford set, do not seem to have been mentioned.

The Shefflex sets at Selsey (1928) and on the K.E.S.R. (1930) had a good write-up with much more detail, which will be reproduced in the next issues.

The Locomotive Magazine

April 14, 1923

PETROL RAIL MOTORS, KENT AND EAST SUSSEX RAILWAY

Between Robertsbridge and Headcorn the Kent & East Sussex Ry. now convey passengers by two Ford cars placed back to back and coupled together. The original road wheels have been replaced by flanged wheels.

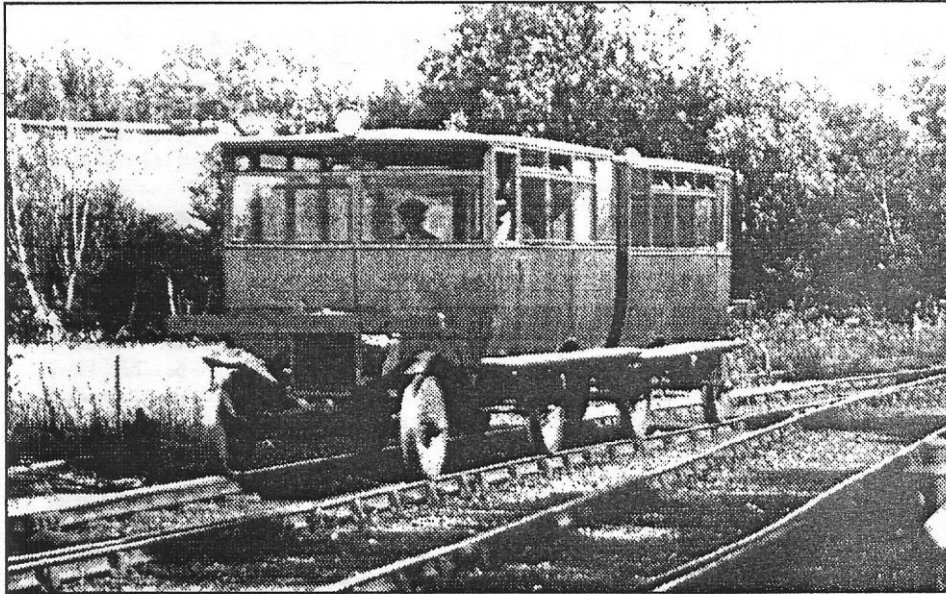
Colonel H.F. Stephens, the managing director of the Kent & East Sussex line, informs us that the petrol consumption for the 24 miles run, with gradients of 1 in 50, is only 1 3/4 gallons with a full load.

September 15, 1923

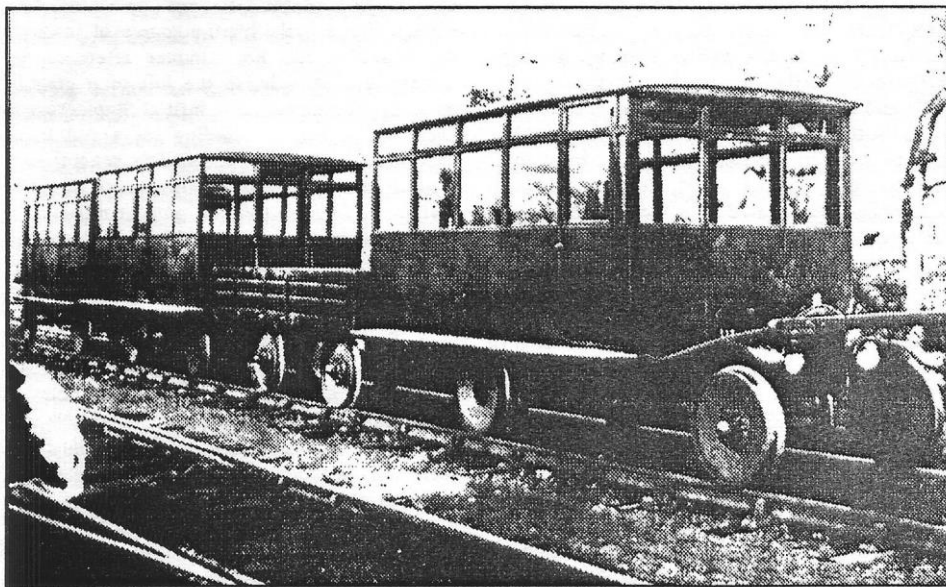
RAIL MOTORS, SHROPSHIRE AND MONTGOMERYSHIRE RY.

For passenger service the three car motor train illustrated herewith, has been put into traffic by Col. H.F. Stephens, on the Shropshire & Montgomeryshire Railway (Shrewsbury to Llany-mynech). These interesting adaptations of road motors for rail service are arranged back to back, with an intermediate dummy car in the centre, giving accommodation in all for sixty passengers. Light passenger bodies have been fitted on the motor car frames, the usual steering gear dismantled, and flanged wheels fitted to solid axles. A sliding door at the rear of each body provides ready access to the centre car. Centre draw-pin connections are used for coupling the cars.

The train maintains a good average speed, the economical rate being about 25 miles per hour, but it will run faster. (*The maximum permitted under the Light Railway Order would have been 25 m.p.h. in any case - Ed.*) It will climb gradients of 1 in 50 with 9 chains curves quite easily, and manage long stretches of 1 in 130 and 1 in 150 without overheating. It is early to give figures at present, but on trial the train ran 50 miles on 7 gallons of petrol with three cars, or working as a two-car unit just over 1 1/2 gallons of petrol for 18 miles, the load being made up with bags of coal, etc., to the full complement of passengers. When running the gear of the rear car is placed in neutral.



Kent & East Sussex Rly. 2-Car Ford Railcar Set



Shropshire & Montgomeryshire Rly. 3-Car Ford Set with Luggage Trailer

ON THE K. & E.S.R. IN 1932

The Editor resurrects an interesting old magazine article.

Editor's note.

This article, by the late Charles F. Klapper, was found in an old copy of the Sussex County Magazine for June 1932, and was apparently one of a series. Because of its "period" flavour, the whole article is reproduced in this issue and the next even though it is not wholly about the railway. It contains a number of surprising errors for an author of Mr. Klapper's standing; for instance, "Northiam" never went to the Shropshire & Montgomeryshire Railway, the S. & M.R. had only three, not four, Terriers, and "Hesperus" did not have outside cylinders. Nevertheless it is an interesting account of the line at the end of Stephens' period.

When Men of Sussex - or all of the world for that matter - have forgotten that the late Marquis Curzon of Kedleston was Viceroy of India, or that he aspired to the Premiership, there will still be a place most gratefully accorded him in the public memory as the preserver of Bodiam Castle. He purchased it in 1917, and took a keen interest in the restoration work. Built of Wadhurst stone, from the lily covered moat to the unicorn's head above the gateway that is the crest of Sir Edward Dalyngrigge who reared it in 1386, Bodiam (or "Bodgem") Castle seems to sum up the middle ages better than anything the writer knows. It is, however, but one of many things to please the eye in this part of the Rother Valley, which a mile eastward, where the Kent Ditch joins the Rother, becomes Kent on the north side.

On the south, thereabouts, is Northiam, with its interesting church. A tall Norman tower is surmounted by a stone spire - one of four such in Sussex. The Church house dates from Henry VIII's day, while on the green is another of the ubiquitous oak trees under which Queen Elizabeth appears to have spent so much of her time, usually partaking of breakfast! Older, and perhaps more violent, history is indicated by

the finding of a Danish vessel ten feet deep in a field near the river in 1822. The iron industry had a centre here, and in 1653 we read of guns being made at "Norsham." It is difficult to think of this countryside as a "Black Country" today, but many of the hopfields of the locality are upon the sites of hammerponds. During the days of industrial greatness the Frewen family came to live at Brickwall, a beautiful black and white house; there has been no Frewen since whose portrait has not been hung upon the walls, a remarkable continuity.

Between Brede and Rother the names of the Hundreds in Domesday are given as Staple, Colespore and Babinrode, and of these only the first is readily traceable in place-names today, Staplecross being at the crest of the ridge opposite to Bodiam. Just as most somewhat unpromising places, it can be interesting enough if one looks for the source of interest. We found it one hot summer afternoon by sitting, legs adangle, in the loft of a granary opposite the old mill. The mill at Staplecross is somewhat peculiar, standing on a red brick warehouse of forlorn aspect. The general roof level of this is continuous with that of a row of cottages, in which live the present miller (not dependent on wind power, to his delight and the artist's sorrow), the local medical practitioner, and under the mill building an old, old man who must surely be the oldest inhabitant.

Like so many other windmills, that at Staplehurst is not now used, and the rails round the octagonal body are "a' wee'd away." The body rises cone-shaped for about twenty-five feet and is surmounted by a cowl which supports at one end the sails and at the other the vane which used to set the sails into the wind. The vane has broken off from its shaft, leaving only the stumps of the spokes. The sweeps are reduced to the skeletons of the great beams from which the sails were hung,

their shadows with those of the rails falling jagged, pitch black and cool, across the superstructure which shimmers in the heat. Windows in the warehouse are broken, and the main door is obscured by masses of vegetation. The only sign of life is the wireless aerial suspended between the driving shaft that carried the sails and the present miller's cottage. Yet we found a pleasant entertainment for the afternoon while a sketch of this was made.

Between Bodiam and Robertsbridge may be seen parts of the Cistercian Abbey which formerly stood under the bank surmounted by Fowlbrook Wood. The Abbey Farm is a pleasing spot and under the outbuildings may be seen some of the Abbey ruins, embowered in trees, and some of the stone used, incongruously enough, as the foundations of an oast-house.

Robertsbridge - the name of which is a popularisation of "Rother Bridge" - is a place of many streams, and still has a quaint charm, although its position on the Hastings road is not an enviable one from the viewpoint of a pedestrian. There is nothing today to justify Horace Walpole's stigmatisation of it as "wretched." Perhaps the Rother and the Glottenham, which make a complicated junction here, with a mill stream to confuse the many waters, were doing a united flood when Walpole so described it.

Certain it is that the Kent & East Sussex Railway, to which we are come at last, has copious arrangements for letting flood water pass under its tracks here. Indeed, it is on record that the river rose violently in the night on one occasion, and an early morning milk train plunged into the waters of the Rother at Padgham Gut between Northiam and Bodiam, just before dawn, the driver not having been able to see the washed out bridge. The cab of the engine, which overturned, was badly crushed, and it was fortunate for the driver and fireman that they had jumped clear, although even then their escape from drowning was comparatively narrow. For the rest of the train

it was disorganisation rather than danger which was caused.

The railway, which was incorporated by the Rother Valley Act of 1896, was opened in March, 1900, from Robertsbridge, where it uses the Southern Railway station on the Hastings to Tonbridge line, to Tenterden. Later on the name was changed, the Tenterden station renamed Rolvenden, and the extension through Tenterden to Headcorn in the heart of the Weald of Kent, and on the main line from Tonbridge to Ashford, was carried out. As the railway is 24 miles long, and crosses no others in that distance, it will be seen to serve a very wide area, in which it is of the greatest use both to travellers (no roads parallel its Sussex portion at any rate) and to agriculture. It is now technically and legally a "light" railway, and this enables certain economies of operation suitable to the traffic to be carried out. It passes from Sussex to Kent by a big bridge over the Rother a mile east of Northiam station. There are two other stations in Sussex, at Bodiam and Udiam, the latter, however, being named "Junction Road (Alight for Hawkhurst)." Oast-houses belonging to the famous firm of Guinness and Sons, Limited, are located at Udiam.

A frequent service of double-ended Ford petrol units is provided for passengers, as well as trains of four-wheeled compartment carriages which have accommodation for both first and third class passengers. Among the locomotive stock may be mentioned two pretty little tank engines with four coupled wheels built specially for the line in 1900; one of these, named "Northiam", is rather far from its native heath at the moment, as it is doing passenger train duties on the East Kent Railway, which runs across the Kent coalfield. Previously it has strayed so far off as the Weston, Clevedon & Portishead Railway in Somerset, and the Shropshire & Montgomeryshire Railway in the Welsh Marches! The other is named "Tenterden".

To be continued.

LINES FROM THE PAST

Shropshire & Montgomeryshire Light Railway

On the passenger service one of the ex-Brighton "Terrier" tank engines, No.7, "Hecate", is now working. Presumably this has been transferred from the Kent and East Sussex Ry. It is still painted in the L.B. and S.C. style, with cast-iron nameplates on the side tanks, steam heat and the vacuum brake.

The train, usually three coaches, is painted a bright ultramarine with vermilion ends (coaches as well as brake van), and all lettering and numbering is of cast-iron screwed on and painted bright yellow. The train is fitted throughout with vacuum brake and steam heat, and apparently is old L. and N.W. stock.

From "The Locomotive Magazine" for May 15, 1923.

Editor's comment.

Despite being a contemporary account, this contains two errors.

"Hecate" (originally L.B.S.C. No.81 "Beulah") did not come from the K.E.S.R. It was one of the "Terriers" purchased by the Admiralty during WW1, and was bought by the S.& M. from them in 1921. "Daphne" and "Dido" (ex-L.B.S.C. No.83 "Earlwood" and No.38 "Millwall" respectively) came from the same source via the Government Surplus Material Depot in 1923.

The S.& M. had no ex-L.N.W.R. stock, so the coaches referred to must have been either Midland, L.S.W.R. or North Staffordshire.



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