



• THE COLONEL •

NUMBER 25 SUMMER 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

Chairman's Report to the A.G.M.

Since I am combining the functions of Chairman and Editor (and since I was running out of space) I have taken my Chairman's Report to the A.G.M. as Editorial for this issue.

Another year has gone by and the Colonel Stephens Society is continuing to grow, albeit slowly. Once again, the interest in all things relating to the life and works of the Colonel seems to have increased, with what must be a record number of new book titles coming on to the market. I hope our Society provides, through the medium of "The Colonel", some small stimulus to this increase as well as providing the sort of service that members want.

We are shortly to embark on the first Society outing, the special train on the K.& E.S.R. I have been delighted with the response from members, having had about 70 bookings.

There has been a lot of activity on the preservation front over the year. The East Kent has worked wonders at Shepherdswell; the Shropshire & Montgomeryshire crane has been saved; what little remains of the Snailbeach now looks more secure; and the K.& E.S.R. is looking at the feasibility of returning to Robertsbridge - with full support from British Rail and the local authorities!

Publicity continues to be obtained from exhibitions and lectures, and this has ensured a slow but steady influx of new members. We intend to put an occasional advertisement in the railway press with the view to attracting more members.

In conclusion, may I thank everyone for their support over the last year, particularly in keeping me supplied with articles for "The Colonel". Keep them coming in!

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1991 ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

The Chairman reports on the Society's 4th Annual General Meeting held at Keen House on 27th April

Last year, when the time of the meeting was omitted from the notice calling it, 15 members turned out. This year, when the time was given, only 12 came and some of them were late! Apologies were received from 6 others. The low numbers, and the absence of any Committee members other than the Chairman, made for a fairly brief and smooth meeting.

The Chairman read out his Report, saying that the Society was continuing to grow slowly but steadily and that the increase in interest in all matters relating to the Colonel, reported last year, was continuing. A Report from the Treasurer was also read, and showed that again the Society finances were healthy. He did however suggest a subscription increase, and urged a membership drive. A message was read from the Membership Secretary to the effect that there were currently 164 members on the books compared to 150 last year, and new members were coming in at the rate of a couple or so a month; against that, there were some subscriptions still outstanding from last September and he was actively chasing these.

The elections for the Society Officers proceeded with very little discussion, and resulted in all existing Officers being confirmed in their positions with no opposing candidates.

There was some discussion on the agenda item "Subscription for 1991/2". The Treasurer in his Report had suggested an increase from £4.00 to £4.50, but the meeting thought that this would mean a probable increase again next year which would be undesirable. A figure of £5.00 was suggested, which hopefully could remain for at least two years. This was proposed, seconded and carried unanimously.

The next Agenda item was "Membership for other Societies", and the Chairman explained

that this arose from a letter from the East Kent society asking whether there was any way they could join our society as a corporate member. After some discussion, it was agreed that there was no need or advantage in having corporate members. The East Kent and ourselves exchanged journals anyway, and there was nothing to stop an individual joining if he wished, but one society joining the other did not provide any additional benefits to either.

Under Any Other Business, several points were raised. Firstly, the question of our membership of the Railway Librarians Association. David Kegan explained the advantages to the society, namely liaison with other kindred organisations and knowledge of, and access to, useful sources of prototype information (e.g. the whereabouts of manufacturers' drawings). However, he said that no one had attended the meetings during the past year. There was some discussion of this, and it was agreed that we should renew our subscription to the Railway Librarians Association (£5.00 for 5 years) but that we should make more effort to have someone attend the meetings. Mr Kegan said that although Stephen Hannington was our nominated representative, in practice it didn't matter who went and it could be that someone living near the meeting location would be more appropriate. (Meetings are held at widely different locations, the next one being in Leicester.)

The question of a society badge was again raised, and it was asked whether any costings had been provided by Dave Sutton as agreed at the last AGM. The Chairman said he did not know of any costings, and in the absence of Dave Sutton could not sensibly comment. Although one member said he would not wear a Society badge (at least not in public!) it was generally agreed that one would be desirable

and that a note should be put into "The Colonel" to judge the level of interest.

Finally, the question was raised about the Society's use of computer membership records and whether we infringed the Data Protection Act. It was said that for small clubs and societies formal registration was not needed, but that protection against infringement could

be obtained merely by putting a note on the subscription renewals and membership application forms such as "I agree that my membership details may be stored on a computer". Any individual not agreeing with this (by crossing the line out) would have to have his details stored manually.

TREASURER'S REPORT 1990/1991

The statement of the Society's funds is attached and continues to reflect an acceptable credit balance of some £303, after all expenses. Despite an increase in subscription income (£454 against £418) the residual balance is only £3 up on last year's balance due to increased postage and stationery costs.

I would suggest a nominal subscription increase to say £4.50 to cover the no doubt

annual postage increase and the general increase felt every year by us all!

Again I would urge a membership push, perhaps with more advertising in the national monthlies to try to increase the base of our membership.

I am quite prepared to stand for re-election if required.

FINANCIAL STATEMENT TO 31.3.91

Balance Brought Forward	£383.33
Subscriptions Received	£454.00
	£837.33
Less	
Printing and Stationery costs for "The Colonel"	£272.20
Postage	£118.94
Room Hire	£ 12.00
	£403.14
Balance as Bank Statement of 1/3/91	£434.19
Unpresented cheques	£ 25.57
	£104.80
	£130.37
Net Cash Funds	£303.82

Certified N.C.Bird, Treasurer

Nigel Bird

Bryn Hir, Llanio Road, Llwyn-y-Groes, Tregaron, Dyfed SY25 6PY Tel: (097 423) 281

"The Colonel Stephens Society Treasurer"

BUYS and SELLS

Out of print and second-hand railway books, ephemera and relics
Recently published books as reviewed in The Colonel also supplied,

at cost plus postage
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NEWS AND VIEWS

K.& E.S.R. Honoured

The K.& E.S.R. has joined the ranks of preserved lines honoured by British Rail naming a locomotive after them. At a ceremony at Northiam station on 23rd May, Electro-Diesel Class 73 No.73126 was named "Kent & East Sussex Railway". This notable event is fully described overleaf.

Society Special Fully Booked

The Society's very own special train over the K.& E.S.R., scheduled for 14th July, is now fully booked with over 70 participants.

A special opening of the Colonel Stephens Museum has been arranged for that day from 10.30 am until departure of the train at 11.45. (Normally in July it is only open in the afternoon.) The admission charge is 50p.

As well as a train journey to Northiam and back, the day's activities will include visits to the Carriage and Wagon Department at Tenterden, the Locomotive Department at Rolvenden, and a tour by road to Bodiam and Robertsbridge. The return to Tenterden will hopefully be via Hawkhurst, Cranbrook, Biddenden and High Halden Road so a lot of the Colonel's territory will be covered.

While at Tenterden last week, I took the opportunity to have a peep in the carriage shed where the train for our Special was lined up, and very nice it looked too! The Great Eastern 6-wheel coach was nearly complete externally, with gorgeous maroon paintwork. Internally, there is more work to be done yet (there were no seats!) but I was assured that it will be ready. If not, it will be a case of "Standing room only!"

I am sure that we are all set for a very good day out.

S. & M. Railway Severed

The erstwhile S.& M.R. line at Hookagate, just West of Shrewsbury, has been severed by works in connection with a new by-pass road scheme. I don't think anyone was thinking about re-opening the line, but if they were they've got a problem!

Another Ilfracombe Goods Kit?

Andrew Mullins, of Branchlines, has announced that he is bringing out a kit for the Ilfracombe Goods. It will utilise a cast white metal body on an etched nickel silver chassis, with lost-wax brass detail fittings. Initially, the unrebuilt version as used on the East Kent will be produced, with the rebuilt version later if demand is sufficient.

There is no sign yet of Iain Rice's rival kit, so the race is on!

More Colonel Material Wanted

Although I have some material for future issues, with more drawings and other good things, I am always in need of more.

In particular, I would welcome something on some of the lines not yet covered in any detail. Has anyone out there anything they can write on the Snailbeach? And what about the Sheppey or the Burry Port & Gwendraeth? The latter is a particularly neglected line.

Material doesn't need to be confined to the Colonel's lines exclusively; other Light Railways are quite acceptable. I am sure readers would find something on the Bishop's Castle, for example, very much to their taste. Articles on some of the lines planned but never built would also be interesting, and current news on any of the lines is always welcome.

PERFICK!!

The Chairman goes on a very special trip to Northiam

"The Chairman and Directors of the Tenterden Railway Company Limited request the pleasure of the Company of Mr and Mrs L Darbyshire at the naming of British Rail's class 73 locomotive number 73126 "Kent & East Sussex Railway", and the launch of the railway's Robertsbridge Extension Project, on Thursday 23 May 1991. Special train departs from Tenterden Town Station at 12.30 pm. Luncheon will be served on the journey."

Thus read a very smart looking invitation card which arrived through the post a few weeks ago. The combination of a visit to the K.& E.S.R., a special train and a free lunch were simply too much for your Chairman to resist, so an acceptance was straight away dispatched to Tenterden.

So it was that we set out on the morning of 23 May for deepest Kent, travelling via the dreaded M25 on which traffic was surprisingly light. The day had begun overcast and dull, but by the time we caught sight of the first oast house the sun was shining and the countryside looked remarkably like the surroundings of a certain "Maidstone Road" station.

Arriving at Tenterden, we parked the car in the car park and walked back over the level crossing to the station. Standing in the bunting-bedecked platform was a train made up of three Mk 1 coaches in blood-and custard livery and the Pullman "Diana" in brown and cream. All were immaculately clean and well polished, and their tables were invitingly set for lunch. The sound of a distant whistle was heard, and soon our locomotives arrived and coupled to the head of the train. They were the Terrier "Sutton" in green livery and the Manning Wardle "Charwelton" in brown livery with elaborate lining in gold. Like the coaches, both were immaculate.

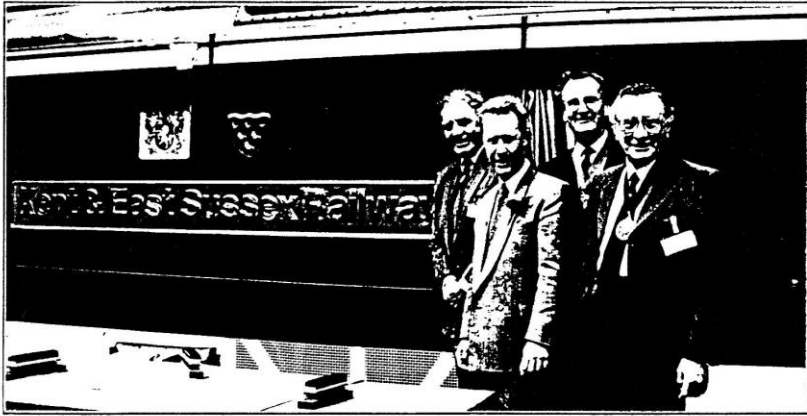
As we were early, and the "Colonel Stephens Buffet" at the station was closed (it was not a normal public operating day) we walked into the town centre for some coffee. By the time we returned, quite a crowd had assembled on the platform where a string quartet was playing. Now that's something the Colonel never had! Guests and VIPs were arriving all the time, and it was rather surprising to see that the County Council officers drove themselves - no chauffeurs in these days of economics!

Eventually, all the guests had assembled and we were ushered to our seats on the train. There were I believe about 125 guests, so there was plenty of room with generally only two people to a 4-seat table. Our companions across the gangway were Philip Shaw, Editor of "The Tenterden Terrier", and his wife and Dick Riley the well-known railway photographer.

The train departed a couple of minutes late and proceeded slowly down the bank towards Rolvenden. The track was in excellent condition and the journey was remarkably smooth as we were served with our lunch of poached salmon, new potatoes and salad, washed down with Chablis. I'm sure the Colonel would have enjoyed that - we certainly did.

Arriving at Northiam, again bedecked with bunting (in NSE red, white and blue), our locomotives were removed and the object of the naming exercise, class 73 number 73126, buffered up to the coaches. We all alighted and made our way towards the front of the train where a small stand had been prepared alongside the beautifully finished and bulled-up locomotive whose nameplate was covered by curtains.

The proceedings were opened by the Lord Lieutenant of East Sussex, Admiral Sir Lindsay Bryson KCB who welcomed the assembled



The nameplate in unveiled!

Left to right: Admiral Sir Lindsay Bryson, Geoff Harrison-Mee, Coun. Perry, Coun. Hatcher.
(*L. Darbyshire*)

gathering to "his" county. Sir Lindsay, apart from being a sailor, is an engineer with an appreciation and love of things driven by steam and he was very enthusiastic at the thought that the K. & E.S.R. might soon get back to Roberts-bridge. In reply, Geoff Harrison-Mee, Director South Eastern, Network SouthEast, was equally enthusiastic and said that this was the first occasion on which one of his engines (worth, he said, £2 million) had been entrusted to a preserved line. He said the loco. had been brought from Ashford by road, a distance of about 15 miles, but that the Police had made it go via Maidstone, Swanley and Sevenoaks making the actual journey more like 115 miles!

The naming itself was carried out jointly by Councillor John Perry, Vice Chairman of Kent County Council and Councillor Harry Hatcher, Chairman of East Sussex County Council, both of whom were very keen to see the line extended. Together they pulled on a cord, and the curtains parted to reveal the gleaming nameplate "Kent & East Sussex Railway" surmounted by two shields carrying the arms of Kent and of East Sussex. The locomotive was a real picture in its sparkling paintwork and the

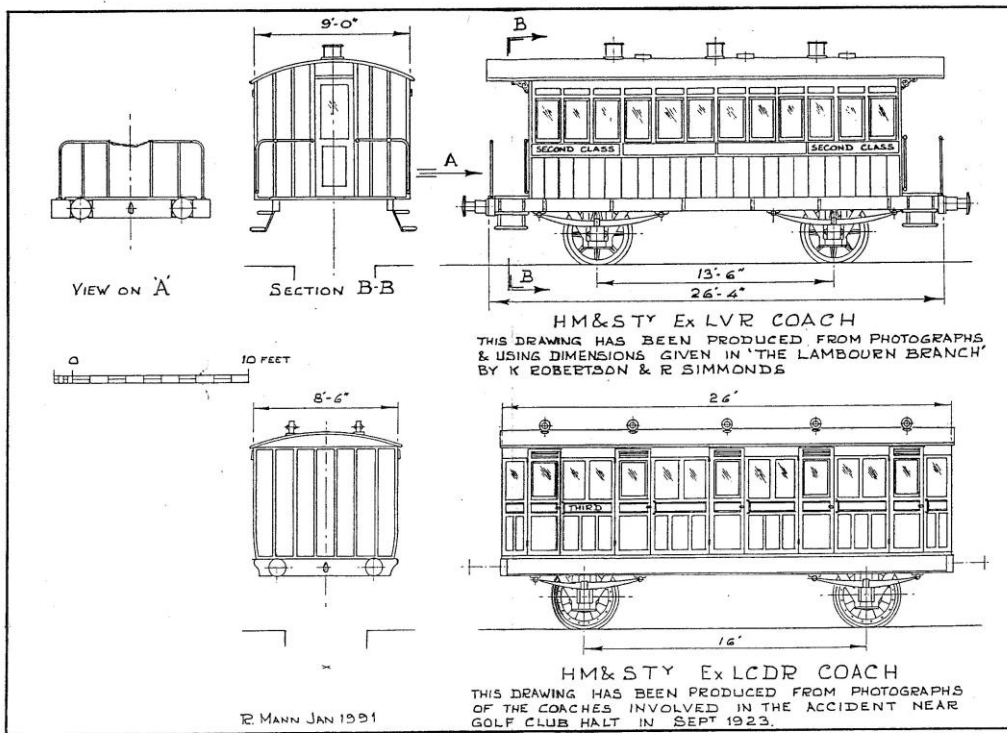
new nameplate set it off to perfection. A copy of the nameplate was presented to Admiral Bryson, and 4mm scale models of the class 73 (complete with their correct nameplates) were presented to the various dignitaries concerned in the ceremony.

We then got back on board the train, 73126 ran round to the other end and we set off for Tenterden hauled by an Electro-Diesel - definitely a "first" for the K. & E.S.R. On the way back we resumed our meal, being served with strawberries and cream followed by coffee. With a locomotive much larger (though on diesel power not necessarily more powerful) than is customary on the line, the journey was smooth and effortless; even Tenterden Bank was hardly noticed and we glided back into the platform at 3 pm.

After much hand-shaking and well-wishing, everyone departed and the station went back to its normal off-season slumber. All in all, it was a fantastic day, with perfect weather, perfect organisation and perfect running; a day that I am sure the Colonel would have been proud of. In a word, perfect!

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

Ron Mann continues his drawings of the passenger stock



WHEN THE RAILCARS WERE NEW

We continue Alan Garden's extracts from the Locomotive Magazine with an article on the Shefflex set on the Selsey Tramway.

February 15, 1928

SHEFFLEX RAIL CAR, WEST SUSSEX RY.

Satisfactory results have attended the trials of a new rail car which Lieut.-Col.H.F.Stephens has introduced on the passenger service of the West Sussex Ry. (Chichester to Selsey), formerly the Hundred of Manhood and Selsey Tramway, but brought under the Railways Act by the Railways Construction and Facilities Act, 1864, a very unusual proceeding. These cars have been built by the Shefflex Motor Co., of Tinsley, Sheffield.

As will be seen from the accompanying illustration, there are two cars, each seating 23 passengers, which usually run coupled together. The wheelbase is 11 ft. and the overall length of the frame 16 ft. 8 in., plus front and rear buffers. Ball and roller bearings are used practically in every part of the chassis, while, in keeping with its place of origin, special steels are used where ordinarily mild steel would be employed.

With dimensions of 100 mm bore (3 15/16 in.) and 120 mm stroke (nearly 4 3/4 in.), the engine's four cylinders are cast in pairs. All three of the crank-shaft bearings are ball bearings, which also carry the skew-gear driven camshaft, although on this component, a split bronze centre bearing is also used as a steady.

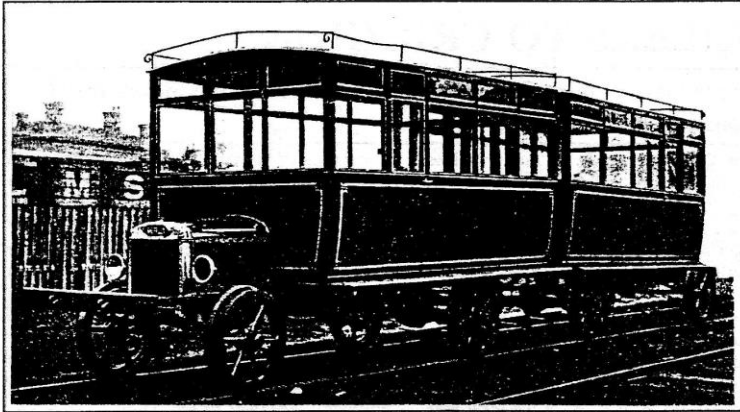
Oil is delivered to the big-end troughs by a submerged pump, and arrangements are made whereby all oilways can be cleaned from the exterior of the engine. Petrol is gravity-fed to the Claudel carburettor from a fourteen-gallon

tank under the seat, and a hot-air intake is led from an exhaust muff to the carburettor. Ample cooling is afforded by thermo-siphon action, which is assisted by the large lead from the cylinder heads to the three-piece cast aluminium and Dreadnought tube radiator, which is trunnion mounted above the front dumb irons.

The engine is mounted on three points, the rear bearer actually forming the back bearing housing of the crank case, while the front chassis' cross-member carries the front trunnion mounting, through which the starting handle passes. The Ferodo-faced cone clutch is kept in contact with the flywheel by a single control spring, while the clutch shaft is capable of universal movement, thanks to a laminated steel disc joint at the gearbox and a ball spigot on the flywheel. In the clutch withdrawal fork the ball bearing principle is also introduced, and an adequate clutch stop is incorporated in the design.

The patent gearbox includes three forward speeds and reverse, and here the construction is unusual, in that the changes are effected by a combination of sliding gears and dog clutches, the former engaging before the latter takes up the drive. By such an arrangement damage to the gear teeth becomes practically impossible. Behind the gearbox is a fabric-to-metal transmission brake, and at the front end of the propeller shaft to the over-worm rear axle is an enclosed star-joint, whilst the rear joint is of the sliding block type. Wear and chatter are eliminated from the latter by combining the radiused steel blocks with bronze pads, which prevent back-lash and play.

The casing, or body, of the rear axle, is a one-piece steel pot construction, with the worm carried by the lid. Taper roller bearings carry



the back wheel hubs on their axle tubs (the front wheels also run on similar bearings) and the axle shafts are 3 per-cent nickel steel.

Fabric-faced expanding brakes act in open drums bolted to the rear wheel spokes, each shoe working on its own fulcrum pin, and the end of the cam spindle arm carries a loaded wing nut adjustment. Supported on semi-elliptical springs fore and aft (with the rear springs taking torque and drive reactions), the channel section frame is strengthened with ample cross-members in addition to diagonal bracing at the back corners.

Running empty, a steady speed of about 30 miles per hour can be maintained, and the ability to pick up from very low speeds on top gear is excellent. Gear changing, due to the dog clutches, requires a little practice, but actually becomes easier than with the conventional type, apart from the fact that little damage can be done by mere clumsiness. The gear ratios of 6.2/3, 13.1/5, and 24 to 1 for the chassis should be adequate under all normal conditions. A particularly noticeable feature of the engine is its quietness when idling. Although the valve tappets are not enclosed, there is no clatter. The lighting system is C.A.V. with head and rear light, and also interior lights.

The bodies are built by Messrs. W.J.Flear Ltd., of Burton Road, Sheffield, with luggage rails fitted on the tops. Large plate-glass windows are provided above elbow level, ventilators being fitted above to admit air without draught. Throw-over, spring seats are arranged across the car, with a gangway down the centre. The carriages are warmed by hot-air pipes heated by the exhaust gases, which are easily disconnected in warm weather. Exhaust whistles are fitted and are operated by the driver. Tecalemit high pressure greasing system is fitted throughout, and a gear and hand-brake locking device is fitted to prevent passengers accidentally putting these into action.

The cars are combined with a two-ton open truck, which is easily dealt with over gradients as steep as 1 in 50; The sharpest curve negotiated is six chains radius. The gauge of the line is 4 ft. 8 1/2 in. and it is 8 miles long.

The cost of the cars, for their seating accommodation of 46 passengers, is moderate, and it is the first case of this method of working, with two sets of engines being used, with English built chassis although, of course, Ford sets have been running for the last seven years on several of the associated lines dealt with through Lt.-Col. H.F.Stephens' office.

TRAILERS TO CRIGGION

The Editor looks at the origin of Gazelle's trailers on the Shropshire & Montgomeryshire Railway.

When the Criggion branch of the erstwhile Potteries, Shrewsbury and North Wales Railway was re-opened by the Shropshire & Montgomeryshire Railway in 1911, the provision of a passenger service over the chronically decrepit Melverley viaduct must have given Colonel Stephens a few sleepless nights. As is well known, he purchased the diminutive 2-2-2 well tank "Gazelle" to provide lightweight motive power, dispatching it off to Bagnalls for conversion into a 0-4-2 WT. Passengers were carried, on occasions at least, in the open rear part of the engine and this caused the Vicar of Criggion to complain bitterly to the Board of Trade. Possibly as a result of these complaints, the passenger space on "Gazelle" was enclosed to provide a compartment capable of carrying at the most six people in very cramped (not to say claustrophobic) conditions. At around this time the passenger accommodation was substantially enhanced by the provision of the trailer which is the subject of these notes.

The trailer was a very curious vehicle indeed. It was converted from a double-deck horse tram said to have been purchased from the London County Council, and despite being shorn of its end platforms, stairs and top deck seating still looked very much like a horse tram. Its precise origin has long puzzled me and recently, after a discussion with a Society member who also happens to be a tramway enthusiast, I contacted Ted Oakley of the London Tramways History Group to see if he could throw any light on the matter. His conclusions on its origin form the basis of the following notes.

The L.C.C. would certainly have had a great number of surplus horse cars in around 1910-11 as its various lines were electrified, so that origin may well be correct. Unfortunately the L.C.C. do not appear to have recorded the

destination of individual cars in their fleet and I do not know of any documentary evidence from the S. & M.R. either.

The vehicle did bear a very strong resemblance to some cars built by the North Metropolitan Tramways Company in 1890/1 for the South Eastern Metropolitan Tramways Company, a very small concern which operated in the Lewisham area of South-East London, so this could be a clue to its origin. It was not absolutely identical to the S.E.M.T. cars, differing slightly in the window dimensions and more substantially in the underframe, but the general likeness was quite striking. As the N.M.T.Co. built similar cars for other concerns it could be one of those, or perhaps the S.E.M.T. cars were not all exactly alike. Also, the underframe may well have been altered by Stephens, with a longer wheelbase and leaf springs rather than coil springs, to make it more suitable for railway use.

The seats in the car were along each side so that the passengers faced each other. The ceiling was of clerestory shape with ventilators along the clerestory sides, and above this was an almost flat roof which would have formed the floor of the upper deck. The space between the two along the sides was planked over leaving gaps for ventilation.

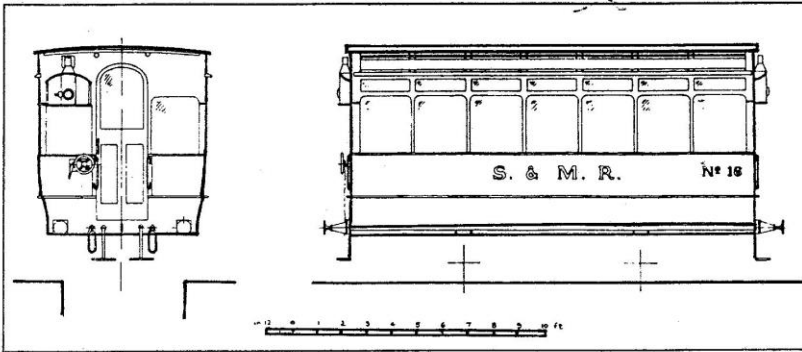
Entry to the car was through sliding doors in the centre of each end, and since the end platforms had been removed this meant that access was impossible from a station platform. Passengers had to scramble down on to the "four foot" and then climb up to the doorway in the end; a small step and handrail were thoughtfully provided to assist them, and fortunately the floor height was much lower than on an ordinary coach.

At each end of the car above the left-hand window was a lamp housing, semi-circular in plan, with a central "bullseye" and a chimney on top. Below the same windows were hand-wheels for operating the brakes through a chain linkage, though since access to these could only be obtained by opening the sliding door and hanging out or climbing on to the buffers, they could not have been used a lot! The buffers incidentally were of a height and spacing to match those on "Gazelle"

The car was probably painted blue by the S.& M. It was initially lettered "S & M R" and numbered 16 in large painted characters on the waist panel, but later small raised letters and numbers were used sited just below window level.

"Gazelle" and its odd trailer lasted in service until at least 1928 after which both were abandoned at Kinnerley and left to moulder away. In true Stephens tradition, however, this was not the end of the story as we shall see in the second part of this article in the next issue!

The drawing below has been produced by projection from photographs without the benefit of a single firm known dimension. Its accuracy cannot therefore be guaranteed, though it should be near enough to produce an acceptable small-scale model. It is reproduced to a scale of 4mm to one foot.



SOCIETY BADGE

At the A.G.M. last year, and again this year, the question of a Society badge was raised.

I undertook to put a note on the subject in The Colonel to see if it drew any response, so here it is!

We had in mind a metal badge, perhaps bearing the picture of the Colonel as used on the cover of this journal, with the name of the Society underneath.

It did cross our minds though that such a badge might look more like a military organisation rather than a railway one, so other suggestions would be appreciated.

If we can get an order of cost, we will put a note on the next Subscription Renewal form so that members can say if they would be interested or not.

Meanwhile, your comments are welcome.

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

Concluding the article from "Sussex County Magazine"

No.5 "Rolvenden" is a very famous engine, having been the first of the famous "Terrier" class of tank engine on the London Brighton and South Coast Railway. It was built to the designs of Mr.W.Stroudley, the locomotive engineer, at Brighton Works and came out in October, 1872. It was then No.71, "Wapping", and went, appropriately enough, to work through the Thames Tunnel on the East London Railway. It was then, of course, painted the brilliant yellow ochre that made "Brighton" engines so distinctive. Legend says that one of this class of six coupled tank engines which was sent to the Paris exhibition (where it gained a gold medal), although so tiny, was able to show a clean pair of heels to the Western of France locomotives, and so caused - for very shame apparently - the French authorities to brisken up the running of boat trains between Dieppe and Paris to connect with the boats to and from Newhaven.

The present owners purchased the engine in 1905, and it is very much in the original condition of 60 years ago. The condenser pipes installed for working through the Thames Tunnel have been removed, and the paint is now dark green. The air pressure brake of the Brighton Railway has been substituted by the Kent and East Sussex vacuum brake. The former London Brighton and South Coast engine No.70, "Poplar", is of the same class, and this now runs under the name "Bodiam". Or rather ran, for in 1931 parts of "Bodiam" were merged with parts of four similar Shropshire & Montgomeryshire Railway engines in order to provide two in good working order. The use of petrol rail motors reduces the number of steam engines required.

A less interesting series of engines is from the London and South Western railway, where they were known as the "Ilfracombe Goods". They were specially built in the 'seventies for

service on the North Devon line, and six of them are ending their days usefully in light railway service. "Hesperus" is a six coupled saddle-tank engine, with outside cylinders, but of no great interest to readers of SUSSEX COUNTY MAGAZINE. "Hecate" is distinguished as the most powerful locomotive on any similar railway in this country. It has eight coupled wheels; there were only eight eight-coupled side tank engines in the United Kingdom until the Southern Railway recently built a large modern class for shunting purposes. Its considerable weight of 53 tons restricts it, however, from working over the underline bridges between Northiam and Robertsbridge.

A unique vehicle in British railway practice is a steam driven four-wheeled passenger coach at present under repair. This was built in 1903, and is a pioneer of a class of gear-driven steam vehicles which has been greatly developed in the past five years under the name of the steam rail coach to enable railways to compete with road transport more effectively.

Sussex owes a great deal to the engineer of the Kent and East Sussex Railway for the valuable work performed by the various railways under his control. The late Lieut.-Colonel H.F.Stephens, M.Inst C.E., was consulting engineer, engineer, and engineer and managing director respectively of the three railways so far dealt with in these articles, and he was associated with nearly a score of light railways in various parts of the country, including such well-known ones as the Welsh Highland, the Shropshire & Montgomeryshire, the Weston, Clevedon & Portishead, and the East Kent. Born in 1869, Lieut.-Colonel Stephens was the son of the pre-Raphaelite artist, the late Mr.F.G.Stephens, who was art critic of the Athenaeum from 1861 to 1901. Following education at University College, London, and abroad, he was a pupil of Sir Alexander Kennedy, and later was with the

Metropolitan Railway. His railway experience was unusually wide; after being with the Board of Trade as an inspecting officer of railways under the "Notices of Accidents" Act, he became Resident Engineer of the Cranbrook and Paddock Wood Railway, following which he devoted himself to the betterment of rural railway communications. His versatility is demonstrated by his being a member of the Middle Temple, a member of the Institution of Civil Engineers, and a Lieutenant-Colonel of the Royal Engineers, while he retained considerable interest in art matters, and never failed to impress those who knew him with the zest of his interest in life. He died in September, 1931, after a long illness, but retained his

interest in railways to the end, coming to meet the writer at Rolvenden, although weak and ill, on the occasion of an official inspection of the new Shefflex rail car, the through carriage working to and from Charing Cross, and the new Southern and Kent and East Sussex station at Headcorn.

The railway is now managed by Mr.W.H.A.Austen of Tonbridge; unhappily difficulties produced by road competition have caused a receivership recently, but Mr.Austen has been appointed to fill the position of receiver and manager.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Rolling Stock of the H.M.S.T.

Ron Mann states that the Falcon brake-end coach was numbered "3" and refers to photo 74 in "Branch Line to Selsey" which shows the coach number "3" in a garter. However photo 70 shows the same vehicle clearly numbered "2" (no garter) with the number "3" applied to the adjacent coach. Exactly when renumbering took place, and why, I have no idea.

So far as the ex-L.C.D.R. four-wheelers are concerned, I can be a bit more helpful. Ron asks whether the four-compartment First was rebuilt into a brake-end coach: the answer is, "No". Photo 59 in "Branch Line to Selsey" shows the Hudswell Clarke loco with a train at Golf Club Halt on Whit Monday 1923, and the first coach is the four-compartment First. The next two are five-compartment Thirds and the fourth is anyone's guess. Photos of the fatal accident (on 3rd September 1923) show a two-compartment Brake, and it is possible that the one was rebuilt into the other during the intervening period.

However, when Dr.Hugh Nicol visited the line in September 1932 ("The Colonel" No 17) he

noted ".....a First Saloon (so called), ex-L.C.D.R., with four compartments and side corridor, but no through vestibuling." This can only be the four-compartment First shown in Photo 59, since Dr.Nicol separately identified the surviving Lambourn Valley coach. Thus the First and the Brake are two separate vehicles. My guess is that the Brake was converted from a First by the L.C.D.R. (for the Sheppey Light Railway perhaps?) but I should stress that I have no evidence either way.

One puzzling item in Dr.Nicol's article (which originally appeared in the "Railway Magazine" for April 1935) was a "curious tin saloon which, obviously, had been run in conjunction with the railcars, but was of a build different from the railcars then in use." This sounds like the centre car from the Shropshire & Montgomeryshire's three-car Ford set.

Any comments, anyone?

Hugh Smith, Stratford

LINES FROM THE PAST

Light Railway Developments

"Gazelle" is out again

There is a variety of news from the light railways.

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 re-boilered and is in the paint shops spick-and-span in green paint and brass nameplate. The work 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 doing all the work.

The latest from the Wantage Tramway is that three trips per day are being worked, and that the 1857 0-4-0T "Shannon" has been under

repair and is now at work again, in turn about with the Manning Wardle engine No. 7.

The ghost of the departed Bideford, Westward Ho! & Appledore Railway hovered in the air a month ago, when the local newspaper mooted a suggestion of turning the very picturesque track of the line, rail-less since 1915, into a road, but nothing more has been heard of it.

The Romney, Hythe & Dymchurch Railway will have in service this summer one of the North Eastern Pacifics with a high-capacity tender, fully as long as the locomotive itself. All trains will consist of the new green stock, which now includes two parcels vans.

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 S.R. 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.

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