



• THE COLONEL •

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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

Another Year Older!

Once again it is A.G.M. time; as before, the meeting will be at Keen House, a short walk up Pentonville Road from Kings Cross Station. The turn-out generally is not very high, though with a widely distributed membership that is not altogether surprising. However it does give members a chance to put their views forward and point the Society in the right direction, so please try to get to the meeting if you can.

Enclosed in this issue is a Society poster which I hope those of you in other clubs etc. will display to give us a bit of extra publicity. Feel free to photocopy it if you want more!

Now for a personal point. For two years I have been both Chairman and Editor, and I don't really think that is right. The two positions should be separate. I am happy to continue as Editor if the membership so desire, but I would like to stand down as Chairman and let someone else have a go. Volunteers please!

COLONEL STEPHENS SOCIETY

Notice is hereby given that the 5th Annual General Meeting of the Society will take place at 3 pm on Saturday 25th April 1992, at Keen House, Calshot Street, London N1.

Agenda

1. Apologies for absence
 2. Actions from the last A.G.M.
 3. Chairman's Report
 4. Treasurer's Report
 5. Membership Secretary's Report
 6. Election of Officers
 - (a) Chairman
 - (b) Treasurer
 - (c) Membership Secretary
 - (d) Publicity Officer
 - (e) Committeeman without portfolio
 7. Subscription for 1992/3
 8. Any other business
- Leslie Darbyshire, Chairman

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NEWS AND VIEWS

Model Railway Exhibitions

Two forthcoming Model Railway Exhibitions are likely to be of interest to Society Members.

The first is a Narrow Gauge and Light Railway Convention, organised by the Wessex Group of the OO9 Society. It will be held on Saturday 4th April, from 10.00 am to 5.00 pm, at Sparsholt College, Winchester (4 miles west of Winchester on the A272 Stockbridge Road). At least 15 NG and Light Railway layouts in various scales and gauges are expected to be present, plus some tramway layouts and a selection of traders, demonstrations and videos.

The second exhibition is at St. Felix Middle School, Newmarket, Suffolk on Saturday 13th June, organised jointly by the Mid-Suffolk Model Railway Circle and the SNCF Society. Among other good things will be three Light Railway layouts: Barry Norman's 'Lydham Heath', John Watson's 'Kenton' and Society Member Ian Hammond's new Shropshire & Montgomeryshire Railway layout, as yet unnamed. If there is sufficient interest, a room could be provided for our members to meet and chat. All profits from this exhibition will go to the Multiple Sclerosis Society, so it's in a very good cause.

More News from Shrewsbury

Derek Smith sends in an update on the situation on the Shropshire & Montgomeryshire Railway.

The strip of land from Shrewsbury West overbridge to the top of the exchange sidings has been sold, so almost the last remnant of the old line in the Shrewsbury area has gone. The land is being levelled, and during this process a point stretcher bar was found which Derek has restored. There was little else there of railway interest.

Railway Studies Library Opens

We are informed that a Railway Studies Collection has been set up at the Library in Newton Abbot, Devon. The Collection contains 7000 books and pamphlets, 5000 photographs and 3000 slides together with drawings, maps, magazines and other items of interest. The bias is towards the railways of the West Country but there is coverage of other areas as well. All items are on open access, but opening hours are at present restricted to Wednesdays 10.00 am to 1.00 pm and 2.00 pm to 5.00 pm, and Thursdays 10.00 am to 1.00 pm. Postal enquiries are welcome to The Library, Bank Street, Newton Abbot, Devon TQ12 2RP.

More Col. Stephens Kits Available

Quanton Road models have introduced etched brass kits (in both 4mm and 7mm scales) for the four wheeled Metropolitan Railway coaches as used on the Weston, Clevedon & Portishead.

Beejay models are advertising 7mm scale vacuum-formed body kits for the K.& E.S.R. (ex-L.S.W.R.) Royal saloon, drawings for which were published in the old Model Railway Constructor for September 1986.

Eric Gates, who makes a range of interesting 4mm scale wagon kits, has brought out a kit for the early L.B.& S.C.R. Open D wagon, six of which were sold to the Selsey Tramway. Eric sent me a trial set of castings to assess, and they have made into a very nice model.

The kits contain the basic cast components, but require wheels, W-irons, couplings and a plasticard floor to complete. A s.a.e to Eric at 391 Woodham Lane, Woodham, Addlestone, Surrey KT15 3PP will provide a list.

Meanwhile, if you want to see what the finished item looks like, come to IMREX at Easter.

BOOK REVIEW

BRANCH LINE TO SHREWSBURY by Vic Mitchell and Keith Smith.
Published by Middleton Press. 96 pages, Hardback. Price £8.95.
ISBN 0 906520 86 X.

This is the latest book published by Middleton press dealing with railways in the Colonel Stephens empire and it certainly lives up to their fine standards.

The title gives a clue to where the described route commences, at LLANYMYNECH; previous books on the Shropshire & Montgomeryshire Railway - by Eric Tonks and Keith & Susan Turner - started at SHREWSBURY (Abbey station), the headquarters.

Illustrations are very clear throughout with most of them new to me, but a slight disappointment are the O.S. maps which are of the line prior to its re-opening in 1911 except the

ones round Shrewsbury where some of the track layouts have not reproduced very well. I like track layouts! *[Not the Publisher's or Authors' fault - except for Shrewsbury itself the Ordnance Surveyers did not visit the area during the whole existence of the Shropshire & Montgomeryshire Railway, so maps are perforce either before it opened or after it closed! - Ed.]*

Nevertheless it is a must for Colonel Stephens disciples and a worthy book for any railway bookshelf.

JG

CHRISTMAS PUZZLE RESULT

A rather disappointing number of people sent in entries to the competition, so my particular thanks to those seven stalwarts who did. That's a very small fraction of our membership. Where were the rest of you? You can't all have gone on a Christmas cruise, and if you did you should have taken your Colonel with you!

No one got all of the hidden words, though some found others that were not on my list and were perhaps a little dubious! Martin Brent came nearest with 45 out of my 46 (plus numerous extra words) so he gets the prize. Ivor Gotheridge was runner-up with 41.

For the record, here is the "official" list.

- | | | | |
|-----------------|-------------------|-------------------|----------------------|
| 1. Stephens | 13. Northiam | 25. Weston | 37. Wingham |
| 2. Daphne | 14. Hawkhurst | 26. Clay Cross | 38. Ham (lane) |
| 3. Austen | 15. Headcorn | 27. Watgate | 39. Eastry |
| 4. Seven Stones | 16. Edge Hill | 28. Rother | 40. Roman Road |
| 5. Tenterden | 17. Camber | 29. Hole | 41. Hope Mill |
| 6. Meeth | 18. Edgebold | 30. Salem | 42. Dido |
| 7. Callington | 19. Brambledown | 31. Shefflex | 43. The Colonel |
| 8. Ford | 20. Chapel Lane | 32. Crew Green | 44. High Halden Road |
| 9. Broadstone | 21. Ringing Rock | 33. Robertsbridge | 45. Shepherdswell |
| 10. Thisbe | 22. St. Michaels | 34. Calstock | 46. Arcadia |
| 11. Ash | 23. Ashover | 35. Rye | |
| 12. Golf Links | 24. Junction Road | 36. Hecate | |

THE SELSEY MANNING WARDLES

To follow his series of articles on Selsey rolling stock, Ron Mann now moves on to the locomotives

The Hundred of Manhood and Selsey Tramway employed the services of three Manning Wardle locomotives during its lifetime. All three were built as contractors' locomotives and they had all worked for a number of owners before coming to Selsey. In consequence they show many variations from their original condition and the changes continued while on the tramway. Of the three, "Sidlesham" seemed to make rather more frequent visits to the loco. repair shed than the others. For the modeller, it means carefully picking the right combination of variables to match the period modelled. In this first article I will deal with "Sidlesham" which was the oldest of the three as well as being the first to arrive at Selsey.

Potted history

Built by Manning, Wardle & Co. of Leeds in 1861, and one of that firm's earliest products, being Works No.21. It was one of their "Old Class I" locomotives.

First it was owned by J & J Charlesworth of Leeds who sold it to the East & West Yorkshire Union Railway. It then passed to Meakin & Dram of Birkenhead. It was at Blagdon waterworks near Bristol in the early 1900s. Before arriving on the Selsey tramway in 1907 it was rebuilt and overhauled by Hawthorn, Leslie & Co. It was in use until 1930 and scrapped in 1932.

The name

An easy one - "Sidlesham" was one of three locomotives on the tramway named after locations along the route, Sidlesham being a village halfway between Chichester and Selsey.

Visible changes between 1907 and 1930

Safety valves, smokebox door, handrail over smokebox door, handrail round chimney, buffers, sandboxes, tool boxes, cab and cab

bracing, paint and lining. These changes took place at various times and the picture is complex. Hopefully, the table may clarify matters.

Alterations recorded (see table)

- (1) c 1908 R.H. sand box added (see note B).
- (2) c 1910 G.N. style safety valve cover and handrail round chimney fitted.
- (3) c 1910 Vertical stays added from cab sides to roof.
- (4) c 1915 Round buffers fitted in place of ribbed ones.
- (5) 1911-5 Domed smokebox door in place of flat one with loss of handrail above smokebox door hinges. R.H. sand box removed.
- (6) 1923-7 R.H. sandbox replaced. Front tool box removed. New cab rear sheet. Horizontal stays at or front. No cab tool box.
- (7) 1927-30 Handrail around chimney cut off. Inclined stays fitted from tank top to front weatherboard.

Photographic sources

- Ref.1: "The Colonel Stephens Railways", John Scott-Morgan, David & Charles
Ref.2: "Branch Line to Selsey", V.Mitchell & K.Smith, Middleton Press
Ref.3: "The Selsey Tramways", Edward Griffith, published by the Author
Ref.4: Model Railway Journal No.12 "Morous & Friends" by Don Townsley
Ref.5: "Railways of Arcadia", John Scott-Morgan, Paul Waters & Associates

Notes

- A. This photograph could not have been taken in 1898 as "Sidlesham" did not arrive until 1907.
B. I suggest that the loco. started working on the line without any sandboxes and that they were fitted on both sides at the same time.
C. I suggest this was an official photograph taken after the alterations in 1909 or 1910.

D. Doubtful if taken in the 1930s as stated because there are later photos of the loco. still in service and it was withdrawn in 1930.

E. "Sidlesham" was very shy in having its left hand side to the camera during the 1910 - 1920 period and only in later years do we get a record of that side of the loco. This ties up with the fact that in all the early shots it was facing Selsey and in the later ones it is facing

Chichester. Where did it go to do an about-turn and why?

F. Has anyone any suggestions as to what the wooden structure is that is visible between the fireman's legs in this photograph? The one that it was a game larder for wildfowl caught along the line hardly seems true!

Some additional comments by the Editor

An earlier view of this loco. appeared accompanying a letter from Eric Tonks, published in "The Tenterden Terrier", issue 17. It shows "Sidlesham", then named "Henrietta", working at Minera lead mines, near Wrexham, North Wales. Minera recorded her as in bad condition in February 1899 and disposed of her soon afterwards, so the photograph must be earlier than that.

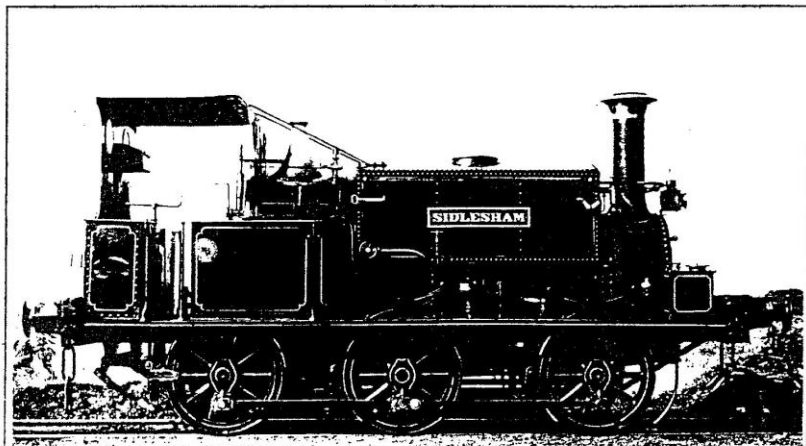
It shows some interesting features:

- (1) The cab has no rear weatherboard, only pillars at the rear corners.
- (2) A "Henrietta" nameplate (fitted while owned by Charlesworth) is on the cab side sheet and a Hawthorn Leslie (not Manning

Wardle) works plate (presumably put on at an earlier overhaul) is on the bunker side. Although removed prior to arrival at Selsey, the location of both of these is visible under the paint in the original of photo Ref.4.

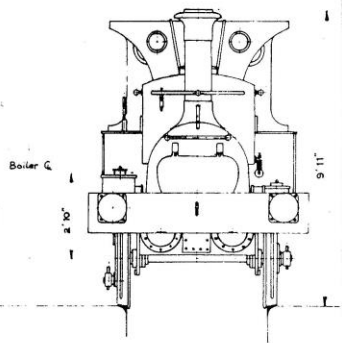
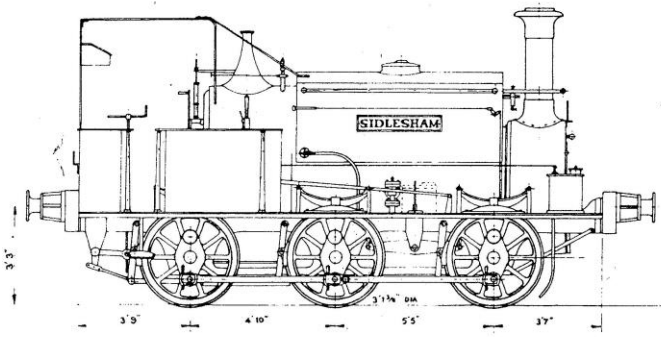
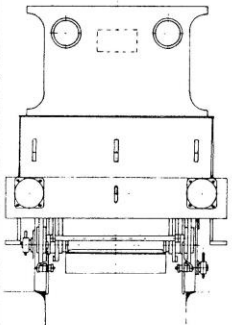
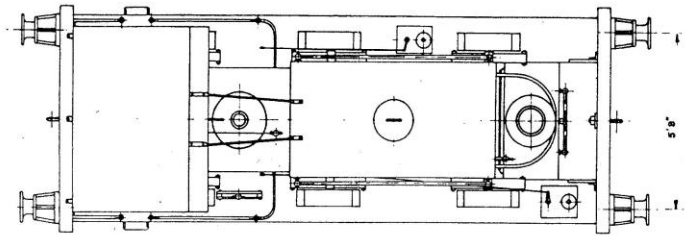
- (3) A plain stove pipe chimney.
- (4) Ribbed pattern buffers, but with a pair of metal-faced wooden dumb buffers in between.
- (5) Standard Manning Wardle sand boxes at the front of the footplate on both sides.

Eric Tonks in his letter speculates that the rebuild prior to arriving at Selsey was by a builder other than Hawthorn Leslie since their plates were removed.



Sidlesham in about 1909 or 1910 (photo Ref. 4)

No.	SOURCE OF PHOTO	YEAR	S. VALVE	S. BOX	DOOR	CHIMNEY	BUFFERS	PAINT	SANDBOXES		L. FRONT	CAB DETAILS
			COVER	DOOR	HAND RAIL	HAND RAIL	LINING	R. H.	L. H.	TOOLBOX		
1	Ref.1 Top p34	c 1908 (Note A)	Large Cylindrical	? Flat	? Yes	No	Webbed	Lined	No	?	?	Stays to roof front
2	Ref.4 Top p30 Ref.2 Plate 24	?	do	?	?	No	do	Lined	No	?	Yes	do
3	Ref.2 Plate 67 Ref.5 Plate 33	c 1909	do	?	Yes	?	do	Lined	Yes (1) (Note B)	?	?	do
4	Ref.3 p43 (Note C)	c 1910	G.N. style trumpet (2)	?	Yes	Yes (2)	do	Lined	Yes	?	?	do Toolbox on back
5	Ref. 1 Btm p34 Ref.2 Plate 45	Dec 1910	do	?	Yes	Yes	?	?	Yes	?	?	Vertical stays added from sides to roof (3)
6	Ref.2 Plate 72	Apr 1911	do	?	?	?	Webbed	Faint	Yes	?	?	do
7	Ref.2 Plate 62	Apr 1911	do	?	?	Yes	Webbed	Faint	Yes	?	?	do
8	Ref.3 Cover Ref.2 Plate 29	?	do	Flat	Yes	Yes	Round (4)	Faint	Yes	?	Yes	do
9	Ref.2 Plate 11 Ref.5 Plate 23	c 1915	do	Domed (5)	No (5)	Yes	Round	No	No (5)	?	Yes	do
10	Ref.2 Plate 6	1921	do	do	No	Yes	Round	No	No	?	Yes	do (see Note F)
11	Ref.2 Plate 81	May 1923	?	do	No	Yes	Round	No	No	?	Yes	do
12	Ref.4 Top p31 (Note D)	c 1927 (Note D)	do	do	No	Yes	Round	No	Yes (6)	Yes	No (6)	New cab rear sheet (6) Horizontal stays to front
13	Ref.2 Plate 85	Jul 1927	do	do	No	Yes	Round	No	Yes	Yes	No	do
14	Ref.2 Plate 87 Ref.4 Btm p30	c 1930	do	do	No	No (7)	Round	No	Yes	Yes	No	Angled stays from tank to cab front (7)
15	Ref.2 Plate 10	c 1930	do	do	No	No	Round	No	Yes	?	No	do



SELSEY TRAMWAYS

0-6-0 "SIDLESHAM"

Manning, Wardle & Co., 1861.

© L. Löringhagen 1970

ON THE S & M IN WARTIME

The following fascinating extract from "Locos at War" by P.Kalla-Bishop (published by Bradford Barton) was supplied by Alan Garden.

The Shropshire & Montgomeryshire Railway, or S.& M., was taken over by the army in 1941. The line had been opened in 1866, closed in 1880 and was revived from neglect and ruin in 1911. The route that the army obtained ran eighteen miles from Shrewsbury Abbey station to Llanymynech and included Shrawardine viaduct over the river Severn, a girder structure that was subject to a severe speed restriction because of its condition. The operating centre and locomotive shed was at Kinnerley, 13 3/4 miles from Shrewsbury Abbey, which was the junction for a branch to Criggion that was not included in the army's take-over. The military purpose of the line was to serve munitions stores and to this end a number of sidings were added off the railway between Shrawardine viaduct and Kinnerley by the army.

The army rebuilt the S.& M., among other things providing new track from Shrewsbury to Kinnerley, as well as on some sections of the lesser-used line from Kinnerley to Llanymynech. Apart from the munition store sidings, new sorting sidings were provided at Ford and new exchange sidings with the main line railway from Shrewsbury to Welshpool were put in at Hookagate near Shrewsbury. The 8th Company construction section at Ford was engaged in strengthening underline bridges between there and Hookagate. At one stage we had occasion to consult the document under which the army had taken over the line. We saw that included was a clause providing for the eventual handing back of the railway to its owners in as good a condition as when taken over. To meet that clause literally at the end of the army's occupation would have meant patient application of the restorer's art. Even if the old layout and ancient equipment had been put back, with infinite pains, the necessary air of decrepitude and decay would have been well-nigh impossible to reproduce.

At Shrewsbury Abbey station the old station buildings were in use and there was a simple run-round loop against the platform with an eight-lever signal box. There was a steep gradient out of the station so that the line could cross the Shrewsbury - Kidderminster and Shrewsbury - Hereford railways. Then followed a drop past disused exchange sidings with the Welshpool line at Meole Brace to Hookagate at 2 3/4 miles. This section was worked by staff and ticket. Hookagate had flagboard signalling, as had Cruckton (5 miles) and Ford (7 miles). The single track was worked by army telephone and ticket between the passing loops. From Ford the army had put in double track to Quarry block post (8 miles) at the other end of Ford sidings. Quarry had flagboard signalling and the section was worked by telephone. From Quarry the rest of the line was single track, across Shrawardine viaduct to Nesscliff (11 3/4 miles) at first, a section worked by means of the single token. From Nesscliff with its flagboards to Kinnerley was worked by miniature electric train staff and Kinnerley had a thirteen-lever signal box and signals. Kinnerley on to Llanymynech was a one-engine-in-steam section with light traffic.

A fresh locomotive shed had been built at Kinnerley, although when I was there no one had got round to cleaning out the ashpits outside, which were filled with ancient ashes. The shed housed a varied collection of locomotives. First came three old London & North Western Railway 0-6-0 "Coal" engines, carrying L.M.S. 8108, 8182 and 8236 and built in 1874, 1879 and 1881 respectively. These were inherited from the S.& M.'s civilian days. Then there were two ex-L.N.E.R. 0-6-0s of the J15 Class, W.D.212 and W.D.221, originally built for the Great Eastern. These had carried L.N.E.R. 7835 and 7541 respectively until sold to the Denham Film Studios in 1936, where

they had been disguised to simulate the locomotives of various countries as needed for filming, including Russia. Last of the main line locomotives, and the best liked, were the "Dean Goods" 0-6-0s. On the line at that time were W.D.96 to W.D.98 and W.D.176 (ex-G.W.R. 2425, 2442, 2415 and 2558). It should be said that until this time the W.D. favoured a desert sand or near khaki livery for its locomotives and that one or two of the "Dean Goods" were painted in the later dark green camouflage colour that I now saw for the first time.

Among the shunting locomotives was W.D.1872, a more or less standard Avonside 0-6-0 saddle tank (Works number 1872 of 1920) painted black. It carried the name "Ashford", but there was no number on it at the time other than that on the works plate. Another 0-6-0 tank was W.D.73, built by W.G.Bagnall in 1941 and the delivery of which had been frustrated by the war. It was said to have been intended for a Turkish colliery. This was a useful little engine, but had a deep and wide front buffer beam which was out of gauge slightly on the S.& M., unfortunately; it chipped bits out of the platform at Kinnerley and so on. Consequently W.D.73 was restricted to certain lengths of track and only men who knew where it could go and where not were allowed to drive it. Later it was sent to an obscure W.D. establishment sited south-east of the main line in an old factory between Melbourne Junction and Derby. From casual observation of this depot from passing trains one would have supposed that the cramped quarters would have maximised the buffer beam nuisance. At the end of 1943 this depot was being worked by W.D.211 (a Hudswell Clarke 0-6-0 tank of 1915) and W.D.223 (a Manning, Wardle 0-4-0 saddle tank of 1883) which were both based on Derby L.M.S. shed. After 1945, W.D.73 was sold to the Morton Colliery at Clay Cross.

Three shunting locomotives were laid aside in a siding to the north of Kinnerley station platform at this time. An inheritance from the civilian S.& M. was "Gazelle", the celebrated

0-4-2 well tank built by Dodman of Kings Lynn for a private owner in 1893 and claimed as the world's smallest standard gauge steam locomotive. After coming into W.D. hands from the S.& M., "Gazelle" was passed finally to the National Railway Museum at York. [Now at the Army Museum of Transport, Beverley - Ed.] The other two locomotives were London & North Western Railway 3014 and 3015, miniature 0-4-0 saddle tanks built without cabs for service at Crewe Works. Built at Crewe in 1880 and 1882, they had been familiar to visitors to Crewe Works as they lay out of use in the paint shop for ten years before 1939. These two were still in L.N.W.R. plain black freight livery and they carried L.N.W.R. numberplates.

The ammunition store sheds (with earth cover) at the end of the sidings off the railway east of Kinnerley held three wagons apiece and small locomotives like these seemed to be just the thing for shunting three wagons at a time. Unhappily the sidings were too long so that the locomotives ran out of steam and, even worse, all three had hand brakes only, which took a long time to stop three wagons. The store sheds had sliding doors over the track and, after two or three door pairs had been smashed by trains that failed to stop in time, larger locomotives with better brakes were substituted for the little ones.

As passenger stock the military provided the eight ex-Ealing to Southend L.M.S. corridor saloon coaches that had worked previously on the Melbourne Military Railway. On the S.& M. the coaches were painted the darkish grey-green that the Longmoor Military Railway favoured for its coaches in the 1930s. This was a little lighter than the dark green adopted for W.D. stock in 1943 as mentioned above. The corridor coaches were supplemented by one three-axle bogie ex-Caledonian compartment coach, of the same type used on the L.M.R. and the M.M.R. This coach was painted in an unpleasant buff-brown livery, and one suspects that it was painted locally using civilian paint stocks. One of the train sets was made up of

three of the corridor coaches and the ex-Caledonian coach. Laid aside at Kinnerley was a four-wheel coach inherited from the civilian S. & M. This was built as part of the London & South Western Railway's Royal train in 1848. *[More likely 1844 - Ed.]* Most of the exterior was grey weathered timber with a few traces only of the previous S. & M. livery of dark blue. Inside, the broad upholstered seats were luxurious still. Unfortunately the coach's condition had become so bad by the end of the war that it had to be broken up.

The S. & M. Military Railway had little freight stock of its own and what there was had seen previous service on the L.M.R. or M.M.R. Not unnaturally, military railway freight trains featured many gunpowder wagons. A curiosity of the workings was the survival of a weekday civilian S. & M. freight train from Hookagate to Llanymynech and back. This was worked by a S. & M. civilian crew using "coal" engine 8108, although during my time on the railway 8108 was laid aside and L.M.S. 28204 of the

same class was hired in its place. The W.D. worked an early morning passenger train from Shrewsbury Abbey to Kinnerley plus the return service after the day's work was finished. This was supplemented by week-end passenger trains from Kinnerley into Shrewsbury for soldiers seeking amusement, the return service leaving the Abbey station at 23.00 hours.

Once when going on leave from Ford I arranged an early call to catch the 06.15 hours train, an empty stock working to Shrewsbury. The call failed and I was awoken by the handlamp of the train's fireman shining into my face. He was one of my sappers and told me that the train would hang about for ten minutes. I shaved and dressed fast and when stumbling across the rails in the first light towards the coaches I was hailed from the "Dean Goods" train engine. On climbing on to the footplate I found that the crew had occupied the time by brewing a most welcome mug of tea. There are advantages in having friends in the business!



Kinnerley Shed as rebuilt by the Army
Photo taken 8th September 1991

D Smith

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Christmas Issue Comments

As usual, I found much of interest in the Christmas 1991 edition of "The Colonel". I wonder if I could comment briefly on three of the items:

Alan Cliff in his letter expresses some surprise that H.F. Stephens was not listed as a Director of the Burry Port & Gwendraeth Valley. As I understand the situation, Stephens was never employed in the management of the line, but was employed as a Consultant Engineer in connection with its application for a Light Railway Order and introduction of passenger trains. An interesting sidelight of this is that the W C & P R's acquisition of No. 3 "Weston" from the Burry Port in 1906, which might be thought to be a transfer between Stephens' railways, actually took place before he was connected with either line.

Turning to the article on plate girder bridges, I do not know when your photograph of the bridge near Rolvenden was taken [1990 - Ed.], but the present structure dates from only 1970-73, when the deteriorated beams were replaced by new ones and the abutments were considerably rebuilt and strengthened. Newmill Channel bridge (No. 2332) originally had a span of about 34 feet and a skew of around 45

degrees. The original abutments were in a poor condition and as the river authority required the bridge to be raised and increased in span in connection with their flood prevention works, it was necessary to rebuild it completely. The new bridge, which used Callender Hamilton spans from a temporary bridge over the Medway at Aylesford, Kent, was opened in 1977. Hexden Channel bridge (No. 2347) was square and had a clear span of some 25 feet. It was replaced in 1979, as the original beams were badly corroded and the abutments cracked and again the water authority required the structure to be raised.

Finally, Edward Seaton (mentioned in the report of the "Colonel Stephens Railways" course) was not in fact appointed as Resident Engineer of the Metropolitan Railway until 1903; before then he had been an independent consultant and it would have been in that capacity that he acted for the Paddock Wood & Cranbrook. Together with Percy Tempest (Engineer of the South Eastern Railway at that time) he was also Engineer for the Tenterden Railway Bill of 1899 (Headcorn - Tenterden - Appledore).

Tom Burnham, Sidcup, Kent.

More comments on Jon Clarke's letter, this time from two Committee members. Firstly, from the Treasurer.

As Treasurer and more importantly a long-standing member of the Society (even back to the days of Andrew Emery running the show for the cost of an s.a.e.!) I cannot let Jon Clarke's comments in "The Colonel" issue No. 26 go unanswered.

Firstly, surely no member expects that a committee member or anyone else should absorb the cost of producing "The Colonel";

this is most unrealistic and is without any precedent. Committee members already subsidise the society by not claiming all the postage and other expenses incurred by themselves on behalf of the Society. (thanks, chaps!)

"The Colonel" has improved beyond recognition from its early days both in format quality and content and I am sure all members will agree that the Editor is doing a splendid job.

A fiver over a year when broken down is adequate to cover four journals per year and leave a little spare to go towards hiring an A.G.M. room and some publicity.

I would however entirely support Jon's views about increasing membership by advertising, press releases, trade stands etc. and this was mentioned in my last reports at the A.G.M. Now that we have a Publicity Officer in the person of Stephen Hannington, I hope this will come to fruition.

Finally, on the vexed question of including material other than relating directly to the Colonel's lines, why not ask the members? I personally feel we should be 100% Colonel Stephens as other groups and societies exist for other lines, but the members must decide.

At the end of the day the members I think get a good five pounds worth; if I am wrong our membership will fall and Jon can say "I told you so!"

Nigel Bird, Llwyn-y-Groes, Dyfed

Secondly, from the Publicity Officer and past Editor.

Reading Jon Clarke's letter reminded me of the KESRA versus TRC squabble (founding preservationists against the operating company) and at first I was reluctant to get involved. However, as one of the architects of the current regime, and with perhaps a closer working knowledge than most of the issues, I feel compelled to take the plunge.

Firstly, I would like to express my wholehearted support for "the committee" who have freely given of their time, effort and, more often than not, money to keep our show on the road. As a result of their work, the Colonel Stephens Society is stronger and better served than ever before.

Credit is also due, of course, to Andrew Emery and Jon, for exactly the same reasons, for their excellent work in getting the CSS off the ground in the first place.

Having said that, a few facts are needed to balance the argument. The membership of the CSS has almost doubled since "the committee" took over: from 88 in June 1987 to 164 in April 1991. This is Chris Holden's achieve-

ment. Incidentally, a recruitment advert has recently appeared in two issues of the British Railway Journal.

Furthermore, at the time that I took over as Editor of the journal, and before the committee was formed, the Society finances were in such a disorganised state that our "printer" was threatening to withdraw his services because he hadn't been paid. Nigel Bird put that right.

As for the five quid subscription, it wouldn't even buy a round of drinks down my way. And I've never yet got a hangover from reading "The Colonel!": worth every penny.

As for the inclusion of non-Colonel railways, I resisted it in my day, but I have no objection whatsoever if Les Darbyshire chooses that direction. I trust his judgement. And by "resist", I mean there were requests for this sort of material from the membership itself. Current editorial policy therefore gets my vote any day - particularly the fearless approach of the letters page.

Stephen Hannington, West Norwood

Having let the membership have their say (and with apologies to those whose letters, for space reasons, were not printed) I think I had better call a halt to correspondence on this topic - Ed.

MODELLING TOPICS

Ray Arnold explains how he adapted Comet LMS Suburban Stock etched coach sides to become the ex-Midland stock of the Shropshire & Montgomeryshire Railway.

Editor's Note - Ray works in 3mm scale, but Comet make the same sides in 4mm scale and the method described is suitable for both.

The Comet sides required are the LMS Suburban 9-compt. and 7-compt. brake-3rd. Drawings of the Midland stock can be found in "Midland Coaches" by D Jenkinson, and prototype photographs of the S & M stock are desirable.

First scoring deeply with a craft knife and then by the judicious use of sharp scissors, the sides are cut to the dimensions given on the drawing to give the correct panelling arrangement. Joins in the sides are best made along a door edge if possible, as this shows the join least.

A strip of brass is prepared of length slightly short of the full coach length (by twice the end thickness) and wide enough to reach from just above the lower edge of the side (with clearance for the floor) to just below the lower edge of the windows, and a second strip of the

same length but narrower, to reach from the roof edge to just above the window frames. Both strips are soldered to the inside of the sides, leaving a rebate into which the glazing material fits.

The glazing material is temporarily tacked into place, and the droplights scored on it ensuring it does not move whilst so doing. The glazing is then removed and the droplight profiles cut out (drill small holes at corners first) and by trial and error (with me much more error!) ensuring that the holes match the brass etching. The edges of the glazing holes are painted appropriately to the colour scheme used and when dry, small squares of glazing material are attached from behind to give depth to the droplights. Finally the glazing strip is refitted and secured.

Thus a coach side is born. The rest of the assembly is in accordance with the manufacturers instructions.

Some S & M Queries

Ray is currently working on a model of Shrewsbury Abbey station (having already made Kinnerley) and requires some detail information as follows.

1. All 1920s photos show at the buffers end of the platform an advert comprising a large dark circle with the word "Grocutts" centrally placed. Grocutts is believed to have been a department store. What other wording was on the advert, and what were the colours?

2. Above the platform exit over the canopy a sign states "J & B Blower Ltd.", with possibly "wholesale and retail" beneath. Other letter-

ing is illegible. Is Blower the firm who now supply compost? What is the full lettering, and in what colours?

3. Which firms traded from the huts in the station yard? I know the Shropshire Coal Co. was one, but who else? Did J Crane have an office? And what are the words on the gable end of the smaller two huts facing the station?

Can anybody help Ray with this information? Replies via the Editor, please, then I can publish it in case it's of interest to others.

FROM THE ARCHIVES

Another interesting snippet from the Festiniog Railway archives, by kind permission of the Archivist, Michael Seymour

Grand Atlantic Hotel
Weston-Super-Mare¹

12.7.1923

Dear Mr Tyrritt²

I'm sorry I missed you last night.

I got finished earlier than I expected & caught the 4.30 p.m. ex Festiniog L & N W (M & S) R yesterday reaching Euston at 5 a.m. today (12 1/2 hours!) only to find after a day in the office I had to come on here by the 6.30 p.m. ex Tyburnia.³

I will write you on my return to office Friday re suggestion as to signalling at Festiniog end. If you want a staff stn at "The Tunnell", you will want a loop. I wonder if you could find out if we could get 33 feet of land cheap on Festiniog side of your Tunnell Box for say 400 yards. It would only be about 3/4 of an acre. do you know the owner either side of the line would do. preferably the LH side going from Portmadoc to Festg.

By the way are you in enough with Euston to get my mans⁴ London Whitechurch & Welshpool 3rd Class Pass extended to Dinas & Festiniog L & N W.

Yrs fth

H.F.Stephens

Notes

1. Stephens was visiting the W.C.& P.R.
2. S.E.Tyrwhitt, General Manager, Festiniog & Welsh Highland Rlys
3. Tyburnia = Paddington (from Tyburn Tree)
4. My man = W.H.Austen. Stephens often referred to him thus. Note that Austen had a 3rd class pass - the Colonel's were 1st class!
5. Spelling and punctuation are as on the original. Neither were Stephens' strong points!

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