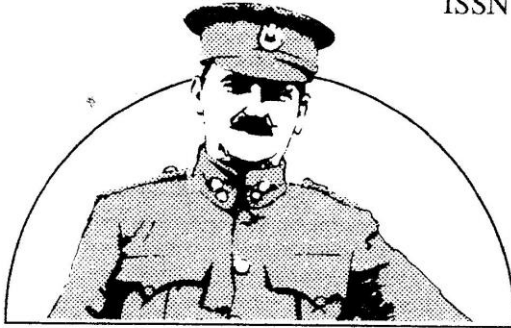


ISSN 0268-778X



• THE COLONEL •

NUMBER 42 AUTUMN 1995

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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

Subscription Time Again!

Yes, it's time to part with your money once again! Please note that the subscription is unchanged at five pounds (six for overseas members) and not as stated in the AGM report in the last issue. For some reason best known to itself, the Editorial computer went berserk last time and changed every figure that was preceded by a pound sign! I thought that I'd corrected them all, but must have missed a couple.

I've put the amounts in words rather than figures in this paragraph, in case the wretched machine decides to mess me about again!

Enclosed with this issue is a Membership Renewal Form. It would help to keep our funds in a healthy state if you could return the forms (with remittance) as quickly as possible.

More Material Wanted

I'm running very low on articles again, so sharpen your quill pens, summon up the Muse and get writing. Anything relevant to the Colonel accepted, historical or contemporary, provided it's not indecent or defamatory! A couple of suggestions:

could someone please write about the current state of plans and progress on the Welsh Highland? And we haven't had anything on the Plymouth, Devonport & South Western Junction for several years. How about it, folks?

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Personal views expressed in articles and letters in this journal are those of the contributor, and not necessarily those of the Society or the Editor.

NEWS AND VIEWS

East Kent Re-opens!

Following a final inspection by the Inspectorate on 2nd June, the Shepherdswell to Eythorne section of the East Kent Railway was re-opened to public passenger trains on 24th June, 47 years after the previous passenger service was withdrawn. The opening ceremony was attended by the Chairman of Shepherdswell Parish Council, Barry Crush, and the Member of Parliament for Dover, David Shaw.

The inaugural train comprising DMU set 51572+54224 in Network SouthEast livery set off at 11.10 and ran throughout the day at 45 minute intervals. A similar service, but commencing at 11.00, will operate each week-end (Saturday and Sunday) until the end of October.

At present the line ends at Eythorne crossing, where a platform has been erected; eventually it is intended that it will be extended to Tilmanstone Colliery (site of a possible mining museum) though this will require the restoration of a bridge over a lane as well as further land purchase.

Rye Exhibition a Success

The Model Railway Exhibition held at Rye on July 15th to celebrate the Centenary of the Rye and Camber, and also to launch Laurie Cooksey's book on the subject, was most successful and was thoroughly enjoyed by visitors and participants alike. There was an excellent set of layouts of very high quality, mostly narrow gauge, and several of which your editor had not seen at an exhibition before. Congratulations to the organisers.

SE&CR Coach Restored

The Kent & East Sussex Railway have just completed the full restoration of one of their SE&CR coaches. The coach, No.2947 of 1901, was one of four sold in 1921 and used to build a bungalow in Ashford. In 1986, two of the four were moved to Tenterden for restoration - the other two were beyond economic repair.

Work began on the first coach in August 1994, much being required, as the coach had been stripped of all internal fittings including partitions and had no under-frame! The latter problem was solved by using the underframe, suitably shortened, from a Southern utility parcels van.

The coach has been painted in its original crimson lake livery with ornate lining and lettering. Because the coach had been encased in the bungalow during its years as a dwelling, the original lettering had been preserved so could be copied exactly.

Terrier Trust Launched

The K&ESR without an operational Terrier is like a show without the leading lady, so it is pleasant to be able to announce that a Trust is being set up to raise approximately £75,000 to purchase BODIAM from its current private owners and to restore it once again to full working order. A new boiler is being ordered as part of a joint deal with the Isle of Wight Railway.

The Trust has applied for charitable status and membership is open to anyone donating £150 or more. Smaller donations are of course also welcome, though in that case donors do not become members.

Prospective members (and donors) should write to Tim Stanger, The Terrier Trust, Tenterden Town Station, Tenterden, Kent

MORE NEWS AND VIEWS

Warley Exhibition

As mentioned in earlier issues, the Society will have a stand at the Warley National Model Railway Exhibition to be held at the National Exhibition Centre, Birmingham on Saturday 7th and Sunday 8th October. The exhibition will be in Hall 12 of the Centre, and will be open to the public from 10.00 to 19.00 on Saturday and 10.00 to 17.00 on Sunday. Access for setting up is on Friday and from 07.30 to 09.30 on the Saturday.

We have Stand No.62 (out of 228 - it's a very large show!), and will have twelve feet of frontage. We will have our display boards, plus a showcase containing models. I have had some offers of models

to go in this case, but not enough to fill it so far, so could do with more. 7mm or 4mm scale (OO, EM or P4) would be all acceptable, but I need to know in advance what is coming so that I can provide suitable track to put it on. I will also need estimates of value of each item for insurance purposes. I've had some volunteers for stand manning but need a couple more. Please contact me directly with offers for either models or manning (or both). Passes will be available each day for stand manners (three plus myself) and can be picked up from the "Front of House Steward" each morning; he will be outside the main entrance to Hall 12 in the Atrium.

Society Badges

At last, after several false starts and numerous "prods" by members, thanks to the efforts of Nigel Bird the Society has a badge! The all-metal badge is semi-circular in shape and roughly the size of half of a pre-decimal penny. The upper half of the Colonel is depicted, as on the cover of this Journal, in khaki uniform, with "THE COLONEL STEPHENS SOC." in an arc on a green background. All in all, an attractive, professional-looking badge.

If you want one, and I'm sure you all will, they are available from the Treasurer, Nigel Bird, at a cost of £2.50 including postage and packing. To assist and encourage you, an order form has been added to the membership renewal form. They will also be available from our Warley stand for a mere £2.25, buyer collects!

Donation made to Museum Fund

As agreed at the AGM (see last issue), the Society made a donation of £250 to the Colonel Stephens Museum Project. We have received the following letter from Philip Shaw on behalf of the Project:

"Thank you very much for the generous cheque as a donation to the Colonel Stephens Museum Project. This is very much appreciated and perhaps you could convey our thanks to the Committee.

We hope to open the museum towards the end of next year which is, as you know, the 100th anniversary of the passing of the Light Railways Act. The collection of artefacts at Tenterden is very extensive, having been built up over a 25-year period so we have plenty of material to create a suitable display covering all aspects of Colonel Stephens work.

With all good wishes, Philip Shaw"

WHAT IS A LIGHT RAILWAY?

Ray Arnold asks an important question!

Rather surprisingly there never has been a clearly laid down definition of a Light Railway but I have managed to find this definition:

A Railway of lighter standard than the main network of the country. A secondary system of transport, usually in this country a branch line probably below 20 miles in length, built to open up a poor district not likely to be of interest to Main Line Companies and freed from the Main Line restrictions, but conforming with the 1868 Regulation of the Railways Act which laid down a maximum axle load of 8 tons and a maximum speed of 25 mph. Buildings kept to a minimum, flexibility in staffing (Unions' one-man-one-job not applying).

However in those days (1868) the problem of every line needing a Parliamentary Act existed, thus little happened until the 1896 Act.

Even so, surely there must have been rules of running laid down? There never specifically were; even the 1896 Act did not say "do this" or "don't do that", but worked on the fundamental idea that Light Railway construction is the elimination of every kind of expenditure not essential to its efficiency as a means of transport, and the reduction of all permanent way works, plant and appliances to their simplest and most inexpensive forms. This was stated by E.R.Calthrop in "Light Railway" and seems to me a fair description of my own modelling activity as well as Colonel Stephens' way of running a railway!

The 1896 Act set out to provide for the following items:

1. It established a Light Railway Commission of three people for a period of five years (later extended) to look after the development of Light Railways

2. It set up a simplified procedure for obtaining authorization for building the railway, cutting out the need for individual Acts of Parliament. The Commissioners were empowered to issue a Light Railway Order which was passed to the Board of Trade for approval.

3. Local Authorities (County, Borough or District) were encouraged to promote and work Light Railways, and if they advanced money in the form of loans the Company could also obtain from the Treasury a loan of up to a quarter of the construction cost.

4. The powers of the Light Railway Company were defined as being within the discretion of the Commissioners but also within the provisions of the general Railway Acts already in force, unless otherwise stated; except that all Light Railways were exempt from paying passenger duty, as laid down in the 1842 Act.

5. A provision for compulsory purchase of land was included

6. Existing railways were permitted to convert all or part of their lines into a Light Railway by applying for a Light Railway Order.

In principle a Light Railway consists of light rail, ballast and sleepers just sufficient to cope with a limited, suitable loco weight; gradients for moderate loads relatively steep; bridges over or under roads in most cases unnecessary; and Board of Trade safety requirements greatly simpli-

fied. However, the Local Authorities usually issued the criteria for each particular line and so they varied considerably from one part of the country to another. People like Colonel Stephens simply exploited local needs, with the idea of running a railway on the cheap. Often this meant cattle grids instead of crossing gates and keepers, no signalling except very simple needs within station confines, light weight track with thin ballast (often dirt), mixed trains rather than separate passenger and goods - cheap and cheerful!

To me the demise of railway construction is forecast in the report by the Commissioners in 1921:

"In assessing the comparative economic values of road-motor transport and Light Railway services, it must be frankly recognised that a road-motor service may be a desirable alternative to a Light Railway and no such Railway should be authorised if it is clear that a road-motor service would be equally suitable and likely to be established within a reasonable time."

THE WORCESTER & BROOM (LIGHT) RAILWAY - PART 3

More information from Stephen Branchett

The original Directors were:

Colonel John Anselm Samuel Grey
Major Cuthbert Fairbanks Smith
Reginald Young Turnbull Kendall
Lt Colonel Holman Fred Stephens
plus one other

I have no information on the Colonel's other directors, but they may well have been local landowners or the like.

There were to be the following running powers:

1. The Redditch, Evesham and Stratford branch of the LMSR
2. The Stratford on Avon and Midland Junction branch of the LMSR
3. Between the junction with Railway No.2 and Shrub Hill station of the GWR

These would have held out the prospect of through running from Worcester to Strat-

ford, Redditch and Evesham, which would have been all the more interesting if operated by the LMSR along the lines of the Southern's operation of the North Devon & Cornwall Junction Light Railway.

The proposed speed limits were:

- a. 30 mph
- b. 20 mph where gradient > 1 in 50
- c. 15 mph where gradient > 1 in 40
- d. 10 mph over curves sharper than 9 chains or within 200 yds of open level crossings.

Axle Load (Tons)	Rail Weight (lb/yd)
8-10	50
9-11	55
11-13	60
13-15	65
15-17	70
17-20	90

LOCK'S THE HATTERS AND COLONEL STEPHENS

Alan Cliff, creator of the well-known and delightful "Lock's Siding", produces with tongue firmly in cheek some remarkably tenuous links between the Hatter and the Colonel!

The author of this article was introduced to the world of railways by his grandfather, George Stephenson, of Ealing. Grandfather, who was not related to the "other" George Stephenson, the great engineer, was a lover of railways though not an enthusiast in the modern sense. He was in fact a hatter, and chairman of James Lock and Company, the hatters of St James Street, London. This firm started business in 1676 and is still going strong. The present writer's 7mm scale O-gauge model railway is named after Lock's and the chronicles of activities on this Colonel Stephens type branch are recorded each month in "British Railway Modelling".

Colonel Stephens does not seem to have bought his hats from Lock's unlike many other famous servicemen. The hats worn by Nelson at Trafalgar and Wellington at Waterloo were both Lock hats. Field Marshal the Duke of Cambridge, Queen Victoria's cousin, had Lock's design a hat for him, a sort of square-crowned bowler. This became very fashionable. The Duke probably wore one when he cut the first sod for the builders of the Mid-Suffolk Light Railway. This extraordinary line from Haughley to Laxfield was a prime candidate for the Colonel's empire but never made it!

Lock's also gave the world the bowler, the badge of office of railway inspectors and foremen throughout Britain. It was originally designed for a Norfolk farmer, William Coke, who wanted a hard close-

fitting hat for his gamekeepers to protect them from low branches and cudgel-wielding poachers. To this day this hat is known as a "Coke" at Lock's. The name "Bowler" is that of the hat-maker to whom Lock's entrusted the design. Lock's do not actually make hats though they finish them.

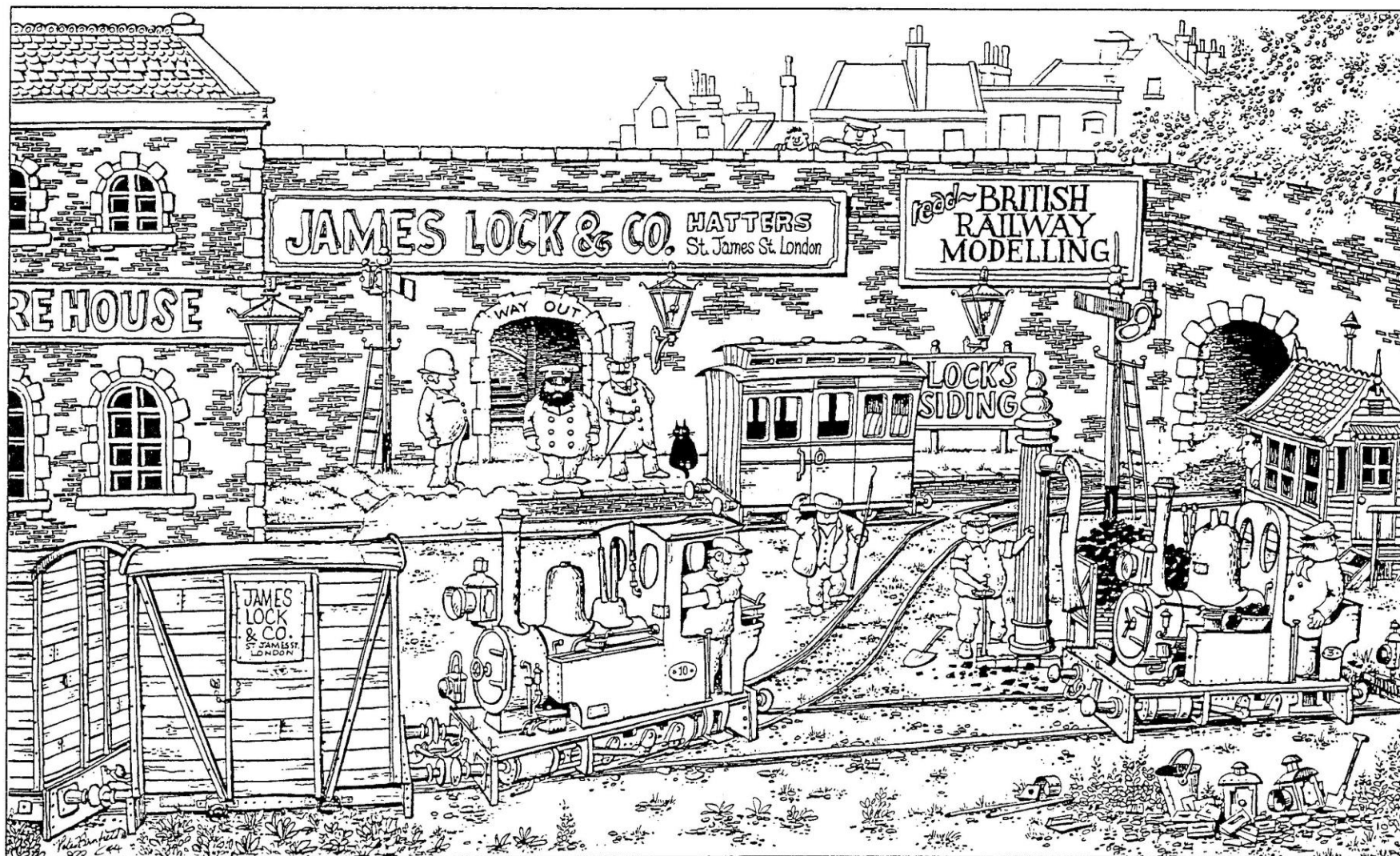
Many customers of Lock's have had locomotives named after them including "Palmerston" on the Festiniog named after the nineteenth-century prime Minister. Colonel Stephens' association with the Festiniog is well known! The Colonel's collection of ancient royal carriages produces a Lock connection for the firm has supplied hats to the royal family for generations.

It is probable that the other Directors of some of the Colonel's railways bought their hats from Lock's, like the Duke of Devonshire, Chairman of the Furness Railway or Lord Stamp, President of the LMS.

Perhaps the Colonel did after all?

Editor's note. The drawing of Lock's Siding overleaf was specially commissioned by Alan Cliff from artist Peter Barnfield, whose advert appears elsewhere in this issue. Our thanks to both gentlemen for permission to reproduce it here.

I like the idea of a Colonel Stephens line in industrial (but genteel) surroundings. It has rather the flavour of an urban Wantage Tramway!



LOCK'S SIDING

From an original drawing by
Peter Barnfield

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

The Colonel's Railway Titles

Chris Jackson's fascinating article "The Chalke Valley Railway" in the Spring 1995 Issue of "The Colonel" caused me to consider what name the Colonel might have applied to the Chalke Valley proposal had he had a hand in the matter.

"County" names were a marked preference on his lines and I suppose "Wilts and Dorset Railway" would have been a likely appellation - the epithet "Light" often being avoided by the Colonel with regard to his railways! The keenness of the Colonel for "county" names can be seen in the re-naming of so many lines - the "Potts" re-opened as the Shropshire & Montgomeryshire, the Rother Valley becoming the Kent & East Sussex (after an abortive attempt to name the line the South Kent), the Hundred of Manhood & Selsey Tramway re-named the West Sus-

sex and so on. The East Kent was so-called from "birth" as was the North Devon & Cornwall Junction. "Stillborn" proposals included the East Sussex and the Surrey and Sussex. Some railways retained their "non-county" names, presumably because the Colonel did not control the line from an early date (Sheppey Light, W.C.& P.), but can anyone explain the enthusiasm for "county" names?

Jon Simons, Bishop's Stortford

(Could it be simply that the Colonel, ever an optimist, realised that a "county" title allows for future extension of the line without the need for re-naming? Even the numerous proposed extensions of the K&ESR would all have been contained within the geographic boundaries of its title! - Ed.)

The "Grantham" Steam Tram

Regarding Doug Ware's letter in "The Colonel" Issue 38, in which he says that the Grantham steam tram of the Wantage Tramway was transferred to the Portsdown and Horndean Tramway in 1903. This is I'm afraid quite untrue and is an old red herring started, I think, by the late Dr H.A. Whitcombe who was without doubt the greatest steam tramway enthusiast of his era. His extensive collection of photographs and other material is now deposited in the Science Museum.

How he came to identify the Wantage "Grantham" with the Portsmouth car is not now clear, but they were quite different vehicles. The Portsmouth car was an experimental machine known as "LIFU" from its builders, the Liquid Fuel Engineering Company of East Cowes, Isle of Wight. Fuelled by paraffin, it was built

about 1896 and ran first on the Portsmouth Street Tramways up to 1901, and then on the Portsdown & Horndean Light Railway from when that line opened in 1903 until about 1917, after which it was used as a store.

Nick Kelly, Shoreham-by-Sea

(The above is a drastic precis of a long letter from Mr Kelly, describing the history of the several Grantham cars built, and of the LIFU car. Although I appreciate that there is no Stephens connection that I know of, I hope to publish the letter as an article in its own right in a future issue as I am sure most of our members are as fascinated by these rather esoteric machines as I am! - Ed.)

The Rye & Camber Tramway

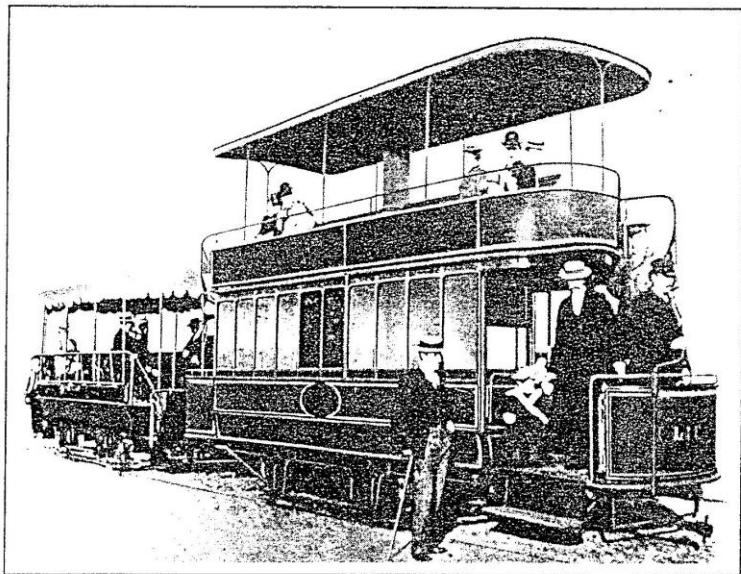
As a postscript to my article "Pamela Oldfield and the Rye and Camber Tramway" in the last issue, I had a really nice letter from the lady herself recently. A friend had given her a photocopy of my article - if I thought that she might get to read it, I don't think I would have written it in the first place! In her letter she writes:

"...I certainly do try to research thoroughly but the problem comes when a) there is almost no relevant material or b) there are several conflicting sources... I wanted to mention the R & C Tramway because as a child of six I made several journeys on the tramway in 1939 (and before) and had vague but happy memories. We were in Camber on holiday

when war was declared and then stayed on for several months because my parents expected the bombing to start in London where we lived."

I am sure Pamela Oldfield wouldn't mind you quoting the above in "The Colonel" if you think members might be interested in her side of the story. In 1991 her children's book "The Mill Pond Ghost and other short stories" was published, and on pages 94-105 "The Haunted Track" is set on the Rye & Camber Tramway. She says "You can see how it (the Tramway) haunted me!!"

Laurie Cooksey, Camber



The LIFU Car at Portsmouth c 1898 (see letter opposite)

A RURAL STEAM TRAMWAY

Laurie Cooksey demonstrates that even contemporary accounts can get things wrong

It was ironic that the article "A Rural Steam Tramway in Sussex" taken from "The Railway World" of March 1896, should have appeared in the Summer 1995 issue of "The Colonel" when, in that same issue, I mentioned that "...many articles featuring the Tramway in the railway press, INCLUDING ONE WRITTEN AS EARLY AS 1896, have contained several errors..."

The article starts well enough, until it is suggested that "...the line is...1 3/4 miles long" - a slight exaggeration, as it was only 1 mile 43 chains to the end of the locomotive spur at Camber. In 1898 the spur was extended 3 1/2 chains on an 8 chain radius left-hand curve into the sand hills, from where sand was removed and transported by sea in connection with the building of the outer arms of the Admiralty Pier at Dover, and for the use of local builders in Rye.

"The Rye and Camber stations are connected by telephone". This statement can be neither confirmed or denied, but telephones would seem to be an unnecessary luxury with the Tramway being operated on the "one engine in steam" principle. Although used at first for its original purpose, the booking office at Camber soon fell out of use and tickets were issued by the conductor on the tram. Telephones were not introduced in Rye until 1904.

Regarding the locomotive CAMBER, the solid leading wheels are quoted as being 10" in diameter, rather than the correct 1'10", that "the side tanks hold 140 gallons", actually 100 gallons, with boiler pressure as 150 lbs instead of the true 140 lbs. Quite what the article was getting

at when it states "...the frames are extra wide so that one can pass all around without difficulty when travelling at a good speed..." is difficult to explain! I can't imagine who might wish to attempt such a manoeuvre even though CAMBER's reported top speed was only 20 mph with normal average around half that figure!

The Bagnall carriage was 25' 10" long, yet the article quotes 24' 0". "...the second class portion is provided with glass windows during the winter months..." Now this statement is true, but it has been misinterpreted by Camber Tram historians ever since! When delivered, the second class section was completely open above the 3' 6" high tongue-and-groove planked sides, but two fixed windows (similar in size to those in the first class compartment) mounted on to a single wooden panel could be bolted to the roof supports between the waist and cant rails of the centre section during inclement weather. The Rye end had similarly-sized planked panelling added (that matched the sides) so that, viewed from the side, the vehicle took on the appearance of a brake composite carriage. When the familiar sash windows were built into the carriage some time prior to the First World War, they were fixed PERMANENTLY in place.

The number of errors is surprising when the writer acknowledges "Mr H G Henbrey, the Secretary of the Company (1895-1903) to whose courtesy we are indebted for much information relating to the line..." and it is all the more curious that this article should be used, word for word, in several editions of Messrs. Bagnalls' own catalogue!

TREVOR CHARLTON ETCHINGS

Some coach building components, described by the Editor

Trevor Charlton produces an extensive range of etched components for building model coaches. They are not kits as such, since only the sides and ends are generally supplied, but they are fully detailed with etched panelling and cut out windows, and have the tumblehome formed where appropriate. They are made from a zinc alloy which solders easily and takes paint well. The range covers a wide variety of companies, including some fairly unusual ones such as the Maryport and Carlisle and the MSWJR. Adrian Kennedy has kindly sent a copy of Trevor Charlton's list, from which I have extracted the K&ESR prototypes, as follows:

215 C Pickering Steam Railcar
216 B 23'6" 4-wheeled 3rd (Rother Valley)
302 C 28' 3-compt brake-3rd (ex LSWR)
393 C 27'3" 2-compt brake-3rd (ex-LSWR)
394 D 32' tri-compo (ex-LSWR)
395 B 18' Royal saloon (ex-LSWR)
396 F 44'2" brake composite (Rother Valley bogie conversion)
397 F 44'2" all-3rd (ditto)
554 F 41' brake-3rd (Pickering)
555 F 41' all-3rd (Pickering)
556 F 41' brake-composite (Pickering)

The Pickering railcar contains some errors - I know cos it's made from my drawing! - but it still looks ok. The 32' tri-compo is not I think exactly the same as the K&ESR vehicle, but it is very similar.

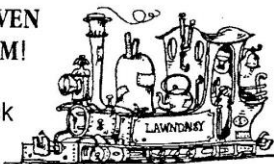
The letters B,C,D etc are a price code. As at 1st Jan 1994, prices for 4mm scale ranged from £7 for B to £13.75 for F. The parts are also available in S-gauge, 7mm and 10mm scales at higher prices - the 7mm parts are rather less than three times the 4mm price. No doubt all prices have risen since January last year, but a call to Trevor will check that. Parts are not stocked but are made to order against a 20% deposit.

Trevor's address is:

Trevor Charlton,
206 Dower Road,
Four Oaks,
Sutton Coldfield,
West Midlands,
B75 6SZ.
Telephone:
0121 308 2876

THESE RAILWAYS WERE SO OBSCURE, EVEN COLONEL STEPHENS OVERLOOKED THEM!

- The Portersfoote Bunting Light
- Creeping Nurge & Lower Lottlestock
- Lydiard Tregoze Light Industrial



Greetings Cards, Prints and Booklets to make you chuckle and some serious stuff too! A 19p stamp brings you a sort of catalogue, the **STEAM PENCIL & WHIMSEY RAIL ILLUSTRATED NEWS & REVIEW**

➤ From: Peter Barnfield, 15 Ladman Road, Bristol BS14 8QH

BOOK REVIEWS

THE RYE & CAMBER TRAMWAY - A CENTENARY HISTORY
by Laurie A Cooksey. 160 pages, hardback. Published by
Plateway Press at £17.95. ISBN 1 871980 26 7

Your reviewer has been waiting with eager anticipation for this book to appear, and is certainly not disappointed by the result. Indeed, he finds it difficult to find enough superlatives to describe it! The book contains everything that a line history should contain: a detailed and scholarly account of the line's birth, life and death in the context of the local physical and social environment; full details of the line's infrastructure with track diagrams and scale drawings of the buildings; a complete history of the locomotives and rolling stock with scale drawings showing their changes over the years; details of train services, fares and tickets; biographies of

the line's staff; and the whole beautifully printed on high quality paper with a fantastic collection of well-chosen and well-reproduced photographs. The full colour dust-jacket carries a superb reproduction of a painting by Eric Bottomley on the front, and locomotive portraits by Paul Jenner on the back. Most importantly, the text is not just a dull account of facts, but is a jolly good read!

You have probably gathered from the above that the book is highly recommended!

LD

COLONEL STEPHENS RAILMOTORS by Stephen Garrett and John Scott-Morgan. 44 pages, soft covers. Published by Irwell Press at £7.95. ISBN 1 871608 46 5

This is another book that has been eagerly awaited for some time, and again it was worth waiting for. The term "Railmotors", which I expected to embrace just the Fords, Shefflexes etc plus the WC&PR Drewrys, here is extended to include not only the K&ESR's Pickering steam railcar but also "Gazelle" and its trailers on the Shropshire and Montgomeryshire - a reasonable extension of the definition.

The Authors have clearly done a great deal of research into the subject and the result is a collection of just about everything that is known about these fascinating vehicles. There are some matters that are still rather obscure, such as the detailed history of the steam railcar and the early life of the Wolseley-Siddeley car, and perhaps more facts will come to light in

the future, but this book is as complete as is possible with current knowledge.

The book is printed on good quality paper and is illustrated by a fine set of photographs, including a few new to your reviewer, and these are well reproduced. About the only thing lacking for a book of this kind is a set of scale drawings of the vehicles themselves, though it must be admitted that with makers' drawings non-existent and dimensional information sadly lacking in most cases, this is not an easy shortcoming to cure!

Once again this is a book that is highly recommended - no member should be without one in his collection.

LD

SIGNAL POSTS FROM OLD RAILS

This short article appeared in THE LOCOMOTIVE for 15th January, 1930

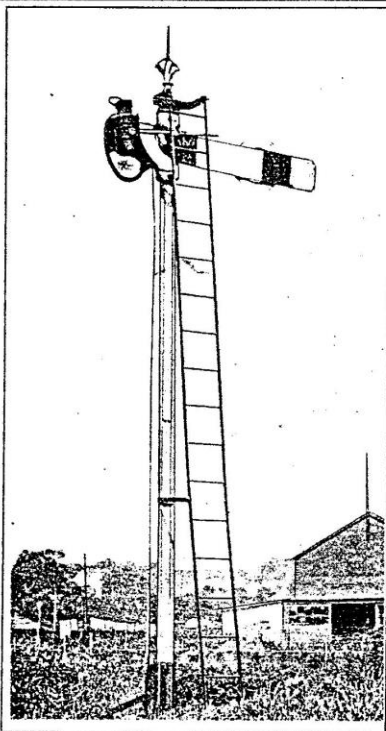
For many years the Indian railways have used old rails for structural purposes, bridges, signal posts etc., and an interesting example of this employment of worn-out material is to be seen at the present Colaba terminus, Bombay, of the Bombay, Baroda and Central India Ry., where the columns are formed of groups of rails secured in ornamental cast-iron bases and capitals - a successful application.

Recently, the Southern Ry. have prepared designs of signal posts built up of old rails. Lieut.-Col. H F Stephens, R E. of the K&ESR and other light railways, has been using signal posts made out of old rails for a long time past on several of his lines. The example illustrated in the accompanying cut is a very neat one.

Editor's notes.

The illustration is somewhat unclear (even in the original magazine) but some details can be made out. The post is a single length of bull-head rail, whereas the Southern ones used two lengths of rail with spacers between them. A single rail I would have thought would be a bit flexible, but maybe waving signals didn't worry the Colonel! The rail is bolted to a cast-iron base set in the ground, while at the top there appears to be another casting carrying the arm pivot and the lamp.

From the background, the location would seem to be a short distance on the Tenterden side of Headcorn, where the line runs closest to the main road by the present dairy building, and the view is looking north. The arm appears to have a ring on it, and if so is unique for the K&ESR. Usually a ring indicates either a shunt-



ahead signal or else an exit from a siding on to the main line. Why either sort would be required at this particular location escapes me, unless extremely long trains were being shunted at Headcorn.

The article suggests that rail-built signals had existed on several Stephens lines for some time. Has anyone evidence of any others? If so, please let me know.

CHAIRMAN'S CORNER

The Edge Hill Light Railway

One of the strangest lines associated with the Colonel was the Edge Hill Light Railway. Although not part of the Stephens "empire", it was built under contract by the Colonel for a private company at the end of the First World War.

The idea for the line was to transport minerals, in the form of ironstone, from a newly-discovered rich seam to join the Stratford on Avon and Midland Junction Railway at Burton Dassett in Oxfordshire. The line was not an easy one to build, with very steep gradients. It was standard gauge and was worked partly by locomotive and partly by rope haulage. A loco was used in the mine area, then a self-acting incline took loaded wagons down and empties up.

It seems that things were going well when it was discovered that the main seams of ironstone were running out within the mine's land area. The seams did continue under some adjacent private land and efforts were made to obtain the mining

rights, but the landowner objected to the company mining on his land. So, early in 1924 the railway ceased to operate.

The Edge Hill was always a mineral line and was never used for passenger carrying. After closure, everything was left just as it was on the last day of operation. The line had three locomotives; two were LB&SCR "Terrier" 0-6-0Ts and the other a Manning Wardle 0-4-0ST named "Sankey". The company also owned some 4-wheeled wagons and two ex-Great Eastern Railway brake vans. All were left to rot until they were broken up in 1947. Amazingly, they had survived untouched for over twenty years, surviving even the WW2 scrap metal drive; a real ghost railway!

In 1945 I visited the line with another enthusiast, but bad weather and briars stopped us proceeding very far along the line. Everything was very overgrown and lost in a jungle of vegetation.

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