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THE COLONEL

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THE COLONEL STEPHENS SOCIETY

The Society for the Enthusiast
of the Light & Narrow Gauge Railways of
Holman F. Stephens



THE COLONEL STEPHENS SOCIETY

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

EDITORIAL

As I was rash enough to volunteer for this job, I had better introduce myself.

I earn my living running a publishing company and editing a monthly magazine for radio enthusiasts. So editing *The Colonel* is rather like a busman's holiday. What it does mean is that I have all the professional d.t.p. gear to make my life a little bit easier.

My railway and modelling interest are very wide ranging - probably too wide ranging! I model in ScaleSeven and the current project is a small, portable 7mm layout, loosely based on light railway practice à la Colonel Stephens. Progress is very slow at present as work gets in the way, along with all the other projects on the boil. These include an American HO layout, a 5" gauge 'Sweet Pea' and several workshop projects. I also

write a regular column on electronics for a new quarterly model railway magazine.

I do not believe that the editor of a Society journal should have to write very much of the content - that is up to you, the members - and I eagerly await your contributions! I use a Macintosh computer, to do everything - as does 85% of the publishing world in the UK. If you can supply your copy on a Mac disk, so much the better. I can accept copy from a PC on a 3½" disk, but please save the file in ASCII format as well as your wordprocessor format.

Do not be put off if you don't have access to a wordprocessor, I would rather have typed or handwritten copy than none at all! Photographs can be scanned and drawings copied. So, please get writing.

Dick Ganderton

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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 & VIEWS

Bishop's Castle Railway Study Day

The Glyn Valley Tramway Group are holding a Study Day on Saturday 14th September 1996 on the Bishop's Castle Railway. There will be a lecture and slide show in the morning, a visit to the BCR Museum, visits to former BCR stations concluding with a walk along the 'Onney Trail' - the former BCR trackbed.

Full details and a booking form are available by sending an SAE to: Bryan Heatley, Cantlow House, Vicarage Lane, Burton-in-Wirral, Cheshire L64 5TJ.

Mid-Suffolk Special Event Day

This year being the Centenary of the passing of the Light Railways Act, the Mid-Suffolk Light Railway Society is commemorating the event by organising a Special-Event Day on Sunday, 18th August 1996, at Brockford Station Museum.

It was this Act that made it possible for local promoters to bring about the formation of the Mid-Suffolk Light Railway, which ran from Haughley station on the GER's Ipswich to Norwich line, to Laxfield, deep in the heart of Suffolk.

B.Q. Co. Wagons

I am considering commissioning transfers and/or wagons for the British Quarry Company, as found on the Shropshire & Montgomeryshire Railway. I first need details of the wagons' manufacturer, the colour of the wagons, and clear photographs of the lettering on the wagons, including the plain 'B.Q.Co.', 'Granofast', and 'Granomac'.

Can anyone help?

If you can help, please write to me, Jon Clarke, Kilmorey House, 13 Lumley Road, Chester, CH2 2AQ.

There will be displays of both the Mid-Suffolk and other light railways to explain to visitors the importance of the Light Railway Act.

Peter Wilde's 7mm scale *Laxfield* layout will be on display and the event is intended to be of educational/historical nature.

**Mid-Suffolk Light Railway Society,
Brockford Station, Wetheringsett,
Stowmarket, Suffolk IP14 5PW.**

Flying Over The Edge Hill Light Railway

If anyone is interested, it is possible to fly over the site of the Edge Hill Light Railway, just 6 miles north of Banbury! Given favourable weather conditions, plus a north/north westerly wind, it is possible to take a glider flight over the former site, courtesy of the Shenington Gliding Centre. They fly from Shenington Airfield, formerly known as the WW2 airfield Edge Hill.

Jon Clarke has been a regular visitor to the airfield over the last four years, and has had the opportunity to fly over the old quarries, which are still visible from the air.

If you're interested, contact the Shenington Gliding Centre, PO Box 230, Banbury, Oxfordshire, OX16 9FS. Tel: (01295) 680008.

AGM 96 REPORT

Les Darbyshire reports on the Society's 9th AGM, held on 27th April 1996.

The Chairman and 12 Members attended.

1. Apologies for absence were received from four Members.

2. Actions from the last AGM

a) Society Badge: This had been produced and was selling well.

b) Donation to Colonel Stephens Museum: A sum of £250 had been donated, and a letter of thanks received from Philip Shaw.

c) Exhibitions: The Newmarket exhibition will contain a substantial Colonel Stephens element, and will take place on 8th June this year. The Warley exhibition will unfortunately, have only a small Society presence.

3. Chairman's Report

Once again I am pleased to report another successful year for the Society. Our membership is holding up very well, with new members joining up all the time. Many other societies have fallen victim to the long recession.

The Society has taken another step forward with the formation of a local group in the West Midlands. I know there are many members who are unable to attend the AGM but would like to make contact with others in our Society. I hope that the new group will be the start of a trend that will bring our members together more often.

The AGM marks the end of an era, with our Editor putting down his pen for the

last time after six years and 24 *Colonels*. What a good job he has made of it, not just as Editor but the many other tasks he has undertaken on behalf of the Society. When I became your Chairman, Les was most helpful in pointing me in the right direction, for which I am very grateful, and he has continued to help to this day. We have had 24 super *Colonels* under his editorship.

Now we must look to the future, and our new Editor. I would like all our Members to support him in every way they can, and I am certain they will.

During the last year the Society has been well represented at Model Railway Exhibitions. I was only able to attend the Warley show, and was very impressed with our stand. Many thanks to those who helped over the week-end.

After many false starts, we have at last got a Society Badge, thanks to our Treasurer who got to grips with the problem and produced what I think is a first class product. I trust you all have a badge by now!

The message for the future is one of expansion for our Society, in which more people become aware of the Colonel and his achievements. Thank you all.

Derek Smith, Chairman

4. Treasurer's Report

Another substantial year's progress; although our 'Cash at Bank' is some £110.38 down on the year ending 1995, we have had three 'one-offs', namely donation of £250 to the Colonel Stephens Museum, £136.95 for purchase of a Society display cabinet and £414.77 for

AGM 96 REPORT

purchase of our Society badge (sales to date have generated £210.25, with some 95 still in stock).

A healthy £61.80 has been received in interest, despite falling rates.

Once again I see no reason to increase membership fees.

I am prepared to stand for re-election.
Nigel Bird, Treasurer

5. Membership Secretary's Report

Yet again I am delighted to report an overall increase in Membership of the Society. The number of paid-up Members as at 20th April is 200, an increase of 17 over 1995 and a very healthy situation.

Our Presence at the Warley Exhibition at the NEC Birmingham was well worthwhile and increased our profile substantially; without doubt there are a lot more potential members out there who don't even know we exist. I suggest we try to reach them via national advertising and more attendance at rail events.

At last the membership has the chance to 'show off' that they are Members - the rather splendid enamel members badge (just £2.50 including p&p!) was commissioned in 1995 and over half the stock has been sold. It is unlikely to be viable to have a further run produced so any members who don't have one I suggest you order NOW!

I am prepared to stand for re-election.
Nigel Bird, Membership Secretary

6. Election of Officers

The Treasurer, Membership Secretary, Publicity Officer and Committeeman,

being prepared to offer themselves for a further period in office, were elected unanimously.

For the position of Editor, Dick Ganderton was proposed by L. Darbyshire and seconded by D. Sutton. He was elected unanimously.

The Chairman proposed that L. Darbyshire be co-opted on to the Committee in accordance with the Society Rules in order to act as a focus for archive material, plans, etc. This was agreed unanimously.

7. Subscription for 1996-7

It was agreed to accept the Treasurer's recommendation and leave the subscription unchanged.

8. Publicity Matters

Ivor Gotheridge said that he had hoped to have had a display at IMREX this year but the exhibition had unfortunately been cancelled. He suggested that we should create a poster suitable for displaying at the various preservation lines around the country. He and Stuart Marshall agreed to get together to produce a suitable poster.

He said that the East Kent Railway intended to have a Light Railway Centenary week-end next year and we should be represented.

Hugh Smith suggested adverts in such magazines as *Railway World*, *Model Railway Journal* and the new *Railway Bylines*.

David Powell suggested a 'Colonel Stephens enclave' at the Aylesbury show, maybe next year.

AGM 96 REPORT

9. Any Other Business

a) The Chairman read out a proposal from David Sutton, seconded by Nigel Bird, as follows:

"I hereby propose that in recognition of his long service in promoting the cause of Light Railway modelling and archiving and latterly, his great and unselfish services to our Society, Leslie Darbyshire shall be offered, and encouraged by all those here present to accept, HONORARY LIFEMEMBERSHIP of THE COLONEL STEPHENS SOCIETY as a token of our esteem and gratitude for his outstanding contribution and unswerving dedication to our cause."

The Proposal was carried unanimously. In accepting the honour, your scribe was rendered practically speechless!

b) The Chairman reported on the inaugural meeting of the West Midlands Group which took place at the Royal Oak in Dudley Port on 19th April, and which he attended with ten other Members and one guest. After introductions, informal discussions took place about further plans for the future. Unfortunately, the promised slide show failed to materialise due to illness of the person responsible, but Ned Williams went home and fetched his cine equipment and Colonel films. Well done Ned!

c) The Chairman said that two items of Stephens hardware, namely the crane from Abbey Foregate station on the S&M, and the body of the Wolseley-Siddeley railcar/Gazelle's second trailer were being forced to move from their present home at Mike Wright's premises. He

was hoping that the crane (which the Chairman owns) could be found a site near to Shrewsbury. The cost of moving would be considerable, and he asked if the Society could help with a donation towards the cost. It was agreed to support this in principle, subject to the Treasurer's approval.

Regarding the railcar body, which was owned by Mike Wright, this was available to anyone who could give it a home, at no cost except for transport. However it was pointed out that it was completely dismantled and possibly beyond restoration. Les Darbyshire agreed to contact Philip Shaw at the Colonel Stephens Museum to see if he wanted it.

[Post meeting note - Philip thought there was so very little original material left that it would be a replica rather than a restoration. He was not interested in acquiring the remains. He might however consider the crane should a site near Shrewsbury not be found for it.]

d) Dave Sutton suggested a 'Colonel Stephens Evening' at the Model Railway Club premises.

e) Ian Hammond wanted a Society sticker or small notice "Exhibited by a Member of the Colonel Stephens Society" for exhibition use.

f) Ian Hammond asked that Hillside Publications be pressed to put their 8mm cine of Colonel Stephens lines on to video. Ivor Gotheridge agreed to chase them about this.

g) Ivor Gotheridge spoke about the proposals to re-open part of the Ashover Light Railway.

MANNING WARDLE 630 OF 1876

Trevor Wright

In the old county of Pembrokeshire, which is now in the county of Dyfed, Wales, stand the Presceli Hills. On the south western slopes of this range there is a small village beside the remains of a large slate quarry. Together these give the name and need to a small railway company, founded in the late 1800s, known as the Narbeth Road & Maenclochog Railway.

This company owned three locomotives, the youngest of the 0-6-0 saddle tanks was *Margaret* (1878), which is extant at Scolton Manor Museum, near Haverfordwest. The eldest, by three years, was *Prescelly* (1875) and completing the trio was Manning Wardle 630, *Ringling Rock - Maenclochog* in Welsh - which arrived on the railway in 1876.

The railway changed its name in 1881 to the Rosebush & Fishguard, in 1884 to the North Pembrokeshire & Fishguard and it was eventually absorbed in 1898 by the Great Western Railway. When this happened, *Ringling Rock* was renumbered as 1380 and sent to Swindon for overhaul. After working for several years in the West Country she returned to Swindon in 1902, this time to be re-boilered and receive typical Great Western touches, such as the copper capped chimney that can be clearly seen in one photograph of her. In 1912, having had 14 years work out of her, the Great Western withdrew 1380 from service.

Bought by the Bute Works Supply Company of Cardiff, who had also purchased *Prescelly* in 1907 as ex-GWR 1379, *Ringling Rock* stayed in Cardiff for another two years before moving to

Rolvenden and the Kent & East Sussex Railway - bought for the sum of £550:0s:0d. *Prescelly* eventually went to Malton Colliery, where, in the late 1940s she was scrapped.

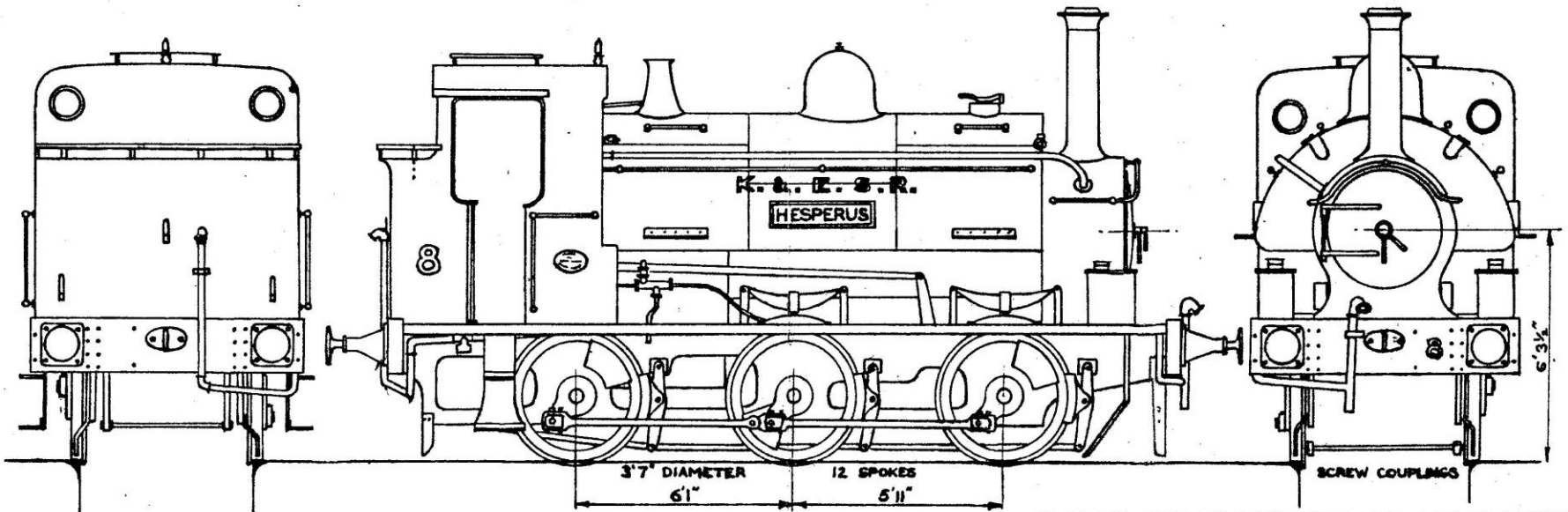
Rostered on the Stock Book as *No. 8*, the Kent & East Sussex Railway used *Ringling Rock* mainly for passenger duties. There is one photograph of the locomotive in the 1920s, with the rear coupling rod sections removed, running with a rake of ex-Great Eastern Railway coaching stock. Why this was done has never been understood, but the idea was probably not too successful, as *No. 8* was soon restored to its original 0-6-0 configuration!

The Accident

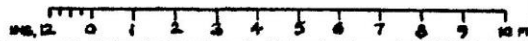
Then came the accident. A charming story has grown up that after this event *No. 8* was renamed to allay the fears of intending passengers. As *No. 8* was the only saddle tank on the line at the time, such a ruse was hardly likely to succeed! The River Rother had flooded and washed out the track at Padgems Curve, between Northam and Bodiam. On being derailed, *No. 8* fell on her side, coming to rest against a tree strong enough to prevent further descent into ten feet of flood water. Damage was confined to dislodging the dome cover and pushing the cab forward over the firebox - damage that was quite quickly put right.

The date of the accident had generally been accepted as 1921 - 1922, but in the Summer 1975 edition of the *Tenterden Terrier*, the Kent & East Sussex journal,

K.E.S.
8



NOTES :- NAME ORIGINALLY "RINGING ROCK", CHANGED c.1821.
 NAMEPLATES REMOVED ALTOGETHER c.1933.
 REF :- "LOCOMOTIVES OF THE G.W.R." (R.C.T.S.) PART 3 p.C89 & dwg. C186



KENT & EAST SUSSEX RAILWAY	
No 8 "HESPERUS"	
DR :- L. Durbidge 8-1-60	K.E.S. 8
SCALE -	

MANNING WARDLE 630 OF 1876

an illustrated article records it thus: "February 1916, two years after *No. 8* was purchased from the Great Western Railway". The illustrations show *No. 8*, off the rails, with *Hesperus* on her tank sides. The renaming of *No. 8*, therefore, pre-dates 1916, but the date when the ex-Maenclochog plates were removed.

What is known is that these Welsh plates were fitted to another of Col. Stephens' locomotives, on a railway that also changed its name three times - from the Selsey Tramway to the Hundred of Marhood & Selsey Tramway to the West Sussex Railway.

Hesperus, as *No. 8* had now become, was extensively overhauled during the period 1933 to 1935 - depending on which source you accept - the nameplates were removed and the locomotive repainted, returning to traffic as *No. 8*. Continual boiler trouble eventually forced retire-

ment in 1939 and in 1941 *No. 8* was cut up to help the war effort scrap drive.

As far as is known, the locomotive was painted dark green all the time, the last repaint returning to lined out in white, edged black - similar to the then current Southern Railway livery.

Sources

North Pembroke & Fishguard Railway. Oakwood Press No. 24.

Model Railway News 1970/71 (contains scale drawings of the locomotive) *Tenterden Terrier*. Summer 1975; Winter 1975.

Journal of Friends of Pembrokeshire Museums. Spring 1972.

Note: The sale date from the GWR is given by one source as 1911, two sources as 1914 and one does not admit.

LETTERS

Dear Dick

Sorry to trouble you so soon in your period of office, but I think I have some information relating to the article in the spring issue of *The Colonel* on 'The Light Railway Act of 1896'.

The line concerned was not the Wotton tramway but the line from Quainton Road to Verney Junction on the Oxford to Bletchley line of the LNWR. It is stated that it connected with the GWR and the LNWR. The GWR connection was at Aylesbury. The section from Quainton Road to Aylesbury later became part of the Great Central London Extension.

Quainton Road to Verney Junction

closed to passengers in 1936, but a freight service, of sorts, clung on until 1957.

Jack Burrell, Bristol

Dear Dick

First, I would like to thank you for volunteering to take over as Editor of *The Colonel*. Speaking as an ordinary member, if it was not for people like yourself there would be no Society.

I am writing to ask you to correct a couple of misprints in my letter *A Day Out In Kent*, published in the Spring '96 issue of *The Colonel*.

TREASURER'S REPORT & FINANCIAL STATEMENT TO 20 APRIL 1996

Balance brought forward	£2074.20	
Income		
Subscriptions received	1104.72	
Sale of back issues	114.05	
Sale of Society badges	210.25	
Interest received	61.80	
	£1490.82	£1490.82
Expenditure		
Room hire for AGM	20.00	
Printing/postage for <i>The Colonel</i>	620.61	
Purchase of display stand	136.95	
Donation to CS Museum	250.00	
Purchase of Society badges	414.77	
Stall rent (Warley)	52.88	
Travel expenses (Warley) L. Darbyshire	40.00	
Other postage	65.99	
	£1601.20	£1601.20
Balance of bank statement 10th April 1996		£1963.82

Unsold badges in stock 95 @ £2.50 = £237.50.

Certified correct - *Nigel Bird, Treasurer.*

LETTERS

My surname is Cant, not Gant and in the first paragraph of the letter it says "I saw a picture of a train leaving Corrington". This should have been Corringham. Maybe it was down to my awful handwriting.

When I get some time perhaps I could write another short article on my memories of light railways in the late 1940s

and 50s. I'm afraid that I didn't take a lot of interest in the technical side, but was more interested in the overall atmosphere of the light railways and branch lines I visited.

J.F.J. Cant 304, Hassocks.

I will be only too pleased for you to write more short articles. This also applies to any member, of course! Ed.

The S&M's Forgotten Rail Cars

Jon Clarke

Much has been written about the introduction and use of the Ford rail car set on the Shropshire & Montgomeryshire Railway, and of the Wolseley-Sidley single railcar, but often forgotten are the petrol driven Wickham and Drewry rail cars, which the War Department introduced for inspection of the line. The Wickham cars came from Wickham of Ware, and had two cylinder JAP engines, which were economical to run. Direction was reversed by shifting the friction drive from one side of the flywheel to the other, but it is known that it was often easier to simply turn the whole car around by hand. The Drewry rail cars were also four-wheeled petrol driven vehicles.

Restrictive

The WD working instructions for use of the Wickham and Drewry rail cars were very restrictive. Although always treated and signalled as a train, they were not allowed to be run, except as ordered by the Controller on duty. The railcars were not allowed to be operated during the hours of darkness, or in bad visibility, except on the authority of the Operating Officer. It is possible that the former restriction resulted from improper use, in taking servicemen to public houses down the line, although safety was the reason given.

Some Wickham Car trailers were provided for the rail cars, and the propelling of these on the main lines was prohibited, as was the use of trailers between rail cars, and the use of two trailers at the

same time, empty or laden. The carrying capacity of the Wickham Car trailers was 10 cwt., while the Drewry Car trailers had a 30 cwt. limit.

Keep a Sharp Look-out

The speed restriction on the rail cars makes the speeds run by the S&M engines seem excessive. On the main line, a 15 mph speed restriction was enforced on the rail cars, reducing to 10 mph at the Paper Mill and Shrawardine level crossings. At the Paper Mill, the rail car drivers would have to sound the whistle or klaxon when approaching the level crossing, then reduce their speed to 10 mph. Drivers were then instructed to "keep a sharp look-out" and be prepared to stop short of the crossing. At the Shrawardine crossing, rail traffic had priority over road traffic, but instructions were the same as for the Paper Mill crossing.

At sub depot level crossings, except Argoed Yard and Poplars where a crossing keeper was in attendance, the instructions were the same, but the speed was limited to just 5 mph. At the Shoothill, Nescliffe, Maesbrook and Wernlas level crossings, the rail cars had to stop at the 'Rule 103' boards, and Rule 103 carried out. If the driver was unaccompanied, the rail car had to stop dead at the edge of the level crossing, and the driver had to look along the road in both directions. If no road vehicle was in sight, or as soon as a sighted vehicle had passed over, or come to a halt at the crossing, the driver could then rejoin the rail car, and pro-

ceed over the level crossing at walking pace.

Full details of WD rail cars used on the S&M are not available, but at least eight Wickham Rail Cars, numbers WD2941, WD2942, WD2943, WD3376, WD3410, WD11965, WD11966, and WD11967, and four Drewry rail cars, numbers WD9103, WD9104, WD9105, and WD9106, are all listed by Tonks as having worked on the line.

Historic Trip

Use of the Rail Cars was not solely confined to WD staff. On June 26th 1955, the Birmingham Locomotive Club retraced its historic trip behind *Gazelle* in 1939, using Wickham rail cars to explore the Criggion branch, as the steam locomotive used on the main line excursion was

too heavy for the bridge at Melverley. The Stephenson Locomotive Society ran two excursions to the S&M on the 14th and 21st September 1958. The party of enthusiasts travelled on the branch from Kinnerly to Criggion on Drewry rail car number WD9104.

As the line began to be run down, the rail cars were disposed of. The fate of the older Wickham cars is not known, but one of the Drewrys went to Bramley (WD9103), and the other three to Bicester (WD9104, WD9105, WD9106). All the rail cars had gone by 1960.

References

The Shropshire & Montgomeryshire Railway (2nd edition) by Eric S. Tonks (published by the Industrial Railway Society, 1972 - SBN 901096 09 1)

MORE LETTERS

Dear Dick,

Welcome to the 'Hot Seat'.

Regarding the request made in *The Colonel* number 44 for a photograph of *Walton Park*, there is another picture on page 102 of *The Weston Clevedon & Portishead Light Railway* by Colin Maggs, Oakwood Press 1990. ISBN 0 85361 388 5.

The photo is also part of the Peter Strange collection and is a similar view to the photograph in his book.

On page 103 there is a brake pipe arrangement drawing of *Walton Park*, a copy of the works (makers) drawing No. 7422 and it states "Painting Midland Red copper cap on chimney."

Having written this, I expect that

you will have several letters giving the same information.

The next time that I'm in Weston-super-Mare, I'll pop into the museum to see if they have any other photographs - they do have a selection of photographs and other pieces.

Doug Ware, Leyton.

The moral of this letter is, "don't assume that someone else is going to offer the information requested." So far this is the only letter I have received on this topic! Ed.

VISITS TO THE EAST KENT RAILWAY

Simon Hargraves 223 was interested in the progress reports on the East Kent Light Railway in *The Colonel*, and thought that members might be interested in his visits to the line during the last decade.

My first visit was in about 1983/84 - I cannot remember precisely when. The line was not then in use, but there was still a line of hoppers waiting at Sheperdswell, and though the weeds were taking over, the track still looked ready for the next train. I walked just beyond Eythorne, but did not have time to get more than a glimpse of Tilmanstone Colliery. The atmosphere of the whole place, especially around Sheperdswell station was quite spooky. It certainly did not need any great stretch of the imagination to see a mixed train awaiting departure from the platform road, perhaps behind the Adams 'Radial' or an 'Ilfracombe Goods'.

What a Difference!

The second visit was in February 1993 - and what a difference! Although trains were not yet running, the station/yard area at Sheperdswell was full of a mixture of rolling stock - just like a modern version of those photographs from the 1930s.

Among the locomotive types noted were Rustons of various sizes, a Fowler and the one steam locomotive, Avonside 0-6-0ST *St. Dunstan*. The item of rolling stock that interested me most, however, was the prototype coach made from National Bus body panels, rather like some of the newer generation of BR diesel rail cars. If any other member has

further details of this, I would be interested to hear.

Much Progress

My third and fourth visits were made last summer (1995) and again much progress had been made, the most important being - **passenger trains!!**

A service is now being run using ex-BR DMUs. Now I know that many purists will object to using such equipment, particularly still in Network South East livery. However, these units have the advantages of being cheap to run, do not need running round - essential as there is no loop at Eythorne - and, from the passengers' point of view, the ability to see where you are going or have come from. This is of great benefit on the EKLR as the scenery the line traverses is pretty. The line itself is interesting, with cuttings, tight curves, gradients and, of course, Golgotha Tunnel.

Other changes that have come about more recently include the addition of gates and a gateman's hut to the level crossing between Sheperdswell and the tunnel, a small signal cabin and colour light signal (!) at Sheperdswell - although the latter was not in use at the time of my visits - and a small booking office/store room on the platform. This building is a replica of the original one.

Further changes planned include using the upper room - I noticed the area

VISITS TO THE EAST KENT RAILWAY

behind the booking office was being cleared for just this purpose.

Other facilities at Sheperdswell included a small gift shop/refreshment room, temporarily housed in two coaches on the road next to the platform road. In the next coach was a large selection of second-hand magazines, etc., for sale.

Museum

Leaving the platform area, the first thing one finds is a miniature railway - 7¹/₄" gauge, I think - which runs a few yards to a small shed and back again. This proved to be very popular with kids - myself and my wife included! Near to the entrance to this is a small, but very nicely presented museum showing details of the history of the EKLR and other Colonel Stephens lines, as well as some other lines of local interest.

Going from the museum, past the picnic area and through some trees, the next thing we found was the former connecting line to BR, closed by a large gate. Standing on this line was St. Dunstan, currently under restoration.

Following the line further into EKLR territory brings you almost level with the platform end. Here, on the road next

to the platform road are two ex-BR vans, housing the showroom of HM Baseboards and a small model railway shop. Beyond this point the running lines are, very sensibly, roped off.

Leaving Sheperdswell, facilities at the other end of the line consisted of a short platform at Eythorne, the level crossing being protected by a brake van.

Atmosphere

I note from the EKLR Society leaflet that the intention is to eventually extend operations to a station and depot at Tilmanstone. They also state that "At Sheperdswell we have attempted to retain the atmosphere of the railway as it would have been in Colonel Stephens' day, hence no large buildings or structures." I certainly feel that, so far, they have been successful in the latter objective and wish them luck with the former.

In conclusion I must say that I found everyone at the EKLR very friendly. I also thought that the train rides were good value for money - last year an adult ticket giving unlimited rides on the day of issue was just £3. All in all a very good day out and it's good to see another working Colonel Stephens line.

If you have studied the 'Masthead' on page 2, you will have noticed that I can be contacted *via* the Internet. This means that not only can you send messages to me but you can also send that article that you have been meaning to write! Just put the text in place of the message and it automatically gets into my computer ready for me to prepare for the next issue of *The Colonel*. My E-mail address is: dick-graskop@bournemouth-net.co.uk



Colonel Stephens Society

Society Badges

Have you got your Colonel Stephens Society badge yet? If not, why not?

A bargain at only £2.50 inclusive of postage from Membership Secretary Nigel Bird.

My Introduction to the Colonel's Empire

Jon Clarke explains how a search for railway station in a Cuneo painting ended up with the Society being started

For Christmas 1980, my mother gave me a rather nice framed print of a Terence Cuneo style painting, depicting a Terrier standing at a mysterious station named High Halden Road. It was signed by the artist Barrie A.F. Clark, and dated (19)78. Curiosity led me to search out the location of this unusual station.

The Railway Clearing House *Handbook of Railway Stations* (1904) didn't list the station, and eventually while looking through *The Branch Line Age* by C.J. Gammell, I came upon what looked like a familiar station. The photograph, by J.H. Aston, was of High Halden Road. Some details were given with the photograph, including reference to the Kent & East Sussex Railway, and to its engineer Mr (later Lt-Col) H.F. Stephens.

Fanatical Follower

My curiosity was satisfied, at least for the time being, my main interests in rail-

ways at that time being the GWR. Then, in 1982, while working in Bootle, Merseyside, a lunch time stroll into the local library resulted in the discovery of an orange coloured paperback railway book by E.S. Tonks called *The Shropshire and Montgomeryshire Railway* (2nd edition). Never before had I come across such an interesting railway history book, and I immediately became a fanatical follower of this railway.

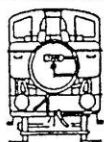
On reading the book I discovered that the connection between the Shropshire & Montgomeryshire Railway and the picture of High Halden Road was none other than Colonel Stephens.

So my interest was subsequently expanded to include other railways in his empire, and to the formation of the Colonel Stephens Society.

The picture proudly hangs on my office wall, above a bookcase filled with numerous volumes on the railways associated with the Colonel.



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