

THE COLONEL

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

Editorial: bigger and better

Welcome again to a bigger-than-usual *Colonel*, now running to 20 pages instead of the usual 16. Now that we are getting some projects off the ground, and links to preservation and other related groups are starting to firm up, there seems to be plenty to report, as well as a good crop of original research, modelling and historical articles.

The concept of the Millennium Survey, given an excellent kick-start by David Powell on page 11, has already borne fruit, with a set of photos of the present-day Camber Tram route from Laurie Cooksey, plus some unpublished shots of the S&MR and PD&SWJR in the 1950s and '60s from Jim Jarvis. Thanks to both these gentlemen. Anybody else?

These photos will be passed to Stuart Marshall, who has been promoted to archivist: a vital king-pin in the whole Survey operation and a position this society has been in need of for some time. Thanks also, Stuart.

We also have news of the first Deserving Causes to benefit from the society's

generosity, with three locomotives and a station site now better off thanks to members' generosity. We shall be tracking progress on these projects in future issues so that you will know how your money's been spent in keeping the Colonel's achievements alive.

Most of this extra activity is the result of your committee actually meeting for the first time ever outside of an AGM. It might seem odd put that way, but until now there had been nothing to discuss. Given that we all live so far apart, it might not happen again all that often, but I hope that it will, and that future occasions will be just as fruitful.

The best news of all, for me personally, is that a marked improvement in the print quality of *The Colonel* is in the offing: again, something that's been needful for a long time. With any luck, the next issue you see will have photos that actually bear close examination. Watch this space.... *SH*

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History in the making

History was made on July 22 when your committee met for the first time outside of an AGM. A decision-making procedure was agreed by which there will be majority voting on precisely-worded motions. Each member has a single vote, with the chairman having a casting vote in the event of a tie.

The main agenda item was the allocation of the £200 funds voted by the AGM to be donated to Colonel-related **preservation projects**. Four projects were agreed: the restoration of ex-K&ESR Terrier *Bodiam*, site development at Robertsbridge, diesel loco 4415 on the Ffestiniog, and 0-4-OST *Spitfire* on the EKR. Details of these projects are on page 4.

The committee also agreed to donate up to £250 towards the retrieval, transportation and restoration of the ex-WD **camping huts** at Wellington Heath. However, the EKR preservation group decided against taking on the task because “they’re too far away,” according to EKLRS chairman Dave Harris.

On **publicity** matters, it was decided to research the cost of adverts in magazines in order to draw up a budget for approval at the next AGM. It was felt that having an agreed amount of money made available might break the logjam that has stalled previous moves to advertise the Society in the past.

Nigel Bird, originator of the **Millennium Survey** idea, said that his original concept was for a much more informal approach than has subsequently been mooted. David Powell agreed to set out some guidelines, and Stuart Marshall volunteered to act as archivist for any material that results (*see page 11*).

Stephen Hannington suggested that *The Colonel* could be printed on heavier paper for a marginal increase in cost. Stuart Marshall took the idea a step further with the proposal that it could be printed digitally – each copy could be printed directly from the source computer file, rather than photocopied as it is now done – at reasonable cost.

The result would be a marked improvement in quality, particularly in the reproduction of photos. Stuart is to

investigate the matter and report back. As this issue went to press, it looks likely that the Christmas issue will be the first to be produced in this way.

David Powell reported that slow but steady progress is being made on the production of a **Colonel Stephens video**. He is still pursuing sources of suitable footage, and it was pointed out that ‘archive’ material can include the 1950s, 60s or even the 70s. Please contact David if you have any leads.

Unfortunately, no progress has been made on the society **Website**, although Dr Robert Kinghorn has volunteered his services, having helped to produce sites for the Highland Railway Society and the Glasgow & South Western Railway Association. He has been enlisted and hopefully there will be progress soon.

Tony Michell’s proposed **biography** of the Colonel is coming along. He has produced a draft outline and has promised an article for the next *Colonel* on a rumoured friendship between the Great Man and Rudyard Kipling. Les Darbyshire is liaising between Tony and Philip Shaw, who also has been planning a biography, but has been pressed for time.

Derek Smith reported that he has been in discussions with Bryan Heatley of the Glyn Valley Tramway Group about the possibility of running a **study day** on the S&MR at Llanymynech some time next year.

The original proposal was to run the event in conjunction with the **next AGM**, but it has been decided to stage the AGM in the South this year, probably at a venue in Tenterden with an associated Society trip on the K&ESR. More news on this will be published in the next *Colonel*. ●

News

For more news, turn to page 14

Renewals time strikes again

With another Autumn issue comes the time when membership renewal falls due. A renewal form has been included. Please use it promptly. Once again, fees have been kept to the same level as in previous years: £5 for UK members, £6 for overseas and £8 for joint members sharing one copy of *The Colonel* at one address.

Extra features have also been included in the renewal form. There is a statement that should clarify what records the society holds on computer and why.

Secondly, although we are primarily a correspondence society based on *The Colonel*, a number of members have expressed interest in doing more. One of your first opportunities is to take part in a Millenium Survey of lines in your part of the country (see page 11).

Consequently a section has been added to the renewals form for you to authorise including your details in an up-to-date membership list to be circulated with the next issue. This is intended to help the emergence of mini-groups, particularly in those areas that once had, or some cases still

do have, a Colonel Stephens railway.

Welcome to new members Richard Smith, Alan Walder and Chris Hobson. Sadly, we have had to hang up the membership plates of Maurice Lawson Finch, an expert on the East Kent Railway, and Martin Brent. The society's condolences have been sent to their respective families (see also *In Memoriam*, page 20). ●

Trains return to

Triumphing over the rains that twice delayed its revival, the rebuilt section of the Welsh Highland Railway between Dinas and Waunfawr finally opened for public trains on 7 August, two months later than originally scheduled.

The first train was hauled by Beyer Garrett 2-6-2+2-6-2 number 143, arriving in Waunfawr at 11.30am. However, the 1.30pm departure from this station was delayed for an hour by an irate farmer who parked his tractor across the line at Plas Bodaden crossing.

The next phase is to reconstruct six miles of route towards the line's summit at Rhyd Ddu. Work is due to start soon, and the section has a planned opening date of May 2002.

On 16 and 17 September, the Welsh Highland Festival was held at the WHR's Caernarfon terminus and featured its only surviving original locomotive *Russell*, along with former WHR coach number 23. Lookalike stand-ins for *Moel Tryfan* and Baldwin number 590 were provided by new single Fairlie *Taliesin* and the former WD *Mountaineer* respectively. ●

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Dispatches

Letters to the editor

How we should spend our money

As to funding preservation groups, I feel we have ample in the funds for the society's needs. We should make donations to help preservation societies, and the K&ESR would seem to be an ideal recipient.

But that is without any knowledge of their financial problems past or present. I would not advocate giving money to a lost cause, but as the K&ESR is one of the Colonel's surviving lines and is run closely to the way it used to be, we must ensure it keeps running - and through to Robertsbridge as soon as possible.

On another matter, some issues ago there was a request in *The Colonel* for details of photos that include H.F. Stephens. I have just come across one that is new to me. It is in *Railways In Camera* by Robin Linsley and shows the first train to run on the Hawkhurst branch at Hope Mill. Stephens is standing on the platform beside the loco.

PS: In my article on Selsey liveries in the last *Colonel*, a slight error has crept into the references. Ernest F. Carter is the author of *British Railway Liveries*, and R. Crumblehome *et al* compiled *Callington Railways*.

Ron Mann, Christchurch, Dorset

I write with respect to your comments regarding the refusal of the AGM to sanction payment to the K&ESR. I believe that the decision was right and proper, and in fact follows the guidelines of the constitution that you quoted in your editorial.

To have given funds to another organisation to offset its debt would have been against the basic principles of voluntary and charitable societies. What would have been the outcome had the K&ESR been liquidated? The money would only have benefited creditors.

All societies need a reserve of funds, and perhaps the Colonel Stephens Society would consider that using money to rescue the ex-army huts, for example, would be a proper

use to prevent their destruction, carry out preservation, storage and transportation to a new home.

Another comment at the AGM related to the aims of the society. I consider the CSS to be a correspondence society to comment on the Colonel's work, with working members able to help with their local societies. I think that there are too many preserved railways in the UK that are draining any available practical - and financial - support.

Stewart Lanham, Crawley, W. Sussex

Regarding the AGM minutes and the editorial in issue 59, I totally agree with our editor when he suggests a more realistic ~~sum could be spent each year on suitable~~ projects. As secretary of my local model railway club, I hear complaints time and again from our members that we should spend more on projects, rather than hoarding for a rainy day. Indeed, if this hoarding leads to loss of membership, it would be self-defeating.

Money has already been rightly spent on transportation costs to their new homes of the S&MR Abbey station crane and *Gazelle's* coach. Further monies could be allocated to these suggested S&MR projects: the Abbey crane; restoration of *Gazelle's* coach (even to the extent of it becoming a 'replica'); and the Abbey water crane, now at the K&ESR.

The following were still extant at my visit a few years ago and deserve consideration for preservation: the end part of Llanymynech milk platform; the station building and platforms at Kinnerley; and that lovely iron goods shed on Kinnerley platform.

David Gallear, Ludlow, Shropshire

PROJECT FUNDING GETS UNDER WAY

Stephen Hannington reports on the Colonel-related projects that have been awarded money from Society funds following the AGM decision in April

Four projects have been awarded £50 each from our coffers: three for locomotive restoration, and one for site improvements. The committee aimed for as broad a spread as possible, although suitable projects are grouped in only two areas: Kent and Wales.

The latter is represented by Kerr, Stuart diesel loco **Number 4415**, whose history is recounted in *Colonel 56*. Its links to the Welsh Highland and Ffestiniog railways date back to 1928-29, when it ran on trials on those lines. Eventually ending up in Mauritius, it returned to the Ffestiniog in 1997 and is awaiting space in Boston Lodge workshops – and funding – for restoration to its original condition.

Currently stored at Minffordd yard, 4415 has been professionally inspected and a price tag of up to £50,000 has been put on work needed. A replacement engine has been sourced and funding via contributions by Deed of Covenant are being sought.

Andrew Barclay 0-4-0ST *Spitfire* was, until recently, the only working steam loco on the East Kent Light Railway. Built in 1929, it had, by this time last year, clocked up an estimated 1400 miles during 76 days in steam on the railway.

Normally, *Spitfire*, carrying the legend ‘EKR’ on the sides of its tank, would have been hauling a pair of ex-BR Mk 2 coaches this running season, but had to be taken out of service with firebox problems.

With its boiler out of the frames, the loco is now undergoing a full 10-year overhaul at a cost of £12,000, of which £6000 remains to be found. Hopefully, *Spitfire* will be back in steam by Christmas to haul Santa Specials.

The last surviving K&ESR original locomotive, No.3 *Bodiam*, has been off the rails for some time as it, too, undergoes a major overhaul and rebuild. Owned by The Terrier Trust, *Bodiam* is currently at the

works of Ian Riley in Lancashire for a chassis overhaul and a new cab and bunker.

It is expected to return to its old home of Rolvenden for a new boiler to be fitted by the end of the year. Gerald Siviour, secretary of the trust, reported: “It is a matter of fitting all the pipework and braking system – it doesn’t sound much if you say it quickly!”

The exciting news is that when *Bodiam* returns to steam, it will be in the blue livery of the Rother Valley Railway that it carried when it first came to the line in 1901. Gerald promises that a CSS representative will be invited to attend its first day back in active service [*Me please! Ed.*].

On another RVR note, the **RVR Supporters’ Association** will be using its donation to refurbish its building at Robertsbridge station on the site of the ex-SE&CR goods yard, where the association has built trackwork that links to the start of the former RVR route towards Bodiam.

“We are constructing a new catering/shop area, which will be situated at the opposite end of the ex-VSOE building,” wrote RVRSA treasurer David Felton. “A lot of work has been done, and the donation will help us with the costs of this work and the additional fittings that we require.”

With the AGM’s permission, it is hoped to repeat – and maybe expand – this funding exercise next year. There’s no doubt that it has generated considerable good-will between the preservation groups and the Society, as well as making a concrete contribution towards these projects achieving their goals. That counts as a major achievement. ■

4-4-0s THAT ALMOST RAN ON THE S&MR

Martin Brent sent this article shortly before he died. We run it here not only as a fascinating piece of research, but also as a tribute to Martin.

The last few issues of *The Colonel* have related the abortive attempt to purchase *Triana*, an 0-6-0 tank locomotive, for the Selsey Tramway (*Colonels* 55-57). That this ended amidst acrimony is no surprise, bearing in mind the Colonel's preference for getting his own way. But the *Triana* Saga is not the only instance of him not succeeding. There were other occasions. This little story is about one such event.

Why should the Shropshire & Montgomeryshire Railway want a couple of 4-4-0s with driving wheels of no less than 7' 1" diameter? What would they have been used for? What would the 15 ton driving axle weight have done to the track? Just imagine them struggling up to Crossgates with the usual mixed train: would they - could they - have done it?

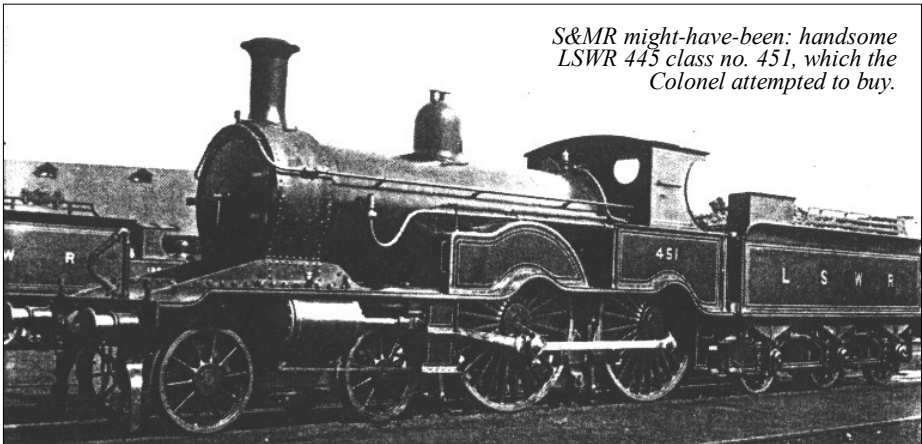
We shall never know, but suffice it to say that in November 1924, the Colonel approached the Southern Railway and tried to purchase two locomotives, numbers 0446 & 0451 of the Adams 445 class. The price

offered was £1,700 apiece with payment being spread over three years.

The SR agreed these terms, but offered 0445/9, since the boilers carried by 0446/51 were needed for the 460 class. After inspecting the substitutes, the Colonel reduced his offer to £1,450 per engine, but Mr. Maunsell would not accept that price and the deal fell through.

The first mentioned locomotive was not without interest. In November 1886, after trying out a Webb compound, William Adams, perhaps wisely, decided to try another system of compounding and converted the then 446 (the 0 was added only after it went onto the duplicate list) into a Worsdell-von-Borries type compound.

In this form, with a huge right hand cylinder, it ran until 1891, when it was rebuilt in its original form. In a report to the Locomotive Committee, Adams said that, with the exception of coal burnt per mile, which was very slightly reduced, the locomotive used slightly more consumables



S&MR might-have-been: handsome LSWR 445 class no. 451, which the Colonel attempted to buy.

OPENING DAY ON THE OLD WELSH HIGHLAND

To mark the recent reopening of the first section of the rebuilt Welsh Highland Railway, this interesting report of its original opening is reproduced from the pages of *The Locomotive magazine* of 15 October 1923

Traversing some of the most charming scenery in North Wales, the recently completed Welsh Highland Railway, of 1ft 11½in. gauge, provides an excellent means of access to Beddgelert, the famous tourist centre of the Snowdon district. It is expected also to assist in developing the district agriculturally and to lead to the reopening of the numerous copper and zinc mines which have been closed down through transport difficulties. The railway is readily accessible through Portmadoc on the Great Western Ry. or Dinas Junction on the London, Midland & Scottish Ry., three miles south of Carnarvon.

Between Portmadoc and Dinas, a distance of 21.4 miles, the line follows the valley of the River Glaslyn to Beddgelert and thence to the summit, that of its tributary the Colwyn. Beyond the summit at Pitt's Head, where there is a large rock which is

said to resemble that statesman's profile, it enters the valley of the Gwyfrai, which drains the western slopes of Snowdon. For the greater part of the way, rail and river are close neighbours.

From the junction with the Festiniog line at Portmadoc to Pont Croesor, the first station, where the river Glaslyn is crossed by a bridge of eight spans of 24 ft. each, the route of the old horse-worked Croesor Slate Tramway is used. This section has been relaid with new flat-bottomed rails weighing 40lb to the yard.

Soon after parting company with the Croesor Tramway at 3.7 miles from Portmadoc, the new line begins to climb the valley, and for the next 6.5 miles the gradient is 1 in 40 up, with short sections a trifle easier. The Dylif is crossed by a lattice girder bridge of 75 ft span, and another of similar design near Nantmor, just before

➤ as a compound than a simple locomotive of the same class.

Back to the S&MR: evidently there was a perceived need for such locomotives because the Colonel made another approach in the following year when he tried to buy two 460 class 4-4-0s. This time the wheels were slightly smaller at 6' 7", but the records show that no agreement could be reached.

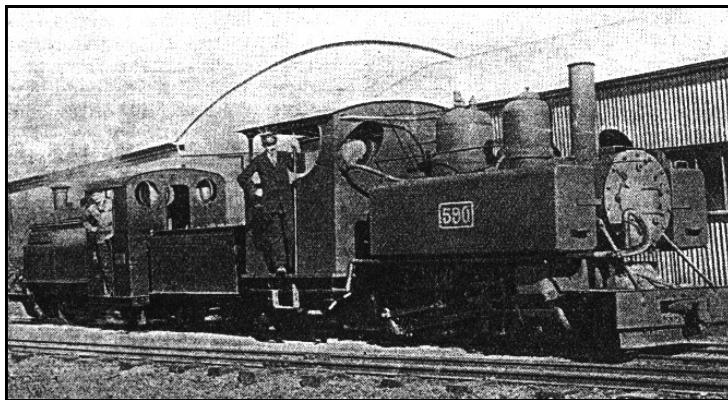
Perhaps the Colonel tried just that bit too hard to strike a bargain. Whatever the reason, we were denied the spectacle of these large-wheeled locomotives ambling through the Shropshire countryside far from the hustle and bustle of Waterloo or the windswept heights of Meldon Viaduct.

The question that is difficult to answer is which locomotives would they have taken replaced? So far as I am aware, no locomotives were purchased for the S&MR

between November 1923, when the Terriers *Dido* and *Daphne* arrived from Dalmeir, and March 1930, when Bill Austen purchased the first of the ex-LNWR 'Colliers', No. 8108, which became S&MR No. 2.

Was it really a case of a flight of fancy by the Colonel? We could model it, though... Just in case you think that this article is the ravings of a fevered mind, I would point out that most of this information can be found in Part 2 of D. L. Bradley's *Locomotives of the LSWR* published by the RCTS. ■

FR Little Giant (left) and WHR Baldwin at Dinas Junction, as shown in The Locomotive's article. The Baldwin later lost its cast numberplate, but seems always to have carried the number 590.



entering the beautiful Pass of Aberglaslyn.

In order to preserve the amenities of this romantic spot, the line is taken through a tunnel 300 yards long, cut in the naked rock. This is followed by two short tunnels, a 75 ft lattice bridge over the Glaslyn, and another tunnel, 100 yards long, at the back of the Royal Goat Hotel, close to the station at Beddgelert.

All tunnels are 11 ft wide and 14 ft high to the crown from rail level, and are unlined. Trains are timed to stop at Beddgelert long enough to allow passengers to walk the Pass of Aberglaslyn, alighting at Nantmor when coming from Portmadoc, or joining the train there in the reverse direction. The distance between the stations is about 11 miles.

Above Beddgelert the line continues climbing at 1 in 40 with a succession of horse-shoe curves, the sharpest being of 3 chains radius, while others are 4 chains radius. Reaching the summit at Pitt's Head, just over 11 miles from Portmadoc and 647 feet above sea level, the railway then begins to descend.

At South Snowdon station a mile farther, it is 626ft above sea level. The ruling grade is 1 in 50 down to the terminus at Dinas. Throughout its whole course, the Welsh Highland Ry. consists practically of a continuous series of curves. The distance from the junction with the Croesor Tramway to South Snowdon station, which may be termed the new lines, is 8.6 miles.

From South Snowdon (or Rhydd-du) to Dinas Junction, 9.1 miles, the line was formerly known as the North Wales Narrow Gauge Ry. and had been in operation for

many years. It was closed for a long time and used for slate transport only.

Last year, after being repaired by the Welsh Highland Ry., it was re-opened for passenger traffic on July 1. Construction had been commenced by the NWN Ry on the extension to Beddgelert and beyond as far back as 1903, and a considerable amount of heavy earthwork and cuttings made, but financial difficulties stopped work about 1905.

With the aid of advances made by government and the local authorities, the Welsh Highland Ry. Co. was formed after the war to complete the line with a capital of £120,000. The construction contract was entrusted to Sir Robert McAlpine & Sons at £60,000, and Sir Douglas Fox & partners were appointed as consulting engineers, while Mr J.K. Prendergast acted as their resident engineer.

The line was completed in time for the summer tourist traffic, and opened throughout on Friday, June 1st last.

At Portmadoc, the WHR makes a physical connection with the famous Festiniog Ry., which, of course, is of the same gauge. A continuous narrow gauge system is thus provided having a total length of 35 miles.

The trains of both the Welsh Highland and the Festiniog Rys. start from a new station at Portmadoc, close to the Great Western station, and not at the old Festiniog Ry. station in Britannia Terrace (except the morning and evening quarrymen's trains).

The W.H.Ry. stations in addition to the termini are as follows: Croesor Bridge, Ynysfor, Ynys Ferlas, Hafod-y-Llyn, ➤

- Nantmor, Beddgellert, Hafod Ruffyd, Pitt's Head, South Snowdon, Quellyn Lake, Salem, Bettws Garmon, Waenfawr and Tryfan Junction, where the branch to the slate quarries at Bryngwyn joins.

There are no platforms at the stations, nor are they necessary. Flat-bottomed rails 40lb to the yard are used throughout. The line is worked on the staff system, the crossing places being at Beddgellert, South Snowdon and Waenfawr.

On the opening day the train consisted of the Festiniog Ry. engine Princess, two bogie carriages and a brake van. It left Portmadoc at 8.10 a.m. The first through train out of Dinas left at 9.50a.m. drawn by the F. Ry. engine Prince, and passed the train from Portmadoc at Waenfawr, the second stopping place and the site of the well-known Marconi long-distance wireless station.

Powers have been obtained for an extension of the W.H. Ry. to the harbour at Carnarvon, and it is to be hoped that this will be carried out.

The locomotive stock of the W.H.R. comprises two of the N.W.N.G. Ry. locos: the Russell, a 2-6-2 side tank built by Hunslet Engine Co. in 1905; and the Moel Tryfan, an 0-6-4 single-boiler Fairlie tank built by the Vulcan Foundry and rebuilt by Davies and Metcalf in 1903.

The company has recently purchased one of the 4-6-0 War Office engines built in 1917 by the Baldwin Locomotive Works, and this engine has been fitted with the vacuum brake. There are also in service two or three of the Festiniog Ry. locomotives working from the Portmadoc end. They are usually four-wheeled saddle tanks with separate tenders carrying coal only.

The stock of the N.W.N.G. Ry. is fitted with the air brake, while the Festiniog Ry. uses the vacuum. Consequently there is likely to be difficulty in interchange of passenger stock. No doubt the vacuum brake will be adopted throughout in time. The centre couplings of the two railways also differ, but are to be standardised shortly.

Owing to the restricted loading gauge through the Moelwyn tunnel on the Festiniog Rlwy., the W.H. Ry. stock cannot run over that line, but the Festiniog trains are used regularly over the new line.

Experiments are being made with a Simplex 40 H.P. rail motor, with a view to hauling a single carriage when traffic is

light. At present this machine is used for shunting slate wagons at Minffordd, the interchange station between G.W. and Festiniog Rys.

As is well known, the slate trains on the Festiniog Ry. are run by gravity from Blaenau Festiniog to Minffordd, and as the shunting at Minffordd is only intermittent, a petrol locomotive is undoubtedly an economical proposition for the duty.

The passenger stock consists of long bogie carriages belonging to the Festiniog and N.W.N.G. Rys., with the addition of six bogie vehicles purchased from the government, which have been fitted with roofs and seats for use in summer.

Both the Welsh Highland and Festiniog Rys. are now owned by the North Wales Power & Traction Co. Ltd, and are under the management of captain J. May, with headquarters at Portmadoc.

Our best thanks are due to Mr S.E. Tyrrwhitt of the G.W.R. who has been acting as general manager for the past two years, for facilities for going over the line, and to whom we are indebted for much of the information; also to Lt. Col. H.F. Stephens, engineer and locomotive superintendent of both railways. ■

Scant credit for our own dear Colonel here! Did he not at least survey the route in the planning stages? And the proposed extension to Caernarfon harbour sounds like a good basis for an interesting might-have-been model. Ed.

MILLENNIUM SURVEY GUIDE

Find it. Record it before it's too late! Membership secretary David Powell gives some basic pointers on how you can do your bit for this far-reaching society project to survey what remains of the Great Man's works.

The aim of the Millennium Survey is to record what is left of the Colonel's railway empire. We want to log what is still there and its condition, to photograph it and, if practical, to make scale drawings. With members raising questions about how it should be done, I was asked to provide some guidelines.

Where?

Railways with some link to the Colonel are:

North Wales: Festiniog and Welsh Highland

S. Wales: Burry Port & Gwendraeth Valley

Derbyshire: Ashover Lt Rly

Shropshire: S&M and Snailbeach

Oxfordshire: Edge Hill

Avon: WC&P

Kent: Sheppey Lt Rly, East Kent, Rother

Valley (K&ESR), Paddockwood &

Hawkhurst and the Rye & Camber.

West Sussex: Selsey Tramway.

Devon: North Devon & Cornwall and the Plymouth, Devon & South Western Junction.

Who?

Stuart Marshall has volunteered to be central archivist for material, Nigel Bird has offered to be project coordinator, and we have pockets of members in the vicinity of most of the railways linked with the Colonel. Fortunately, we have some 20 members in Kent with significant reinforcements available in East Sussex and London. Devon may need some outside support.

The next step is to ask for volunteers to take the lead for each of the railways. Names to Nigel, please. Their main role will be to ensure we don't waste energy recording the same item twice while others are missed.

As far as taking part is concerned, the more the merrier! Indeed, hunting and walking old lines is a fun way of getting some exercise.

What?

The sad news is that precious little remains of most lines. We would like to record structures such as bridges and buildings, or at least their locations and remains. It would be useful to log what earthworks are still in evidence. We don't expect a detailed yard-by-yard record of every embankment or cutting. However, where it is now a public footpath is important information.

How – Access?

We have been asked whether the society could arrange clearances for visits, but this is impractical and is where your local knowledge and initiative are needed.

The suggested process is to use the Land-ranger 1:50,000 scale Ordnance Survey map for the area. But look out for old OS maps for earlier information. Your County Reference Library may have larger scale and pre-war maps. With these first clues, use public roads and footpaths to see what is still visible and its likely access.

Draw up an initial list of artifacts. This can also be used to allocate and share tasks.

For a major feature on private land, find out who the owner is. Detective work may entail visits to local pubs or shops. This is where helpers spread the load. Explain what you are up to. This could lead to someone who still remembers the line.

Approach the owner, ideally in writing or by phone. Explain what you are up to and ask for permission to visit. It might help if you explain that, although important to us, you will not be seeking a preservation order! You are just recording what is still there before it is rain-washed into oblivion.

If faced with a daunting situation, such as the local big-wig or, more likely, a pop-star who now owns the Hall and the estate, contact Nigel or myself and we will drop a line on your behalf on society-headed paper. However, you will find that 99% of people will be intrigued and flattered by your interest.

One member asked about insurance. It is the same as when you choose to go for a walk in the country. We are just inviting you to do some railway spotting rather than bird watching.

How – Recording?

Log each feature:

- the line, such as “S&M”;
- date of visit and the researcher(s);
- brief title, such as “B4386 Overbridge at Horton Lane”;
- map reference “442 114” (along the corridor and up the stairs!);
- as full a description as possible: “West abutment intact, over-bridge removed, east abutment demolished. Traces of embankment on both sides still remain but overgrown and impassable. Construction in the railway’s standard red brick.”;
- note any need for a further visit if required: “Failing light so no photo”;
- photograph(s);
- if possible, a sketch or drawing of the site and the remains; and
- give all sketches and notes a reference number, such as S&M/003. Co-ordinators should allocate blocks of numbers to helpers.

The accepted references for such work are: *Recording Archaeological Field Monuments* by the Royal Commission on the Historical Monuments of England (RCHME) ISBN 873592 40 X; and *Recording Historic Buildings*, also by the RCHME, ISBN 873592 28 0.

Frankly, these are far too detailed for our needs and, dare I suggest it, the draftsmanship skills and time of most members. For those who are interested and would like the challenge, both are available from English Heritage Postal Sales (telephone 01536 533500) for £5.00 each.

I am attempting to produce an extract to send to line co-ordinators. To include this in *The Colonel* would triple its size! Meanwhile, for initial guidance take the conventions used by Barry Norman and Ian Rice in their books and you won’t go far wrong.

For drawings, always record the scale used. This should be appropriate to the size of the feature. The RCHME recommended scales are: for earth works etc, location

1:10000 map and a site map at 1:2500; and buildings on a 1:2500 location map with 1:100 or 1:50 for plans, and 1:50 or 1:20 for sections.

For photographs, the guidance is that black-and-white is preferable for archival purposes, with colour to record detail where appropriate. Shots should include:

- a general view/external views of buildings;
- side shots of external walls with a measuring stick included to make drawings later; and
- close-ups of any detail, such as window surrounds, which may not show up in the general shots.

Prepare an adhesive label with subject, location, date photographed, photographer, and reference number *before* sticking it to the *back* of the photo. Log the photograph.

How – Preserved Lines?

For the K&ESR, East Kent, Festiniog and WHR, we are only interested in artifacts that date back to when the railways were in the Colonel’s hands, before 1932.

Where any doubt exists, ask the current operators. These lines may ask for additional constraints, such as limited access times, use of high-visibility vests and so on.

When?

We want to complete this task by the end of next year. In the Colonel’s day, millennia began with a 1 and ended with 000!

Why?

Because if we don’t, no one else will, and by then it will be too late. Happy researching! ■

HIDDEN BIDDENDEN BUNGALOW REVEALED

Stephen Hannington reports on how a characteristic K&ESR building has returned to the light of day after many years literally in the wilderness



On my way to join the first train to Bodiam on the K&ESR's new extension in April, I passed the site of Biddenden station on the line's Tenterden-Headcorn section, which was lifted in 1955.

I was surprised to find that the trees and undergrowth that had surrounded the site for many years had been cleared, giving a view of the station site unseen, I suspect, since trains last called there.

In particular, it revealed the former station agent's bungalow previously entirely hidden in the depths of the undergrowth. I hastily returned with a camera to take pictures, including the one above, in case this elusive building might be in danger of demolition.

The view shows the south and west aspects. The east wall was plain, apart from a door about a third of the way along, and the north wall was still too obscured by ivy to tell if there had been another door there or not.

The building, not shown on the 1908 map and therefore presumably not built at the same time as the rest of the station, has corrugated iron roof and walls on a 10-course brick plinth, the iron overlapping it by two courses. Of note is the handsome brick-built chimney stack with two pots. Model, anyone?

As luck would have it, the Summer 2000 issue of *The Tenterden Terrier*, the journal of the preserved K&ESR, carries an article by Tom Standen, who recalls his childhood days living just across the road from Biddenden

News Extra

URGENT INFORMATION NEEDED

Adrian Gray, CSS member and Ffestiniog Rlywy archivist, needs to know the correct shade of green applied to FR coaches during the Colonel's tenure. Bogie coach No. 16 is about to be repainted in this livery. Contact him at 25 The Pound, Syresham, Northants NN13 5HG or tel: 01280 850292. ●

COLONEL MUSEUM WEBSITE

The Colonel Stephens Railway Museum at Tenterden is on the Internet, with a Web site at www.hfstephens.fsnet.co.uk. It features an online 'tour' of the museum, as well as biographies of the Great Man and his sidekick William Austen, plus potted histories and maps of his railway empire, and more. ●

MIXED NEWS FROM K&ESR

Chairman Norman Brice reports that the K&ESR ran up a deficit of almost £300,000 last year, and that auditors found over half of suppliers' invoices were missing. The good news is that passenger numbers are up 60% on last year, and that a "substantial" operating profit was made in the first six months. ●

SOCIETY BADGES

Membership secretary David Powell has the

last three enamel CSS badges available for £2.50 including postage. There will be no more produced once these are gone, so if you want one, hurry. David's contact details are inside the front cover. ●

LOCO KITS

Peter Stamper of Agenoria Models, purveyor of etched kits for light and industrial locos, aims to launch a 7mm kit of the Selsey's Peckett 2-4-2T *Selsey* by next summer. Other possibilities include EKR (ex-WC&PR) 0-6-0T *Walton Park*. He will be at the Warley show in Birmingham's NEC on November 4 and 5, or you can contact him on 01562 886125. ●

SE&CR WAGON BOOK

OPC's long-awaited *History of Southern Wagons, Volume 3: SECR* includes, as well as scale drawings, five photos of EKR open wagons and one EKR van, plus pictures of the grounded van body at Tenterden and two shots of K&ESR cattle van number 13 (*see page 18*), all former SE&CR vehicles. ●

➤ station in the early 1930s.

The article is full of anecdotes about the station and the people who ran it, including station master Alf Bourne. He was another of the Colonel's employees who had lost an arm during the First World War, like Mr Gilbert at Hunston station on the Selsey Tramway.

(I seem to recall that the EKR employed a one-legged guard: did the Colonel have a policy of aiding those disabled by the Great War, I wonder?)

Asked about the bungalow itself, Tom Standen wrote: "As far as I can remember, the bungalow was always inhabited by private people, as opposed to K&ESR staff."

"I was friendly with the last folk who lived there, Mr and Mrs Girling and their only son Jim. They moved to a more modern bungalow in Biddenden some years ago.

"Playing cards in that old bungalow was

very noisy in a storm. As you know, it is roofed with galvanised sheets!

"Jim and I served throughout the Second World War, but to my surprise he landed from a ship in Colombo, Ceylon as I boarded the very same boat, the *Empire Trooper*. Jim landed one day and I boarded the next, so our paths didn't cross exactly.

"Jim died about 15 years ago, of a heart attack, I believe. He was a funeral director for a Tunbridge Wells firm, and latterly for Earl & Company at Ashford. Jim would have been my age if he had lived: nearly 80."

Any further information on the bungalow, particularly dimensions, would be gratefully received. Who knows, I might even get around to producing a scale drawing. ■

MONTY'S MEMOIRS

part two

In the last issue, we heard of Monty's Baker's fall from grace on the East Kent Railway, and how he was saved from William Austen's wrath by driver Nelson

Reporting to Charlie Turner, the fitter in charge at Rolvenden loco shed, I was given details of my duties. Keeping the shed swept and tidy, cleaning out the inspection pits, and drying sand for the sand-boxes in a shed on the river bank, which was next to the only WC on the K&ESR. This was a galvanised tin shelter perched on stilts partly over the stream, with a hole in a wooden seat.

The stench in summer was terrible when the stream was low, and in winter the stream flooded, lapped around your ankles and cleared the offending effluent away. These buildings are shown very faintly, without description, at the end of the group of three dump sidings in the site plan on page 24 of the 1999 edition of Stephen Garrett's history of the K&ESR (*Oakwood Press*).

Charlie Turner's son Maurice was the apprentice, and Jack Hoad was an improver (advanced apprentice). In K&ESR terms, the latter meant you had finished your apprenticeship, but they did not have to pay you full wages. Old Amos was the coach and loco painter and lived in a shack by the paint shop on a pile of old rags. A Tortoise stove provided heat and cooking facilities, surrounded by enough paint, turps and so on to have caused an inferno had it ignited.

Amos seldom washed, his hair was white and his long beard ginger through chewing tobacco. He mixed all his own paints and varnish from raw materials. The finish of his painting was superb. The last loco he ever painted was number 3 *Bodiam*, which was rebuilt at Rolvenden in the 1930s after number 5 *Rolvenden* had been cannibalised to make one loco out of two.

One set of railcars was running at this time, thanks to Charlie Turner's tender loving care, but breakdowns were getting more frequent due to big-end failures and burnt-out valves. They usually got back by

using the car at the other end in reverse, but this was too risky for running in service. At these times, I had to prepare the spare loco and go firing on it. Meanwhile, Charlie repaired the broken down railcar, which in turn held up the rebuilding of number 3 *Bodiam*.

Help arrived in the shape of George Gray from the Selsey Tramway. He came to Rolvenden in 1935, when the tramway closed, to repair the Shefflex set. He then took over the Tenterden station delivery service from Tom Beach and his horse and dray, using a brand new Bedford lorry. The Shefflex now ran on odd occasions when someone found time and patience to mend it.

When Charlie Turner and his son Maurice left in 1937, the Welsh fitter Dai Evans arrived with his son Owen as apprentice. Evans could not drive steam locos or railcars. Jack Hoad occasionally acted as fireman when we were short-staffed, which caused friction with the Fitting Dept, as they needed Jack there.

When Nelson Wood was sent to Basingstoke with number 2 *Northiam* for the film *Oh Mister Porter*, an apprentice from the East Kent Railway, Bunny Abbott, went with him. They each had a week break halfway through the filming, and I took over from them. Gainsborough Film Company had initially said it would be done in a fortnight: actually, it took eight weeks just to do *Gladstone's* parts. Nelson returned to finish off and bring number 2 back to Rolvenden via the main line.

We were now having to hire locos from the Southern Railway. The first was P Class number 1556, followed by a string of varied classes. K&ESR Number 4 had a broken piston ring in 1938 that damaged the cylinder. This was rebored by hand with some Heath Robinson equipment that had a handwheel

like an antique mangle. It took young Evans the apprentice many weeks of hard work, with very fine cuts, before it was done.

During this period, Number 4's sister engine, SR number 0344, worked Number 4's duties most days. Number 4 had not been reboilered at this time, but later in the 1940s, when 0395 Class 0-6-0 number 3440 stood in for her.

With the threat of war looming, and still not getting a fitter's wage, Jack Hoad volunteered for the services and joined the RAF. This depleted the fitting staff even more and made it more difficult to keep our own locos operating.

Bob Blair was the senior fireman at this time, and was sometimes rostered to drive at holidays and other busy times, but he hated it and much preferred to be on the shovel. I was just the reverse, getting more and more experience driving when I was rostered with him. As we were the only two firemen at the time, drivers Nelson Wood and Jimmy Webb took Charlie Crouch and Jack Masters, both platelayers, as their firemen at these times.

By early 1939, the motive power was in dire straits, with leaking tubes, then burst tubes, plus derailments in various goods yards if we went in too far with the loco, as the old flat-bottom track was so rotten. This made it necessary to always have a third loco on standby to take a gang to re-rail the loco.

When the emergency food depot was to be built at the far siding at Tenterden station (where the museum now is), we had difficulty getting the old, derelict rolling stock out as we could not get the loco in. We had to have a long line of empty trucks in front of us to reach the old stock.

The siding was then renovated to take the truck loads of materials that arrived to erect the buildings. Later, when the vans of sugar were arriving at Headcorn, we kept a bundle of sandbags in the loco toolbox, along with a brace and bit to bore through the van floor to let sugar trickle through and fill a sandbag. Our teacans had wood chips and strands of hessian floating on the top, but our tea was sweet! The hole in the van was sealed with a twist of grass to prevent further waste.

When the evacuation from Dunkirk started, the K&ESR side of Headcorn was taken over by the Voluntary Services to serve tea and food to the returning troops, and we were able to help them during our layover time at Headcorn. I shall always remember

what a demoralising sight that was.

From this period, the K&ESR became very busy with special trains as fear of invasion developed. We ran wagons of old telephone poles to be stuck in the fields of the Rother plain to prevent airborne troops landing. The poles were pushed off the flat wagons at each farm occupation crossing and dragged mainly by horses to their place in the field to be dug in.

The poles were supplemented by any old car or farm vehicle that could be spared. This was a deterrent to the Germans, but very bad for our aircraft trying to make forced landings during the Battle of Britain.

We were now on call at any time. The police would cycle round and tell us to report for work when maybe we had not long been home. I had a motorcycle at this time and was issued with a Defence of the Realm driving licence, which I still have. This was also my pass to get past three trigger-happy armed road blocks between my home, then at St Michaels, and the loco shed at Rolvenden.

With the threat of invasion by Hitler now imminent, and with traffic diverted over the K&ESR line due to bomb damage to the

Defence of the realm

Southern Railway north of Headcorn or Robertsbridge, we had to move vast amounts of defence material. This included cement, thousands of coils of barbed wire, spiral metal stakes that screwed into the ground to support the barbed wire, tons and tons of shells and other types of ammunition, and thousands of bundles of sandbags to be filled from many wagons of sand.

Many of these trains traversed the K&ESR in either direction more than once before finding their destination. It happened once when Charlie Crouch, my platelayer/fireman at the time, and I had taken a train of barbed wire from Robertsbridge to Headcorn between service trains in the morning, only to be called out in the early hours to fetch it back to Robertsbridge.

Running during the night was safer than daytime, as the gangers working on the track could suddenly find unexpected, non-timetabled trains bearing down on them, with the footplate crew praying there was not a rail missing or a few sleepers out at the time.

We did have a close shave one day when I saw the Bodiam ganger heading towards us

on his pump trolley as we came off the five-span bridge towards Junction Road. I slapped the steam brake on and Charlie wound on the tender brake.

Luckily, the ganger had spotted us, stopped, given the trolley a quick push backwards and remounted. He was quite old and his pump action did him credit. The only casualty was Cyril Packham, the guard, who, when the loose-coupled wagons came up to the hard-braking loco, somersaulted from one veranda of his Brahman to the other.

In early 1942, another driver was required on the East Kent Railway. Sammy Austen, the Rolvenden fitter, was now doing some spare driving, so being single (but courting), I was sent to the EKR. Fred Hazell eventually took my place on the K&ESR.

I was told this arrangement was temporary, but I was working the extra coal trains out of Tilmanstone colliery with the Kerr Stuart 0-6-0T number 4. This was the most powerful loco on the EKR and was only used for the colliery work. She had a lovely rams-horn regulator that stretched right across the cab, and a very short wheelbase like the USA 0-6-0T plus outside cylinders that, with a full load up through Golgotha tunnel, gave it a waddling duck action. Whilst washing-out or repairs took place, I used Number 6.

On 21 June 1942, I managed to get a Saturday and Sunday off and got married at Bodiam church, returning to Shepherdswell on the Sunday evening to start work at 5am on Monday 23rd. As we were in lodgings with Vic Hoyle, the colliery train guard, and his family in a mobile home, it was not practical in the long term. I gave my notice in towards the end of 1942 and went in the Army.

Unfortunately, I did not fulfil the Colonel's wish that I should be trained to run a railway, but I would not have missed it for the world.

After my Army service in England, I went to Egypt and Palestine. Although I should not have been demobilised until 1947 because of my late entry, I was surprised to be told to return to England as there was a shortage of engine drivers.

I reported to the De-Mob centre in York, collected my civvy clothing and, even more surprisingly, instructions to report to major Terry Holder, the newly-appointed manager of the Romney, Hythe & Dymchurch

Railway at New Romney.

Italian prisoners of war had repaired the track. We got the service running, and I was lucky to have the chance to drive Laurel & Hardy when they visited the railway in 1947. I left in 1949 as the remuneration was poor, went into estate management, then publican and hotelier before retiring in 1979.

My last wish is to travel on the first official passenger train on the Bodiam extension and, who knows, maybe see or feel the ghost of my old friend Harry Batehup as he stands with his red flag under his arm, waiting to see this train across the level crossing. Perhaps, one day, he will have the other hand held out, as he used to, with the staff for the driver to proceed on to Robertsbridge.

My thanks to the volunteers and enthusiasts; my friends Philip Shaw, John Miller and Simon Long; and the numerous chairmen [of the TRC] and their officers over the years, who have given so much of their time and labour to preserve the railway that Colonel Stephens was going to teach me to run. I wish them all well. They have all made a better job of it than I did. ■

K&ESR CATTLE VAN IN 4MM

Richard Jones reveals how he modified the D&S kit of an SE&CR vehicle

The ex-SE&CR cattle van purchased by the K&ESR in 1928, which Mike King tells me is an 18' 3" vehicle to diagram 1514, became the K&ESR vehicle no. 13, SE&CR no. 1944, allocated SR no. S2569, but sold in 1928 before being renumbered.

The D&S kit is actually to SR diagram 1513, 18' 6" long, which is very similar and almost indistinguishable in photographs. Both designs show door planking and end stanchion variations.

The kit is built up as per the instructions – extremely unusual for me – with Mansell type 3' 6" wheels running in brass pin point bearings let into the W-iron castings. I attempted to put on three-point compensation with one axle fixed, and the other on an MJT inside bearing compensation unit, but ran into trouble trying to secure the latter, and so reverted to a rigid arrangement.

The only significant change required to make the D&S kit look like the K&ESR vehicle is to alter the planking on the lower doors. This was achieved by gluing in Plasticard rectangles, and then scribing on the planking. In the case of the K&ESR vehicle, the lower door planks are flush with the framing and horizontal. Hopefully the photo of the unpainted model makes this clear.

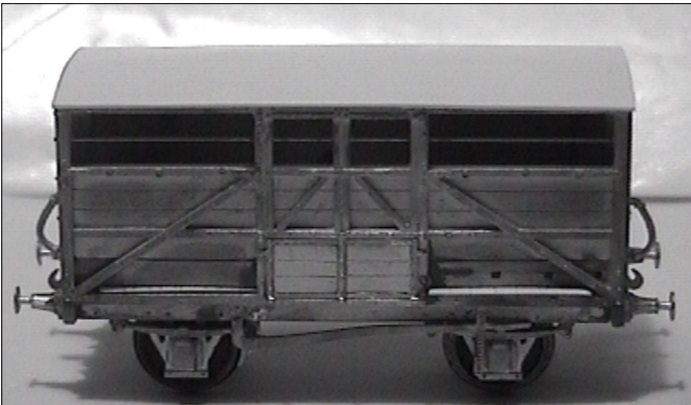
An interesting point to note, that is particular obvious from the HMRS photo

No. V1998, is that the floorboards of the vehicle project through the lowest slot of the body and rest on the top of the bottom frame member, the top edge of the floor being finished off semi-circular.

On the model this has been copied with plasticard, which was cut to the overall width, with various notches, and then 'sprung in' from inside. To simplify matters, I made the floor in three pieces: two ends plus a central section.

The HMRS photo also shows raised lettering for 'K&ESR No.', but with the number only painted on. As for colour, I will use weathered SECR wagon grey (Precision Paints P581) on the basis that, as the Southern had not renumbered the vehicle, I don't expect they would have repainted it in wagon brown, and that the reported grey colour was how it was delivered.

The only additions I made were a central cross member for securing the Alex Jackson coupling wires, and a plate at either end with a height bar out of nickel-silver wire, also for the couplings. ■



Richard's model of K&ESR cattle van number 13, showing modifications to the lower doors and the protruding floor planking, both added in plastic sheet.

Drawings of both the K&ESR and D&S kit vehicles are in the new OPC book on SE&CR wagons (see p.14).

DOORS ON THE SELSEY

Ron Mann solves the mystery of doors on Selsey Tramway station buildings

Some members may recall that in issues 47 to 51 of *The Colonel* there appeared my drawing of the buildings that graced the Selsey Tramway. But a missing detail was the style of doors that were fitted.

Now, thanks to a photograph in John Scott-Morgan's book *The Colonel Stephens Railways: A View From The Past*, this omission can be rectified. The photograph is of Sidlesham station building in 1935 and clearly shows the door details. From this, I have produced this revised drawing.

Knowing the style of this one door, I have checked photographs of all the other stations and am confident that all the doors were of the same type.

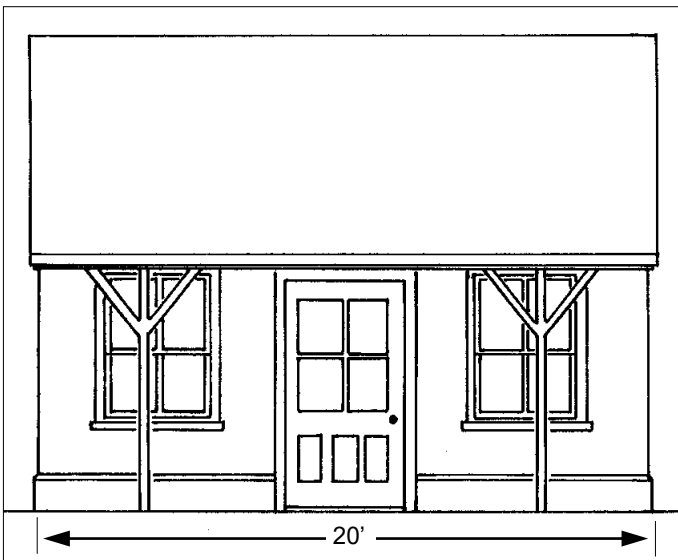
A building for which I did not produce drawings was the loco shed at Selsey. I have since learned it is recorded as being 90' x 30' and there is a clear photograph of it in *The Selsey Tram* by David Bathurst.

This shows the shed in its original condition with a curved roof. This roof was replaced by a conventional ridged one in about 1910. In understand that the loco shed

at Rolvenden on the K&ESR had similar alterations. I wonder why, as it would involve what seems to have been an unnecessary expense by a company not renowned for its extravagance.

Was it cheaper in the initial stage to install a curved roof that was self-supporting, so saving the expense of roof framing? But did this result in many areas of the shed being very dark for working on the locomotives? And, as the roof lights could not be installed into the curved corrugated iron, was the only solution to replace the whole roof and gable ends?

I suggest this because the new roof incorporated four big roof lights on the north side, together with smoke ducts. I have no evidence for or against roof lights on the south side. Has anyone any better suggestions, or is there even someone who knows the real reason for the change? ■



Ron's new drawing of Sidlesham station, revealing the style of door fitted to all the Selsey Tramway's buildings. The full version of this drawing, also showing the side view, is in Colonel 48, along with a plan of Selsey station building in its original condition.

Other buildings drawn by Ron include Chichester [47], Selsey goods shed [49], and Selsey station in its final state [50 and 51].

In Memoriam

Martin Brent

It is with the greatest sadness that we have to report the death of member Martin Brent, who passed away on July 12th. He had been diagnosed as having leukaemia about three months before and was receiving treatment, but succumbed to a chest infection.

Martin was an expert and prolific modeller, with many layouts appearing on the exhibition circuit over the past twenty years or more. The layouts generally had a Kent and East Sussex influence: the railway, the district, or both. His original *Arcadia*, later extended as *Rye Harbour*, was a classic in EM gauge that captured the true flavour of the area and of the lines of Colonel Stephens.

Then came *Salehurst*, a layout in a showcase that was minimal in track plan, but full of superb detail. *Hope Mill* used a Colonel Stephens location, on the Hawkhurst branch, but was essentially a BR Southern Region layout, complete with Southern Electrics. It was also notable for being populated by characters from *The Darling Buds of May*.

More recently, Martin had progressed to

7mm scale, his last layout being an O-gauge version of *Arcadia*. Like the 4mm scale original, it featured stock from several of the Colonel's lines, including the delightful *Gazelle*: surely a unique feat to have made this diminutive loco in both scales.

When not actually exhibiting a layout, Martin was frequently to be seen on a demonstration stand, where he would willingly pass on his experience and skills to others. His cheerful manner and words of encouragement led to many a visitor 'taking the plunge' and picking up a soldering iron for the first time. He will be sadly missed: exhibitions will not be the same without him.

We extend our deepest sympathy to his wife Jan, who often helped him on the layouts, and to his family.

Les Darbyshire

Maurice Lawson Finch

It is with enormous regret that I have to report the death of Maurice Lawson Finch, author of the first history of the Kent & East Sussex Railway: *The Rother Valley Railway - later the Kent & East Sussex Railway*.

Published in 1949 at his own expense, this excellently illustrated book was one of a very small number of histories that were breaking new ground in telling the story of a minor railway at a time when most enthusiasts were more concerned with the Big Four.

His researches involved combing the local and railway press, gleaned such information as was available from local authority archives and personal interviews with those who had worked and travelled on the line.

With this book was included a loose sheet advertising that he was preparing a similar work on the East Kent Light Railway.

Maurice soon found that this was a far bigger subject than the K&ESR and the researches that he began in the late 1940s continued throughout the rest of his life. In recent years I was privileged to work with him on this history and it is to be hoped that when published it will be a fitting tribute to him.

Maurice was also a connoisseur of windmills, shipping and traction engines. He was a skilled model engineer and a very large scale model traction engine that he had built immediately took your attention on entering his house. Maurice was a kind family man with a wealth of anecdotes whose company is sadly missed by all who knew him.

Stephen Garrett