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# THE COLONEL

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Number 77

Winter 2004

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

## Editorial: What's it all about?

**T**ravelling on five of the 'Great Little Railways' of Wales in September set me thinking again about the nature of railway preservation and revival. This was reinforced by a thoroughly enjoyable day at Rolvenden on a locomotive driving course and the sad news of the loss, by arson, of buildings on the Headcorn Section of the K&ESR, balanced by the good news of progress on the Bodiam to Robertsbridge Section. We can only conjecture what the Colonel would have thought about Pullman dining evenings, Santa Specials, demonstration freights and Thomas weekends. But he would surely have approved of the entrepreneurial spirit behind them. Judging by his correspondence revealed in the Ward Green Archive, transcribed by David Powell, and featured in this issue, he

would also have fully explored the possibilities of Lottery funding and the EU Regional Development Fund, given the opportunity. Of course, the result of all the incredible preservation effort, wonderful as it is, will never be an authentic Stephens railway as it existed in the twenties and thirties. The only way to recreate those light railways, run on a shoe string, is to construct a model railway. And the basic requirement for that is accurate drawings and relevant photographs. As Stephen Hannington reminds us in Despatches, we need to ensure that everything that remains is properly recorded before it is too late. This is, of course, one *raison d'être* for our Society. The basis for a New Year's resolution, perhaps?

Ross Shimmon

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## Society News

# 2005 AGM to be held at the Avon Valley Railway

As reported in *The Colonel* 76, the 2005 AGM will be held on **Saturday 16th April**. Mark Bladwell, who is organising the event, reports that the AGM will be held at the Avon Valley Railway, Bitton Station, Willsbridge, south Gloucestershire (between Bath and Bristol). The meeting will take place in an AVR carriage which is regularly used for meetings and seats 40-50 theatre-style.

It is hoped that a buffet lunch will be available at reasonable cost. There may be an opportunity for a train ride, but at the time of going to press the railway's operating days for 2005 had not been finalised.

### Schedule

The draft schedule for the day is:

**11:30** AGM opens at Bitton Station

**12:30** (approx) Lunch

**1:30 pm** bus tour of the WC&P

**5:30** return to AVR

**6:00** return to Bristol TM

Mark says that the bus tour will take about three hours and that members will be delivered back to the AVR to collect their

cars by about 5.30pm and then to Bristol Temple Meads to catch trains back home. Members travelling by train are advised to alight at Bath Spa for a bus to the AVR, but to plan to return from Bristol TM. Full transport arrangements will be announced in the next issue of *The Colonel*, which will also carry the agenda for the AGM.

The bus in question will be a 1949 Bristol built Gardner-engined single-decker called *Daisy*. Mark promises to provide more details for the next issue.

So, please reserve the date in your 2005 diaries. This is a splendid opportunity to explore what remains of one of the most charismatic of the Colonel's railways. It is also a rare occasion on which to meet fellow enthusiasts of the Great Man and his works. We hope to see you there. ●

### Lost in Transmission

Unfortunately part of the last sentence of Stephen Hannington's report in the last issue of *The Colonel* on the Society's donations programme was lost. It should have read: "Not bad for a society with an annual subscription of £5." Apologies- *Editor*.

## Exhibition at Dartford

Member Alan Bone has written to remind us that the Erith Model railway Society will be presenting its next exhibition at Temple Hill CP school, St Edmonds Road, Dartford, Kent on Saturday and Sunday 29<sup>th</sup> and 30<sup>th</sup> January 2005. Up to 30 layouts are expected to be

on display. In addition, the Kent & East Sussex, the East Kent, the Rother Valley and Ffestiniog societies are all expected to be on parade.

Alan is one of our members who makes a point of distributing our membership leaflets at various events, with over 20 targeted for 2004. We are very grateful for your efforts to spread the word, Alan. ●

## News

# Welsh Highland's £5m Boost

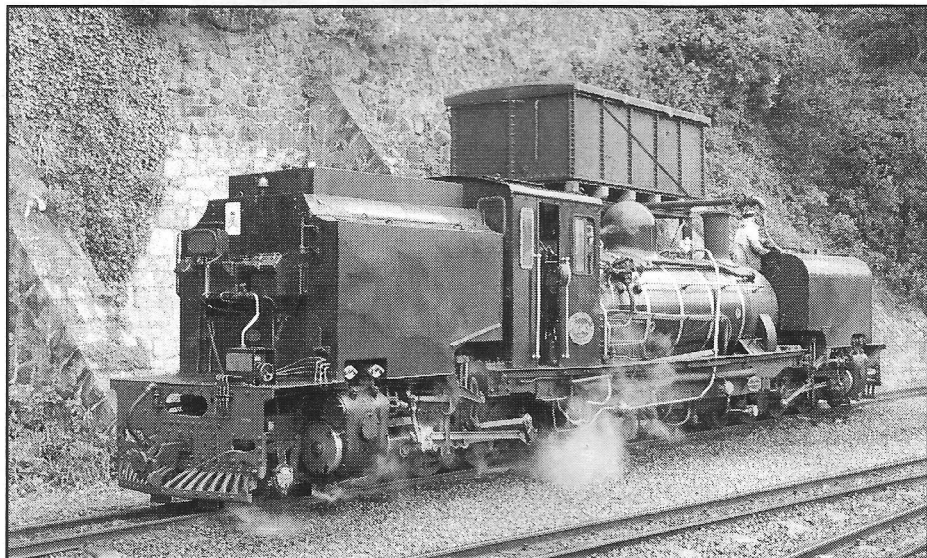
**T**he big story must surely be the £5 million grant-in-aid package from the Welsh Assembly. The award is made up of £3.7 million from the EU Regional Development Fund and a £1.3 million transport grant by the Assembly. This will be match funded by agreed donations from the line's supporters, supplemented by a £500,000 public appeal, which at the time of going to press had been reached within one month!

The funding package will enable a "basic" railway to be built from the terminus of the present line from Caernarfon at Rhyd Ddu to join up with the Ffestiniog at Porthmadog.

This final stretch of the WHR is the most spectacular, threading through the Aberglaslyn Pass and serving the tourist hot spot

of Beddgelert. The line will require a flat crossing of the Cambrian Coast Line at Porthmadog, although this one of several lines throughout the UK threatened by the Strategic Rail Authority review, covered in the national press recently. (What a tragedy that would be for the Welsh narrow gauge railways, connecting as it does the Welshpool & Llanfair, the Talyllyn, the Fairbourne miniature railway and the Ffestiniog). It also requires a level crossing and street running in Porthmadog.

Once complete, scheduled for 2009, it will be longest heritage line in the UK. The prospect of the South African Beyer Garratt storming through the Aberglaslyn pass is certainly spine-tingling. ●



Former SAR Beyer Garratt taking water at Caernarfon on the WHR, September 2004. This and her bigger sisters could be a common site in Porthmadog by 2009.

*Photo: Ross Shimmon*

## PRESS DIGEST

**T**he Welsh Highland story, see previous page, naturally receives widespread coverage. **The Railway Magazine** carrying it in the November issue. But the most comprehensive coverage is probably in **Heritage Railway 66**, October 2004, including a route map. Also covered in that issue is the first outing of the Tasmanian Garratt K1, the of its type in the world. It steamed at FR's Boston Lodge works in September.

**Welsh Highland Heritage**, the journal of the Welsh Highland Heritage Group, revealed in its September issue, plans to preserve existing NWNRR and WHR buildings, quarry branches and other artefacts. The group has proposed that original WHR features at Beddgelert, such as the water tower and inspection pit, should be preserved. Group secretary John Keylock, referring to the loss of granite blocks from the demolished Waun Fawr station said that "such carelessness must be avoided in future."

**The Festiniog Railway Heritage Group Journal**, Autumn 2004, has an interesting article outlining "aspirations" for future projects. There are "A", "B" and "C" lists. All containing interesting and in some cases ambitious projects. Outside of the lists is "Set up the museum, if ever the opportunity appears." This is described as the last of the Group's founding objectives. If the museum is ever established it would no doubt contain many items of interest to CSS members.

**The Railway Modeller**, as reported in *The Colonel 75*, featured articles earlier in the year on modelling the Rye & Camber Tramway. The December issue has a seven-page article by John Golding on the construction of the R&CT Bagnall 2-4-0T *Camber*. It was made entirely from plastic card and like the previous vehicles, the petrol locomotive and the Bagnall coach, are in 1:20 scale, running on 45mm gauge. No doubt to Laurie Cooksey's dismay, John Golding refers to the Rother Ironworks carriage as the 'Jones' carriage. The author concludes his article by saying that the compromises he made have

"resulted in a chunkier-looking model ... somewhat out of keeping with the character of the prototype." The November issue of the magazine reviewed a ready-to-run 4mm Adams radial 4-4-2T available in EKR livery. It could be yours for £180.

Members who attended the AGM will recall that former editor of *The Colonel*, Stephen Hannington, agreed to serve as Publicity Officer as well as continuing as Secretary. Both the **Railway Modeller** (December) and **Heritage Railway** (November) reported on the Society's donations programme, as a result of the press release he issued. At least one new member has been enrolled as a consequence.

Robert Kosmider's etched kit venture 'Steam & Things' received another favourable mention **Gazette**, the journal of the Gauge 'O' Guild, Autumn issue. The instructions and transfers for his HMST (ex Lambourne) coaches found especial favour with the Trade News editor. Still on a modelling theme, eagle-eyed members may have spotted a Colonel Stephens-style Shefflex railcar set on the cover of **Model Trains International 55**. However, that's about it. There is another photo of the set inside on the 4mm layout 'Snailspeed', but no constructional, or indeed any other details.

Work on restoring the missing link between Bodiam and Tenterden is covered in both **Rother Valley Phoenix 30** and **Tenterden Terrier 95**. **Phoenix** also records the thanks of the RVR for our donation of £200 towards the rebuilding of bridges. **Tenterden Terrier 94** reports the sad loss of Frittenden Road and Biddenden station buildings by arson (see also Despatches, page 6). **Tenterden Terrier 95** covers interesting correspondence between Rudyard Kipling and the Colonel. It also looks at the inter-railway politics involving the Cambrian Railways and the S&MR, followed by some reminiscences of an outing in the dying months of passenger service on the EKR. ●

*Contributions to this feature are welcome. Just*

## Dispatches

Letters to the editor

### Baldwin 778: correction & update

**Firstly**, we greatly appreciate the donation of £100 to towards the restoration to steam of Baldwin 4-6-0 No 778 - I hope we thanked the Society properly at the time it was made. I hope this does not appear 'picky', but reading *The Colonel 76* (I receive the copy sent to *The Railway Magazine* since I am Steam Writer for *The RM*) it struck me that there was a little confusion of names and titles. Since the magazine clearly strives to record things as accurately as possible (e.g. Laurie Cooksey's article - thus proving I read all of it!) I wonder if I could assist in relation to this loco.

No 778 is owned by The Greensand Railway Museum Trust. It is based at the Leighton Buzzard Railway. The trust and the Railway have signed a management agreement for its restoration to steam. The railway (LBNGR) is a registered museum but does not use the title 'Leighton Buzzard Railway Museum'. Not a big issue, but it may help for future reference. The frames are currently at Alan Keefe Ltd for total renovation, while a new boiler has been ordered from Bennetts Boilers of Bristol. The funding has come from a £50,000 HLF grant, plus donations, including yours. If we can raise the cash, further work will be done by contractors. Otherwise we are looking at some 500 hours of volunteer labour—or about two years.

**Cliff Thomas, Chairman,  
the Greensands Museum Trust**

### Record before it's too late

**I** was passing the site of Biddenden station on the former KESR Headcorn section on 20th November to discover that the former station agent's bungalow had been destroyed by fire, leaving only the brick footing and Chimney standing. A short feature on this building appeared in *The Colonel 60*, autumn 2000. John Miller, archivist at the col. Stephens Museum, subsequently responded that the owner had given permission for measurements to be taken and plans drawn up. I wonder if this ever happened? It all goes to show the value of recording whatever remains of the Colonel's lines, because they may not remain for much longer.

**Stephen Hannington, by email**

### Sentinel 7026 at Criggion

**I**n reply to Philip Scoggins's queries (*The Colonel 76*, page 9), this is an example of a response that can raise more questions than it answers, but I will have a stab at making a few comments on the points he raises.

**Granomac wagons** appear to have encompassed the standard types available at the time. I have reasonable pictures of both 3- and 5-plank varieties. The 3-plank is of interest, as it has raised curved ends (rising in the middle to the height of a fourth plank). It also appears to have a sheet rail running the length of the wagon. As they would have been used to convey tarmac, it would have been vital to keep the load as dry and warm as possible. ►

◀ They appear to have been of all wooden construction and have vertical outside framing at the ends. They were of dark colour, with lighter coloured lettering. It would be safe to assume that ownership would have passed to their successors, BQC Ltd and more often photographed in that condition.

**The quarry sidings:** I suspect that the details of the layout of the quarry sidings changed over the years, but the principle of the workings remained the same. The quarry extension from Criggion station, having passed under the Criggion to Trewern road bridge, split into two. To the left were two, possibly three reception sidings and to the right were firstly a loading dock and two, possibly three, outgoing sidings. ►

Letters to the editor

## Dispatches

### Sentinel 7026 *continued*

◀ both roughly following the shape of a rugby ball, continued either side of the blacksmith's forge and cottage (still extant as a private dwelling) and rejoined some one hundred yards from the loading screens. They immediately split to serve two loading screens. I suspect there was a further long siding at this point leading to a stockpiling area. The narrow gauge line passed over the sidings at this point on what can only be described as a gantry, although I have yet to figure out where (and how) the NG wagons were unloaded. There were two stub sidings, one for the 'engine shed' and another for tank wagons which delivered creosote, necessary to slow down the setting of tarmac transported by rail. A relative remembers unloading solid tarmac at Llandrinio Road station from a wagon which had failed to get to its destination on time and returned to the quarry for selling off cheaply. It took him several days.

**Steam loco:** I have one undated and unpublished photo of the rear of a steam engine shunting at the quarry. I am pretty certain that it is not the Sentinel, but I am unsure if it is the Baldwin as I have never ▶

◀ seen a photograph of this locomotive. I do have an excellent photo of *Jack*, clearly showing left-hand side detail. It is coupled to two apparently new narrow gauge wagons, probably taken when the quarry re-opened in c1911.

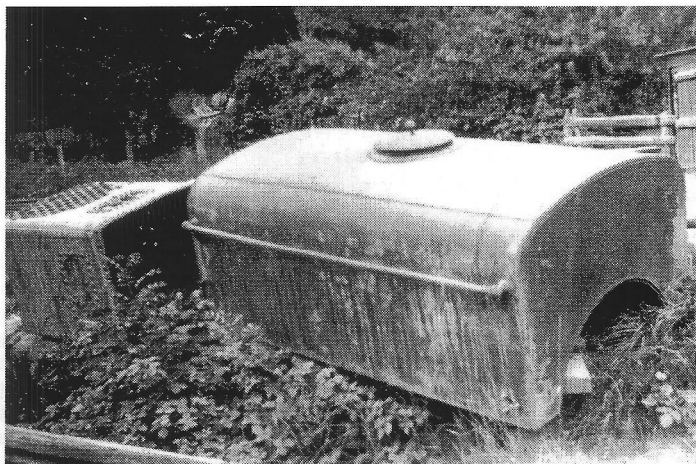
**Keith J Patrick, Crew Green**

**R**elative to the note from Mr. Scoggins, I enclose a photo I took in July 1934 of the remains of an engine at Criggion (*see below*). At that time the Sentinel still carried the Granomac name, but in light colour, not black as in the photo published with his letter.

The other photo (*overleaf*) shows the cramped position of the railhead buildings. Sidings were few; spare wagons were kept at Chapel Lane and Meverley stations. I am not clear what use was being made of the Sentinel tip wagons. They had formerly been owned by Messrs Chittenden & Simmonds.

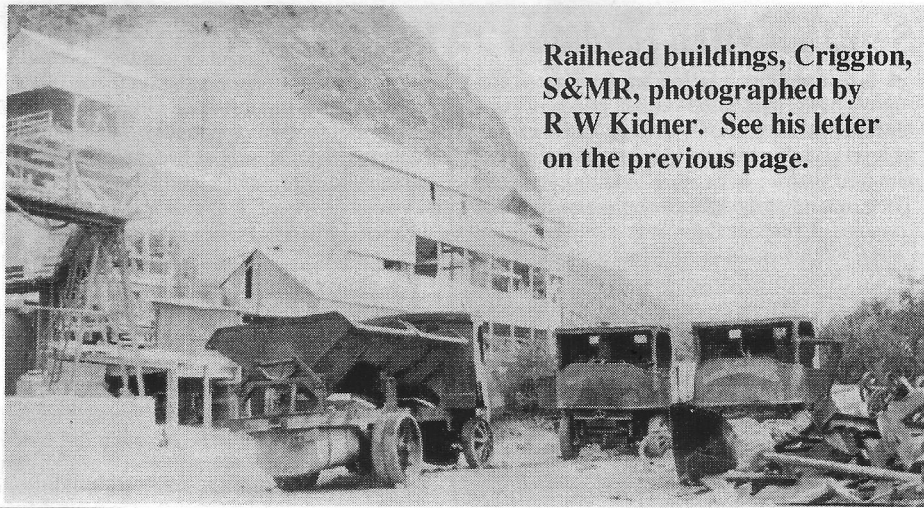
**R W Kidner,  
Bow Street**

**Contributions to the Dispatches pages are welcome. Please send them to the Editor at the address on page two. Email, floppy disc or steam-age pen and ink are all acceptable, as long as they are legible - and relevant.**



## Dispatches

Letters to the editor



Railhead buildings, Criggion, S&MR, photographed by R W Kidner. See his letter on the previous page.

### TEST LES

**W**e have a bumper crop of questions for Les Darbyshire in this issue. If you have been puzzling over a mystery about the Great Man or his railways, why not see if Les can help solve it? Simply send your question to the editor at the address on page two. Les will try to answer them, either from his own resources or with the help of the expertise residing in our network of members.

**Q** *What were the liveries of the three terriers used by the S&MR in the 1920s/early 1930s (apart from varying degrees of rust)?* Phil Scoggins, Shrewsbury.

**A** All three Terriers were purchased from the government after WW1, the first, *Hecate*, in 1921 and the others, *Dido* and *Daphne*, in 1923. The government acquired them from the LBSCR. They would have been painted in Marsh umber brown and lined out. *Hecate* was definitely in ▶

◀ umber livery when it arrived and still was in 1923. I think the others were the same. Since they did not last long in service on the S&M (*Hecate* and *Dido* soon after) I doubt that they were ever repainted, the umber eventually weathering to a nondescript dark brownish grey and lining vanishing altogether. If, by chance, any paint did reach them, I think it would have been black.

**Q** *Are there any 4mm scale transfers available at present for the Colonel's lines?* Albyn Austin, via email.

**A** *None are available that I know of. However, DJB Engineering Ltd (www.djbengineering.co.uk) do a sheet of transfers in 7mm for the Kent 7 East Sussex and would produce them in 4mm if there was any demand. The sheet contains the company name in the oval garter, plus some block lettering "K.&E.S.R." (in two sizes) and "ROTHER VALLEY RAILWAY" in full. Since, apart from the oval device, most lines used minimal lettering (at least on the locos in later days) in a very plain style, wagon lettering such as that ▶*



## TEST LES *continued*

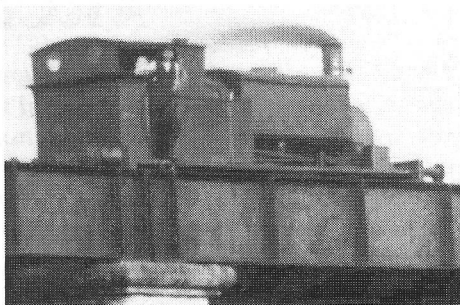
◀ available from the HMRS can be used in many cases.

**Q** *What was the Colonel's involvement with the Isle of Wight Central Railway? Albyn Austin, via email.*

**A** The Colonel was appointed Engineer to the IWCR in April 1911 "... to supervise the Permanent way and Locomotive Departments ..." he was instrumental in purchasing some second-hand rolling stock and water towers among other things, but his stay was very brief. He retired at the end of September the same year, finding the trip to the island too onerous in view of his many other commitments. For a more detailed account, see Stephen Garrett's article in the *Tenterden Terrier* 45 (Spring 1988).

**Q** *If you do a Google search on 'Potts Line' or Shropshire and Montgomeryshire Railway, you will discover the excellent BBC site which includes a neat article on the S&M with several photos. It is marred by a photo purporting to be Gazelle at Llanymynech. It is almost certainly the same loco as that portrayed in Eric Tonks's seminal book on the S&M on page 38, where a 'contractor's loco' is shown on an LNWR well wagon at Shrewsbury exchange sidings. What is the loco? How and where was it unloaded off the well wagon to enable it to appear at Llanymynech? Are there any sightings of this loco on other Stephens's lines? David Powell, Princes Risborough.*

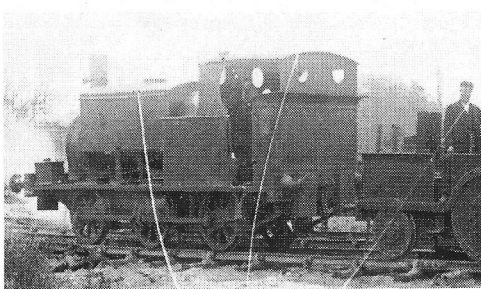
**A** The loco is certainly a Manning Wardle and belonged to the contractor responsible for rebuilding the S&M in 1910/11. I have a couple of other photos of it. One is a very cruel enlargement of it on Shrawardine viaduct (see top of next column) and the other a badly cracked photo of it at Kinnerley alongside *Gazelle* in its ▶



◀ 2-2-2 form (bottom of page) thus dating it to the first half of 1911. I don't have any details, except that it looks to be of similar vintage to the S&M's *Morous* and the HMST's *Sidlesham* which were built in 1866.

I don't know who the contractor was—Tonks doesn't give the name— but as William Rigby was one of Stephens's co-directors and was the contractor for the Sheppey Light, the EKR and the KESR Headcorn extension, he could have been the contractor here as well. If not, it would surely have been one of his associates. However, the loco does not appear in any photo I have seen of the other lines.

I would imagine that the loco was delivered to Llanymynech as that was the only place with a usable main-line connection to begin with. The exchange sidings were put in later, so the photo may be of it leaving rather than arriving. As there was no crane around capable of lifting a loco, it would have been transferred from the well wagon using jacks and a lot of swearing! Judging by the state of the track in the Llanymynech picture it was taken in 1910 at the start of the work. ●



# THE WARD GREEN ARCHIVE

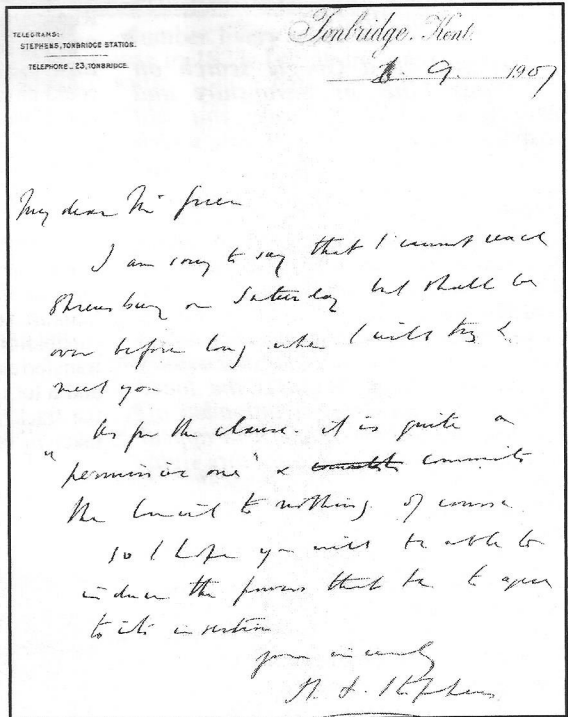
*David Powell has deciphered the Ward Green Archive, consisting of some 160 sheets, much of which is in the Colonel's handwriting, described by David at this year's AGM as "lethal". In this first instalment of a short series examining specific documents in an attempt to show how the Shropshire & Montgomeryshire Railway was funded and some of the shenanigans during the four years covered by the papers, David begins with two letters dated 26th September 1907 from the Colonel to Thomas Ward Green of Llanymynech.*

**A**s members will be aware, the Society obtained last year copies of correspondence involving Colonel Holman F Stephens and others and Thomas Ward Green of Llanymynech, mostly dating from 1907 to 1911 and primarily concerned with the establishment of the Shropshire and Montgomeryshire Light Railway. Green (1863-1950) was a prominent Shropshire Methodist layman, county councillor, Liberal Party activist and farmer. The first letter (*reproduced below*), entirely drafted in the Colonel's distinctive handwriting reads:

*My dear Mr Green*

*I am writing to say that I cannot reach Shrewsbury on Saturday but shall be over before long when I will try to meet you. As to the clause, it is quite a "permissive one" and commits the council to nothing of course. So I hope you will be able to induce the powers that be to agree to its insertion. Yours sincerely H.F. Stephens*

The 'clause' concerns the Light Railway Order, then in course of preparation. This was the section of the Order in which local district and county councils could demonstrate their commitment to a 1896 Light Railway Act project by detailing any sums of money they might subsequently wish to advance to the light railway company. As Stephens highlights, the clause was not a binding commitment (because the project could fail to get off the ground). However, the sum quoted would be the upper limit of what could be ►



◀subsequently advanced. Finally, there were certain situations where matching Treasury loans or grants could be obtained. Hence the concern of Stephens that Shropshire County Council should pass a suitable resolution for insertion in the LRO.

The second document (right), is thankfully an example of a letter written by one of the staff at the Tonbridge office, presumably dictated by Stephens. It reads: *Dear Sir North Shropshire Light Railway* You will be glad to hear that we have now got permission from all the local authorities with the exception of Salop CC to insert the clause as to them subscribing to the undertaking. I suppose we cannot do anything with the Salop CC till their next meeting. Yours faithfully H F Stephens

To which Stephens, ever keen to maximise potential funding, has added a postscript: *I understand*

*the proprietor of the lime works at Llanymynech is likely to subscribe to the undertaking, do you know him well enough to ask?*

Points to note include the name then given to the line: the North Shropshire Light Railway, and the associated file prefix 'NS'. The files would remain in the NS series even after the company became the S&M. ●

*David continues his analysis of the Ward green papers in the next issue.*

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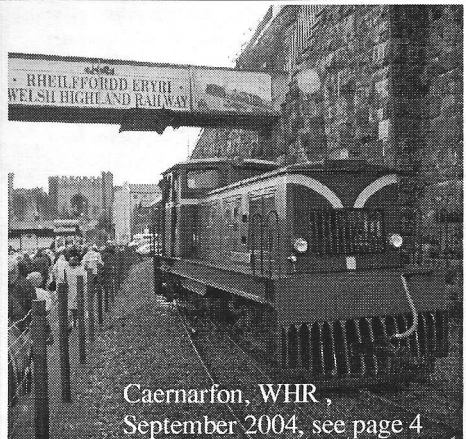
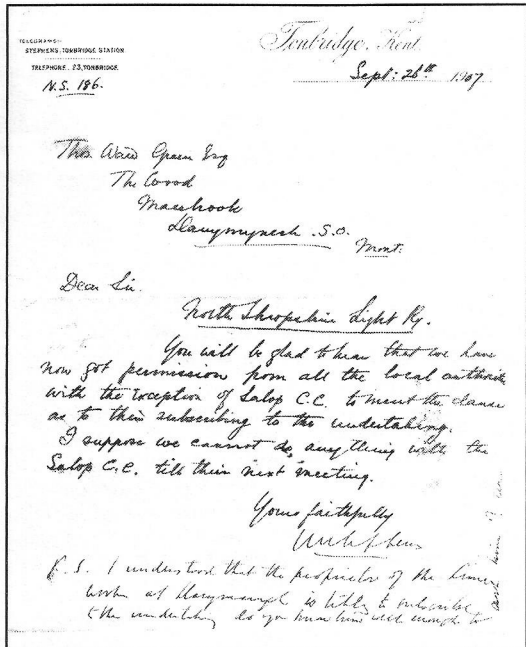
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## HOLMAN F. STEPHENS:

### S Military Man

Stephens was never a full-time army officer, but a member of the 'volunteer forces' (later the Territorial Force) and was able to continue his railway work in parallel with his military career. He became secretary of the University College School cadet company and in 1888 attended a summer camp at Aldershot at the age of twenty.

His first commission came in 1896 when he reached the rank of second-lieutenant with the 1st Sussex (Volunteer) Royal Engineers at Eastbourne. The following year he was promoted to lieutenant and, in 1898 to captain whilst still based at Eastbourne. During this time Stephens recruited some 600 men to serve with the Royal Engineers in the Boer War in South Africa.

He received a fresh commission in 1885 as a captain with the 2nd Cinque Ports Royal Garrison Artillery (Volunteers), based again at Eastbourne. The old volunteer companies were replaced by the Territorial Force. Stephens reached the rank of major, acting as commanding officer of the five companies of the Kent (Fortress) Royal Engineers, moving to his headquarters in Chatham. In 1913 Stephens was given command of the Cadet Battalion of the Kent (Fortress) RE, again with the rank of major, along with his other duties.

In 1915, Stephens appeared on the cover of *The Review* and in 1916 was further promoted to lieutenant-colonel. As the First world war dragged on, Stephens devoted more time to his military effort. ►



◀ However, the War Department put pressure on him to become full-time in the army. Given an ultimatum of full-time army service or his blossoming railway empire by the War Department, Stephens returned to Salford Terrace.

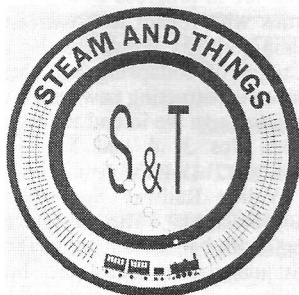


***“Given an ultimatum of full-time army service or his blossoming railway empire by the War Department, Stephens returned to Salford Terrace”***

However, it was not for long as, in 1917 he was transferred to the Territorial Force Reserve, being mentioned in dispatches in that year. In 1921, Stephens became Commanding Officer of the Sussex (Fortress) R.E. Territorials in Seaford. His time in Seaford was short-lived and he moved on to become Commanding Officer to the Cinque Ports (Fortress) R.E. based at Dover. It was here, around 1925, that Stephens gave up his military role. ●

*This article is adapted, with permission, from ‘Holman Stephens-The Military Man’ by John Miller (Tenterden Terrier, No.65, Winter 1994). Illustrations, courtesy of the Colonel Stephens Museum, Tenterden.*

***HAVE you paid your 2004/2005 subscription yet? If not, this is the last issue of The Colonel you will receive. If you have not paid, there should be a final reminder with this issue. If you have, you should find your membership card.***



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# ROTHER VALLEY RAILWAY BRIDGES

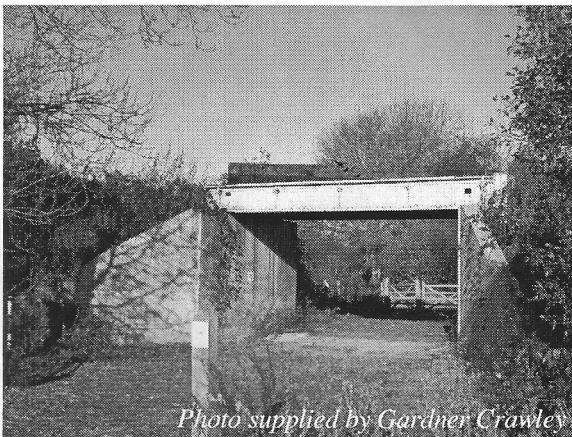
*Gardner Crawley, Chairman, Rother Valley Railway Heritage Trust reports on progress towards restoring the link between Bodiam and Robertsbridge on the KESR and the activities of the RVR Heritage Trust.*

Since its inception on 22 May 1991, the Rother Valley (East Sussex) Ltd has purchased approximately half a mile of trackbed from the end of the KESR track at Bodiam towards Robertsbridge. At Robertsbridge it has secured the trackbed from Station Road to Northbridge Street bringing the total, and secured ownership, to over a quarter of the total needed.

Planning permission for change of use back to railway purposes has been obtained from Rother District Council, which has included the route in its draft district plan. A survey of the route has been carried out and the feasibility of the level crossings established. Salehurst Parish Council fully supports the aims of the company and sees that its success would revitalise the village of Robertsbridge, in the way that the KESR has brought new life to Ten-terden.

Due to the generosity of one of our supporters, we were able to secure several 24 ft bridge spans that were being demolished at Staplehurst on the Tonbridge-Ashford main line. These spans were from the bridge made notorious by Charles Dickens's description of the rail crash he survived, although the spans themselves were erected by the SECR in 1904. They are thus contemporary with the construction of the RVR

The first bridge to be replaced was bridge number 2 (numbered from Robertsbridge) which was in imminent danger of



*Photo supplied by Gardner Crawley*

collapse and was removed by Southern Water as part of its Bewl to Darwell reservoirs transfer scheme. RVR(ES) persuaded Southern Water to construct new reinforced concrete abutments and replace one of the steel spans (*see photo above*).

## ***“Success would revitalise Robertsbridge”***

Negotiations are in progress with British Rail Properties with regard to possession of the remaining bridges, which are also in imminent danger of collapsing and their removal prior to constructing new ones.

In the medium term we intend to reconstruct Bridges Nos 3, 4 and 5 up to Northbridge Street, using the resources of the Rother Valley Railway Supporters' Association (RVRSA). The design of these bridges will be similar to that of No.2, again using the Tonbridge line bridge decks. ●

# Rother Valley Railway Heritage Trust

*Gardner Crawley, Chairman of the RVRHT, outlines its role.*

**T**he Trust, set up in 2001, aims to preserve the heritage of the Rother Valley Railway for the education, enjoyment and benefit of current and future generations. It has the following objects: *to preserve for the benefit of Kent and East Sussex and the nation, the historical, architectural and constructional heritage that may exist in and around the Kent and East Sussex Railway in buildings (including any building as defined in Section 336 of the Town and Country Planning Act, 1990) or structures of particular beauty or historical, architectural interest.*

The activities of the Trust will include:

1. The preservation of Robertsbridge Station Master's House, Robertsbridge Goods Shed, Orient Express Departure Lounge, Robertsbridge Station site, permanent way between Robertsbridge and Bodiam villages, areas of woodland adjacent to the trackbed, bridges and other railway structures.
2. These buildings and land will be purchased or leased by the Trust from their existing owners.

3. The Trust will retain ownership or head lease and make property available to other organisations to fulfil its charitable objectives.

4. The public will have access to all the properties, subject to the constraints of health and safety and other provisions. School parties will be given access free of charge.

5. The Trust will provide suitable educational material for its properties. This will be provided free of charge to school parties.

Since its inception, the Trust has been in discussion with landowners regarding the purchase of sections of the trackbed between Robertsbridge and Bodiam. ●

*RVRHT is a registered charity (No 1088452) and is actively seeking donations for the funds to carry out this work. A donation under the Gift Aid Scheme allows the Trust to claim £28 from the Inland Revenue for each £100 donated by a standard rate taxpayer.*

## THE ROTHER VALLEY RAILWAY

Robertsbridge station, East Sussex TN32 5DG

### REBUILDING THE K&ESR FROM ROBERTSBRIDGE TO BODIAM

Visitor centre open Sundays and Bank Holidays 9.30 to 17.00 (or dusk if earlier)  
For membership, telephone: 01580 881833, go to [www.rothervalleyrailway.co.uk](http://www.rothervalleyrailway.co.uk)  
or write to: RVRSA, 375 New Hythe Lane, Larkfield, Kent ME20 6RY

# H&MST: THE SOUTHERN'S VERDICT: PART 3

*In this instalment, the SR's report, submitted by Robert Kosmider, considers the places served by the Hundred of Manhood & Selsey Tramway.*

## 4. Territory

The census particulars in respect of the three places served are set out in the table hereunder :-

Civil Parish	Population 1921	Population 1931	Structurally separate dwellings occupied
Hunston	307	359	95
Sidlesham	801	878	240
Selsey	2307	2514	677

The increase was, however, larger than might be thought from the figures as the 1921 census was taken in June and included certain people on holiday, whereas the 1931 census was taken in April.

The country between Chichester and Selsey is for the most part pastoral in character, though beet sugar is grown.

In addition to the agricultural population at Hunston and Sidlesham, there are certain residents of the artisan classes who work either in Chichester or on certain building developments at Selsey.

In view of its position Selsey is isolated to a great extent to the east and west, and the main road from Chichester runs right to the coast at Selsey, serving en route the villages of Hunston and Sidlesham. Selsey itself has many attractions as a holiday resort; the sands are very good and well situated for bathing, and boating, fishing and golf are available. Up to the present the best class of development has taken place on the West Beach which, as previously explained, is farthest

from the Selsey Tram Station. Schemes have been considered from time to time to divert the line so as adequately to serve the West Beach. On the east side, however, development is now proceeding. Adjacent to the station Mr. W. Hobbs of Sutton is opening a new estate of small houses and, in addition, Messrs. Selsey Estates Ltd. and Messrs. Duncan Gray and Partners are offering land for sale.

A Holiday Camp consisting of brick buildings to house 300 people is being erected on the Bill at Selsey.

The occupants of the property on the West Beach appear mostly to be those of the classes owning private cars, but the development on the east side appears to cater for a less wealthy clientele. It therefore seems that the station as at present positioned will be suitable for serving that part of Selsey to which most traffic will go. The lobster pot fishery at Selsey is not unimportant and most of the traffic emanating therefrom is at present conveyed by rail. ►



## H&MST *continued*

◀It must not be overlooked that Selsey is the nearest seaside town to Chichester which has a population of 13,912 and besides being a cathedral city has certain industrial activities, including a sausage and potted meat factory of Messrs. Shippams, a tannery and dye works, and an ice and cold storage works. Moreover, the high [*sic*] population of 249,000 centred on Portsmouth is only 23 miles away by rail.

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**“...the best class of development has taken place on the West Beach which is farthest from the Selsey Tram Station.”**

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There has been some discussion respecting the erection of a sugar beet factory adjacent to the Selsey tramway near the Stockbridge Road Crossing at Donnington. ●

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*The next instalment of the report covers the working arrangements on the HM&ST*

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# SETTING THE RECORD STRAIGHT, PART THREE

*In part three of his series, Laurie Cooksey deals with the station diagrams for*

**I** refer to the station diagrams on page 37 of *The Rye & Camber Tramway*, compiled by C. Judge and published by the Oakwood Press in 1995. There is a disclaimer at the foot of the page: *all diagrammatic and not to scale; drawn from photographic evidence.*

Modellers should certainly beware!

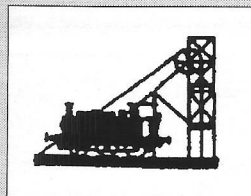
### Rye Terminus c1895

The track entering the engine shed was straight, not curved, and the water tank was mounted on a wooden framework behind the shed, not on top of it. The single siding was constructed in 1901 for the sand traffic, but it extended to a position close to the station building. The ‘coal dump’ is mentioned in the lower photograph on page 21, where *Victoria* is clearly standing on the main running line, with the sand siding visible behind her. I do not think this is a coal stage (to be honest, I don’t know what it is) as coal was stored in the coal shed on the platform.

### Rye Terminus c1930

The run-round loop was not re-aligned, the impoverished Tramway could not have afforded it and what would have been the point? The “new shed” beside the engine shed was the 55’ long carriage shed built early in 1896 to accommodate both the Bagnall *continued on page 18* ▶

## The East Kent Railway



**Ride the Colliery Line  
from  
Shepherdswell to  
Eythorne**

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## Setting the Record Straight *continued*

◀ *Continued from page 17* §

and Rother Ironworks carriages. The original engine shed at 45' long was *not* extended, but the front was in line with the later carriage shed. I am intrigued as to what "photographic evidence" shows that the main station building (containing waiting room and booking office) with TRAM painted in white on the roof, was connected to the coal shed (described on the plan as the "new building") displaying STATION. All the photographs (see pages 22, 27, 29 and 39) show a gap between them in which the water tank was situated as shown in the photo on page 4. The "carriage shed added c1908?" was in fact the maintenance shed, built in 1921. It had already been noted that it had not been built by 1910 in the photograph (actual date 10.4.1909) on page 27. The suggestion of a "track extension?" is correct; the sand siding of 1901 still serving its sand dock and terminating close to the station building. A small, and perhaps unimportant, detail is that the fence at the bottom of the plan followed the curve of the run-round loop, to parallel the main running line close to the sand siding points.

*Continued in next column* ▶

### Golf Links

At Golf Links, the platform was not sited centrally alongside the run-round loop, and it overlapped the points at the southern end. The plan suggests steps at both ends of the platform, but they featured only in the northern ramp. The footpath between the Royal William Hotel and the ferry crossed the tramway inside the northern loop points. It was in 1943 that the run-round loop was reinstated and the siding, (hardly a "branch" at 90 yards long) built at the same time, curved sharply to the left on a 2½ chain radius curve to run onto the jetty at right angles to the stonework.

### Camber Sands

This is a realistic diagram of the station layout, except that Thompson's Tea Room was sited further away from the station to the north-east. The weather boarded wooden shelter on its concrete plinth was not situated centrally, but two-thirds of the way along the platform towards its eastern end. •

*Laurie Cooksey continues 'Setting the Record Straight' in the next issue.*

## Back numbers of *The Colonel*

Back numbers of issues from 2 to the latest issue are in stock, with the exception of 62, 69, 70 and 71 which are currently out of print. 67 and 68 are in very short supply. They are obtainable from Les Darbyshire at 74 Red Rose, Binfield, Bracknell, RG42 5LD (email [Lesdar74@aol.com](mailto:Lesdar74@aol.com)). The cost to members is 75p per issue, including UK postage. Excess postage for overseas orders will be charged at cost. Please make out cheques to "The Colonel Stephens Society". Issue 1 was a single-sheet affair with little factual content, but for those who wish to complete their set it can be supplied free of charge with any other order, or on receipt of an A5 size stamped, addressed envelope.

## WESTON POINT LIGHT RAILWAY

*It's not often that we have the opportunity to report on modern 'heavy metal' - if you can call class 37s modern. And the Weston Point Light is one of the Colonel's lesser known enterprises, so that does not often get a mention either. However, Albyn Austin provides us with this double whammy.*

One of the less well-known of the Colonel's lines, the Weston Point Light Railway is the only one still operating out of captivity. It was opened in 1922, engineered by the Colonel who had no further involvement with it. Located beside Runcorn station, the route follows the old Runcorn Docks branch for a few yards before the light railway branches off on a substantial embankment above the Manchester Ship Canal. The route runs round Weston Point which became part of ICI, now Ineos Chlor. There is one bridge over the road. The final few yards of the route across the two level crossings into the works is now shut. The line was about a mile long, but traffic now commences in the exchange ►



*Photos : Albyn Austin*



◄sidings near Folly Lane. About the only rail traffic left is an approximately weekly train from Sellafield nuclear plant to pick up full tankers of acid and alkali and to return empties. They are worked by Direct Rail Services and usually topped and tailed by two locos. This avoids running round at reversals, speeds up the operation and provides extra reliability when using elderly class 37 diesels. On the afternoon of 4<sup>th</sup> March 2003, I was lucky to find a train of a single bogie tanker being filled and then departing along the WPLR. Locos were 37611 and 37029. With reprocessing operations at Sellafield likely to finish in the next few years it seems unlikely that the line will see its centenary. ●

## Jackson's Jottings

### MORE LIGHT RAILWAY ORDERS

*Chris Jackson browses through more clippings from the Railway Gazette, discovering several more proposals to the Light Railway Commissioners and the Board of Trade. In common with the selection in the last issue, many of the schemes were never built.*

#### September 3 1909 Light Railway Orders

The Board of Trade has confirmed the under-mentioned orders made by the Light Railway Commissioners: Dover, St. Margarets & Martin Mill Light Railway Order, 1909, authorising the construction of light railways in the Borough and Rural district of Dover, the County of Kent; Halesowen light railways (Transfer &c) Order, 1909, transferring to a company the powers conferred on the Rural District of Halesowen by the Halesowen Light Railway Order, 1901, and by the Halesowen Light Railway (Extensions) Order, 1902, and amending those orders.

#### October 8 1909: Light Railway Orders

The Board of Trade has confirmed the under-mentioned Order made by the Light Railway Commissioners: Padstow, Bedruthan and Mawgan Light Railway (Extension of Time) Order, 1909, reviving the powers and granting and extending the period limited by the Padstow & Mawgan Light

Railway Orders of 1903 and of 1905 for the compulsory purchase of lands and extending the period limited by those Orders for the completion of the railway and works thereby authorised.

#### December 10 1909

**Government Grant for Welsh Railway**  
In reply to a question in the house of Commons last week, the President of the Board of Trade announced that, subject to certain conditions, the Treasury had agreed to make a free grant of £9,000 in aid of the construction of the Dinas Mawddy [*sic*] Light Railway in Montgomeryshire.

#### December 17 Light Railway Order

The Board of Trade has recently confirmed the undermentioned order made by the Light Railway Commissioners: Mid Suffolk Light Railway (Amendment) Order, 1909, amending the Mid Suffolk Light Railway Orders of 1900, of 1903, and of 1905. ●

*Jackson's Jottings continue in the next issue with a glance across the channel.*

### Notes for contributors

Contributions to *The Colonel* are welcome. Please send them to the Editor at the address on page 2. They may be in the form of a Word document, sent as an email attachment, or a floppy disc, or a CD. Steam age authors may, of course, send them as a typescript-but please write legibly. Please ensure that photos, either in electronic form or traditional print are reproducible.

### Next issue:

*The next issue of The Colonel (No. 78) will mark the twentieth anniversary of publication of the Society's Newsletter No. 1. Yes, the CSS will be 20. In addition to a special feature, there will be full details of the AGM, as well as our regular features, plus news.*

*Make sure you don't miss it!*