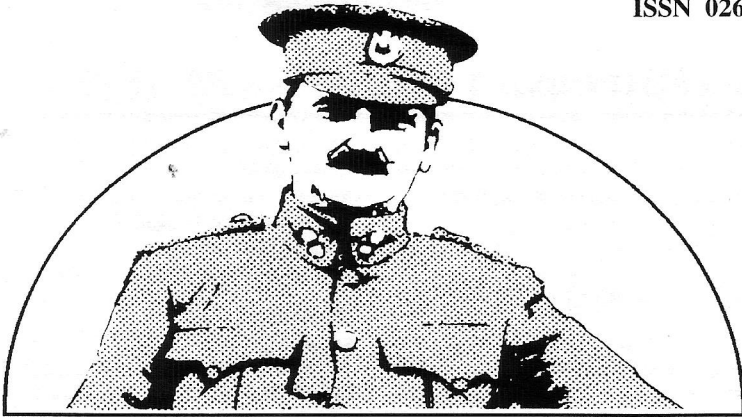


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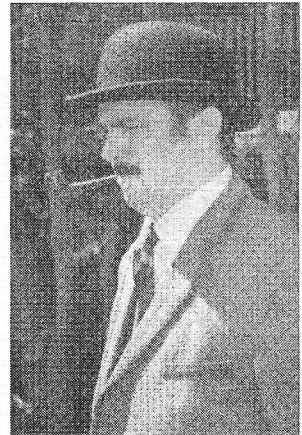


THE COLONEL

Number 85

Winter 2006

The Colonel Spotted at
Tenterden - 3
Stephens Family Tree
Revealed - 10
Selsey Tramway History
Published - 22



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THE QUARTERLY JOURNAL OF THE COLONEL STEPHENS SOCIETY
*for enthusiasts of the light and narrow gauge railways of
Colonel Holman F. Stephens*

Staff Officers

CHAIRMAN

Les Darbyshire

74 Red Rose, Binfield, Bracknell RG42 5LD

Tel: 01344 420791

Email: lesdar74@aol.com

SECRETARY & PUBLICITY OFFICER

Guy Hardy

Cawdron House, 111 Charles Street,
Milford Haven, Pembrokeshire SA73 2HW

Tel: 01646 692254

Email: cawdronhardy1@yahoo.co.uk

MEMBERSHIP SECRETARY

David Powell

Gateways, Bledlow Road, Saunderton,
Princes Risborough, Bucks HP27 9NG

Tel: 01844 343377

Email: DJPowellLtd@compuserve.com

TREASURER

Nigel Bird

Bryn Hir, Llanio Road, Llwyn-y-Groes,
Tregaron, Dyfed SY25 6PY

Tel: 01974 821281

Email: nigelbird.books@virgin.net

ARCHIVIST

Stuart Marshall

53 Peasland Road, Saffron Walden,
Essex CB11 3ED Tel: 01799 500528

EDITOR

Ross Shimmon

7 Nobel Court

Faversham, Kent

ME13 7SD Tel: 01795 533137

Email: pandrsshimmon@btinternet.com

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An Index to **The Colonel** issues 1-84 is available on our website (see below).

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Editorial: Who would have thought?

Who would have thought, in 1931, that 75 years later a small group of a Society with over 300 members would gather in a hotel in London to mark the anniversary of the death of a relatively little known railway entrepreneur and engineer?

Given the state at the time of some of the railways he was connected with (the Selsey Tramway to name just one), given the collapse of passenger traffic in the face of increasingly aggressive road competition, given the economic realities of the time, anyone who suggested that five of 'his' railways would in the 21st century, be the subject of major revivals, some of them carrying passengers in numbers rivalling those at their peak of

their success, would have attracted the attention of the men in white coats. Admittedly, these lines carry little or no freight, but they do operate services, such as Pullmans and wine & dine specials, beyond the wild imagination of those years on those lines. But not only has that happened, but a significant library of thoroughly researched books is being published, a major museum is flourishing and a cottage industry making parts for enthusiasts to build realistic models has developed. Even a replica Ford railmotor has been built by one of our members. Who would have thought? I wonder if we realize how lucky we are - and if we make the most of the opportunities to experience something of these charismatic lines? **Ross Shimmion**

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WHO IS THIS AT AT TENTERDEN?

Cover story: The *Victorian Examiner*, published by the Kent Community Network and



the Historical Model Railway Society, reported on a project held on the Kent & East Sussex Railway during its Victorian experience week last June. Children were set a series of challenges involving historical investigations linked to the National Curriculum. One of the tasks was to

discover whether the Colonel was planning an extension of the line to Headcorn. Other people spotted during the week were WH Austen, Queen Victoria and Mary Seacole. ●

THE COLONEL ON THE ROCKS

The first of a short series of edited extracts from a report on mineral deposits in the areas served by several of the Colonel's railways

PAUL JACKSON has provided *The Colonel* with a copy of this fascinating report, apparently commissioned by Colonel Stephens, on the mineral resources in the areas of five of his lines. Unfortunately, the report is undated, although it is clear that it was written soon after the first world war. There is also no clue as to its author(s). The purpose seems to be to identify minerals which might be extracted and lead to more traffic for the railways concerned. In this issue we begin with the introductory remarks and an analysis of the minerals near the K&ESR.

Introduction. In the following general statement of the mineral resources of the above mentioned areas [*those of the five railways listed, see the illustration, right*], attention has been given not only to the minerals now being worked but also to the possibilities of finding new deposits, or of reviving old industries which have decayed for various reasons. It should also be remembered that minerals undergo considerable fluctuations in economic value; while the march of scientific discovery sometimes creates a market for

materials essential to certain manufactures, such, for example, as glass sands and refractory products; while the increased use of native ores for the manufacture of iron and steel adds enhanced importance to the raw materials used in metallurgical processes.

Again, the question of roadstone promises to assume a new character in the light of modern tendencies in road construction. Not only is this due to the more extended use of tarred macadam, which in itself has enhanced the value of many grades of road material, but the possibility of the more general adoption of concrete roads, following American practice, may eventually add to the demand for local

“The war has caused a revival of interest in minerals”

mineral products previously neglected.

The war, too, has caused a revival of interest in the mineral resources of this country, the effect of which promises to be a permanent improvement in the value of

REPORT ON MINERAL RESOURCES

Kent and East Sussex Railway.

Shropshire and Montgomeryshire Railway.

Wotton, Clevedon and Portishead Railway.

Chichester and Selway Railway.

East Kent Railway.

Introduction. In the following general statement of the mineral resources of the above mentioned areas, attention has been given not only to the minerals now being worked but also to the possibilities of finding new deposits, or of reviving old industries which have decayed for various reasons. It should also be remembered that minerals undergo considerable fluctuations in economic value; while the march of scientific discovery sometimes creates a market for mineral products previously neglected.

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For these reasons attention is given in the following report not only to the minerals that have been or are being worked, but to those also which show promise for recovery of their possible future value.

All questions of cost of production and present market prices are beyond the scope of this report. It must not, therefore, be assumed that mention of the occurrence of any mineral of a certain quality of actual or prospective commercial use implies that it would be profitable to exploit at the present time; for this question could only be determined by a detailed examination of the spot of the commodity under which it is found.

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For these reasons attention is given in the following report not only to the minerals that have been or are being worked, but to those also which claim attention by reason of their possible future value.

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KENT AND EAST SUSSEX RAILWAY

The country traversed by this line, with its authorised extensions, includes the central ridge of the Wealden arch or anticline, the strata here being bent into a series of folds or flexures, which, owing to the wearing away by denudation of the tops of the folds, expose the underlying beds in the crests of the ridges. The axis of one of these folds passes from the coast at Fairlight through Battle in a N.W. direction through Brightling, and it is here that the lowest strata of Sussex are exposed. These are the Purbeck beds which occupy a narrow area, 10 miles long and averaging $\frac{1}{2}$ mile wide, between Whatlington and Tortingworth Farm. The high ground between Battle, Brightling and Heathfield consists of Ashdown Sand, which lies next above the Purbeck Beds. Although it is mainly owing to the denudation of the Ashdown Sand that the Purbeck Beds are exposed in the valleys, these exposures have been partly brought about by faults.

Summary and Conclusion

The foregoing description refers to the mineral products that have been worked in the geological strata traversed by the Kent and East Sussex Railway. Some of the place names mentioned lie at a considerable distance from the line. The following remarks apply more directly to the neighbourhood of the railway, and refer to

those minerals which might be expected to repay investigation provided that suitable markets may be found.

Gypsum

The Purbeck Beds are nowhere exposed in the area served by the line; but they cannot be far below the surface in the valleys west of Wittersham Road, and also around Robertsbridge. The extension of gypsum beds beneath this area is always a possibility. But their occurrence can only be proved by boring.

Glass Sands

The Ashdown Sands should be examined for these sands in the neighbourhood of Bodiam, and further west towards Etchingam, as well as in the higher ground to the south of the line between Bodiam and Robertsbridge.

Moulding Sands

The prospect of the development of an iron and steel manufacture in Kent may add considerable importance to suitable deposits of moulding sand. They are at present an unknown quantity so far as this part of Kent and Sussex is concerned. They should be looked for in the areas where sandy beds occur in the Wadhurst Clay and the Weald Clay. These beds cut in thin bands across the railway line between Bodiam and Headcorn, and further onto Chart Sutton. More promising are the Tunbridge Wells sands which occur near Tenterden and as outliers on the Wadhurst Clay between that place and Northiam, and along the ridge about Cranbrook.

Refractory Sand

The pure sands of the Ashdown Beds may be suitable for use in open hearth steel furnaces. The above remarks on glass sands apply to these.

Building Sand

Any of the above localities may be examined for sand suitable for building.

Iron Ore

This may be looked for on both sides of the line between Bodiam and Tenterden, in the Wadhurst Clay country. Many old pits show where it has previously been got.

Brickearth

The upper part of the Tunbridge Wells Sands near Tenterden contains beds of clay of

the "catsbrained" type more loamy than the stiff Wadhurst Clay. Good brick clays may be looked for near the junction of the Wadhurst Clay with the overlying beds, as near Tenterden, and also with the underlying sands between Bodiam and Northiam, east and west of the line. Brickearth may also be looked for in the valley of the Beult between Cranbrook and Headcorn.

The stiff clays of both the Weald Clay and the Wadhurst Clay outcrop all along the line. Between Bodiam and Chart Sutton beyond Headcorn, and where mixed with sand make good brickearths.

Fireclay

Nothing is known as to the suitability of any of the above clays for refractory purposes. Reference is made above to the Fairlight Clays, which lie at the base of the Ashdown Sands, but they are not exposed in the vicinity of the railway.

Roadstone

The proposed extension of this railway from Headcorn to Maidstone might be expected to bring a considerable amount of traffic in Kentish Rag which is largely quarried near Maidstone, and is the best roadstone of this area. Tilgate stone occurs in the Wadhurst Clay area between Bodiam

"Kentish Rag is the best Roadstone"

and Tenterden on either side of the line. Further north, in the Weald Clay area, about Frittenden, Idenbourn and neighbouring places the limestone bands, known as Betersden marble may be used locally for roadstone, but the beds are too thin for extensive working.

Building Stone

The above remarks apply also to local building stone.

Fuller's Earth

Although inferior kinds of Fuller's Earth

may still be found on the Weald Clay area on each side of the line between Headcorn and High Halden Road, there is no prospect of this material being worth working under present conditions. It is only the better quality found in the Sandgate Beds, as already mentioned, that is worth notice, and the nearest locality for this is Deptling near Maidstone.

Gravel

Only the flint gravels are worth notice and there is nothing to add to what has been said above with regard to this material. •

The next instalment will deal with the mineral resources located near the Shropshire & Montgomeryshire Railway. If any readers can throw more light on the background to this report, the Editor would be delighted to hear from them.

Deadlines for 2007

Copy for *The Colonel* should be submitted to the Editor by the following dates:

86: Spring 2007: 15th February

87: Summer 2007: 15th May

88: Autumn 2007: 15th August

89: Winter 2007: 15th November

These are final dates, but we much prefer earlier receipt if at all possible. •

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HM&ST - THE SR'S VERDICT:

Part 8 The position in 1933

We continue our coverage of the Southern Railway's report on the HM&ST, submitted by Robert Kosmider

9. Present position.

The debentures previously referred to became repayable on March 1st, 1931, and in April, 1931, a Receiver was appointed by the Court on behalf of the debenture holders. The executors of the late Col. Stephens have a majority holding of the debentures, full particulars of which are set out in Mr. Austen's letter to the Traffic Manager dated 7th March.

A copy of the accounts of the Hundred of Manhood & Selsey Tramways Co. Ltd. For the year ending 31st December, 1933, are attached as Appendix No.5. [missing] It is here again interesting to note that while accounts in this form are circulated to the Shareholders and sent to the Registrar at Somerset House a copy of the accounts in the form required by the Railway Companies (Accounts and Returns Act, 1911) is forwarded to the Ministry of Transport.

From Account No.9 it will be seen that there was an actual deficit on the working for the year of £315, but the expenditure includes the following accounts:-

	£
Part rent of Tonbridge office	48
Office expenses	31
Part salaries of Tonbridge staff	209
Expenses of Receivership	326

It will be seen that the passenger business is the least profitable of the Company's undertaking.

Account No.12 shews [sic] the general balance sheet of the Company.

There is an amount shewn [sic] as a balance debit of net revenue account of £13,216 whilst the sundry accounts due to the Company amount £17,693. 2. 7. This figure includes amounts incurred prior to and since the appointment of the Receiver, and

details are set out below:

	£	s.	d.
Suspense account	47.	5.	0.
Mileage and Demurrage	8.	0.	0.
Commissioners of Inland Revenue	336.	15.	9.
Advertising	111.	6.	0.
Director's fees	463.	4.	10.
Debenture interest	5,274.	1.	11.
Cartage	13.	1.	11.
Southern Railway Co.	1,961.	11.	7.
Painter Mayne & Walker (per Mr. Owen Walker)	598.	4.	0.
Pontifax Pitt & Co. (Solicitors to Receiver)	32.	0.	0.
Southern Railway Co.	430.	9.	8.
The Executors of Lt. Col. H.F. Stephens	7,467.	13.	7.

It is understood that the Executors of Col. Stephens would be prepared to waive the amount of £7,467 upon a reasonable offer being accepted for their holdings in the Company.

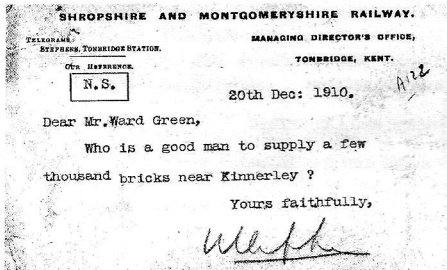
So far as the future is concerned there is no doubt that the resuscitation of the line will involve substantial expenditure being incurred. ●

The final instalment of this report will include an assessment of what the SR would have had to do to make a go of the line. Previous instalments appeared in Colonels 75,76,77, 80, 81, 82 and 83

THE WARD GREEN ARCHIVE - 9

DAVID POWELL concludes his journey through correspondence on the *Shropshire and Montgomeryshire Railway* accumulated by **Thomas Ward Green**, leading up to the reopening of the line

First a typed note (Doc 122), dated 20th December 1910:



My first thought was that many of these bricks could have been needed for the new centralised loco and workshop facilities at Kinnerley which replaced the PS&NWR engine sheds at Llanymynech and Shrewsbury. Alternatively, John Davies has pointed out that the S&M had several flood openings in the Kinnerley area to allow flood waters from the Morda and Vyrnwy to pass under the track bed. One of these in Maesbrook was 103 feet wide. Its eight piers contained over 50,000 bricks, so possibly bricks may have been needed for repairs or improvements to these flood openings.

Next, Stephens writes to Ward Green (Doc 124) on 30th December 1910 about opening the line to traffic, including milk traffic from stations between Nesscliffe and Llanymynech:

Dear Mr Ward Green Many thanks for yours of 28th inst. We cannot undertake any traffic at present, to begin with, through rates are not fixed up with the Main Line Coys and to start traffic with local rates would cause a misapprehension and probably divert traffic to the road which might be difficult to regain. I am delighted to hear that there is a chance of milk traffic with London, they will be able to load up at any Station. Traffic between Nesscliff and

Llanymynech would circulate via Oswestry and Whitchurch. There would be no difference in the rates and it would save carting across Shrewsbury. With best wishes for 1911. Yours sincerely H F Stephens

Finally, on 12th March 1911, Stephens invites Ward Green (Doc 130) to join him on an 'inspection' train.

Dear Mr Ward Green We are going through the Line next Saturday with the Clerk of the County Council and some other people, 2.30pm from Shrewsbury Station. I hope you can come, Yours faithfully H F Stephens

This inspection train ran some two weeks before the official reopening on Thursday 13th April 1911. As well as Stephens, the 200 guests on the opening train including Alderman Ben Blower, by then deputy mayor and Major Wingfield, the mayor of Shrewsbury. Ward Green's diary records:

Journeyed down the Potteries Ry from Salop with Bowen-Jones, R.G. Venables and about 12 other county gents. Travelled on line last day of running & first pass. [passenger] to alight at Maesbrook.

Bowen-Jones and Venables were chairman and vice-chairman of the county council respectively. After the line opened, as well as his milk traffic, Ward Green used the railway to dispatch cheeses made on Wood Farm from Maesbrook station to his buyer, Platt & Dobell of Wem.

The branch to Criggion reopened on 21 February 1912. The S&M survived, just, under the management of Stephens and, after his death, W H Austen, until taken over by the War Department in 1939. Advertised passenger services were withdrawn in 1933, leaving the 'Potts' as a freight only line, primarily to serve the quarries at Criggion. Occasionally pre-war traffic was augmented by a bank holiday excursion. WD occupation continued until 1960. The Criggion

branch was never requisitioned, but continued working for as long as the 'main line' was open. In 1960, the railway was handed over to BR(WR) for dismantling. This was undertaken by Marple & Gillott Ltd of Sheffield in 1962. ●

A124

SHROPSHIRE AND MONTGOMERYSHIRE RAILWAY.
 TELEGRAMS: SHROPSHIRE, TONBRIDGE STATION.
 Managing Director's Office,
 Tonbridge, Kent,
 30th December, 1911.

OUR REFERENCE: N.S.

Dear Mr Ward Green,

Many thanks for yours of the 28th inst. We cannot undertake to carry any traffic at present, to begin with, through rates are not fixed up with the Main Line Coys and to start traffic with local rates would cause a misapprehension and probably divert traffic to the road which might be difficult to regain.

I am delighted to hear there is a chance of milk traffic with London, they will be able to load up at any Station. Traffic between Nesscliffe and Llanyrnnech would circulate via Oswestry and Whitchurch. There would be no difference in the rates and it would save carting across Shrewsbury.

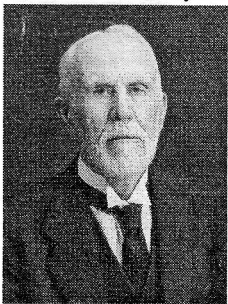
With best wishes for 1911.

Yours sincerely,



Postscript

Thomas Ward Green (1863-1950), pictured here, was a leading Shropshire Methodist layman, county council chairman, Liberal Party activist and farmer. He was inaugural chairman of Kinnerley Parish Council in 1894. In 1904 he became a county councillor and was council chairman in 1931. His diary records that, on entering the county council, he and a few others brought forward the ques-



tion of reopening the S&M.

He was present and gave supporting evidence at the first hearing of the SMR (then North Shropshire) Order in 1907 when he was on both the Shropshire County Council (where he was vice-chairman of the Roads and Bridges Committee) and Oswestry Town Council. He took up £100 of Shropshire Railways prior charge debentures on the first day of issue in 1911. But this original loan to the S&M was not paid back until nationalisation in 1948. He was not one of the inner circle of SMR shareholders and had to be given (or bought) five shares when he was appointed a director on 22nd February 1932.

Ownership and rights to letters quoted in this series remain with the Ward Green family. The transcriptions of Stephens's handwriting are mine and any errors or omissions are entirely my responsibility. Likewise, the comments represent my personal views and interpretation of the archive, although I am happy to be persuaded by others with greater knowledge of the individuals or situations portrayed. May I thank those who waded through some of the earlier versions of the transcribed archive and my commentary, and in particular John Davies of Crickheath, who discovered the papers while researching for a biography of his grandfather and who kindly gave the Society access to the 'S&M' documents.

Brian Janes observes that we should not be surprised at Stephens hustling for money. That was the key to reopening these railways and at this stage of his life Stephens was wholly committed to promoting and creating light railways. He continued this activity to some extent until his death. Running them was almost a subsidiary activity until after WW1. Reading Stephens's letters, I was struck by their terse content. However, Brian points out that he always wrote in this style. He was abrupt in his letters, even to his closest colleagues. Nothing should be construed from this about his attitude to individuals - it was just his way. Furthermore John Davies made the point to me that, in his diaries, Ward Green gave no hint that he felt he was being used or bullied. Indeed, in an interview with the *Oswestry Advertiser* editor in 1946, Ward Green described Stephens as "a somewhat remarkable man." ●

THE STEPHENS FAMILY

PHILIP SHAW presented these results of his long-term research into the Colonel's family background to the lunchtime gathering of Society members at the Charing Cross Hotel on the 28th October, held to mark the 75th anniversary of Stephens's death

The compilation of this family tree, over a period of seven years, has not been easy, as Frederick George Stephens, in particular, may have deliberately attempted to conceal some murky aspects of the family history.

Research has also been hampered because there is no published biography of Fred Stephens, an original member of the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood and the entry for him in the new edition of the *Dictionary of National Biography* merely perpetuates existing errors. Alas, Holman Stephens failed to merit an entry in the Dictionary, despite submissions being made to the publishers for his inclusion.

Documentation of the early history of the Stephens family is confined to a short biographical sketch of Fred Stephens contained in a monograph published privately by H F Stephens, entitled *Frederick George Stephens and the Pre-Raphaelite Brothers*

which consists mainly of reproductions of paintings then in his father's art collection. Holman Stephens states in this work that his grandfather, Septimus Stephens, came from Aberdeen and that his great-grandfather was called Octavius Stephens and came from Dublin. In fact Septimus Stephens claimed on the 1851 census that he came from Manchester and my researches show that this is

much more likely to be correct. So why would he have put round the Aberdeen story? Or perhaps he didn't? The International Genealogical Index (which, it has to be said, is not absolutely definitive) shows only one Septimus Stephens born in England during our period and none in Scotland. It contains no references at all to an Octavius Stephens, so perhaps he did not exist. It is much more likely that our Septimus's parents were John, a gardener,

and Mary, who came from Prestwich, in the Manchester area. They certainly had a son of that name, born in 1786 and another child called Ralph, born in 1791.

Court records show that a Septimus Stephens was convicted at the quarter sessions in Salford in 1807 of embezzling money and sentenced to two years' imprisonment at Lancaster Castle. That location is quite feasible, because at that time Manchester did not have its own quarter sessions. We know that our Septimus Stephens moved to London in about 1818 and that, in the 1820s

was a tavern keeper at the Cock & Lion coffee house in St. Michael's Alley, Cornhill. To this day there is a tavern on the site called the George & Vulture. Fred Stephens was born at the Cock & Lion, but he told the world at large that he came from Walworth, at that time a smart London suburb, which he moved to in 1850. Being a Pre-Raphaelite meant that one had to have a



reasonable address and pedigree. However, Septimus was in trouble again by 1841, as the census for that year shows him serving a sentence at the County Gaol of Surrey at Newington for an unknown misdemeanour.

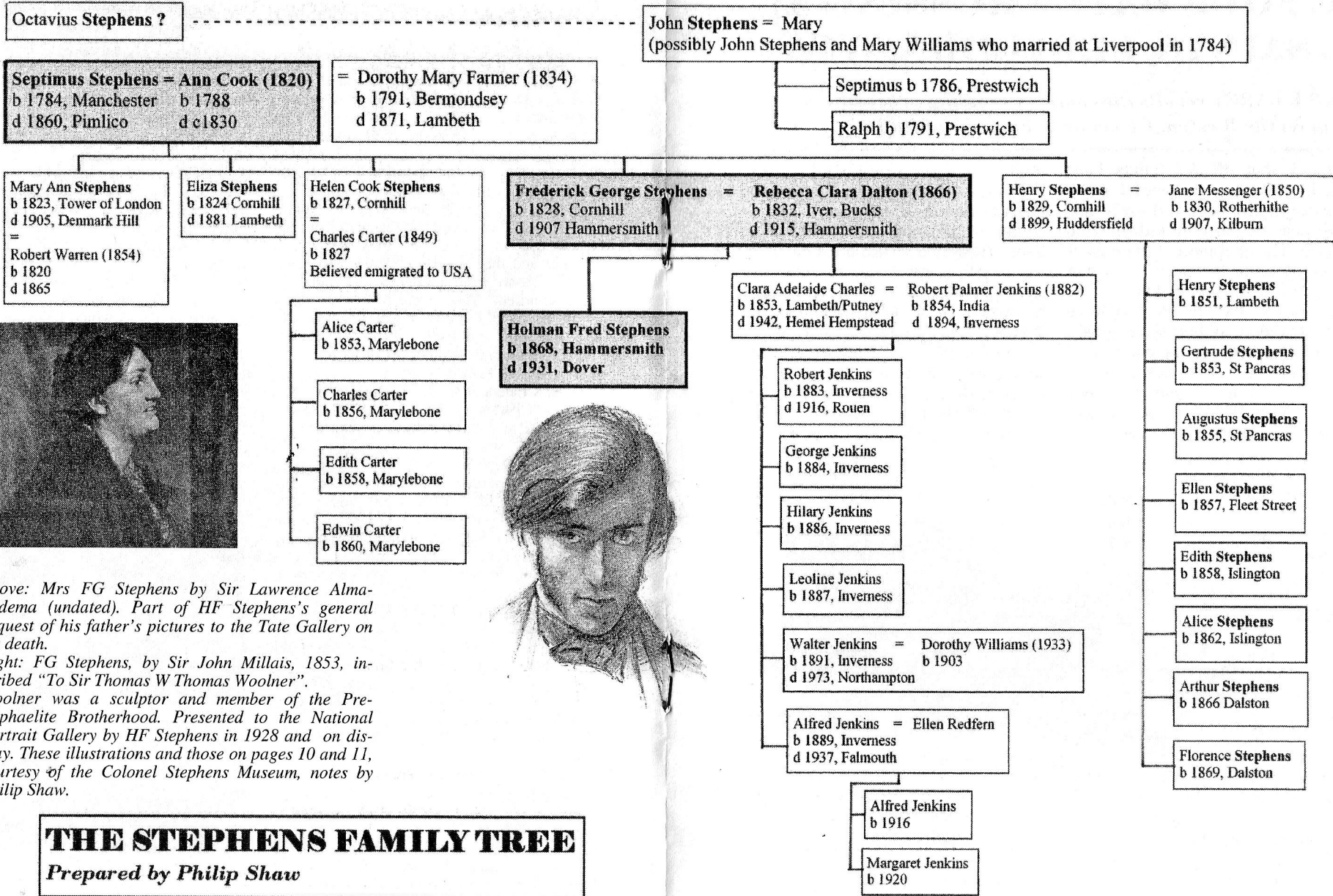
Septimus was undoubtedly a 'jack of all trades'. He and his second wife, Dorothy, were master and matron of the Strand Union workhouse from 1836 to 1839. Surviving correspondence shows that, in 1837, he was the subject of an investigation into alleged interference with the contractor for linen, drapery and hosiery at the workhouse. But no action was taken. After he resigned from the workhouse in 1839, Septimus became a butcher and then a general dealer and land agent. Apart from Frederick, he had four other children. These were Mary Ann, born at the Tower of London, where he apparently had business, and Henry, Eliza and Helen, who were all born at the Cock & Lion. Mary Ann married Robert Warren, proprietor of Warren's Patent Blacking Factory, immortalised by Charles Dickens, who was put to work there as a child and hated every minute of it. This was subsequently mirrored in *David Copperfield*, which is, of course, a biographical sketch of Dickens during this period of his life. Eliza lived quietly as a spinster. She presented a prayer book to the young Holman Stephens, possibly at the time of his confirmation. This is now in the Colonel Stephens Museum. Henry was a tobacconist and music salesman. He died unexpectedly at the Imperial Hotel, Huddersfield, in 1899. Helen married Charles Carter, a picture framer and engraver, who Fred Stephens used from time to time. The Carter family are believed to have emigrated to America.

Fred Stephens married Rebecca Dalton, a spinster, in 1866 amidst great secrecy. Rebecca had an illegitimate daughter called Clara Adelaide Charles (known as Lottie). To his friends, however, including the artist Holman Hunt, Fred proclaimed Rebecca to be a widow. At what point the truth emerged is not recorded, but Hunt was witness to Lottie's wedding certificate in 1882 and so he must have found out by then. Lottie's story is fascinating in its own right and is the subject of a separate paper, contained on the Colonel Stephens Railway Museum website:

www.hfstephens-museum.org.uk There are two questions that have emerged during my researches. Firstly, did Holman Stephens, in compiling the notes on his family in 1920, deliberately falsify some of the information for the sake of appearance? Or did his father conceal the truth from him? Secondly, are there any Stephenses around today who can claim to be descendants of Holman Stephens? The answer to the first question is most likely that he did not know the facts surrounding his father and grandfather. As far as can be ascertained, he had little or no contact with any of his relatives, apart from his parents and he would not have known either of his grandparents. With regard to the second matter, any descendant today with the family name Stephens would have had to come through the male line of Henry's children, Henry Jnr, Augustus or Arthur. There is an outside chance that Septimus's parents (John, Octavius or whoever) had made other male issue. In this respect, Ralph Stephens has come up on the International Genealogical Index as a possibility. Updating the family tree will continue, but it may take several years before we can answer all the queries - if we ever can. ●



Above: Mrs Septimus Stephens. Opposite: Septimus Stephens. Both by FG Stephens, Exhibited at the Royal Academy in 1852 and 1854 respectively. Both later destroyed.



Above: Mrs FG Stephens by Sir Lawrence Alma-Tadema (undated). Part of HF Stephens's general bequest of his father's pictures to the Tate Gallery on his death.
 Right: FG Stephens, by Sir John Millais, 1853, inscribed "To Sir Thomas W Thomas Woolner". Woolner was a sculptor and member of the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood. Presented to the National Portrait Gallery by HF Stephens in 1928 and on display. These illustrations and those on pages 10 and 11, courtesy of the Colonel Stephens Museum, notes by Philip Shaw.

THE STEPHENS FAMILY TREE
 Prepared by Philip Shaw

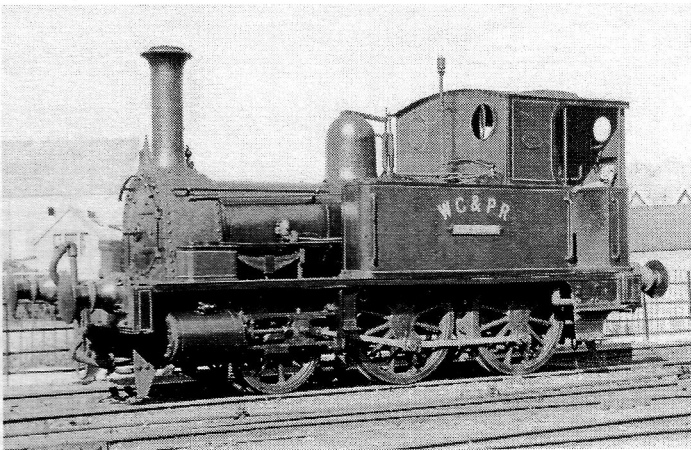
THE FOUR GATE CROSSING AT ALL SAINTS, CLEVEDON, WC&P

HOWARD K CAREY *recalls the complex crossing procedure at Clevedon on the Weston, Clevedon & Portishead Railway*

Two gates shut off All Saints Lane (prior to 1860 this was called Carey's Lane, because it gave access to my ancestors' farm) near its junction with the Old Walton Road. The operation of these gates always seemed to be the same, no matter which way the train was running. The other two shut off the Old Walton Road (the main Clevedon to Portishead road). The first to be opened was the one nearest the cabin, followed very quickly by the other, larger gate which required a much harder pull. Sam Harris, a local blacksmith, who lived just across the road above his forge, was the gateman. His son, Sam junior, assisted him at times.

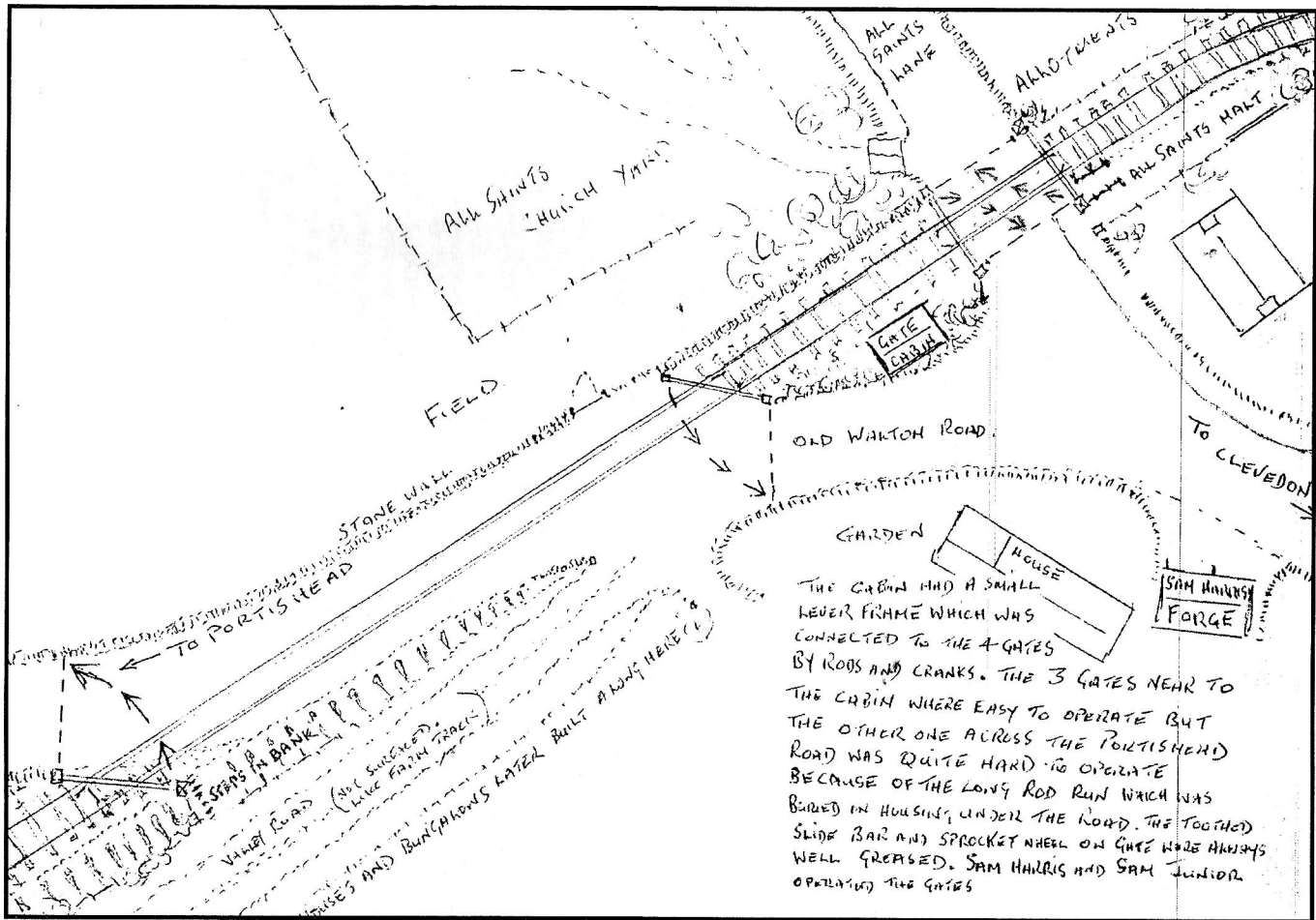
An up train would whistle long and hard on leaving Clevedon East, about half a mile down the valley, to alert them so that by the time the train arrived, the gates would be open. If for some reason the Harrises were missing, the guard would have to operate the gates and re-join the train waiting behind the gate across the Walton Road. This would cause at least a five minute delay and was a very rare occurrence. The crossing was very hazardous for cyclists because of the almost parallel angle with which the rails crossed the

road. I was often in the forge with the Harrises when a train was due. I would run across the road with young Sam. He would let me open the gates across All Saints Lane, because they were an easy pull on the levers, while he would open the two across the Walton Road. The train would steam through with whistle blowing, after which we would shut the gates and return to the forge where I would have to work the bellows in return for being allowed to help open the gates. ●



*Above: A sparkling Clevedon captured at Clevedon by R G Jarvis
Copyright: Midland Railway Trust*

Howard Carey has drawn this map of the layout at All Saints in 1935 on page 15 to illustrate the procedure he describes. He stresses that it is not to scale ▶



THE CABIN HAD A SMALL LEVER FRAME WHICH WAS CONNECTED TO THE 4 GATES BY RODS AND CRANKS. THE 3 GATES NEAR TO THE CABIN WERE EASY TO OPERATE BUT THE OTHER ONE ACROSS THE PORTISHEAD ROAD WAS QUITE HARD TO OPERATE BECAUSE OF THE LONG ROD RUN WHICH WAS BURIED IN HOUSING UNDER THE ROAD. THE TOOTHED SLIDE BAR AND SPROCKET WHEEL ON GATE WERE ALWAYS WELL GREASED. SAM HARRIS AND SAM JUNIOR OPERATED THE GATES

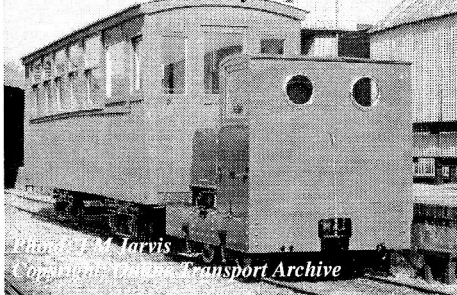
SETTING THE RECORD STRAIGHT: PART 8, AT WORK & THE END

LAURIE COOKSEY, in this final instalment of his corrections to the text of *The Rye & Camber Tramway*, compiled by C. Judge, concentrates on the line at work, towards the end of operation and the scene at the time of publication

► **The Line at Work:** "Many people were under the impression that the new terminus was situated in the position it was, only because of the rails running out ..." It was railway historian, Alan A Jackson, in an article entitled 'The Rye & Camber Tramway' which appeared in "Trains Illustrated" in February 1957, who suggested (tongue in cheek) that the position of the terminus was dictated by there being only a certain amount of rails available.

"... Although this vehicle was often referred to as an overgrown lawn mower ..." Roger Kidner described the Kent Construction petrol locomotive thus. Many may have thought it as being "ugly", but it had a certain charm of its own and to the many locals who grew up in Rye in the 1930s this little locomotive was "The Camber Tram".

Petrol locomotive at Rye, March 1937



"... the steam locomotive, *VICTORIA*, was sold in 1937 and *CAMBER* was exiled to the locomotive shed after its works service in 1931." *Victoria* was sold for scrap in 1936 and *Camber* was overhauled in 1921 (not 1931), see my earlier comments under "Locomotives" in *Colonel 81*, page 17.

► **Towards the End:** "During the 1930s, a motor bus service was introduced between Rye Town and Camber ..." The first motor bus service between Rye and Camber was operated by Mr E Bryan for one season only in the summer of 1920. This was followed by Messrs Wright & Pankhurst who ran a daily service all the year round from March 1924 until they sold the bus side of their business to The East Kent Road Car Co in October 1930.

"In the early 1930s, a shingle works was situated at Camber Sands under the ownership of W E Colebrooke & Co Ltd and they operated a 2 ft gauge railway with a PAT locomotive ..." Mr G T Jennings's shingle works were situated on Northpoint Beach, not Camber Sands. Work commenced here in 1927. W E Colbrooke & Co took over the site many years later. See my notes concerning the caption to the upper picture on page 40 in *Colonel 76*, p14.

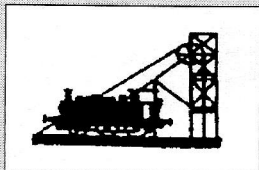
► **The Scene Today:** "From Golf Links station, the path of the Tramway is clearly marked by an embankment crossing what is now part of the Golf Course ... Approaching the site of Camber station, a golfers' shelter has recently been erected." Only the first part of the embankment is that constructed in 1908. The final long straight section is that which was built to the new Camber Sands station during the winter of 1938/9. Part of the original embankment still exists, but the actual site of the terminus is lost under the re-developed golf course a little to the north. The golfers' shelter is situated just short of the "new" station which was open only from Easter 1939 until 4th September of that year. See *Colonel 63*, Summer 2001, page 5 for a photograph of this short-lived station.

Continued on next page ►

► "From this point, the course of the tramway is obscure and the shifting sands, plus the profusion of gorse bushes, seem to have covered over any small remains of the terminus station." The position of the 1939 station can be clearly seen, a track following the course of the main running line past the mound that once formed the platform. Just one piece of a wooden upright remains *in situ* at the eastern end. ●

This concludes Laurie Cooksey's campaign to set the record straight on the Rye & Camber. Previous instalments appeared in issues 75, 76, 77, 80, 81, 82 and 83. ●

The East Kent Railway



Ride the Colliery Line from Shepherdswell to Eythorne

Booking office: 01304 832042
www.eastkentrailway.com

Notes for contributors

Contributions to *The Colonel* are very welcome. Please send them to the Editor (address on page 2). They may be in the form of a Word document, an email attachment, a floppy disc, a CD or a typescript. Steam age authors may, of course, send them as a manuscript - but please write legibly. Please ensure that photos, either in electronic form or traditional print, are reproducible. Authors are responsible for ensuring that their material is not subject to copyright restrictions ●

ALAN CLIFF HONOURED

Well-known Society member and columnist in the railway press, Alan Cliff has received full membership of the Welsh Academy / Yr Academi Gymraeg for "Services to the literature of Wales". Accepting the award, Alan commented: "I regard this honour as one for the railway and model railway press and hobby". Congratulations Alan! ●

More Books on the way

The grapevine suggests that more books of interest to students of the railways of the Great Man are on the way. Laurie Cooksey, far from resting on his laurels (oops) tells us that he has been commissioned by Wild Swan to write a history of the **Shropshire & Montgomeryshire**. If he requires two volumes and 334 pages to describe the Selsey Tramway, one hesitates to guess at the length of this one! Still, Laurie would like to hear from anyone with material that might assist him in this task. Nigel Bird has been told that Brian Hart's definitive history of the **Kent & East Sussex** is likely to be published by Wild Swan in time for Christmas. Ian Allan is said to be publishing a photographic album on the **Shropshire & Montgomeryshire** in about a year. ●

COLIN GETS HIS AWARD

We reported in *Colonel 81* that Society member Colin Shutt won the David Muirhead award from the Transport Trust for his replica Ford railmotor. Here he is receiving the award from the Duke of Kent. Colin has recently applied for planning permission to build a short line at his home in Yorkshire on which to run the replica. ●



HOW GREAT WAS THE COLONEL?

Society chairman, LES DARBYSHIRE, posed this question at the lunch to mark the 75th anniversary of the death of Holman F Stephens

Most of us gathered here today are members of the Colonel Stephens Society or are associated with the Colonel Stephens Museum, neither of which would of course exist were it not for the eponymous Colonel! But why are there a society and a museum associated with him? What is there about him that attracts such interest 75 years after his death? Was he, as many contributors in our journal *The Colonel* have written, a Great Man?

He was an engineer, an entrepreneur and promoter of railway schemes, a manager of railway enterprises and a leader of men - but was he a great engineer in the mould of Stephenson and Brunel? Was he a great railway promoter like Sir Edward Watkin? Was he a great manager like his contemporaries Sir Felix Pole and Sir Herbert Walker? I think you would agree that the answer to these questions is, probably, "No". So, if he was not a great man, why are we all here?

I think he was one of those people where the whole is greater than the sum of the parts. He may not have been truly great in any of the individual attributes, but put them all together and we have a man of extraordinary ability who happened to be around at the right time to exploit his particular skills. By the 1890s when he embarked on his career, most significant railway building was complete or under construction and the country was criss-crossed by a network of lines such that few places of any significance were more than ten miles from a railway.

However, those places that were just a few miles from a main line were, in an age of little other public transport, seriously cut off from fully participating in the economic growth of the country, yet the main line companies could not see any profit in further extending their systems. Holman Fred Stephens saw an opportunity for the development of cheaply built and economi-

cally run railways to fill in the gaps in the existing network, and he grasped that opportunity. He was not always successful, usually because he could not persuade others to provide the necessary funding, but he did eventually have engineering or management involvement (and sometimes both) in some seventeen railways.

We do tend to think of his lines as they were in the thirties, rather run down and using old main line equipment, and maybe this is what attracted us to him in the first place. But when his lines were new they were very different. Some were equipped with brand new stock from the outset, and they were initially profitable too.

Think of the pictures of the Rother Valley Railway in 1900, with its gleaming new locomotives, rake of six shining coaches and two brake vans proudly standing at the Tenterden terminus. This is not the picture usually conjured up by the mention of Colonel Stephens, but it is the vision that he had for the future of rural transport.

He could scarcely have foreseen the competition that would come from road transport after WW1, nor the economic depression that followed, but the fact that most of his lines survived those troubled times is a testament to his skill in organization and financial control.

His management team at Salford Terrace was a masterpiece of economical organization. He was a master at recycling long before the term was invented! His lines in his latter days may have been run on the proverbial shoestring, but at least they did run and provided a real benefit to the local communities through which they passed.

Faced with the problems that Stephens had to face, a lesser man would have thrown in the towel, but Stephens was not a lesser man.

And if he wasn't a lesser man, maybe he was a great man after all! ●

*Letters to the Editor***WRONG GENERATION**

I must call to your attention an error in *Colonel 84*. You were commenting in your editorial about the attitude to Colonel Stephens on the part of S&MR staff and referred to me, Howard Carey, as a 'guard on the WC&PR.' But it was my Dad, E C (Dan) Carey, who was a guard on the line, not me. Could you please put the error right in your next issue?

Howard Carey (Young Dan), Swindon

[Sorry Howard - Ed.]

SPEAKER APPEAL

I have had an appeal from the Wells Railway Fraternity for a speaker to present an illustrated talk on the Colonel and his railways on one of the following dates: 13th November 2007, 12th February, 11th March or 8th April in 2008. Any volunteers should contact me.

Guy Hardy (address on page 2)

Moving Mountains By Rail:**A Review**

This book traces the history of what is now Hanson Aggregates, providing a worthwhile record for researchers and modellers. Of the eight chapters, the one of most interest to us is the last, entitled 'Cambrian Country', featuring the Potts, Shropshire Railways and the S&MR, as well as a reference to the Snail-beach. A letter from Stephens is reproduced, as well as photographs of two BQC wagons. Locomotive lists and wagon liveries appear as do many photographs. Operations from the use of horses to class 66 diesels are covered. The only minus point is the use of monochrome reproductions of the author's watercolour paintings (14 in all), instead of photographs. Paintings are always of dubious value, because one can never tell how accurate they are. ●

Christopher Mitchell

Ian P Peaty. *Moving Mountains By Rail: a History of Quarry Railways*. Tempus Publishing, 2006. 6.8x9.8in softback 192 pp, 14 maps/track plans, 160 B/W illus. £17.99 ISBN 07524 3861 1

Dispatches

Shot in Foot?

It was good to see some feedback on the 2006 AGM [In *Colonel 84*]. Some of the comments were a little unfair for a UK-wide society. After all, the Colonel's railways were nationwide, as is the Society's membership. Unlike Mike Roberts, I think that the time of year is irrelevant. Christopher Mitchell's point is partially justified, but he cannot expect all events to be in Kent. Chris Redwood hits the nail on the head, but the Society shoots itself in the foot by again changing the date (at late notice, Stephens style)! If the AGM fixed it for either 13th or 20th May (*Colonel 83*) why swop to the 5th? Either stick with the original suggestion or expect a lower attendance. It will be interesting to see how many attend the 2008 event in Devon & Cornwall, although a year plus notice has been given. The train service from Scotland to Plymouth seems to be the solution.

Alan Bone, Bexleyheath

[The committee decided, with some reluctance, to change the date for next year's AGM to the 5th May to take advantage of the Colonel Stephens Weekend on the KESR, enticed especially by the prospect of a ride on the replica Ford railmotor built by Colin Shutt, a Society member - Ed.]

Selsey Tramway buildings

I have recently updated the drawings of the Selsey Tramway buildings referred to in 'Test Les' in *Colonel 84*. I believe that, with one exception, they are reproduced in volume 2 of Laurie Cooksey's. But if Society members want copies, I will be happy to oblige.

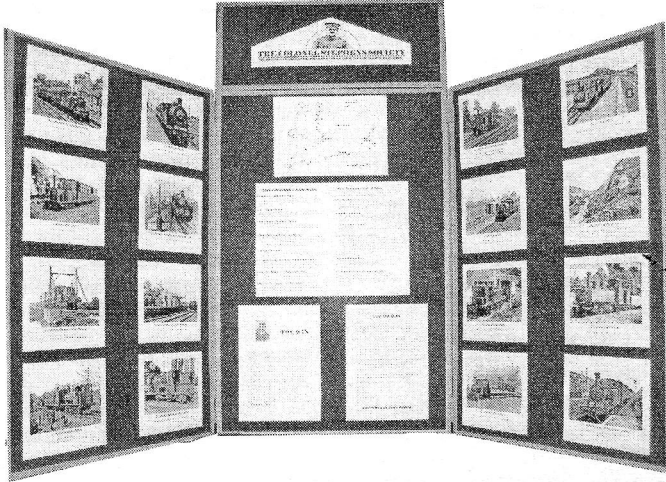
Ron Mann, Christchurch

[Ron's drawings are indeed in the second volume of The Selsey Tramway, reviewed on page 22. Requests for copies of the drawings should be sent to me for forwarding to Ron. Please enclose a cheque or PO to cover postage and copying costs - Ed]

More Dispatches appear on page 24

Society News

New Display Board debuts at Warley



By the time you read this, one of our new display boards, designed and mounted by Kerry Bayliss, and pictured here, will have been seen by thousands of visitors to the National Model Railway Exhibition held at the beginning of December at the NEC, Birmingham. Prompted by comments on the old board by stalwart stand staffer, Ned Williams, Kerry offered to prepare two such stands. One will be for events held in Birmingham and north of there

and one for those in the south. The illustrations were provided by Society Chairman, Les Darbyshire. As part of our current publicity drive, we also hope to upgrade our presence in the Colonel Stephens Museum at Tenterden. ●

WANTED WANTED

Some years ago the Society published a poster, pictured right, aping the style of the famous WW1 recruitment poster. Our poster, predictably, replaced Lord Kitchener with the Colonel. Kerry was hoping to make use of it when he was preparing the above display. But unfortunately none of the Society's current officers has a copy, with the sole exception of the poor photocopy reproduced here. An appeal on the e-discussion list did not attract a single reply. So we would be delighted if one of our readers has one safely filed away - especially if it could be borrowed to make some good copies. Replies to the Editor please at the address on page 2. ●



NO MORE COLONELS?

No - don't panic! Just pay your subs. If you don't, this will be the last issue you receive.

THE COLONEL STEPHENS SOCIETY
THE SOCIETY FOR THE ENTERTAINMENT OF THE LIGHT & BARBICOT GUYARD BARBERS OF BODMAN V. SPINER.

Society News

75th Anniversary duly honoured

Fourteen members gathered to mark the 75th anniversary of the death of Holman F Stephens at the Charing Cross Hotel on 28th October. The hotel had been chosen because it was the venue for board meetings he attended. Following lunch, Chairman Leslie Darbyshire gave a short address, reproduced on page 18. Philip Shaw then presented the results so far of his long-term research into the Colonel's family history. An edited version of his remarks and the genealogical chart he prepared are reproduced on pages 10-13 of this issue. Michael Bussell then read out a message from Gordon Masterton, President of the Institution of Civil Engineers, of which Stephens had been a member. If it had not been for engagements in Scotland he would have been present. The party then made its way to Brompton Cemetery where Stephens was buried 75 years previously.

A small working party had, earlier in the month, tidied up the grave which is on a family plot. Two minutes' silence were observed and

wreaths were laid by Les Darbyshire for the Society and Philip Shaw for the KESR and the Colonel Stephens Museum. Chris Jackson pointed out the inscription on the gravestone, giving the Colonel's age as 65. In fact he died just before his 63rd birthday. Michael Bussell observed later "our small gathering did justice to the Colonel's memory and his achievements".

We hope so. • *Photo shows Les Darbyshire (left) and Philip Shaw laying the wreaths*



Photo: Ross Shimmer

Dartford Exhibition

Alan Bone writes to tell us that the ever-energetic Erith Model Railway Society is holding an exhibition at Temple Hill CP School, Dartford on 27th and 28th January. Stands from the East Kent, Ffestiniog, K&ES and Rother Valley Railways will be among the attractions. Apologies are due again to Alan. First we left off his name altogether and, in the last issue, we called him Colin. •

SELSEY OFFER

Nigel Bird is making a tempting offer to Society members. The eagerly awaited definitive history of the Selsey Tramway written by our very own Laurie Cooksey, reviewed on page 22, is available from Nigel (address on page 7) to members only, post free. Just quote your membership number. As it is a large format 2-volume hardback of 334 pages, this is a bargain. •

Donations List Announced

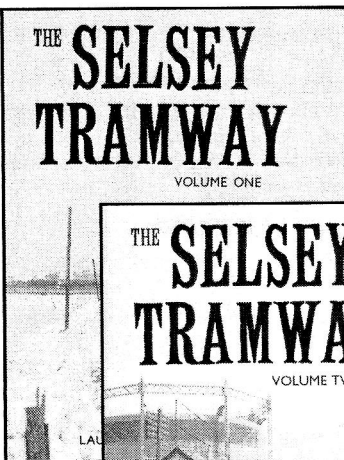
The Welsh Highland Railway's locomotive *Russell* heads the list good causes supported by the Society's donations programme this year. Earlier in the year, the AGM authorised the committee to

decide which Colonel-related projects should be given grants from the fund. The WHR is hoping to restore *Russell* to full working order in time for the reopening of the from Caernarfon to Porthmadog in 2009. The oral history project by the Shrewsbury Heritage Trust, recording the recollections of local railwaymen and others involved, including passengers, together with the commissioning of a waxworks effigy of Colonel Stephens by the museum at Tenterden, were the other initiatives supported. •

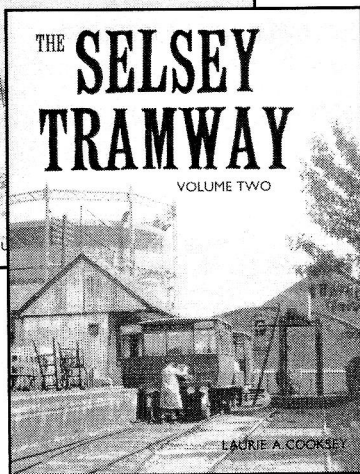
Review

SHORT LINE - LONG BOOK

At last, Laurie Cooksey's eagerly-awaited history of the Hundred of Manhood and Selsey Tramway has been published. The



question on many minds must be; 'was it worth the wait?'



There is no doubt that this is *the* definitive story of

this short, iconic Colonel Stephens line. Previous books on the tramway in my collection have 62 (Griffiths), 132 (Bathurst) and 162 (Mitchell & Smith) pages. This has 334 large format pages in two hardback volumes. It is presented in typical Wild Swan style, making good use of the size to enlarge photographs, often to full page size. In one or two cases, such as a wonderfully atmospheric shot of Selsey station in about 1900, they form a double-page spread. Some of them have been cruelly, but usefully enlarged to show hitherto unseen detail, for example, under the canopy at Selsey station.

For those of us not blessed with eagle eyes, Laurie Cooksey has provided extremely informative captions. The publisher's advertisements do not, I think, make it entirely clear what is covered in each of the volumes. The first is a detailed company history, quoting extensively from board minutes and the local press. It is copiously illustrated with photographs, reproductions of timetables, tickets and other documents. There are seven appendices with details of receipts, fares and rates and even a list of manual staff who worked on the line. The acknowledgements include a generous reference to the Society. The second volume includes a full description of the line, including reproductions of old OS maps and, again, a large number of photographs. It also covers all the locomotives, railmotors and rolling stock used. An extremely valuable feature is the comprehensive collection of drawings, mostly in 4mm scale, by Ron Mann of the locomotives, railmotors, passenger and goods rolling stock (including private owner wagons) and buildings. Both volumes are fully annotated with sources to references in the text at the end of each chapter. An unusual feature is the reproduction rubbings of the rail sections used on the tramway. But it is disappointing that such a detailed, definitive work has neither an index, nor a list of illustrations.

Even though the author has clearly ferreted in every conceivable source, a shot of the short-lived Selsey Beach station has failed to emerge. However, the two volumes contain very nearly everything else anyone needs to know about the HM&ST. Is it worth nearly £62 for the two volumes? If you have a strong interest in the line and the struggles experienced by those trying to run a Colonel Stephens light railway, the answer must be yes. RS ●

Laurie A. Cooksey. *The Selsey Tramway*. 2 vols. 28x22 cm. Casebound. Didcot, Wild Swan, 2006. Vol 1, 192 pp: ISBN 1 905184 15 8 £31.95. Vol 2,

Press Digest

The spirit of the Colonel clearly lives on in the **Festiniog Railway** Heritage Group. An answer to a reader in the latest issue (No 87, Autumn 2006) of its journal reveals that the secretary, in the absence of a discount from Royal Mail, distributes it using stamps obtained cheaply in bulk from a supplier who buys them in liquidation sales and the like. The result is a colourful assembly of obsolete special issue stamps on the envelopes containing each edition! Meanwhile, the latest *Model Railway Journal* (170), maintaining its strong interest in our hero, has a splendid feature on the motive power used in John Spencer's evocative little Ruyton Road layout. John described how he built a 4mm version of *Gazelle* in our last issue. Here he describes the rest of his fleet of, mainly, **S&M** engines. There are colour shots of *Morous*, a Manning Wardle similar to *Sidlesham* from the **HM&ST** and a Ruston 48DS. Progress on the **Welsh Highland** features in many recent issues. *Narrow Gauge World* No. 47, Sept/Oct 2006 carries a picture of the replica NWNCR coal wagon, a works train headed by Ruston & Hornsby 48DL at Traeth Mawr and the new bridge in place near Beddgelert. The December *Railway Magazine* has a shot of *Palmerston* heading a works train south of Rhyd Ddu. The same issue reports on the decision to contract Alan Keef Ltd to complete the restoration of the **Greensand Railway Museum Trust's** Baldwin 4-6-0T. Following promises of extra funding from several sponsors it is hoped that the loco will return to Page's Park on the **Leighton Buzzard Railway** around Easter 2007. This is a project that the Society has contributed to. Of possible interest to those trying to obtain information on the correct colours to paint buildings and rolling stock, *Rail Archive 5* contains an article by Tony East examining what colours and pigments available in Victorian times. Almost every issue of *Railway Bylines* these days has something of direct interest. The October issue (Vol 11, issue 11) is a case in point with a four page spread on the **Kent & East Sussex** with six lovely photos taken in September 1952 by Frank Goudie. Extended captions provide much detail, while

the editor, Martin Smith, waxes lyrical about the sticky buns still available in Tenterden High Street. My favourite shot shows a Terrier and single carriage in the northbound platform at Tenterden. The September issue features a three page article on the final years of the **Snailbeach Railway**, including lovely photos of the Kerr Stuart 0-4-2T and the Baldwin 4-6-0T, plus an extract from the British Transport Commission report recommending that "the railway not be acquired" at nationalisation.

The imminent reinstatement of the flat crossing of the Cambrian coast line by the **Welsh Highland** prompts the journal of the Welsh Highland Heritage Group to revisit concerns about the crossing in the 1930s with a front page piece. *Heritage Railway*, in its October issue, reports on a plan to revive part of the legendary **Ashover Light Railway**. The revivalists are planning a new terminus close to the Ogston Reservoir to provide an alternative route through the Amber valley to Ashover, relieving the village from some car traffic. More information is available from the Ashover Light Railway Society, 31 Park Road, Earl Shilton, Leics, LE9 7EB or info.alrs@ntlworld.com

The October *Railway Magazine* reports that SR-built brake van has been returned to traffic by the K&ESR in BR bauxite livery, carrying number M360327, a number once carried by a similar vehicle on the **Shropshire & Montgomeryshire**. Still with the **S&M, Abbey Lines**, the newsletter of the Shrewsbury Heritage Trust, reports that the lease for the station site has been signed, the site preparation work has been completed by the borough council and the Trust is now registered as a charity. A major Lottery bid is being prepared. The Trust's oral history project, to which the Society has contributed, is on its way to producing high quality CDs recording the stories of those whose lives were touched by the railways of the Shrewsbury district. ●

Dispatches Extra

More letters to the Editor

The Fair-Minded Colonel

As I was responsible for putting the "locked up in Shrewsbury jail" story, referred to in your Editorial in *Colonel 84*, into the public domain, I think I should redress the balance by reporting another experience which supports the view that the Colonel was a fair-minded man. This was related by former Festiniog foreman plate-layer, Will Jones. It must have occurred in the early to mid-twenties when he was stationman at Tan-y-Bwlch.

Having accepted an up passenger train from Minffordd, he then received what he took to be a 16-bell "Testing Block Indicators and Bell" signal on his Glan-y-Pwll instrument (things were starting to fall apart and this signal was sent quite regularly as the linesman was checking whether the latest faults had been cleared). He acknowledged the signal by returning it. But immediately the signal came down the line again; he sent another acknowledgment. This clearly didn't satisfy the sender as the signal came for the third time. This time, Will counted the beats. There were twelve (2 pause 5 pause 5) which signifies "Vehicles Running Away". He gathered, rightly, that some slate wagons had run away at Glan-y-Pwll and were approaching Tan-y-Bwlch at ever increasing speed. He meanwhile had accepted a passenger train, which could arrive at any minute.

His swift action (by this time he could hear the runaway wagons as they had cleared the short tunnel), was to jamb a pick or mattock between the switch blade

and the stock rail of the top points, thus "splitting" the points. He then rapidly retreated behind the water tower. There was an almighty crash. Derailed wagons and slates spewed all across the top end of the station. Crucially, however, no-one was injured and no serious damage done.

A couple of minutes later, the up train rolled in. On board were the Colonel and a local official. The latter, perhaps intending to impress Stephens, started to tear a strip of Will, suggesting that he ought to have gone up the line sanding the rails to bring the wagons to a halt. Stephens told the official that he was talking nonsense. He turned to Will: "You have done well, Jones. You have prevented what could have been a serious accident. As this weekend is Easter you have ensured that we will still have our little nest egg". The latter comment suggests that even then holiday traffic was considered significant.

Roy Cunningham

Tar for Granomac

Further to the debate about the supply of tar for Granomac tarmacadam, a recent conversation with an ex-Salop County Council worker now in his eighties, suggests that, in the 30s and 40s, the tar was supplied in large number of 40-gallon drums from Port Sunlight, Birkenhead. They were sent by rail to Maesbrook, where they were stored in large quantities in the station yard before being sent by road to Criggion. Could this have been to limit rail freight on the branch to block workings of the stone and Granomac trains?



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