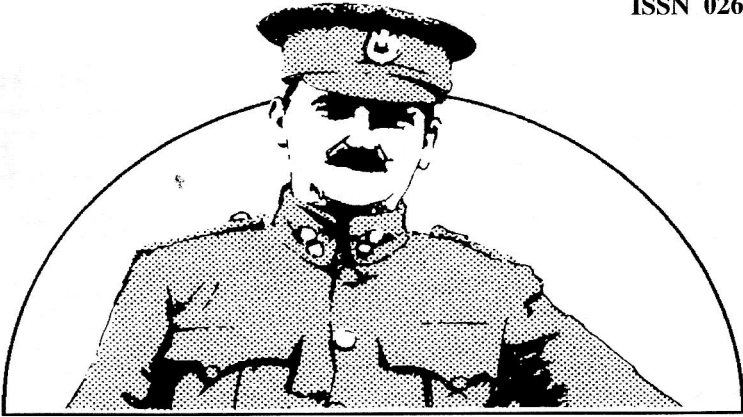


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THE COLONEL

Number 88

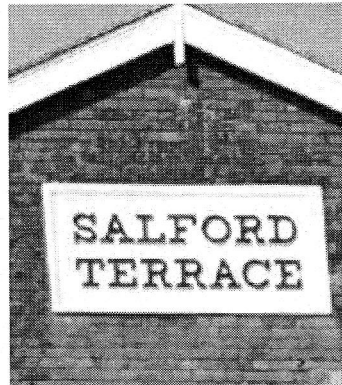
Autumn 2007

**STEPHENS AND THE
CALLINGTON LINE - 4**

SELSEY BRIDGE PLANS - 9

**BLUE PLAQUE FOR
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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*

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Subscriptions *The Colonel* is distributed to members of the Colonel Stephens Society only. Membership of the Society costs £7 annually in the UK. Joint membership for two people, one *Colonel*, same address, is £9. Overseas membership is £12. Applications should go to our Membership Secretary (address above).

An Index to *The Colonel* issues 1-86 is available on our website (see below).

Back numbers of *The Colonel* from 2 to the latest issue are all in stock. They are available from our Chairman (address above). Price to members is £1 per issue, including UK postage. Discounts for large orders: 21-40 issues 90p each, 41 and more 80p each. Excess postage for overseas orders will be charged at cost. Issue 1 was a single sheet. It can be supplied on request free of charge with any other order, or separately on receipt of an A5- size stamped addressed envelope.

Binders Smart dark blue 'Cordex' binders for *The Colonel* are available from our Secretary (address above) at £6.30, including postage. Each binder takes 12 issues.

Badges Chic Colonel Stephens Society badges may be purchased from our Membership Secretary (address above) at £3, including postage.

The Colonel's Guide A reprint of the source guide to publications and models of the Colonel's standard gauge railways by Jon Clarke, is available from our Membership Secretary (address above) at the members' price of £3, including p&p.

Cheques In all cases please make out cheques to "The Colonel Stephens Society".

Discussion Group Enrol for the Colonel Stephens e-Discussion Group by opening a Yahoo account with a user name and password. After logging on to the Yahoo Groups.com link (*not* .co.uk), log on with same details if asked, search for ColonelHFStephens and follow the prompts to register.

Visit our WEBSITE: www.colonelstephenssociety.org.uk

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Editorial: Anniversary Blues

On 28th August this year, Robert Kosmider noted, on the Colonel Stephens Yahoo discussion group that the 110th anniversary of the commencement of traffic on the Hundred of Manhood & Selsey Tramway on 27th August 1897 had gone by unnoticed. "Shame on us all!", he said.

Leaving aside for the moment the question of whether a one hundred and tenth anniversary is a significant one, it made me wonder how many notable anniversaries we might have missed - and, indeed, how many are coming up which we should mark in some way.

Last year, of course, we took some pains to mark the 75th anniversary of the death of Colonel Stephens in an appropriate way, by holding a commemorative lunch at the Charing Cross Hotel in London, venue for several board meeting he attended, and a wreath-laying ceremony at his grave in Brompton cemetery.

In our last issue we marked the centenary of the opening of the extension of the

Weston, Clevedon & Portishead Railway with an article by Howard Carey. Next year we mark the centenary of the opening of the Callington line by holding our Members' Day at Bere Ferrers.

Perhaps an historian in our ranks would be prepared to volunteer to compile a list of forthcoming notable anniversaries which we could publish? We would then have no excuse for missing key dates in future. I would venture to suggest that 50th, 75th, centenary, 125th and 150th are significant anniversaries, but I have my doubts about anything in between. I wonder what you think?

If you have access to the Internet and haven't joined yet the Yahoo discussion group, why not give it a try? It throws up some fascinating stuff. Simple instructions appear on the opposite page. You don't even need your own computer - use one at your local library.

Ross Shimmon

Cover photo: Salford Terrace, Tonbridge.
Albyn Austin, October 2006

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Subs Due Now

Subscriptions at the new rates (£7 UK, £10 overseas and £9 for two members with the same address, one *Colonel*) are due now. Full details are on page 14. A renewal slip is enclosed with this issue. Fill it in now to ensure you keep receiving *The Colonel*!

If you think that you are likely to attend our next Members' Day at Bere Ferrers on the Callington line, please tick the box on the renewal form. This won't commit you to coming, but it will give us and the local organisers an indication of the likely attendance at what promises to be an exciting event. •

STEPHENS AND THE LINE TO CALLINGTON

Next year marks the centenary of the opening of the line from Bere Alston to Callington. BRUCE HUNT, Vice Chairman of the Tamar Belle Heritage Group, recounts the involvement of HFS in the project

Books and articles about the Plymouth Devonport & South Western Junction Railway Co. (PD&SWJR) rarely mention Stephens. Likewise books about the Colonel and his railways seem to concentrate on his other lines with the PD&SWJR being mainly pictorial with few hard details. Even a trawl through *The Colonel* index reveals few references to his line in the south west. So what was his involvement in the building of a branch line from Bere Alston to Callington?

Some background

The LSWR main line from Waterloo to the SW relied on the GWR for access to Plymouth via their branch line from Lydford. The PD&SWJR built a line from Plymouth Kings Rd station to Lydford via Bere Ferrers, Bere Alston and Tavistock. The line was operated from the outset by the LSWR, giving them direct access to Plymouth but was

always owned and maintained (until the grouping) by the PD&SWJR.

There had always been plans to link Callington to the main rail network, the two front runners were the GWR's plan for a branch from Saltash (they ran a bus service from Albaston via Callington to Saltash station) and the LSWR/PD&SWJR plan for a line from Bere Alston to Callington and points north. The people of Callington preferred the GWR option to Saltash but it was the Bere Alston option that went ahead.

The building of the line was to be carried out as two separate contracts:

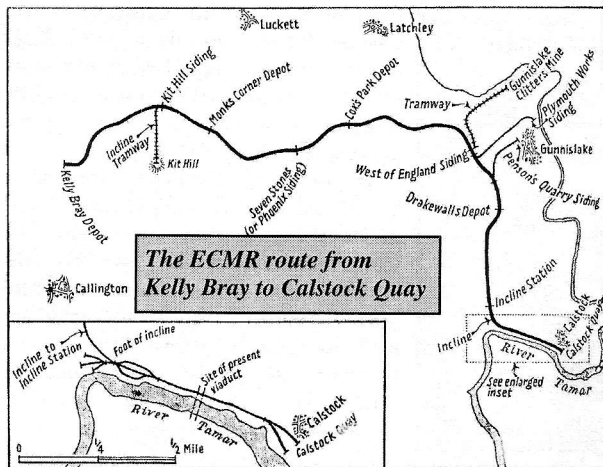
(A) To build a new railway, the Bere Alston & Calstock Light Railway (BA&CLR) from the main line at Bere Alston via a newly constructed viaduct to Calstock and to join the ECMR at a point above the incline and south of Gunnislake

(B) To re-align the existing 3ft 6" East

Cornwall Mineral Railway (ECMR) which ran from Kelly Bray to Calstock Quay via an incline, and to convert the goods depots at Kelly Bray, Monks Corner, Cox Park and Drakewalls to passenger stations.

The contract to build the BA&CLR (A) was awarded to the building firm of John George Lang of Liskeard. This was the biggest job that Lang had ever undertaken and he greatly underestimated the cost, time and complexity of the job.

The upgrading of the ECMR (B) was to be carried

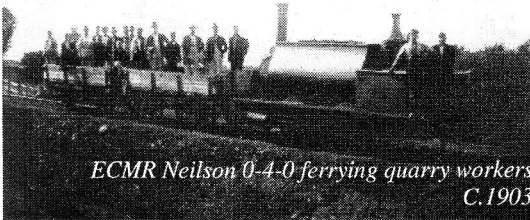


'Plymouth Devonport & South Western Junction Railway' (PD&SWJR) under the direction of Capt. Sowton, who had been the General Manager of the ECMR since 1883. It was realised that there was a lack of light railway expertise so the PD&SWJR board agreed to employ an engineer with the relevant expertise to advise and work with Capt. Sowton. Holman Fred Stephens was approached and in 1904 became a consultant engineer to the PD&SWJR. In 1905 the board decided to convert the line to standard gauge (probably on advice from Stephens). He was also asked to acquire rolling stock

and prioritising future work. Quite often these letters accompanied by his instructions would be written on the train as he returned to Tonbridge.

If materials were required to progress work they were ordered within a couple of days to be delivered to the site as required. Rail and sleepers were quite often shipped to Plymouth and then onto Calstock by barge (7,500 sleepers in January 1906). Lighter material arrived by rail at Bere Alston to be transferred to Calstock via the viaduct cableway.

When plans were required they were drawn and dispatched within days. Stephens's attention to detail was meticulous with many sketches to illustrate the method of construction. It is probably true to surmise that there was no great pressure on Stephens as Lang was having problems with the viaduct and the completion date was continually being revised.



*ECMR Neilson 0-4-0 ferrying quarry workers
C.1903*

and signalling for the whole line.

The involvement of Stephens

Stephens did not base himself in the west country, but preferred to periodically travel to the area to inspect the work in progress and advise on work to be carried out. He would visit on average about twice a month. In the early stages there were longer gaps between his visits, but when work was at a critical point and towards completion and opening of the line his visits were more frequent.

The management saw Stephens as a dynamic entrepreneur who could push things along and keep costs under control. The workforce saw Stephens as an interfering outsider who thought he knew everything. The truth is probably somewhere in between.

His routine was to travel to Tavistock or Bere Alston then on to Callington for a meeting with Capt. Sowton for a progress report, followed by an inspection of the work in hand, he would quite often 'walk the line' dictating notes to an assistant. On returning to his office letters would be sent out detailing things that required correcting

The work on the ECMR consisted of: 1. Straightening the track where required; this involved some earth work. 2. Removal of the existing ballast and to re-sleeper the track, laying new rail to standard gauge and relaying the best of the old rail as a third rail at 3ft 6" so that the line could continue in use as a narrow gauge mineral railway. This third rail was removed on completion of the wagon lift and just before the line was inspected by Major Pringle from the BofT. Re-ballast the track, ballast being obtained locally as spoil from Wheal Edward and Kit Hill quarry. 3. Strengthen or rebuild the bridges adding parapets, this was done by the addition of steel girders. 4. Fence both sides of the track. 5. Design and build stations at: Callington Road, Kelly Bray, Stoke Climsland, Luckett, Monks Corner, Latchley, Cox Park, Gunnislake, Drakewalls, Calstock. 6. To build a carriage shed and engine shed complete with repair facilities at Callington. 7. To change the gauge of the track on Calstock Quay. This was to be done over 3 days after the completion of the wagon lift.

The overall project

Stephens also had an involvement with the overall project. He was asked to supply the

► *From previous page*

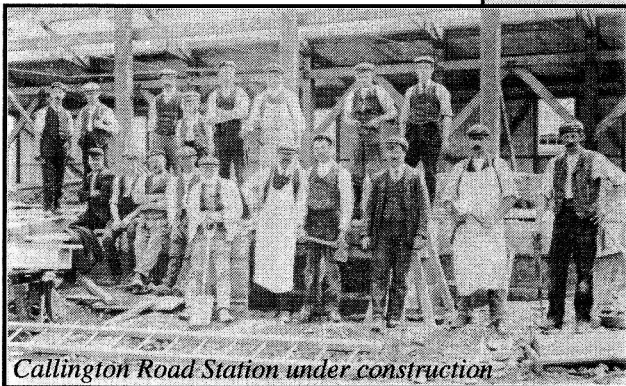
motive power, rolling stock and signalling for the whole branch.

His initial intention was to purchase second hand locomotives from the L&SWR. When no suitable engines were available three new ones were ordered from Hawthorn Leslie: No. 3 0-6-0T A.S. HARRIS, No. 4 0-6-2T LORD ST. LEVEN, No. 5 0-6-2T EARL OF MOUNT EDGUMBE (Nos. 1 & 2 were the original E.C.M.R. Nielsons). One Nielson, No. 2, was converted to standard gauge and a cab added but proved to be under-powered and of little practical use. Four-wheel passenger coaches were obtained from the L&SWR, but were soon replaced by more modern bogie coaches.

Fifty second hand ex-MR open goods wagons and two vans were purchased from R. Y. Pickering, along with two new brake vans.

Signalling for the branch was purchased from F.A. Atkinson & Co. of Birmingham at a cost of £1200.

The above information is probably accepted as the limit to Stephens's involvement with the building of the PD&SWJR's branch line to Callington, but was it? •



Callington Road Station under construction

Bruce Hunt attempts to answer his own question in the next issue, drawing upon copies of more than 400 letters concerning the construction and management of the line.

Members will have a splendid opportunity to inspect the remains of line at next year's Members' Day. More details on page 14.

Nigel Bird Books Special offers

The following books are offered to Colonel Stephens Society members, post free, with a donation to the Society from each book sold.

Clarke J: *The Colonel's Guide - a source guide to books, magazines and films of Colonel Stephens' Standard Gauge Light Railways.* CSS. New copy. £3

Cole D: *The Kent and East Sussex Railway.* Union Pubs, 1963. £3.50

Dixon A G and Loosley A E: *Kent and East Sussex Railway, Stockbook.* Farmers Line, 1970. £3.

Finch M Lawson and Garrett S R: *The East Kent Railway, vol 1: The History of the Independent Railway.* Oakwood Press, 2003. New copy. £14.95

Garrett S R: *The Kent & East Sussex Railway.* Oakwood P, 1972 (1st ed) £4

Garrett S R: *The Kent & East Sussex Railway.* Oakwood P, 1987. £6

Garrett S R: *The Kent & East Sussex Railway.* Oakwood P 1999 (3rd Ed) New copy. £8.95

Griffith E: *The Hundred of Manhood & Selsey Tramways, later known as the West Sussex Railway 1897-1935.* Author, 1968. £10

Janes B: *Colonel Stephens - a Celebration - a brief outline of the life of Holman Fred Stephens and his light railways.* Kent & East Sussex Railway, 2007. New copy. £4.50, all proceeds to the Colonel Stephens Soc.

Kidner R W: *Minor Standard Gauge Railways.* Oakwood P, 1981 (1st ed). £8

Morgan J S: *The Colonel Stephens Railways - a view from the past.* Ian Allan, 1999 (1st ed). £12.

**Orders to: Nigel Bird Books, Brynhir,
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SETTING THE RECORD STRAIGHT: 'BRANCH LINE TO SELSEY'

Traffic began on the HM&ST on 27th August 1897, 110 years ago.

Laurie Cooksey takes the opportunity to correct some facts in the *Middleton Press* book published in 1983

This *Setting the Record Straight* is offered with Keith Smith's blessing. He agrees with me that the Colonel Stephens Society is the place to do just that. It is not intended to belittle in any way the superb series of railway books that he and Vic Mitchell have published over the years, but much new information has come to light since this particular book was published back in 1983.

► **Map on second (un-numbered) page:** Selsey Bridge Halt is not shown on the 1920 map as it was not provided until the late 1920s.

► **Third page, 3rd line:** *The line was therefore built under the little used Railway Construction Facilities Act of 1864:* Like the Rye & Camber Tramway before it, the Selsey Tramway was built without any Board of Trade sanction. Perhaps, in an attempt to give

the Tramway some form of legality, application was made in November 1923 to the Minister of Transport for a certificate under the Railway Construction Facilities Act of 1864 and this was issued on 15th July 1924. Other than changing the

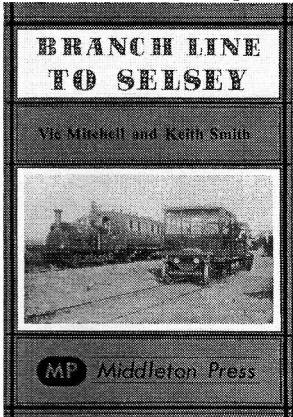
company's name to The West Sussex Railway, nothing else was done. It was the Hundred of Manhood & Selsey Tramways Co. Ltd. that was finally dissolved in September 1938.

► **Third page, paragraph 3:** *Catastrophe struck the Company on the night of 10th De-*

cember 1910... when the sea... broke through the bank on the east side of the peninsula... : The Tramway was flooded on the **morning of 16th December 1910**. Fortunately, the railway was in its prime and prosperous enough to pay for a mile-long embankment up to 15ft. High, to be built to carry its line across what had become *Pagham Harbour again*. Although the tramway was doing well enough, the Directors had to dip their hands into their pockets to pay for the raising of the line and, with their finance having to be paid back out of revenue, the shareholders were not to receive a dividend ever again.

► **Page [7]:** Locomotives: *Selsey* was scrapped in 1936, not 1935; *Hesperus* was scrapped in 1932, not 1931; *Ringing Rock* was acquired in 1922, not 1917, and *Chichester (1)* was most likely built by Dodds of Rotherham in 1865. Passenger vehicles: The ex-Lambourn Valley 4-wheel carriages were not numbered on the Tramway. The first ex-LCDR 6-wheel carriage, a four (not five) compartment, first came from the SECR in 1919. Two five compartment seconds and a two compartment brake first, converted from a four compartment first, were acquired from Vickers of Erith in 1921. The two ex-LCDR six-wheel carriages

Continued on next page ►



Deadlines for 2007/8

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

89: Winter 2007: 15th November

90: Spring 2008: 15th February

91: Summer 2008: 15th May

92: Autumn 2008: 15th August

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

► *from previous page* (nos. 1636 and 3639) were acquired in 1932, not 1931. Railmotors: The Wolseley Siddeley railmotor entered service in March 1924, not c.1921. The twin Ford railmotor entered service in July 1924, not 1923.

► **Photo 72:** *'Sidlesham' on the way back from the Beach on 15th April 1911 ...* Photographed on the same day as photo 62, the Tram comprised two of the ex-Lambourn Valley carriages on the flood shuttle service to Ferry. It is not returning from the Beach, but the engine would have taken water from the tank behind the engine shed.

► **Photo 76:** *Chichester (1)* was most likely built in 1865, not 1847.

► **Photo: 77:** ... *so its boiler was sent to its maker at Bristol ...* With no reference to these repairs in Peckett's boiler test book, this work was probably carried out by Avon-side also of Bristol.

► **Photo 78:** ... *[Selsey's] tanks held 400 gallons ...* According to Peckett's *Selsey's* tanks held 640 gallons.

► **Photo 86:** ... *Although fitted with vacuum brakes, they were not used and there were no continuous train brakes in later years ...* None of the tramway's rolling stock was ever fitted with continuous brakes.

► **Photo 90:** *The original saloon bogie coaches were left to decay either side of the station approach road ...* The original carriages were all dumped to the left of the approach road. The carriage shown here to the right is the ex-Lambourn Valley composite saloon.

► **Photo 94:** ... *The photograph [of*

'Hesperus'] was taken in 1931, four years after its withdrawal ... 'Hesperus' was withdrawn in 1924.

► **Photo 97:** ... *This 3-plank wagon mysteriously bore the number 100 when photographed in March 1935! ...* The ex-GER open wagon is the Tramway Company's no. 10. The centre "0" having been filled in. The opposite side did show the number 10.

► **Photo 104:** *With all the locomotive hauled passenger stock in an advanced state of decay by 1931, the company decided that year to purchase two secondhand 6-wheelers from the Southern Railway ...* The two 6-wheel carriages entered service in 1932. •

Branch Line to Selsey, by Vic Mitchell and Keith Smith. Midhurst: Middleton Press, 1983. ISBN 0 906520 04 5

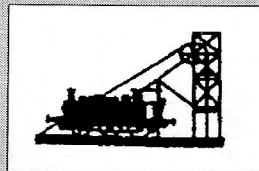
The Colonel in a Spin

As Les Darbyshire reported in *Colonel 87*, the Colonel himself arrived at the museum in Tenterden in time for the Stephens weekend. He was not live, of course, but in the form of a very realistic mannequin. He sits in the reconstruction of his Tonbridge office, having apparently just signed a letter. When a visitor approaches his head turns to see who is there. Scary. But recently his head started turning 180° - even more scary! By the time you read this he should be back to normal. •

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 •

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BRIDGE OVER THE TRAMWAY

ALAN H J GREEN *recounts how he discovered an 1897 drawing of a HM&ST bridge in the archives of a Chichester firm of solicitors. This article is an edited version of one which appeared in issue 37 of Sussex Industrial History, the journal of the Sussex Industrial Archaeology Society.*

The long-established Chichester firm of solicitors, Raper and Co., deposited their vast archive with the West Sussex Record Office several years ago.

But the cataloguing was never completed and most of the collection is known as the Raper Uncatalogued Archive. Searching the archive lists for material for a new book on the buildings of Georgian Chichester, the following entry caught my eye: *Plan of a bridge over a ditch, with covering letter from HF Stephens to Sir Robert Raper (possibly designed for use over the Lavant Stream Chichester) 1897 (2 docs) Box WWW.* The combination of the name H F Stephens and the date 1897 stopped me in my tracks - this had to be *The Colonel* and, more significantly, it had to be a drawing relating to the Selsey Tramway. I briefly nurtured a hope that the alleged ditch might prove to be the Chichester Canal and that the drawing might be of that eccentric bridge across it at Hunston, but sadly this was not to be.

The Drawing

The drawing (*see overleaf*) turned out to be a folded, colour-washed tracing (on tracing paper) of a proposed bridge, but it was clearly not one over the River Lavant, or indeed a "ditch" as the listing had suggested. It was of a bridge over the railway - an *over-bridge* in railway parlance. The attached letter, bearing the magical address 'Tonbridge' proved that this was indeed from *The Colonel* (although of course he was not known as such at this time), and the heading 'Tramway' that it was about the Hundred of Manhood and Selsey Tramway. As with so many engineers, Stephens's handwriting is barely legible, so I have transcribed it:

Tonbridge

May 25th 1897

To R C Raper
Chichester

Dear Sir
"Tramway"

I had hoped to have heard if Monday, Tuesday or Wednesday would have suited your Committee re Level crossings etc. but believe me I should always be glad to attend them on receipt of two or three days notice.

I enclose tracing of the Bridge as promised.

I need hardly point out that it is the usual type of overbridge.

I trust you will be able to give me leave to start this work at an early date.

Any further information I can give you is at your service.

Yours truly

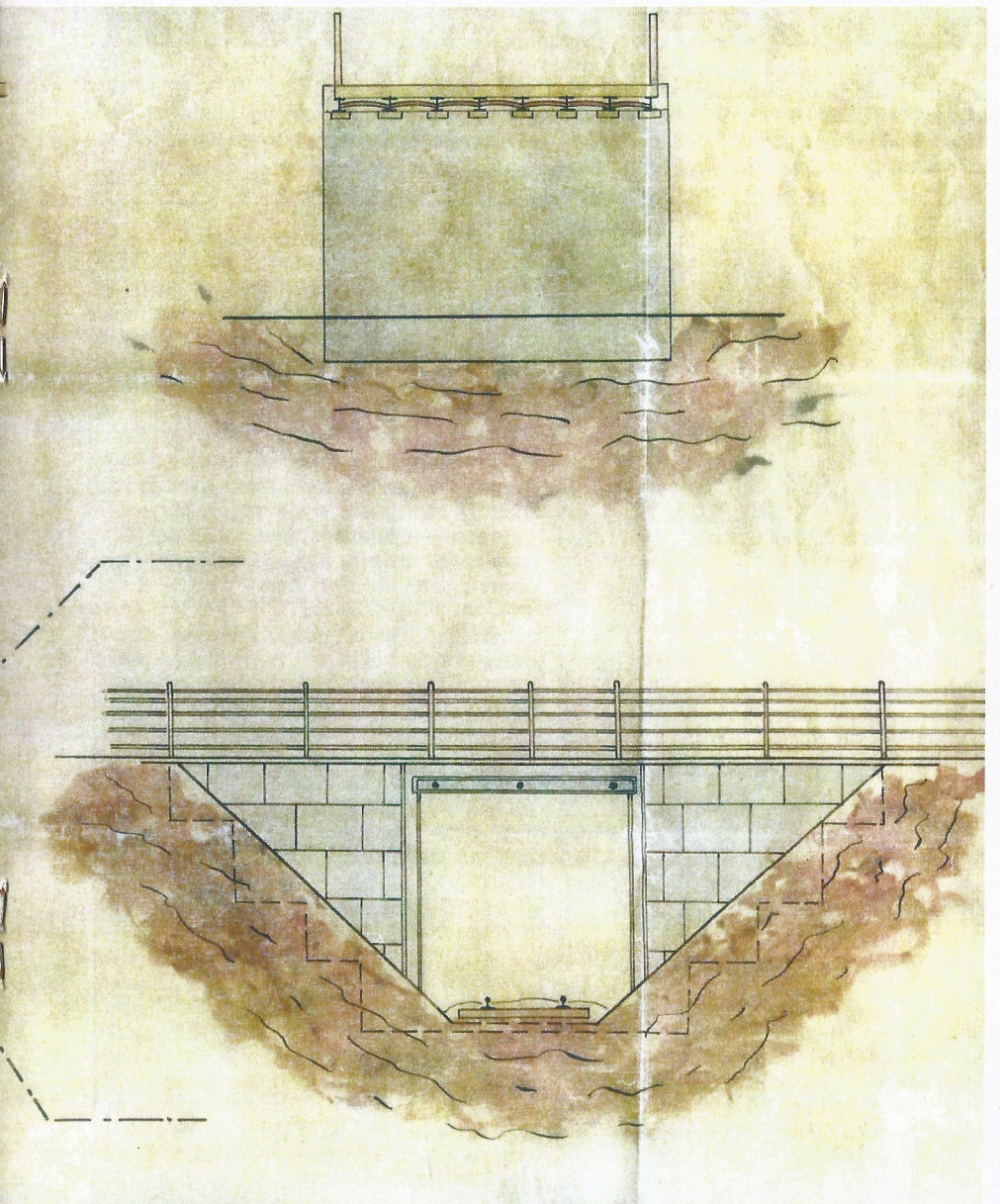
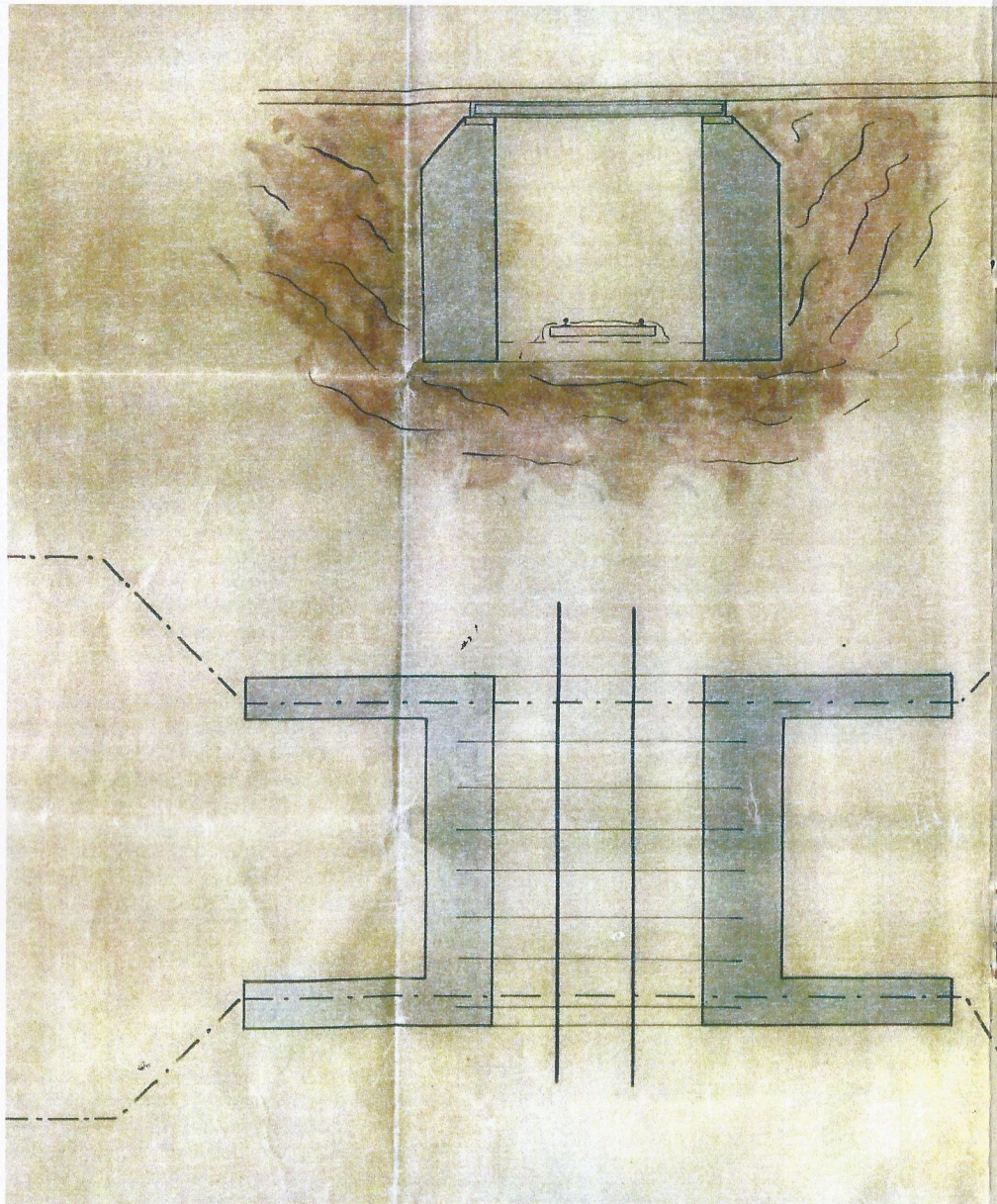
H F Stephens

Raper and Co - or Raper, Freeland and Tyacke as they were then - worked as legal advisers for the Hundred of Manhood and Selsey Tramway Company. In the catalogued section of the Raper Archive there are a few papers relating to the decline and fall of the company, but nothing in the way of engineering drawings or correspondence about its construction.

It is obvious here that Stephens was seeking urgent approval from a committee for this overbridge. Which committee this might be is not revealed. It could have been either the Tramway Company itself or maybe a sub-committee of the parish council whose approval would have been necessary for the highway alterations.

Stephens had either made or had caused to be made a tracing of the original drawing. The tracing carries no title block, is devoid of dimensions or notes and is unsigned. So

Continued on page 12 ►



These plans are reproduced courtesy of the West Sussex County Record Office

► From page 9

we are told very little.

It shows a very simple bridge over a cutting, with mass-concrete abutments (the colour used - pale green - was the traditional one for mass-concrete, but who is to say that the Colonel followed convention?). The faces of the abutments are scored to represent masonry. It carries a superstructure of either wrought- or cast-iron beams with brick jack arches spanning between their bottom flanges. He has used dark red, the traditional colour for brickwork, on the jack arches.

With no title we are not given the location of the proposed bridge. As the letter is equally vague, the Committee were obviously expected to know all about it. However, if the proposal was executed, it can only be the bridge at Bridge Halt near Selsey, that being the only overbridge on the line and built to carry the main Chichester - Selsey road. At that point (Grid Reference SZ 857939), the railway was in a cutting making a level crossing, always the Colonel's preferred option, impossible. This drawing shows that the proposed bridge would be over such a cutting.

It was planned to have the terminus of the line here, thus saving the expense of crossing the road, but at the second AGM, held on 1 July 1897, the company secretary, Walter Lintott, announced that the line would be extended to take it a little closer to Selsey. Unfortunately by the time of the official opening, on 27 August 1897, the bridge had not been completed, so services had to terminate short of their destination at Bridge Halt, which they continued to do until 14 November 1897.

There is a picture of a train near Bridge Halt on page 16 of Edward Griffith's *The Selsey Tramways* with the bridge in the background, from which it can be seen that it bears a striking resemblance to the structure in the drawing. [There are also two pictures on pp 219 & 220 in Vol. 2 of Laurie Cooksey's *The Selsey Tramway - Ed.*] The only variance seems that the concrete was not scored to represent masonry, doubtless the result of more penny-pinching. This, and the date of Stephens's correspondence, would seem to confirm that the drawing and letter

relates to the structure at Bridge Halt.

The question then has to be asked whether this tracing was made by the Colonel himself. Alan Blackburn, a fellow railway civil engineer, has made a study of many of the known drawings relating to the Stephens empire and he advises me that they were generally signed, but not by Stephens himself, implying that either he used a draughtsman to work up his ideas, or they were the designs of another engineer. At this time Stephens was a young man of 28. His sole employee was W.H.Austen, his outdoor assistant, who was only 15, so his office was not exactly awash with either staff or experience. He may have had to suffer the expense of engaging a consultant for structural matters such as these.

Alan Blackburn's view is that Stephens used a number of standard designs for all his lines that were then copied and given to respective contractors when the need arose. This theory is borne out by the fact that this drawing is virtually identical to one for an overbridge on the much later East Kent Railway.

Whatever its parentage, this is an interesting drawing as it can be attributed positively to the Selsey Tramway. It would be interesting to know whether, apart from route surveys, any other civil engineering drawings of the line have survived. The site of Bridge Halt is near the present police station, but no trace of either the platform or the bridge is to be seen there today. ●

This is an edited version of an article which appeared under the heading A Colonel Stephens "Find" in issue 37 (2007) of Sussex Industrial History. The article is printed with the kind permission of the author and the Sussex Industrial Archaeology Society. The accompanying drawing is reproduced on pp 10/11 by kind permission of the West Sussex Record Office. Copies of Sussex Industrial Archaeology containing the original article with a full size colour reproduction of the drawing, are available from R.G.Martin, 42 Falmer Avenue, Saldean, Brighton BN2 8FG at £4.25, plus p&p 75p.

THE COLONEL ON THE ROCKS

The fourth instalment of edited extracts from a report, prepared in 1921, in PAUL JACKSON'S collection, on mineral deposits in the areas served by several of the Colonel's railways. Previous instalments appeared in Colonels 85, 86 and 87. The next part will cover the East Kent Railway

THE CHICHESTER AND SELSEY RAILWAY [sic]

The district traversed by this railway lies entirely on the coastal plain of Sussex. It is part of an elevated sea-bed, the former line of cliff being still traceable in the higher ground to the north of Highdown Hill. The whole of the area is covered by marine drift, overlying London Clay and Chalk.

This drift takes the form of a deposit of flint gravel composed of unworn and broken flints and fragments of chalk. It is only faintly stratified, and spreads in a wide sheet over the whole plain. Its depth in this area is unknown, but further East it is quite 30 feet deep. A boring at Selsey, starting on the shore, passed through 360 feet of Bracklesham Beds before reaching the London Clay. The marine gravel, known as Coombe Rock, is dug to a depth of 15 feet in a large pit, near Chichester. It is used locally for road metal and for ballast on the railway. For this purpose it is usual to screen out the chalky matrix. The larger flints have provided material for local building stone.

The sequence of drift deposits in the Selsey promontory is as follows. Resting immediately on the Bracklesham Beds on the foreshore is a greenish clay in which are embedded occasional large chalk flints and a curious assemblage of blocks of various rocks known as Selsey erratics. The erratics, sometimes of large size and weighing several tons, consist of granite, greenstone, schist, slate, quartzite and sandstone. There are also fragments of local origin. Similar erratics occur at Hayling Island. The origin of foreign rocks is obscure, but they are usually ascribed to the action of floating ice in the Glacial period.

Above the erratic bed is a mud deposit, succeeded by an old shingle beach. The whole is covered by the Coombe Rock above

mentioned. In places the Coombe Rock passes into brickearth, becoming more loamy. An intermediate variety, locally known as "shrave", is too stony for use as brickearth and too loamy for gravel. The "shrave" was formerly dug for making mud walls, but is not of any use at the present time.

Between the South Downs and the sea, brick clays are found in the Woolwich and Reading Beds, and are worked near Chichester. Brickearth deposits also occur in places overlying the Coombe Rock.

Summary and Conclusion.

The only mineral traffic of any extent that can be expected on the Selsey and Chichester line is the conveyance of building material into the area. The only mineral industry in the neighbourhood is confined to the gravel of the Coombe Rock, and some shore sand may occasionally be got.

Brickearth.

The L.B.&S.C.Ry. runs parallel to the strike and about the centre of the outcrop of the Woolwich and Reading Beds, which are mottled clays suitable for bricks and worked at West Hampnet, near Chichester, where 13 feet of brickearth are exposed. An outlying patch of London Clay extends between Oving and Chichester.

The Woolwich beds may be found to the south in the neighbourhood of Rumboldswick, Donnongton, Mundham and Hunston. It is possible that localities might be found sufficiently free from drift to work from bricks in the neighbourhood of these places. •

**Winter timetables, leaves on the line
... Yes, it's that time of year again.
Don't forget to renew your subs,
otherwise your Colonel will be late!**

SOCIETY NEWS

SUBSCRIPTION

RENEWALS

This issue of *The Colonel* means it is time to reach for your cheque books and renew your annual membership subscription.

When the Society formed in 1985, there was no subscription at all! The newsletter was produced free by the Editor and members provided SAEs. With membership growing faster than anticipated, a £2.00 subscription was introduced in September 1985. This was increased to £4 in 1989 and to £5 in 1992, when it was hoped that this would suffice for at least 2 years. In the event it was held for 15 years! Meanwhile, we hope you will all agree that the new rates agreed at the last AGM; £7 for UK members, £9 for joint and £12 overseas are still excellent value.

Please return the enclosed renewal form with your name and membership number with your cheques or Postal Orders to the Membership Secretary as soon as possible so we can issue your new membership card with the Winter issue of *The Colonel*. Also please use the form to advise us of any changes to your address details.

As always we are very happy to receive donations which will go to our important donations programme. This enables individual contributions to make a significant difference to projects related to Colonel Stephens and his railway heritage. ●

Don't delay - do it now!

Calstock 2008

Bruce Hunt has provided us with an update on plans to celebrate the centenary of the opening of the line from Bere Alston to Calstock and Callington.

Three dates

Celebrations are taking place over three dates. First of all, the week of 8th August 2007 to mark the moment when the first wagon crossed the viaduct, then the weekend of 2nd March 2008, the centenary of the official opening and last, but by no means least, the weekend of 17th May, the Colonel Stephens Members Day (which will last the whole weekend). The days around 8th August 2007 were a local affair based in Calstock, the highlight of which was to be the closure of the viaduct in the afternoon for the public to walk across it. This was aimed at local residents and was not publicised outside the area.

Centenary weekend

The main events will be centered around the weekend of 2nd March 2008, with three days of activities, including special trains, exhibitions, displays, re-enactments, etc.

Colonel Stephens Weekend

The Colonel Stephens weekend is still very much in the planning stage, but will involve an exhibition, signalling of the line, local events based at Bere Ferrers, organised by Tamar Belle, a guided walk of the track bed. We have provisionally booked a film show by the South West Film & Television Archive showing a compilation of uncut film and video of the line and branch from Plymouth to Callington. Most of this, due to be shown on Friday 16th May at 7.30pm, will never have been seen before. More information in the next issue of *The Colonel*. Meanwhile, keep the weekend of 17/18th May 2008 free of commitments. ●

MEMBERS' DAY 2009

We are looking for a volunteer to organise our 2009 Members' Day. Please contact Secretary Guy Hardy, address on page 2.

SOCIETY NEWS

Blue Plaque: progress report

Society chairman, Les Darbyshire, has been pursuing the idea, discussed at this year's AGM, of arranging for a blue plaque to be put up on the building in Salford Terrace,



Photo: Albyn Austin October 2006

Tonbridge (pictured left) which housed the offices from which Colonel Stephens managed his railway empire.

After lengthy detective work worthy of M. Poirot, Les contacted the Tonbridge Civic Society which has a plaques scheme to commemorate 'worthies' (their term) to be commemorated in the Tonbridge area. The civic society's secretary in reply said that Stephens was already on their list "but the details you provide in your letter are very welcome: it is difficult to place these people as you have enabled us to do".

Two or three plaques a year

It appears that the scheme is at an early stage. The civic society has formed a committee attended by the head of Leisure Services of Tonbridge council which is said to be 'very supportive'. They meet again in October to consider the list in more detail and to prioritise candidates. They hope to put up two or three plaques each year. Our offer of some (unspecified at this stage) financial contribution was welcomed. They hope to produce a heritage walks leaflet which will incorporate the plaques when they are put up. They are also planning a

'Roll of Honour' for Tonbridge Castle which these days is the Council's tourist centre. The secretary comments that 'Colonel Stephens will feature on that, even if our plaques scheme proves a financial casualty'. To help prevent that happening, the Society's committee has agreed to set aside a sum of up to £500 to be used if necessary for this purpose. •

DISPATCHES EXTRA

On a visit to a rail event at Reading, I bought a rather interesting piece of paperwork. This is a sheet of headed notepaper of the S & M R with the Salford Terrace address and Austen listed as MD and engineer. The date line is from the 1940s. On the reverse is typed a debtor (invoice type) entry entitled the Snailbeach District Railway Co. for £5 for rent of the engine shed etc. to J. Roberts at Snailbeach Mine. 'Paid 26-9-51' has been written on the lower left hand side. The saga of Roberts and this rental is covered on the Colonel Stephens Museum website. A paid note has been attached to the top of the invoice and then removed. This prompts questions of the detail behind this invoice and receipt. I would like to discover who made out this invoice and where they were located, as Salford Terrace had been sold by this time. Also who paid the rental and did they actually visit Roberts at the mine? Also I wonder just what was left (independently controlled) of the Colonel's railways at this time (1951/2)? As far as I can see, only the Snailbeach remained. Presumably they had stock of old notepaper on which to type out any remaining invoices. Can anyone help? **Paul Jackson**

By email

[Part of the headed paper is reproduced on page 19, together with the invoice - Ed.]

DISPATCHES

Letters to the Editor

"Support the Local Lines"

Reading some back numbers of *The Railway Magazine*, I came across a fascinating advert in the June 1919 edition jointly placed by the Kent and East Sussex, East Kent, Shropshire and Montgomeryshire and Weston, Cleveland and Portishead Railways. The header of the advert reads: "Post War Industrial Sites and Facilities." At the base is the following clarion cry. "Support the Local Lines." Each railway beneath its name has a sentence proclaiming its advantages including in all cases the memorable phrase: "Reasonable ('low' in the case of the EKR) local taxation." All enquiries, irrespective of railway, were to be directed to: "The Publicity Clerk, 23 Salford Terrace, Tonbridge, Kent".

**Alan Cliff
Rhyl**

Hero, or just one of us?

I am not quite sure what Chris Mitchell had for breakfast the day he wrote the letter in *Colonel 87*, but it's had an odd, even "weird" effect. Is the Colonel a "Great Man" he asks. Well one of the dictionary definitions for 'Great Man' is "extreme or more than usual". It fits I think. As to 'Hero', the same dictionary says "a man who is idealized for possessing superior qualities in any field" - a perfect description. As to putting off new prospective new members in this age of celebrity, it's maybe an asset to call him such things. If that makes me weird, so be it.

**Nigel Bird
Tregaron**

I agree with Chris Mitchell. It is inappropriate to describe Colonel Stephens as a hero. He was just an ordinary man doing his job, which he did admirably well.

**Philip Chadwick
Peterborough**

I, too, cringe when someone refers to Colonel Stephens as 'The Great Man'. People often get carried away, for example, when a new football manager comes in and the club wins a cup or gets promotion, then about a year later, when things are not going so well, they are calling for his head. I am not call-

ing for the Colonel's head, in fact I have a great fascination for him and his railways, especially the Hawkhurst branch and the KESR, which I remember from my childhood living at Goudhurst, but I would call him an interesting, not a great, man. Seeing that his father, F.G.Stephens, was a founder-member of the pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood and was a model for the head of Christ in the famous painting *Christ washing Peter's Feet* by Ford Madox Brown, I am surprised that some people have not come up with a God-like title for him.

**Peter Harding
Woking**

The Colonel was a very able business man, but I wouldn't describe him as great. Although the Colonel and his railways were the leading examples in Britain of independent rural railways, there were many other lines of character that he never managed or engineered that I find equally interesting, for example, the North Sunderland, the Rowrah and Kelton Fell, or the narrow gauge public lines. The Colonel, followed by Bill Austen, managed some fascinating little lines which survived long enough for a few early railway enthusiasts to visit and chronicle before the bus and lorry swept them away.

**Albyn Austin
By email**

Those Terrier Pipes

With reference to the question posed by Robin Gay in 'Test Les' in *Colonel 87*, upon arrival at the KESR, the incompatible Westinghouse air brake gear was removed and replaced with vacuum brake equipment. Most railways used a neat method of running the ejector exhaust steam pipe along the boiler into the smokebox and up the chimney - thereby increasing the draught on the fire. However, the thrifty KESR merely used a bit of bent pipe to squirt the exhaust upwards in front of the cab.

**Christopher Mitchell
Tenterden**

Les Darbyshire writes: I've had more correspondence on this. Allen Morgan contacted Colin Binnie who in turn posed the

*Letters to the Editor***DISPATCHES**

question to the LBSCR Yahoo group & Brighton Circle who had some discussion amongst themselves and provided their responses. They all tie up so I am sure we now have the definitive answer:

- Apparently it is the exhaust for the vacuum ejector - see pp42/3 of *Portrait of the Terriers* by Handel Kardas. [*Shepperton, Ian Allan, 1999. ISBN 0 7110 2652 1*] It was altered to the conventional arrangement (on No. 3 'Bodiam' only) at Brighton in late 1947. (From 'Andy' via Eric Gates)

- Tom Middlemass in *Stroudley and His Terriers* [*Easingwold, Pendragon, 1995. ISBN 1 899816 00 3*] states on page 44 that the Westinghouse gear was removed and vacuum ejectors were fitted at Brighton in 1901 prior to sale to Rother Valley Light Railway. It may have therefore been the first time that Brighton Works had to think about where to put the exhaust from the vacuum ejector. The fact that the engines were being sold to Stephens may have led to the cheapest solution! Interestingly later engines which had Westinghouse and feed pumps removed had an exhaust pipe from just below the left hand cab window to the smokebox which may have been a combined injector and ejector exhaust pipe. KESR 3 (ex LBSCR 70) had this later pipework from the 1947 overhaul by which time it had become the standard way of doing things. It is implied that LBSC 71 (KESR 5) was similarly fitted but I have not seen a photo of the left hand side that shows the short ejector exhaust. It was probably scrapped before acquiring the latter standard arrangement.

(From Gerry Nichols)

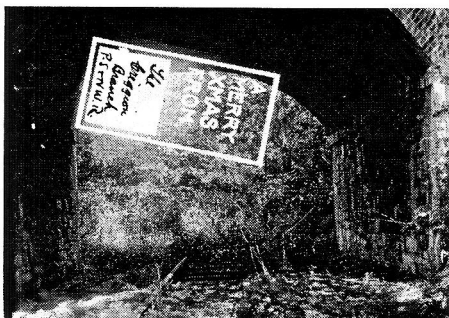
Merry Xmas from the Potts

Further investigation of the photographs I have of the "Potts" in pre S&MR days, see *The Colonel* issue 73 page 7, has confirmed that the "Merry Xmas from the Potts!" photo I provided on page 5 of that issue was sent by G M Perkins to his brother, T R Perkins, the famous railway historian, who is credited as attracting the Colonel's interest in the line and

its ultimate rebuilding as the Shropshire & Montgomeryshire, through his article in *The Railway Magazine* in 1903. It is an amazing discovery. I think it was sent as a humorous gesture as the photo was of the overgrown Criggon branch which was undergoing reconstruction at the time. I now want to find out who originally owned this collection. It may have even been T R Perkins. All photos are annotated and I was wondering if anyone has a sample of T R Perkins handwriting to compare with. I am also investigating the photographer of many of the photos, Frank E-Fox-Davies, who was from Llanymynech. Anyone with information can contact me at jon.clarke@tiscali.co.uk. **Jon Clarke**

Jon Clarke adds:

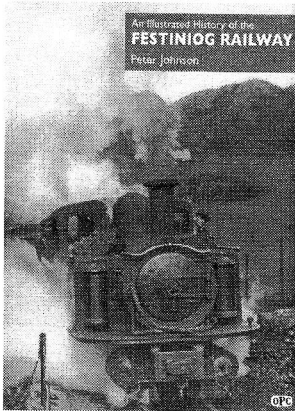
I have just had confirmation that the collection of 30 odd original postcard photos of the derelict Potts (pre S&MR) that I own, taken by F E Fox-Davies and G Perkins in circa 1903 were originally owned by the famous railway historian T R Perkins. Each card is annotated in Perkins's own handwriting, and has been confirmed today by a sample of his handwriting from the Public Record Office and supplied to me by the Colonel Stephens Museum. It is an amazing discovery. I am considering selling them and will listen to a substantial offer for the collection, many of which are unpublished, although it may go for auction later in the year, as there is tremendous historic significance in this collection. •



REVIEW

An Illustrated History of the Festiniog Railway. By Peter Johnson. Hershamp: Oxford Publishing Co, 2007. Hardback. 292 x 216 mm, 128pp, £19.99. ISBN 978 0 8609 3603 9

This splendid book is exactly as the title describes - an illustrated history of the Festiniog. The author has been actively involved with the FR for many years, including a long period as editor of the preservation society's magazine. He is the author of several earlier



books on the line, including *Portrait of the Festiniog Railway: a view from the past*. The book begins with a reference to laying of the first stone on 14th February 1833. The story ends

with the last meeting of the old Festiniog Board on 22nd June 1954. Those interested in the line under preservation will have to look elsewhere.

This is clearly a carefully researched study, well-illustrated with photographs, maps and drawings. Although, as befits a railway history, locomotives and rolling stock are prominent, they do not dominate. The landscape, buildings and infrastructure, implements, tickets, timetables and, notably, people, are all featured. Given the dates involved, the majority of the illustrations are black and white, but tickets, postcards and some engravings are in colour. The front endpapers illustrate clearly in colour the route of the line together with a gradient diagram, while those at the back feature a beautiful map of the Blaenau Festiniog com-

plex, both prepared by Gordon Rushton.

In addition to the eleven chapters detailing the history of the railway, another twenty pages cover the locomotives and rolling stock. Appendices cover such things as revenue and capital expenditure for specific periods and numbers of employees in different categories. There is even a currency converter! Particularly welcome is the provision of that increasingly rare but invaluable feature - a reasonable index. Colonel Stephens appears, of course, in the narrative, especially in the chapter headed 'Managing Decline'. His involvement is recorded dispassionately. Thoroughly recommended. ● RS

0 Gauge *Gazelle* in card

Also received recently for review from Alphagraphix is a 7mm card kit for the famous Shropshire & Montgomeryshire *Gazelle* and trailer. In the same package similar kits for a Ford railmotor and the WC&PR Drewry railcar and trailer. We haven't yet had a chance to build them, but priced at a mere £4 each, they are certainly worth a shot! Mind you, rolling and sticking *Gazelle's* chimney and dome from flat card will no doubt present a challenge. Alphagraphix are at: 23 Darris Road, Selly Park, Birmingham B29 7QY ●

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Our regular round-up of the railway press **Press Digest**

Philip Chadwick writes to say that issue no.198 of *Narrow Gauge*, the quarterly journal of the Narrow Gauge Railway Society has a one page article on page 25 entitled 'A Memory of the **Camber Tram**'. It is a reprint of a photo and a letter from J F Burke from the *Sussex County Magazine*. The photo shows 2-4-0T *Victoria* at Rye in the 1920s at a time when most rains were hauled by the Simplex. On the back page of the same issue there is a half-page colour shot of the **Snailbeach** engine shed taken in 1981.

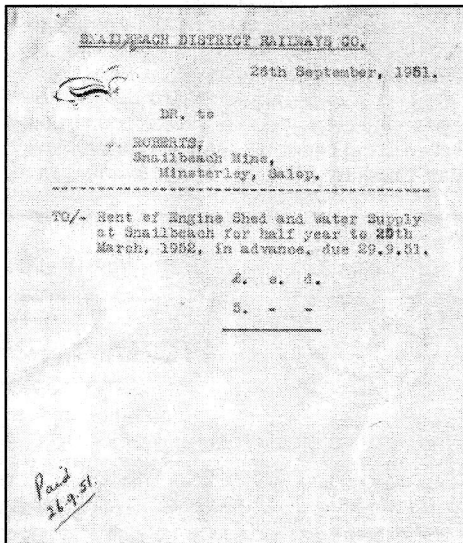
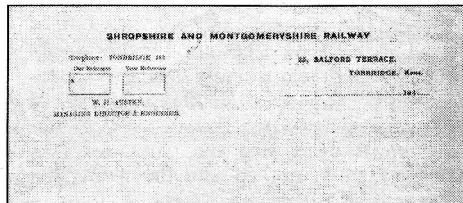
Baldwins are much in the news these days (and we're not referring to the General Manager of the KESR). Several magazines including *Heritage Railway 102*, report the reappearance in traffic of **WD 778** at Leighton Buzzard. This year marks the loco's 90th birthday. It was scheduled to return to traffic on 19th August have been restored by the Greensand Museum Trust. The Society contributed to the cost of restoration. The **Ashover Light Railway** was a Baldwin stronghold ; no less than six of the beasts were on the stocks there. So they feature strongly in a four-page article on the line in *Heritage Railway 102*. Apart from shots of *Bridget* and *Joan*, there are reproductions two of the company's postcards and, incredibly, photos of two surviving original Gloucester Carriage & Wagon Works carriages, one of them alongside the still extant famous 'Where the Rainbow Ends' café. There also a photo of some trackwork still in place near Fallgate. The article by Gary Boyd-Hope, chairman of the Ashover Light Railway Society, explains the ambitious plans for its reopening. Meanwhile, *Welsh Highland Heritage* for June 2007 discusses the turning of locomotives on the WHR, illustrating the Baldwin pointing in both directions in 1934 and 1936 respectively.

In the last issue we reported on a splendid article on the **Callington Branch (PD&SWJR)** in the June issue of *Back Track*. The July issue, as promised, contained part two of the article - another seven pages accompanied by some lovely shots, some in

colour. Gunnislake in September 1961 and Calstock the following year particularly caught our eye. Essential reading, especially for those attending next year's Members' Day at Bere Ferrers. Serendipity rules in this column. And to prove it we noticed a letter from Robin Leleux in *Festiniog Heritage Group Journal* Spring 2007 claiming that the station master at Shrewsbury had available the only pulpit on the entire BR system. Why? Because parts of the refectory of the Abbey had been incorporated into the **Abbey Foregate Station**. ●

Snailbeach Paperwork

See letter from Paul Jackson on page 15



Jackson's Jottings

COMPETING WITH THE BIG BOYS

CHRIS JACKSON continues his trawl through the RAILWAY GAZETTE throwing light on the Light Railway Commissioners' attitude to competition with the main line railways

April 28 1911 – Light Railways and Competition

In the early days of the Light Railways Act, 1896, schemes brought forward under that Act were frequently not considered on their merits by the Light Railway Commissioners and the Board of Trade, but had to be referred to Parliament "by reason of the magnitude of the proposed undertaking, or of the effect thereof on the undertaking of any railway company existing at the time." This proviso has seldom been invoked of late, but the West Cheshire Light Railway scheme, which was recently before the Commissioners, suggested such possibilities of competition with the London & North-Western Railway that the Commissioners felt they could not go into the merits but must leave it to Parliament.

In itself the scheme was simple enough, a light railway of 11 miles from Tarporley to Nantwich. But it was an extension of an already authorised line of seven miles from Mouldsworth to Tarporley, and the two together would provide a direct connection between the Great Western at Nantwich and the Cheshire Lines at Mouldsworth. The

promoters were also proposing to enter into agreements with the Great Western, which, however, was not supporting the scheme.

It was feared by the London & North-Western Railway that the new line might give the Great Western a route through over the Cheshire Lines to Manchester, and also to Birkenhead, *via* Helsby and Booton. The Great Western has an access to Manchester at present over the London & North Western *via* Nantwich and Crewe, and to Birkenhead over its own line to Chester and thence by the London & North-Western and Great Western Joint Line.

By means of the new line it might get a shorter route to Birkenhead, avoiding the Gresford Bank (1 in 80 for 3½ miles) between Chester and Wrexham, and also get a better access to the Manchester Ship Canal, and thereby increase the competition with the London & North-Western, which might also lose some of the traffic (about 450 wagons a day) now exchanged between the two companies at Market Drayton Junction. •

In the next instalment, Chris Jackson ponders the reasons for the lack of progress in Scotland.



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