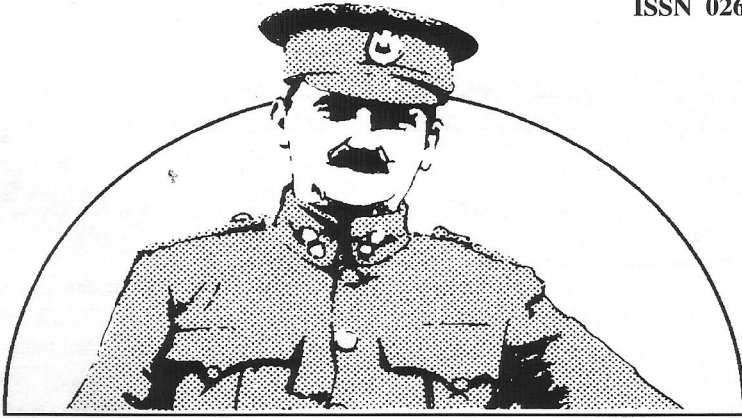


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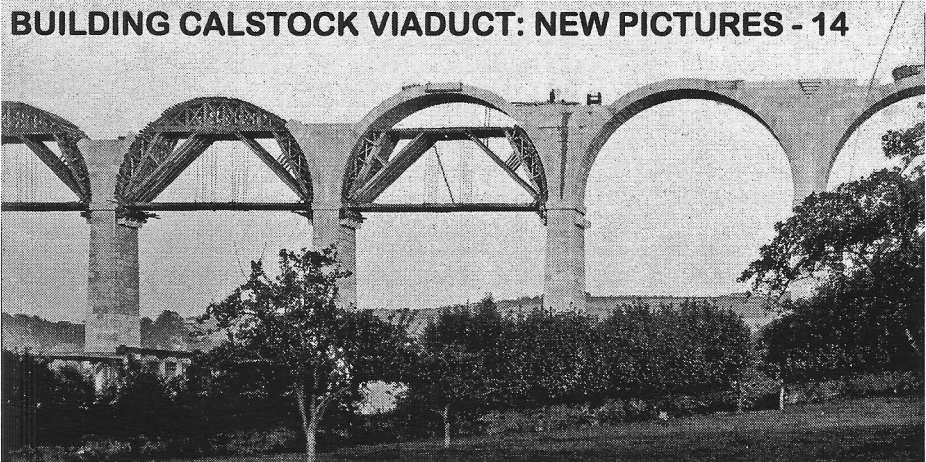


THE COLONEL

Number 89

Winter 2007

BUILDING CALSTOCK VIADUCT: NEW PICTURES - 14



THE QUARTERLY JOURNAL OF THE COLONEL STEPHENS SOCIETY
for enthusiasts of the light and narrow gauge railways of
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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 1-88 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.

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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.

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Printed by Stephen Austin & Sons Limited, Caxton Hill, Hertford SG13 7LU

Editorial: Accidental Preservationist?

Prompted by the new Hornby 00 gauge model of the ex-WCPR/GWR Terrier No. 5 'Portishead' and the splendid little biography of the Colonel, published by the KESR earlier this year, Heritage Railway published an article suggesting that Stephens was the 'Father of Preservation'. Or at least that was the gist of the headline. The article itself, although welcome and informed, did not advance the argument very far. But was he really the father of preservation? Towards the end of his life he certainly presided over collections of ancient rolling stock, some of it acquired second-, or even

third-hand. His railways were reluctant to scrap redundant equipment. But his core interest was promoting and managing light railways intended to open up rural areas to trade. His attitude to railway enthusiasts drawn to his railways because of the ancient locomotives present on some of them was ambivalent. Although we are fortunate that several of the railways he was connected with have been preserved, some of them with notable success, very few of the locomotives or rolling stock survive and those that do are not directly as a result of his efforts. A better description might be 'The Accidental Preservationist'.

Ross Shimon

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Members' Weekend in the West

Following last year's successful event during the Col. Stephens Gala at Tenterden, we are holding our AGM on 17th May at Bere Ferrers on the former PD&SWJR. Bruce Hunt and Chris Grove have planned a full programme for us.

Full details appear on page 16. Make your top New Year resolution 'Attend the CSS weekend'! •

Special Members' only DVD offer

Thanks to the efforts of several members, we can offer a splendid, nostalgic film on DVD of the final train on the Shropshire & Montgomeryshire Railway in 1960. Don't miss it. Full details on page 18. •

STEPHENS AND THE LINE TO CALLINGTON

BRUCE HUNT, Vice Chairman of the Tamar Heritage Group, answers the question he posed about the involvement of the Colonel in the construction of the line to Callington, at the end of the first instalment in the last issue

Much of the correspondence between Lang, (the builder of the BA&CLR) and Henry Byers, (the PD&SWJR engineer) still exist, as do all the weekly reports written by Byers to the board. Byers also kept a diary in note form, probably used to compile his weekly reports. A few of these letters are addressed to H.F. Stephens, or are written by him, but many more refer to Stephens or refer to correspondence between Stephens and Byers or Stephens and the board, pointing to Stephens having a much greater input into the branch line construction than was first thought.

Slow progress

As early as November 1905 the board were concerned by the slow progress being made by Lang. On 10 November 1905 Richard Church wrote to Byers:

'I enclose press copy of a letter to Lang. I have asked Stephens to look into the matter as to where earthwork can be put. Banks would be widened where there is room. I believe Stephens will be down tomorrow.'

Stephens must have reported back to Church, as Church wrote to Byers on 8 December 1905:

'...Mr Stephens reports that work re the abutments was going on in a "very slow and slack way" and also that No.9 coffer dam is not being pushed forward and the stage started three weeks ago is not yet finished....'

Lang was ordered to start night gangs. On 11 December 1905 Burchell wrote to Church:

'...Mr St. Aubyn asked Stephens whether if no unforeseen difficulties occurred in the

foundations of pier No.9 would the line be ready for opening by 1 June 1906....'

Stephens replied

'...that with due diligence there was no reason why the line should not be ready by the due date....'

On 14 February 1906 Byers wrote to Lang:

'I have just received a telegram from Mr. Stephens to the effect that it has been decided to have the Bere Alston Station buildings in masonry. The plan sent to you is therefore cancelled and I expect to get another drawing in a few days. I think Mr. Coombe has made some enquires as to where stone similar to that used in the present station buildings can be obtained'.

There was in February also much correspondence where Stephens was asked to arrange for the removal of telegraph poles and the re-routing of telegraph wires around the area of Bere Alston Station.

On 22 February 1906 Stephens wrote direct to Lang saying he had discussed the use of the permanent way for ballast with Mr. Church and in effect directed Lang on what to do

'... you will arrange to ballast the same (except for top ballast) and to provide a rail press to straighten any crippled rails and place same in sidings and make good any damage to chairs and sleepers. You will also agree not to allow any soft filling....'

19 March 1906 Stephens sent the plans for Calstock Station to Lang. There was also a string of correspondence about minor matters but all outside Stephens's original brief. It is clear that by the summer of 1906 that

Stephens commanded considerable respect from the board and from Byers. His advice and opinion were sought after and any recommendations he made were acted on.

On 15 August 1908 Church wrote to Lang:

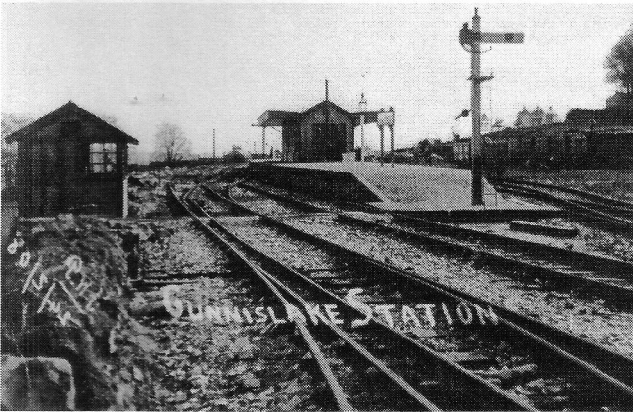
'Mr Stephens reports to me that it is your intention to drive dolphins in the river for the purpose of attaching guy roped from the centres of the arch over the river. I consider that this is courting disaster. Any vessel or barge fouling a dolphin or rope would in all probability upset the whole lot of centres and if any arch was turned it would endanger the whole viaduct.

I cannot agree with this plan.....'

On 12 October 1906 Church wrote to Lang:

'Mr. Stephens reports that your locomotive is not powerful enough and can only take up 3 trucks at a time.

If this is so I think you should at once get another one.....'



On 3 November 1906 Byers wrote to Coombs:

'Mr. Stephens notes on his last visit to works.

The following is an extract from Stephens notes made on his last visit, some of the points I mentioned to you this morning:-

Bere Alston Station

"Lifting & platform finishing also siding and lifting and finishing"

Viaduct

"As solid block work is to be used for pier No. 9 there is no reason why this work should not go on night and day"

Calstock Station

"This surely should be started now"

Harewood Cutting

"Will not be finished for at least 10 weeks.

This cutting should be worked with a second lift and filling tipped into the trucks by skips running on rails supported on needles over the tops of the trucks used on the bottom lift"

On 4 January 1907 Lang wrote to Byers:

'Referring to my interview with Mr. Stephens and yourself.....I am prepared to supply and spread ballast from Wheel Edward between Calstock Station and the junction with the East Cornwall Mineral Line for the sum of 2/10 per c. yd. (this includes purchase of ballast).....'

On 17 January 1907 Stephens wrote to Lang:

'2 miles of rails will leave Southampton for Plymouth about Thursday next.

Can you hurry on the charring of the sleepers, I noticed yesterday that progress herein was not rapid.'

On 13 February 1907 Byers wrote to Lang:

'.....Stephens reports to me that there is a crack in the key of arch No. 5 - No. 6. This should not be - No centres should be slacked until the arch next has been keyed in and gravest care should be taken.....'

On 27 May 1907 Church wrote to Lang:

'I am sorry to say that Mr. Stephens reports that you are not making the progress you ought and certainly the number of men employed as given by Mr Byers does not look light [sic] it....'

Towards the end of 1907 there is much correspondence about minor details and finishing leading up to the Board of Trade inspection

Continued on next page ►

Stephens and the Callington Line

► *Continued from previous page*

Stephens is frequently mentioned, sometimes as a source of information but more frequently as a critic of Lang's inexperience and slack working practice, often followed by a recommendation of how to improve things.

It is quite clear from this correspondence that Stephens's opinion was valued and that the board were happy to use him as a 'trouble shooter'.

They also show that his involvement was not just limited to the ECMR and that he had an input into the construction of the whole line. ●

In the first instalment of this article, published in *Colonel 88*, five words were missing in the break between pages 4 and 5. The sentence should read: "The upgrading of the ECMR(B) was to be carried out by the line's owners, the Plymouth, Devonport and South Western Junction Railway ..."

Apologies - Ed.

Did Colin Blythe know the Colonel?

In a poignant article in *The Guardian* on 13 November, sports writer Frank Keating recalls the sportsmen (yes, all men) killed in WW1. Among them were 22 county cricketers. The most illustrious of them was Sgt Colin Blythe of the Kent Fortress Engineers. Stephens was appointed their Commanding Officer in 1908. Keating speculates that Blythe might have been the last to die at Passchendaele in 1917. He was killed instantly by shrapnel on the night of 8th November. The battle finished on the 10th. He was 38. At the front his job was skilled and dangerous, supervising night patrols laying temporary railway tracks between the trenches and ammunition stores. With the fighting around the ravaged village of Passchendaele all but over, a single German shell exploded above Blythe's working party. A metal splinter of jagged shrapnel pierced the cricketer's heart. ●

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.

Morgan J S: *The Colonel Stephens Railways. A pictorial survey.* David & C', 1990. 96pp, ills, f in vg dw. £10.00

Rose N: *Kent and East Sussex Railway, Stockbook.* 1987. Colonel Stephens Publications, 1987. 80pp, ills. Stock book for the K&ESR, card covers f. £2.00

Scott-Morgan J: *The Colonel Stephens Railways - A pictorial survey.* D&C, 1990. 96pp ills, maps, hardback, f in vg dw. £8.00

Scott-Morgan J: *The Light Railway Era 1896-1996.* Atlantic, 1997 1st combined edition 190pp ills maps. Combined edition of *The Colonel Stephens Railways and British Independent Light Railways with additional colour photos*, f in f dw. £15.00

Scott-Morgan J: *The Colonel Stephens Railways. A pictorial survey.* D & C, 1978. 1st Ed 96pp, ills, maps, lam hd bk vg. £7.50

Shaw P & Mitchell V: *Colonel Stephens - Insights into the Man and his Empire.* Middleton Press, 2005 1st ed 192pp ills, maps. At last a detailed look at THE MAN, covering his childhood, military days and ventures into light railway operation. Fully illustrated with many previously unpublished photos. Highly recommended. Hd bk w lam bds. New copy. £18.95

Scott-Morgan J: *An Illustrated history of the Kent & East Sussex Railway.* Ian Allan, 2007 1st ed 112pp ills dwgs. Probably the best photo book on the KESR. Hdbk in dw. New copy. £19.99

Maggs C: *The Weston, Clevedon and Portishead Railway.* Oakwood P, 1990, 2nd enlarged ed. 160pp, ills, maps, hdbk in dw, new copy, £12.90

**Orders to: Nigel Bird Books, Brynhir,
Llwynygroes, Tregaron,
Ceredigion SY25 6PY**

EAST KENT MEMORIES

A L MINTER *recalls the East Kent Light Railway in 1933*

In the summer of 1933 I was staying at Pedding Farm, maybe a quarter of a mile from the EKLR station at Staple. Aged 10, I was deeply interested in railways, and having heard the afternoon train going through I found I could quite easily walk to the station and ride on it. So my first encounter with EKLR was the train to Wingham (Canterbury Road) which left a bit before 6pm, to ride to the end and back.

Walton Park

I don't recall which loco it was - probably Walton Park - and there would have been a couple of six-wheeled coaches and a wagon or two. The coach doors had the old door

station (as it turned out to be) with closed and deserted buildings. Then we shrieked our way across the level crossing at Dam Bridge and on to Wingham Town station. Didn't stop there, either, but it did have a shed or shelter on the platform. Soon after this, we stopped completely and leaning out of the window I watched the loco being uncoupled and it then set off down the hill, leaving the rest of the train standing on the little wooden bridge across the Wingham stream. What was going on? I didn't have to wait long to find out! The loco went and stopped in the siding that ended beside an intriguing circular shed. I saw them changing the points and then the train set off

on its own down the hill, until it had passed the points leading to the siding in which the loco was sitting. Then the train stopped. I expect there was a little high-class shunting done at this time, and eventually the loco was coupled to its train at the other end. We didn't get pushed into the "real" station, which was across the main road, and where the line ended in a short cutting. I don't recall if I was invited to leave the train - I rather think not -



EKLR 'Walton Park' at Shepherdswell, September 1934. Photo: R G Jarvis

Copyright: Midland Railway Trust

handles that you had to turn back to secure the door (and I had met those on the Southern already). The inside of the compartment was fusty, and you could get a cloud of dust by banging the seats. Pictures of other places were arrayed on the compartment wall behind the seats, and you let the window down on a hefty leather strap (nothing new here, in 1933!)

An intriguing circular shed

Anyway, off we went on our gentle way. Nothing much to see until Wingham Colliery

they just left me securely out of harm's way in the coach!

All the way to Shepherdswell

The return to Staple was just as uneventful as the outward journey, and, to my 10-year-old's curiosity, just as fascinating. With the most of my three-week visit to Pedding still vacant, I found I would be able to make a day of it (I had to - there were only two trains a day, morning and evening) and travel all the way to Shepherdswell.

Continued on the next page ►

► So that's what I did the following week. This was really fascinating - squealing round the two sharp bends that led to Eastry, seeing the rusty line leading to Hamill Colliery, finding one or two special sidings (presumably for farmers' loads), the signals at Eastry, which never seemed to be used, the road bridge there with track on only one side (I wondered why), and the rusty line leading away to who knows where?

Then there were more level crossings to be shrieked at, little halts where we didn't stop, and then a line coming in on the left from Tilmanstone Colliery, with rusty lines and no connection to the main line, but a lot of colliery tipping trucks standing there. On through the woods to Eythorne station, where there was another line on the left, not rusty, this one, which they told me led to the colliery. And another line on the left, rusty and mysterious, which they said went to Guilford. We would have stopped at Eythorne for sure, and eventually set off up the hill to - wonder of wonders - a tunnel, with no lights in the coach so it was dark and fascinating. Out of the tunnel through a chalk cutting - a scene already familiar to me from my SR travels - shrieking and creeping over another road and so down to Shepherdswell. A line set off on the right after the crossing, with some very decrepit coaches on it, and rusty rails.

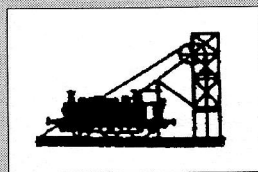
Bits of engine lying around

What fascination here! An engine shed with bits of engine lying around, another in steam, various sad and dead engines and

trucks and coaches standing in sidings. I think the morning train may have gone straight to the platform (it was the evening one which got the Wingham treatment and coasted in). The wooden hut on the platform, and the large black wooden office building way up the hill above the station are memories. With an arrival between nine and ten I had a whole day to fill, and I recall that I walked across to Denton and back, no doubt eating my packed lunch at Denton. The evening train took me, eventually, back to Staple and closed a memorable day which I have never really forgotten. •

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The East Kent Railway



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Shepherdswell to Eythorne

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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 •

TEST LES

The editor's curse - pressure on space - has again excluded our popular feature, 'Test Les', from this issue. We hope to have a bumper instalment in No. 90.

AGM 2009

We are still looking for a volunteer to organise the 2009 Members' Day. It has been suggested that we hold it near the erstwhile Shropshire & Montgomeryshire. But we are still open to other suggestions. Please contact our secretary Guy Hardy (address on page 2).

THE COLONEL ON THE ROCKS

The fifth 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, 87 and 88

EAST KENT RAILWAY

This railway embraces the area of the Kent Coal-field. The limits of this coal-field have now been clearly defined by borings. The Chilham boring, put down in the valley of the Stour to the S.W. of Canterbury, entered Silurian strata at a depth of about 1,100 feet from the surface, and another at Bobbing, near Sittingbourne, reached similar rocks. A further trial at Harmansole, to the east of Chilham, also failed to reach coal measures; but at Bourne, still further eastward, on the Great North Road between Dover and Canterbury, penetrated Coal Measures at a depth of 1,313 feet and passed through 9 coal seams, the lowest of which, lying at a depth of 2,838 feet, is nearly 6 feet in thickness. From these borings it is clear that the limits of the coal basin in this neighbourhood lie between Harmansole and Bourne. Further south the boring at Brabourne, put down in 1898, reached Devonian strata at a depth of about 2,000 feet, and having failed to find Carboniferous strata, settled the question of the westward extension of the coalfield in the latitude of Dover. The Ottinge boring put down about the same time terminated in the Kimmeridge beds at 836 feet. The Elham boring, however, in the same neighbourhood, but a little to the N.E. passed into Coal measures at a depth of 1,598 feet and went through 9 seams of coal before reaching the Carboniferous Limestone at 2,346 feet. The seams are thin and it seems certain that Elham is practically the limit of the coalfield in this direction. South of Canterbury, therefore, the western boundary of the coalfield passes through a point between Harmansole and Bourne and through Elham. At Folkestone a boring was put down in 1915, reaching Coal Measures at a depth of 1,487 feet and ending in the same formation at 3,400 feet, passing through thin seams of coal, and mainly of interest as showing that Folkestone

is somewhere near the limit of the field.

Coming next to the northern extension, the Ebbsfleet boring, near Richborough, entered the Coal Measures at a depth of 1,056 feet, passing through two thin seams and entering Carboniferous Limestone at 1,159 feet. This boring fixes the northern boundary of the coalfield in this locality. The Walmestone boring to the west of Ash, on the other hand, entered Coal Measures at a depth of 1,075 feet and passed through 13 seams of coal; two of which at depths of 1,948 and 1,978 feet respectively, were over 6 feet. This boring is interesting from the fact that it starts in Eocene strata, while the Coal Measures lie immediately below the Wealden Beds, thus proving the absence here of the Jurassic strata which come in so prominently further south. The Chislet boring due west of Ebbsfleet gave still more remarkable results, entering Coal Measures at a depth of 1,071 feet, and passing through 6 seams of coal, including a 5 ft. seam at 1,350 feet and a 7 ft. seam at 1,436 feet. Details of other borings at Rushbourne, Chitty and other places in the neighbourhood of Chislet have not transpired; but it may be assumed that the boundary of the coalfield lies somewhere to the north of this place and between it and the coast. There is, therefore, a considerable area of productive Coal measures to the north of the valley of the Stour in this area. In the meantime nothing is yet known as to the area north of Canterbury, in which prospecting is proceeding, but so far as evidence is available the margin of the coalfield is probably not far away from this city.

It is too soon yet to examine in detail the prospects of the individual collieries of this coalfield. As in all development work of this character there have been great

Continued on the next page ►

► difficulties to contend with, both engineering and financial. The following details, from the Official Mines list for the year 1917 gives the position at that date. The number of Mines under the Coal Mines Act was then 9. These included Adisham Colliery, at Temple Ewell, reported as not yet commenced. Chislet Colliery was still sinking its shafts. Tilmanstone, near Eythorne, Dover, was employing 478 men, and was working the Five feet seam. Guilford Colliery, at Whitfield, Dover, had suspended sinking. Goodnestone and Woodnesboro Colliery was engaged in surface work. Wingham and Stour Valley Colliery had commenced sinking. Dover Colliery was closed. Snowdown Colliery, Nonington, Dover, was employing 578 men, working the Beresford seam, New seam and Snowdown Hard. Stone Hall Colliery, Lydden was sinking but standing at this time.

In the year 1920, three collieries were in the producing stage, viz., Chislet, Tilmanstone and Snowdown, and were together raising about 10,000 tons of coal weekly. ●

The final instalment of this series will complete the description of mineral resources in the area covered by the EKR.

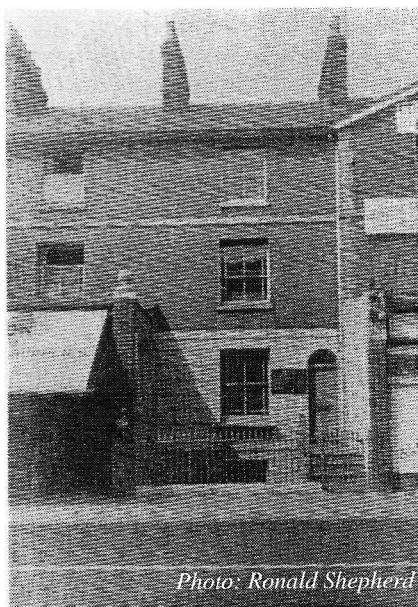


Photo: Ronald Shepherd

▲ 23 Salford Terrace, 1930s. Note the notice board to the left of the door



VIEW FROM RAILWAY STATION, TONBRIDGE.

Mockford—Series 110, Copyright.

▲ Salford Terrace c 1903. No. 23 is to the right of the gable

Both illustrations are reproduced by courtesy of the Colonel Stephens Museum, Tenterden

THE SALFORD TERRACE STORY

PHILIP SHAW *makes the case for preserving the Colonel's headquarters*

At the Society's AGM held at Tenterden last May, the suggestion was made that we should investigate the possibilities of having a blue plaque attached to 23, Salford Terrace, Tonbridge to reflect the importance of the premises as Colonel Stephens's light railway offices over a period of nearly fifty years. It may therefore be appropriate to look at the history of the premises and indeed of the Colonel's residence in Tonbridge generally.

Lodgings in Tonbridge

Stephens left Cranbrook in October 1895, (his residential address there has not been established) having completed work he had in the area and took lodgings at Ashby House, Priory Road, Tonbridge, a private residence (now demolished) occupied by a Mr Charles Standen, a timber merchant's traveller, and his wife and family. He wrote to his father on 17th December 1895 "My address is Ashby House, Tonbridge, but Tonbridge is such a small place that the name of the town is sufficient". He told his father that Tonbridge was chosen because he wanted a central location whilst working on plans for a line from Tonbridge to Hadlow and Yalding and the early stages of the Rother Valley Railway at Tenterden. Other projects on hand included the Selsey Tramway, the Rye & Camber Tramway and a similar tramway line to serve the golf course at Sandwich. He maintained his rooms at Ashby House for residential purposes for the rest of his life, although these were only used intermittently. Indeed, when he was there, a clerk from Salford Terrace, usually Tommy Edwards, was deputed to take breakfast over each morning, supplied by a local café.

Salford Terrace

In 1900, Stephens was sufficiently established to rent proper business premises in Salford Terrace, Quarry Hill Road, nearby and within a short walk of Tonbridge station.

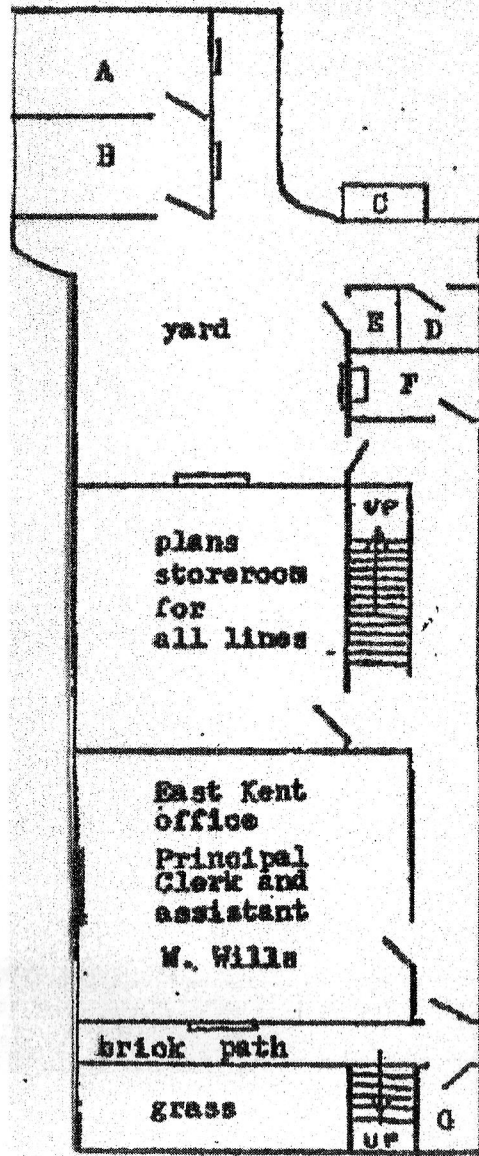
These had previously been occupied by Edward Cox-Moore, a dentist, and had become vacant. Next door, at number 21 was a doctor's surgery, and on the other side at 25 a travelling draper. Kelly's Directory of 1901/2 lists the tenant of 23, Quarry Hill Road as being the Rother Valley Railway Company and no doubt this Company was responsible for paying the rent! Stephens purchased the freehold of the premises in the 1920s and on his death they were acquired by WH Austen as part of his inheritance under the Colonel's will. When the offices closed in 1948, Austen sold the premises and they have since been occupied by a variety of tenants. Interestingly, number 23 has survived more or less as it was, although most of the other premises in Salford Terrace have had shop fronts built on to the front gardens to increase the useable space. A board, listing all the various railways in the Stephens empire was attached to the wall adjacent to the front door. This was rescued by JA Iggulden in 1948, but sadly, was subsequently broken up by his children.

Floor Plan

The floor plan (*overleaf*), incorporating basement, street level, first floor and second floor and its occupants in the 1920s was drawn up by JA Iggulden in the 1970s and shows where each member of staff in the 1920s was located. There was a single post office telephone positioned at the top of the first floor landing, with the number Tonbridge 143. Stephens made considerable use of telegrams and his telegraphic address was "Stephens, Tonbridge Station". This was convenient as there was a telegraph office at Tonbridge station, which dealt with delivery of telegrams.

English Heritage listing?

Let us hope that it is possible to record the importance of these historic premises. How about trying to get no. 23 listed by English Heritage, before the inevitable demolition occurs, as this is one of the few parts of old Tonbridge to survive? ●

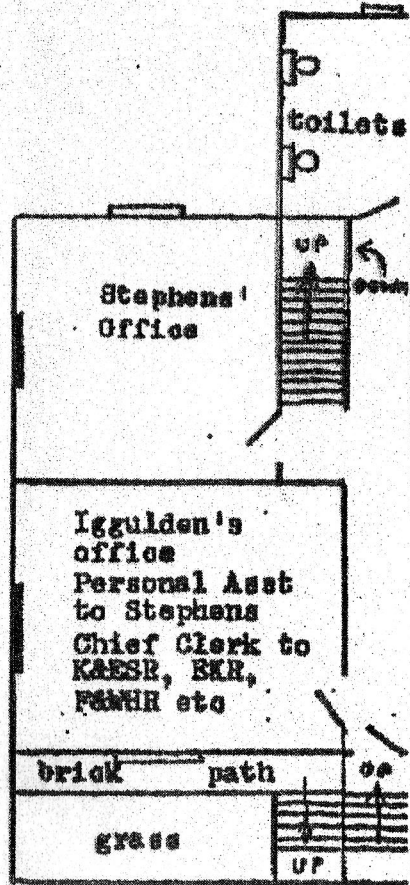


111 COLONEL

BASEMENT

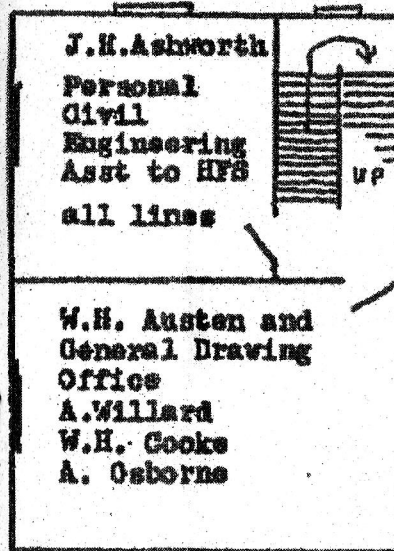
23 Salford Terrace, Tonbridge

GROUND FLOOR

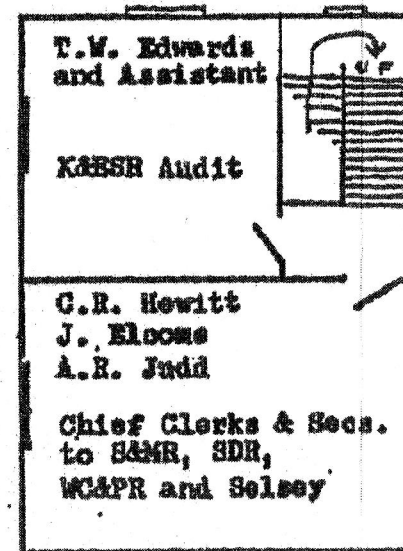


street level

- A } Correspondence Stores, all lines
- B }
- C Rubbish
- D Toilet
- E Coal Store
- F Blue Print washing & drying
- G Coal cellar



FIRST FLOOR



SECOND FLOOR

This plan is reproduced with the kind permission of the Colonel Stephens Museum, Tenterden

JENNIFER'S TREASURE

Society chairman, Les Darbyshire, describes a collection of evocative lantern slides recording the construction of Calstock Viaduct in 1906

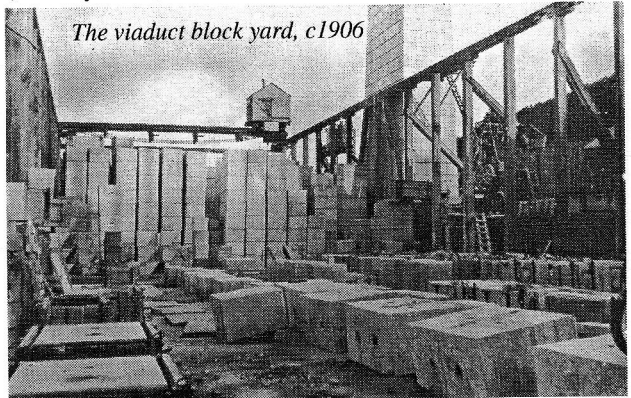
Last year the Society received an intriguing email from a lady at the University of Lincoln. Jennifer Kern was studying Conservation and Restoration there, and had been given as a restoration project a set of 25 lantern slides dating from c 1906-7. The subject of most of the slides was the building of Calstock Viaduct and other locations on the Bere Alston and Calstock Light Railway. Two slides showed subjects with no obvious connection to the line, namely the Victoria Falls Bridge over the Zambezi and a view on the River Nile. Jenny was interested in knowing more about the subject of the slides and also the photographer, who she thought might possibly have been Albert William Searley, as his name appeared on one slide, but as the slide in question was of the Zambezi Bridge, this may be a red herring!

Cracked Plates

We were naturally very keen to see the slides, so Jenny kindly arranged for them to be scanned and sent to us. Sadly, the glass plates had suffered greatly in the past hundred years, some being cracked and many with water damage but the images were still in most cases clear enough to be of very great interest to us. Jenny had done some conservation of the originals to prevent further deterioration, but had not attempted any restoration. Fortunately, modern image technology allows us to go some way towards restoring the scanned images by removing some of the worst blemishes, and this I attempted to do using Adobe Photoshop Elements. Despite this treatment however, they are still of rather poor quality but as they are of great interest, I hope to

publish some of them in these pages over the next few issues. Some of the slides are lettered "B A & C L R", some are captioned and some are dated, though many have neither title nor date. Some have the initials "R.T.T." above the date – the photographer?

Colonel 88 contained an article by Bruce Hunt entitled "Stephens and the Callington Line", that described the building of the line and Stephens' involvement, so there is no need for me to repeat that.



The viaduct block yard, c1906

Concrete Blocks

Calstock Viaduct is an interesting structure. At first sight it looks to be made of stone, but in fact it is built in concrete made to look like stone! Whereas most early concrete structures, like "Concrete Bob" McAlpine's impressive structures on the West Highland Line, were made of mass concrete cast in situ, Calstock Viaduct is made of a large number (11,148 according to one account) of separate concrete blocks. These were cast on site in a block yard on the Devon shore of the Tamar, and moved into position by sheerlegs and an overhead cableway that spanned the river. The first picture (*above*) shows the block yard and is dated July 1907 (but see the next page).

Some blocks are still in their moulds, and a stack of finished ones is awaiting removal. The yard is spanned by a travelling crane running on an elevated timber structure. In the background is one of the finished viaduct piers.

Constructing the Viaduct

The second picture (*on the cover*) shows that the viaduct was built from the Devon side. The first three arches (of twelve) have been completed, the centring has been removed from the first two and is being dismantled on the third. Centring is in place for the fourth and fifth arches and building of these arches has just commenced. The picture, like the last one, is dated July 1907 but this is not correct as by that date all of the arches were in place. July 1906 is more likely. The block yard picture is probably of similar date. ●

Ashover coach saved

Brian Dominic of the 16mm Narrow Gauge Modellers' Yahoo group reports that an Ashover Light Railway coach has been saved. After no less than 21 years of letter writing and negotiation, The third surviving Ashover Light Railway coach has now arrived at the Golden Valley Light Railway at the Midland Railway Centre.

Obtaining this coach was one of the aims of the Butterley Narrow Gauge Railway Association when it was formed. Negotiations continued over the years with a succession of site owners. Now the site is to be redeveloped for housing so the developer wanted to get rid of it.

It was successfully jacked up and craned on to a lorry in October. Hearts were in mouths as it was uncertain how robust the structure was. But it was robust enough to stand the move. It was moved on rail for the first time since the early 1950s later the same day on a pair of accommodation bogies.

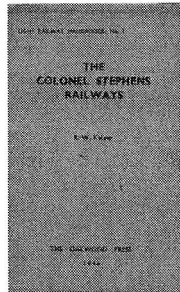
It now sits under cover in the new shed whilst decisions are made on its future. It is the best of the three survivors. The other two in Lincolnshire were chopped about before their recovery and restoration. This one still retains its original seats and bulkheads. ●

R W KIDNER

1914 - 2007

The death was announced in September of R W (Roger) Kidner, the well known railway historian and publisher. Mr. Kidner founded Oakwood Press in 1931 at

the age of 16 with schoolmate R.M. (Michael) Robbins, who remained involved until the 1950s. The output of Oakwood Press included some of the first books for railway enthusiasts among them the very first 'branch line history' - *The Lynton & Barnstaple Railway* by L.T. Catchpole, the surprising success of which stimulated the desire to publish books based on more of Roger's own interests in light railways, including those associated with Colonel Stephens, and narrow-gauge railways. The result was a publishing company famed for its coverage of the obscure corners of the railway network, although he was also particularly interested in the Southern Railway. Together with his wife Beryl, he ran the company for over 50 years. Despite this he found the time to research and write over 30 books himself. When he reached 70 in 1984 Kidner sold Oakwood Press to Jane Kennedy, under whose direction it flourishes today. Meanwhile he carried on in the background. He was especially generous in helping other authors, even when published by other companies, to the extent of allowing them to publish his photographs in return for an acknowledgment. Indeed, in 2004 he sent *The Colonel* a letter enclosing two of his photographs (published in No.77), replying to a query about Criggion Quarry. ● *Above: the cover of the second edition of Kidner's The Colonel Stephens Railways, published in 1946 at 2/-.*



SOCIETY NEWS

Members' Weekend at Bere Ferrers

BRUCE HUNT and NIGEL BIRD reveal details of our trip to the remains of the PD&SWJR and our AGM in 2008

Our Annual General Meetings have gradually evolved from ill-attended and reputedly boring meetings in London to enjoyable days out either on a working Colonel-related railway (for example last year's during the K&ESR Colonel Stephens weekend gala) or exploring the remains of a long closed member of the Salford Terrace empire

(the BP&GVR in 2006 and the WC&PR in 2005). This year, the evolution continues as we head to the west of England for a weekend of undiluted nostalgia.

How much further can we go to sugar the pill that is an AGM? If you haven't done so already, mark your diary and resolve to join us at Bere Ferrers next May.

The tentative programme follows.

FRIDAY 16th MAY 2008

19.30 Film show by the South West Film and TV Archive of footage never seen before of the PD&SWJR at Bere Ferrers Village Hall (open to the public)

SATURDAY 17th MAY

10.30: Morning coffee. Visitors' Centre at the Heritage Centre, Bere Ferrers Station and the signal box will be open. Opportunity to look around, operate the signal box and try your hand at driving a Hunslet diesel.

11.00: AGM

12.45: Buffet Lunch at the Heritage Centre

13.52: Tour of the line between Gunnislake and Kelly Bray (Callington). Train to Gunnislake over the famous Calstock Viaduct. Transport to view the remains of the line to Kelly Bray, taking in Lockett, Chilsworthy station remains, Latchley, Kit Hill incline and Phoenix Halt site. Return to Albaston to Calstock (down hill all the way) via the ECMR incline or transport to Calstock to view the viaduct, have a pint and wait for the walkers (pint for the walkers, too)

17.45: Return to Bere Ferrers by train from Calstock.

On return: Explore more of the Heritage Centre, view the model railway and chill out

Evening: Barbecue at the cattle dock at the Heritage Centre inside or out depending on weather, followed by another chance to see Friday night's film at a private viewing in the 1926 Gresley club coach

SUNDAY 18th MAY

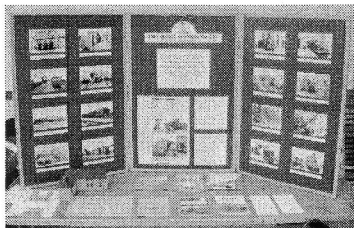
Morning: Opportunity to catch up on what you missed at the Heritage Centre. Guided walk at the Devon Great Consuls Mine and Railway

Accommodation can be booked on site at the Heritage Centre but is very limited. Phone Chris on 01822 840044. A wide range of accommodation is available in Plymouth with frequent trains to Bere Ferrers. The spring timetable will in the next issue of *The Colonel*, along with local accommodation and directions for those arriving by road. Meanwhile, visit www.tamarbelle.co.uk for more information about the site.

SOCIETY NEWS

The Colonel on Tour

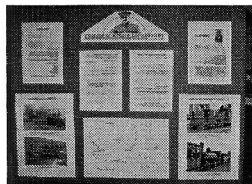
Bryan Marshall of Bangor, Co. Down, who some members will have met at Tenterden in May, is using the old Society display boards to publicise our activities in his part of the world - another example of following the Colonel's practice of reusing otherwise re-



dundant equipment. He reports that the boards, together with his Stephens

style layout, were exhibited at the Ulster Model railway Club's annual exhibition in September. He also took them south of the border for the South Dublin MRC exhibition at Blackrock College in October.

Meanwhile, **Kerry Bayliss** continues to work hard on the publicity front. To reduce transport costs he has produced another display panel which he took to the Association of Larger Scale Railway Modellers show at Pontefract in November - and to the Hull exhibition later the same month.



Energetic regular correspondent and **Alan Bone** reports that the Erith MRS has distributed our leaflets at shows from Ely to Romney Marsh. In

addition to regular shows in September and January, he is planning another one next year, at which one of our new stands will appear. The Erith MRS is holding its next show at Temple Hill CP School, St Edmunds Hill, Dartford on 26th and 27th January. ●

David Powell thanks all those who did renew their subscriptions promptly. In the true tradition of Col Stephens all your stamps are collected and recycled for charity. ●

The Colonel's Web

This is a new feature in which we publish extracts from some of the best 'threads' from our Yahoo discussion group. The first subject is locomotive liveries.

It seems to be an accepted fact that the Colonel's favourite colour for his locomotives was 'Oxford Blue'. Can I ask those who have modelled the various lines, what blues they have used? Does Great Eastern blue approximate? *Patrick Collins.*

The standard livery was described in R W Kidner's book on the Colonel Stephens railways (1938 edition) as dark blue with red lining and the name in yellow inside an oval panel bearing the name of the railway.

Albyn Austin.

The Colonel favoured blue engines but often accepted the livery the second-hand engines came with. Austen favoured Southern green with yellow lettering. KESR: Blue standard livery, but changed to green during WW1, phasing into Austen's preferred brighter green later. EKR: Black livery the engines arrived in, but No. 1 might have been blue, No 2 was probably in its maker's standard maroon, No. 4 kept its original ROD livery until paid for. Austen had overhauled locos painted green. S&MR: Ilfracombe goods and 0-6-2Ts definitely green (LSWR goods livery), *Hecate* possibly blue, but more likely green, *Morous* probably maroon at first. Terriers possibly green but maybe black (certainly later black for *Daphne*), Coal engines remained in LMS black livery until one was repainted Austen green, then all military green. WC&P: as Albyn says but I suspect that one or two engines were black for a time WSR: As Albyn says although I am tempted to say that the only policy here (Stephens was not really in charge till after 1920 when the money ran out) was to accept the delivery livery and then paint them black.

Brian Janes.

▶ Continued at the bottom of next page

SOCIETY NEWS

Last Train to Llanymynech on DVD

Thanks to member Mike Hughes, the Society has produced a short DVD of the last train to run on the Shropshire & Montgomeryshire Railway, before the demolition train came. The train was a SLS special on 20th March 1960. Mike Hughes filmed the special and our Membership Secretary, David Powell was on the train.

Having let slip that I was on the celebrated SLS run over the War Department's version of the S&M, Ross asked me for some memories of 20th March 1960. Well it was 47 years ago, and I was 16 at the time. So the honest truth is 'not a lot', even with the help of this evocative CD and a few small aged black and white photographs of my own. For a start, I cannot remember where we boarded the train. From the CD it does not appear to be Abbey station. My guess is that the oil terminal siding at the Abbey was already in the process of being connected to the BR's Severn Valley line, and the train started at the beginning of the truncated S&M some half a mile south of Abbey.

As for the trip, I recall most of my ride was spent on the balcony of one of the guards vans which top and tailed the train. Although, seeing the video I do recall travelling for part of the run in one of the coaches. I remember the stops at Hookagate exchange sidings, Kinnerley and Llanymynech and I have a photo of the shadow of the train looking down from what must have been the Melverley viaduct. So we must have explored the Criggion Branch which had closed the previous December. •

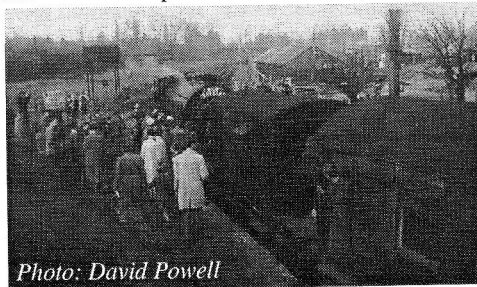
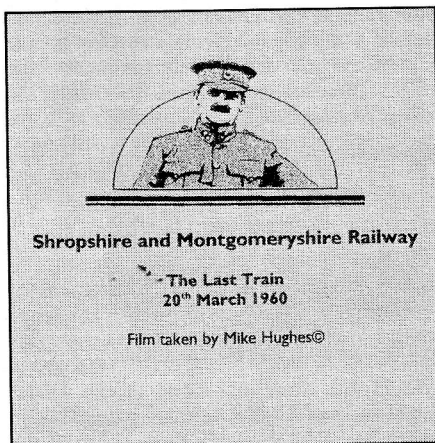


Photo: David Powell



Through the efforts of Philip Shaw and our archivist Stuart Marshall, this fascinating film is available as a DVD in limited numbers to Society members only. Copies are available from our Treasurer Nigel Bird (address on page 2). We are asking for a minimum donation of £3 donation to cover production costs. But, as Nigel says that it's "a great record of a sadly missed line and so well produced it's worth a fiver at least." Any proceeds will be allocated to our preservation donations fund. •

► *Continued from the previous page*

From the Colonel's Web

I used a Humbrol colour called "French Blue" for my KESR models, and they looked OK to me. For a more weathered and faded version of the blue, Steve Hannington I believe used matt RAF blue (No.96) and that looked very good.

Les Darbyshire.

The colours that spring to mind are dirt and rust ... but seriously Dulux used to do an Oxford Blue which may still be available. Whether it is the right colour is another matter. **Kerry Bayliss.** •

DISPATCHES

Letters to the Editor

COMPANY NOTICES

SNAILBEACH DISTRICT RAILWAYS COMPANY

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that the next Ordinary General MEETING of Shareholders of the above Company will be HELD at 26, Deakin Leas, TONBRIDGE, Kent, on MONDAY, the 1st day of October, 1951, at 11.0 a.m., for the purpose of receiving the Directors' Report and Statement of Accounts for the year to 31st December, 1950, and transacting the ordinary business of the Company.

By Order of the Board,

C. R. HEWITT, Secretary

77, Deakin Leas, Tonbridge, Kent.
14th September, 1951.

Snailbeach AGM in 1951

I wonder if this would help Paul Jackson's enquiry in *Colonel 88* concerning the receipt he had purchased for the Snailbeach District Railways marked "Paid 26-9-51". I mentioned in the Colonel Stephens discussion Group that I had seen a notice in the *Financial Times* around September 1951 about the Snailbeach. I have now found the cutting. It is not in very good nick, but I was only 15 when I cut it out and it has not seen the light of day for many years. I enclose it. *[reproduced and enlarged above].*

The address at the bottom is not Salford Terrace as I imagined, but CR Hewitt, Secretary, 77 Deakin Leas, Tonbridge Kent. It's dated 14th September 1951. Maybe it was CR Hewitt who had paid Mr Roberts for the rent of the engine shed?

Note that the meeting was to be held at 26 Deakin Leas, not 77.

I hope this may be of interest.

John Cant,
Hassocks

Ashover track recycled

A gentle ramble from Ashover through Fallgate and Milltown, past Overton Hall to the top of the hill overlooking the site of Salter Lane Halt in the valley below and the excellent Old Poets' Corner Hotel (formerly the Red Lion) on the opposite hillside, revealed an early example of recycling. A cattle grid in the access road leading from Salter Lane to Overton Hall and Greenend at SK347626 is made up of some 15 lengths of what was, presumably, Ashover Light Railway rail cut to fit as shown in the picture below.



Keith Vernon, Mansfield

REVIEWS

An Illustrated History of the Welsh Highland Railway. Peter Johnson. Hersham: Oxford Publishing, 2002, new impression 2006. Hardback. 292 x 216 mm, 128pp. Illus. £19.99. ISBN 978 0 86093 565 0

This splendid history of the WHR was published five years ago. It seems to have been deservedly popular because it was reprinted in 2004 followed by a new impression in 2006. A copy has just arrived on the editorial desk. Given the rapid progress in rebuilding



ing the WHR, which is due to reopen all the way to Portmadoc in 2009, this is as good a time as any to review it. Very similar in format to the same author's *An Illustrated History of the Festiniog Railway*, its title fairly describes the content. It is copiously illustrated, all in black and white, with photographs, maps, track layouts, drawings of rolling stock (including two pages devoted to *Russell*) and illustrations of tickets, receipts, timetables and other paperwork. Many of the illustrations are published for the first time. A coloured map from 1904 of the railways, built and proposed, in the area bounded by Portmadoc (as spelt then) in the south and Bangor in the north is reproduced on the endpapers.

The author describes with admirable clarity the complex history of the Welsh Highland and its associated railways. Chapters cover

the development of the route from 1863 to 1914, followed by three chapters covering the history of the WHR from 1914 to its demise in 1937. The last of these covers the period when Colonel Stephens and his staff were involved with the line. Two chapters cover the revival proposal and rebuilding the line whilst the final chapter covers the locomotives, rolling stock and infrastructure. The story ends in 2001. Maybe there will be a new edition once the entire line is reopened?

Much of the book is inevitably concerned with the lengthy and ultimately abortive efforts of the Portmadoc, Beddgelert & South Snowdon Railway to connect Portmadoc to Beddgelert, Caernarfon and Betws-y-coed which is explained succinctly, aided by a list of Parliamentary Powers. There is a good index and a bibliography. Like its companion volume on the Festiniog, this book is thoroughly recommended. RS

More Books Due

Nigel Bird reports that the Industrial Railway Society is reprinting, in small numbers, two long out-of-print books likely to be of interest to members; *The Snailbeach District Railways* and *The Shropshire & Montgomeryshire Railway*, both by Eric S. Tonks. It is believed that these will be straight reprints with no revision. But as Nigel remarked "There is nothing better on either line at present". Prices were not available as we go to press.

Still available

The splendid little biography of the Colonel *Colonel Stephens - a Celebration*, published earlier this year by the KESR, is still available at £4.50 including postage and packing in a card-backed envelope, from Nigel Bird Books (advert on page 6). Proceeds to the Society.

REVIEWS

The Bishops Castle Railway - A pictorial Presentation, by Ken Lucas. Shrewsbury: Bishops Castle Railway Society, 2007. 66pp, A4, £8.95. No ISBN.

The Bishops Castle is not strictly a Colonel Stephens line, as he decided not to buy this little railway, but it does seem to have found a home in the Colonel Stephens Society. After all, Bill Austen reported it as too run down and decrepit for the Colonel to purchase, and he let the opportunity pass. The Bishops Castle Railway Society, which runs the little railway museum in the town, has just published a book of photographs from the 800 odd that their archivist Ken Lucas has collected over the years, to raise funds for the museum. Most of the photos have never been published before, but one or two are familiar, where the subject was little photographed. Many are from the collections of the Casserleys, Carpenter and other similar photographers, but Ken has chosen many previously unpublished views. Others have been taken by local people of the railway and are unknown outside the society.

Elderly station mistress

The quality is a bit variable as some prints are copied Brownie Box camera snaps, but the content is fascinating. There are also reproduced in colour a couple of postcards of the railway. The format is a pictorial journey along the line from Bishops Castle, with plans of the route and all the station layouts. Ken is now one of very few people left alive who actually travelled on the line as a school boy. Many of the pictures are fascinating and some are charming. The view of the elderly station mistress at Eaton, Mrs Bason, passing a letter up to the driver of *Carlisle* is superb. There are some interesting photos of the demolition in progress, and a sad view at the end of the remains of *Carlisle* partially cut up at Craven Arms.

A real treat

Although I've collected photos of the

line for many years and been a member of the society for quite a few of them, many of the photos were new to me. I'm sure Ken still has enough good photos left to make a second album, if this one is a success. If you haven't got the John Scott Morgan history of the line, the Society also has that available.. Both books are a real treat and many members will have walked along the Onny trail from Stretford Bridge Junction which follows the track-bed for the first few miles on previous CS Society outings.

The book is A4 format, 66 pages long with the two coloured postcards plus loads of black and white photographs. There are one or two minor errors in the text, but it seems churlish to correct them here. Those who know the railway well will spot them, those who don't won't care!

Albyn Austin.

John Scott Morgan's history of the line, *The BCR - Portrait of a Country Railway*, similar size and format, is also available from the Society at £8.95. Post & Packing for two books is £1.50 and £2.50 for three. Cheques payable to the BCRS. Both titles are available from Mr. V Smith, Glebelands, Albury, Shrewsbury, SALOP, SY59 9AG •

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

Colonel Stephens is 'back in the spotlight' according to *Heritage Railway 104*. A two-page spread with several archive photos is the result, but sadly there is no reference to the Society that bears his name. One of the cited prompts for this spotlight is the new Hornby ex-**WCPR Terrier Portishead** in GWR colours, which is reviewed in several model railway magazines. The best is in *Model Rail 111*. But before you rush down to you local model shop (if you have one), read Les Darbyshire's review of the original Dapol version in *Colonels 16 and 17*. He dubbed it the '51st Terrier' for obvious reasons. Unfortunately Hornby has not taken the opportunity to upgrade the original tooling. Another **WCPR Terrier** appeared in *Heritage Railway 105*, photographed in 1938 by Brian Carpenter who provides some reminiscences of the line. **HFS** was said to have had few friends, but **CSS** member Tom Burnham has written about three; Henry Bates, chairman of the **ND&CJR** in *Tenterden Terrier No. 103, summer 2007* and Gilbert Szlumper of the **SR**, Jeremiah MacVeagh, director of many lines in the Stephens empire as well as a promoter of the abortive **Southern Heights Light Railway**, in the following issue. Not bad for someone who 'had few friends'. The summer issue has some lovely shots of the **Colonel Stephens Gala**, including Colin Shutt's famous replica Ford railmotor (which, it is rumoured, may appear at Bere Ferrers next May for our Members' weekend). A further cause given for the spotlight is the galloping progress on the reconstruction of the **WHR**. Many magazines report that reconstruction had reached Beddgelert. The December *Railway Magazine* undoubtedly has the best picture - of vintage **FR 0-4-0ST Palmerston** on a route

learning special in Goat cutting above Beddgelert. In the same issue there is a shot of the state of construction at the station in September. Preparation work had also begun for the trackbed due to run through the streets of Porthmadog. Elsewhere in this issue we record a discussion on locomotive liveries. Interesting evidence appears in the October *Back Track*. Colour photos from the Jarvis brothers show **EKR** Hudswell, Clarke 0-6-0ST No.2 (blue) and ex-**SER 0-6-0** ('Austen' green), both pictured in April 1939 and **KESR** Terrier No. 3 (SR green), photographed in September 1947. Looking ahead, Nigel Bird reports that the next issue of *Steam Railway (No.344)* due out on 28th December will include an article by member and **KESR** driver Monty Baker on his exploits in 'Oh, Mr. Porter!' **RW Kidner** sadly died in September. A full obituary by Peter Johnson appeared in *Guardian Unlimited*. Another is on the Oakwood Press website www.oakwoodpress.co.uk Longer, more personal, appreciations of his life were published in the *Festiniog Railway Heritage Group Journal 91* (Autumn 2007), including two of **RWK's** photos. In the same issue is an article entitled 'The Letter that Began it All'. **JIC** Boyd wrote in 1949 to the *Stephenson Locomotive Society* arguably setting in motion the preservation of the then derelict **Festiniog Railway**.

And finally, this is the season of Santa Specials on many heritage lines, including those associated with the Colonel. A magazine making its first appearance in this column is *Short Axle*, the organ of the West Lancashire Light Railway. A special issue on Santa Trains, published in December 2006, recounts the history of this money spinner. As far as the UK is concerned, the honour for operating the first holiday specials hovers between the Bluebell and the **KESR**.

What better place to wish you all season's greetings and a steamy new year! •

Jackson's Jottings

SLOW PROGRESS IN SCOTLAND

CHRIS JACKSON continues his trawl through the Railway Gazette for details of light railway projects

Despite the problems of funding and competition referred to previously, some undaunted promoters continued to push ahead with their pet projects. One that came very close to succeeding was the Cromarty & Dingwall Light Railway on the 'Black Isle' north of Inverness.

January 13 1911 –

The Cromarty & Dingwall Light Railway

Subject to the subscription of £5,000 towards the Cromarty & Dingwall Light Railway, preliminary arrangements for the construction of the line have now been completed, and the Highland Railway has agreed to work the line for 50 years. The Cromarty Corporation has already agreed to subscribe £5,000 and the County Council of Ross and Cromarty is empowered to subscribe £10,000. The Treasury has agreed, subject to certain conditions, to make an advance of £32,000 as a free grant, and to advance £16,000 by way of loan. Apart from the loans, subscriptions and advances by public bodies, the authorised share and loan capital is £28,000.

The railway was first promoted in December, 1896, but the original scheme was modified and, as modified, was not authorised until 1902. By a subsequent Order of 1907 certain extensions of time were granted and the approach to Cromarty was altered. As at present authorised, the light railways are 18¾ miles in length (single line standard-gauge). They include a short line of about ¼ mile in length making a connection with the Highland Railway, near Dingwall Station, but the main part of the scheme runs from Conon Station (about two miles south of Dingwall) on the Highland Railway, at the head of Cromarty Firth, to Cromarty and thence to Cromarty Harbour. ●

Deadlines for 2008

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

90: Spring 2008: 15th February

91: Summer 2008: 15th May

92: Autumn 2008: 15th August

93: Winter 2008: 15th November

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



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 www.steamandthings.com

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