



THE COLONEL

Number 94

Spring 2009

Snailbeach
District
Rly.

Keep off the
Railway Property.

Trespassers will
be prosecuted.

By Order.

R.F. Bowmaker.
Secretary.

20/-s Reward for
information re
damage to this
NOTICE.

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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 to our Membership Secretary (address above).

An Index to *The Colonel* issues 1-93 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.colonelstephensociety.co.uk

Editorial: Should we get out more?

The news that the reconstruction of the Welsh Highland Railway is nearing completion and that it should be possible later this year to complete a 40 mile narrow gauge steam-hauled rail journey from Caernarfon to Blaenau Ffestiniog via Porthmadog by the end of the year has prompted me to reflect that there probably has been no better time to travel on some at least of the Colonel's lines. In the case of the Festiniog and the Welsh Highland he did not engineer the lines of course, but he facilitated the re-opening of the WHR and some of his characteristic frugal infrastructure survives or is being reconstructed and much of the motive power and rolling stock in use in his time can be experienced.

As we describe in our feature 'Support your local line', the Colonel's legacy lives on in many other parts of the country. The

Kent & East Sussex is thriving with two Terriers and a 'P' class in traffic, together with a 'Birdcage' and vintage stock of four and six wheel carriages. Bodiam and Northiam stations retain much of their light railway character. Developments at the Robertsbridge end of the line are well worth inspecting, as is the East Kent at Shephersdwell. Meanwhile there are signs of resurrection at Pontyates on the BP&GVR as well as at Ashover. As we report elsewhere there are even stirrings at Chalder on the erstwhile Selsey Tramway. So this is as good a time as any to get out, support your local, or not so local, Colonel Stephens line, soak in the atmosphere and help ensure their survival in these hard economic times.

Ross Shimmon

Front cover: Snailbeach public notice not to trespass. courtesy of the Narrow Gauge Railway Museum, Tywyn

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Members' Day 2009

Our annual members' event is centred this year on Shrewsbury, one time terminus of the legendary Shropshire & Montgomeryshire. Our AGM will take place there on Saturday 16th May, starting at 11.30, followed immediately by lunch. Then the real fun begins with a coach tour of the remains of the S&MR. Former railwaymen belonging to the Shrewsbury Railway Historical Trust will join us on this trip, so will have a chance to hear their reminiscences.

The next day we embark on another tour - this time of the remains of the Snailbeach District Railways, include a descent into the mine itself - if you wish.

Full details appear on pages 11, 12 and 13. Don't miss the highlight of the year!

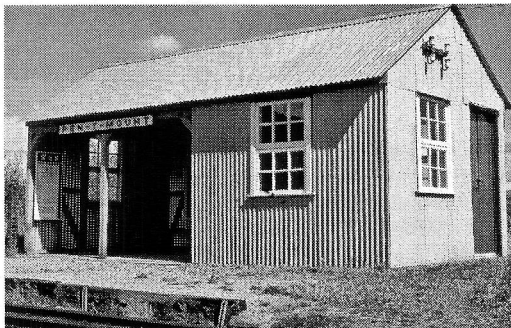
THE COLONEL'S LEGACY IN WALES

To mark the imminent re-opening of the WHR, JOHN KEYLOCK recounts his influence on the Festiniog and Welsh Highland Railways

It is eighty years since Colonel Stephens was appointed civil engineer and locomotive superintendent to the Festiniog and Welsh Highland railways, but because the WHR had only just been born, his influence on that was the greater. It is credit to his influence that examples of items he provided on and for the WHR have been restored - or planned to be - or replicated.

Corrugated iron

It was not only on the WHR that Stephens used corrugated iron on a timber frame and concrete base for station buildings because it was cheap and quick in assembly. On the WHR the two best-known such



Speeders

Perhaps not so well-known is the Colonel's acquisition of at least two petrol-engined gangers' trolleys. 970 of these machines had been manufactured by Fairbanks, Morse & Co in America for use in France on the American Expeditionary Forces 60cm railways during WW1. They were known as 'speeders'. Drive was direct to one of the axles - so, there being no clutch, they were push started in the required direction of travel. They were fitted with a hand-brake - seen protruding through the top platform in both photographs (p14) - to slow down-but coming to a stand would seem to have been a hazardous exercise. One such trolley survived amongst the FR stock at Boston Lodge and in the mid-1950s preservationists revitalised it as the unsuccessful *Busta*. However, in more recent and enlightened times, the Boston Lodge carriage and wagon department has - using some original components- reinstated it to look like the original, albeit with a rather



buildings were at Beddgelert and Nantmor. On Pen-y-Mount platform - long time terminus of WHR (Porthmadog) operations - is a faithful mirror-image replica of the station originally at Nantmor. Even today's waiting shelters on a very different Beddgelert platform reflect, in their style, the Colonel's enduring influence; cheap, by today's standards - and functional.

more sophisticated drive and control mechanism.

Toast racks

Stephens purchased open bogie wagons for the substantial coal traffic between Dinas and Beddgelert. These were of Hudson manufacture-which, like the Speeders, came as war surplus. Several examples of identical wagons are still in use at Gelert's Farm. With an ever-open eye for a bargain, he purchased - for the FR - in 1923 six open bogie carriages for £155 each. They were new from Hudson, to a WD design, having similar running gear and underframes to the bogie wagons and, inevitably, known as 'toast racks'. At least one found use on the WHR and one survivor, No. 42, has been faithfully rebuilt at Gelert's Farm and finds use in the WHR(P) rake of heritage coaches.

Baldwin 590

However, the Colonel's most famous acquisition was Baldwin No.590 as a back-up for *Russell* and *Moel Tryfan*, the only locomotives inherited from the North Wales Narrow Gauge Railway. 590 did not survive the demolition of the WHR and most of its stock, but the Imperial War Museum had an identical loco. This is currently in the custody of WHR(P) at Gelert's Farm and, as funds allow, will be restored in the guise of 590, to run on the new WHR. The Baldwin and the Speeder may be regarded as part of America's contribution to helping Lloyd George win WW1.

The one that got away

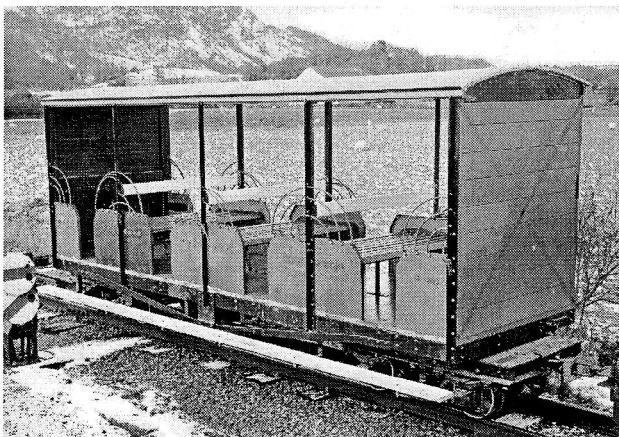
In 1928/9, the revolutionary Kerr Stuart diesel locomotive was trialled on both the WHR and FR but, contrary to the Colonel's best hopes, the manufacturer didn't leave it behind as a gift! Having been repatriated, No. 4415 is back at Porthmadog. Recently the writer learned that £32,000 was still needed for its restoration. Eighty years on, money values are rather different. ●

Colonel Tracks On Show

Andrew Hastings reports that his 00 gauge layout *High Missenden* will appear at Stowmarket on Sunday 26th April, at Ely on Saturday 9th May and the Farmland Museum and Denny Abby's 'World in Miniature' day on Sunday 28th July. We hope to include an illustrated article on this KESR-style layout in a future issue.

Alan Bone of the Erith Model Railway Society tells us that the Society's next show will be held at the Royal Artillery Museum, Woolwich Arsenal, London SE18 6ST on Saturday and Sunday 6th & 7th June, opening at 10.30 am each day.

The annual RVR modellers' weekend will be held at Robertsbridge station on 9th & 10th May - a good opportunity to see what's going on there. ●



Illustrations:

Page 4, lower: *Nantmor station, 1926*

Photo: Ken Farrell

Page 4, upper: *Mirror image of Nantmor at Pen-y-Mount, Welsh Highland Heritage Railway, Porthmadog.*

Photo: David Allan

This page: Toastrack carriage No.42 on the WHHR, Porthmadog.

Photo: David Allan

More WHR illustrations on pages 14 & 15

HEAVY METAL IN KENT

TREVOR WRIGHT reports on railborne artillery on the Colonel's railways in Kent from 1940 to 1944

In 1939, the War Office decided to refurbish and reinstate the remaining rail guns from World War I. The Super-heavy Railway Artillery School was formed in April 1940 by Majors EE Gee and SM Cleeve at Catterick Garrison, north Yorkshire.

Deployment

September 1940 saw deployment from Lincolnshire to Kent of two 9.2 inch Mark 13 rail guns, weighing some 86 tons each. Initially located in the Folkestone area, by February 1941 they were on the KESR.

Forming No. 4 (Suffolk) Super Heavy Railway Battery, Royal Artillery, *EE Gee* was based at Rolvenden, while *SM Cleeve* was located at Wittersham Road. During a practice shoot in June 1941, the Wittersham Road weapon was derailed, but was recovered and fired again within 48 hours. Following abandonment of plans to move them on to the Continent, both guns were "stood down" in March 1944.

No. 8 Super Heavy Regiment was, prior to September 1940, equipped with two 12" Howitzers named *Cleo* and *Sheba*. They were deployed to Shepherdswell on September 9th, *Sheba* being routed via Eythorne.

East Kent Railway

The 12th Super Heavy Regiment was sent to the East Kent Railway, with batteries at Poulton Farm, Ash and Staple Halt. These two regiments, together with the 13th Super Heavy Regiment, Canadian manned, which was based at Ruckinge, Grove Ferry and Canterbury East station, were amalgamated into a new No.2 Super Heavy Railway Regiment in 1940, headquartered at Bishopsbourne on the Elham Valley line.

Together with most of the trackage between Ashford, Dover, Thanet and Faversham and specifically between Canterbury East and Wingham (via

Shepherdswell?), an armoured train patrolled between June 1940 and 1943. Designated *Armoured Train E*, from a pool annotated *A* to *M*, the train was armed with a Hotchkiss six pounder which had its barrel length cut to 5 feet to keep within gauge limits, together with two .55" Boys anti-tank guns and six Bren guns for defence.

Locomotives

The usual locomotive rostered for this work was LNER No. 7244 of 1906. Loaned to the War Office from June 1940 to July 1943, these "borrowed" locomotives were Worsdell 2-4-2 tank engines, ex-Great Eastern Railway, classified by the LNER as F4. Other locomotives known to have been used in connection with these guns are GWR Dean Goods 0-6-0s, GWR Nos. 2531, 2576 and 2540 numbered as WD 195, 196 and 197, respectively. All were based on the KESR.

Range

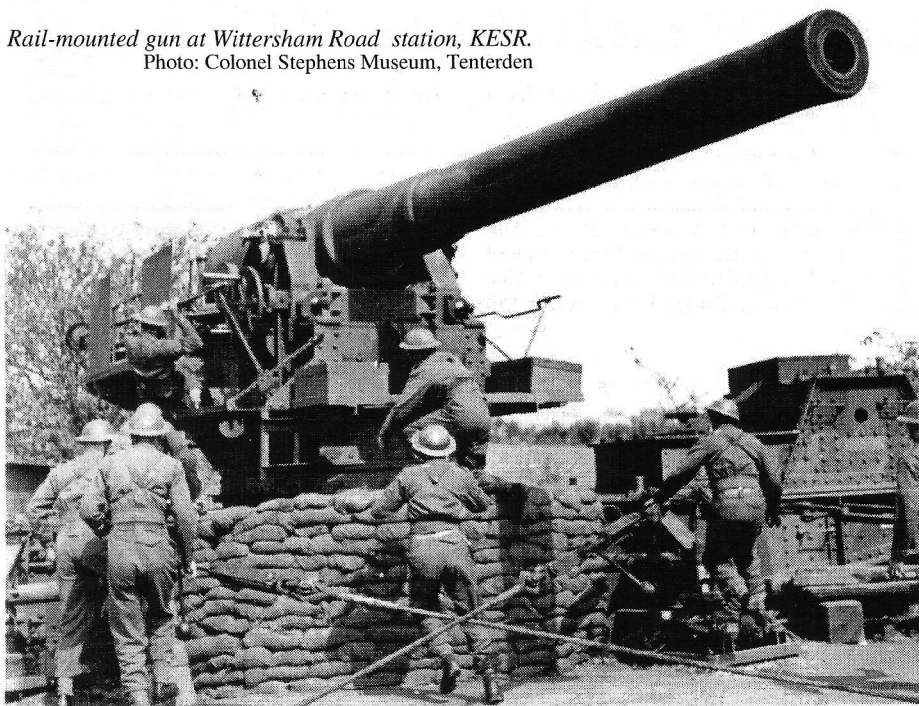
As to the guns, the 9.2" pieces had a range of 26,000 yards and a 360° traverse, but needed "securing to the floor" if at 90° to the track! Shell weight was in excess of 300lbs (or 150 kg).

Camouflage

The guns were camouflaged with netting over steel hoops. There were some 120 men per battery, 22 being needed to attend the gun. The support train consisted of ammunition wagons, workshops, stores and spares vans and a mess van for cooking as well as a food stores van. Accommodation for officers was provided by ex-Southern Railway camping coaches. The gunners and engineers had converted continental goods vans, some 16-18 per gun. They were self-contained, housing 8 men each. Maintenance of the equipment was the responsibility of the Royal Engineers from, one assumes, railway squadrons. ●

Rail-mounted gun at Wittersham Road station, KESR.

Photo: Colonel Stephens Museum, Tenterden



Postscript

Ray Flower, who was apprenticed to the East Kent Railway in 1939, recalled in articles in *East Kent Railway News* the arrival of the army on the line. The following was extracted from them: "The army set up a camp of temporary billets in the orchard at Shepherdswell station. Between the platelayers' hut and the north bank the railway lines were chaired instead of dogged. Sleepers were reinforced on a concrete bed and then a 12" Howitzer railway mounted gun was put in place. Similar guns were put on the goods line at Shepherdswell main line station, Eythorne and Staple. I was present when the gun on the EKR was test fired twice. On a regular basis we would hear machine gun fire while we were working. We would go outside and watch a dog fight. If we saw a plane or planes come down, we would go and collect souvenirs after we had finished work". ●

Sources

- Balfour, G. *The Armoured Train*. Batsford, 1980
 Hart, Brian. *The Elham Valley Line*. Wild Swan, 1984. pp 71-77.
 Gee, Ted. *Weald Artillery. The Tenterden Terrier* 39, Spring 1986 pp 27-30
 Barnard, D B [letter]. *The Tenterden Terrier* 41, Winter 1986
 Johnson, Norman. *The Railways of Martin Mill, part 2: the Martin Mill Military Railway. The Tenterden Terrier* 57, Spring 1992, pp 44-48.

Don't forget to complete and return the questionnaire about future Members' Days, enclosed with this issue.

LIGHT RAILWAYS IN THE FIFTIES - PART 2

JOHN CANT *continues his recollections of travelling on some light railways still running in the 1950s*

During 1951/2 friends and I made several visits to the Elsenham and Thaxted Light Railway. This charming line, with a J69/1 or J68 and ex-GER corridor coaches ran through very rural areas of farmland, terminating on the other side of the valley to Thaxted itself. Sometimes we would walk into Thaxted, or ask the train to stop at Cutlers Green Halt, which had an old coach body as a waiting area. It could only be accessed by a footpath. From there we would walk along the track to Thaxted Station for the train back to Elsenham. By late 1951 I was working on the railway at Norwood Junction and I took Clive Groome (later to become the well-known Nine Elms engineman) to the Elsenham and Thaxted and he fell in love with the line.

We also visited on only one occasion the Mid Suffolk Light Railway. I cannot remember too much about this line except that we had an ex GER 0-6-0 tender engine and suburban coaches so it must have been just before closure. The journey took ages as it kept stopping for crossing gates and shunting at several stations; no wonder there were no other passengers.

A Glimpse of the S&M

Back to June 1951, I had a week working on the Talylyn, relaying track at Brynglas whilst staying at a youth hostel near Towyn. *Dolgoch* was the only working loco and the original stock just about provided a service under the guidance of LTC Rolt. The journey to Towyn was made overnight from Euston to Crewe, Crewe to Welshpool via Oswestry, Welshpool to Machynlleth, and Machynlleth to Towyn. Between Oswestry and Welshpool I looked out for and, in the early light saw, the junction of the Shropshire and Montgomeryshire at Llanymynech. On the return journey

on the Cambrian Coast Express I could see Shrewsbury Abbey Station with the yard full of wagons. Unfortunately I was never to visit or travel on any of the S&MR.

Colne Valley

The Colne Valley Light Railway was another line, travelling from Liverpool Street to Audley End, Audley End to Bartlow, and Bartlow to Haverhill, where we had a walk round in the town and had a pint in a pub whose surname over the door was the same as mine, but no relation. Refreshed, we travelled on to Marks Tey via the Colne Valley but I am afraid I cannot remember more.

One last light railway on the east side of England was the Grimsby and Immingham Light Railway with again only one visit, but a contrast to the others with its single deck electric tramcars, part street running, part reserved track through town and industrial areas. Most important of all it carried passengers other than enthusiasts.

Of course all these visits often included other branch lines and through routes that have since closed, for example the Midland & Great Northern lines in Cambridgeshire and Norfolk; Braintree to Bishops Stortford, and the Brightlingsea branch to name two.

In 1953 it was my turn to do national service, so visits were curtailed for a while. But on some leave in June/July 1954 my friend Ted Crawforth (who was also at Norwood Junction and later transferred as a fireman to Exmouth Junction) arranged for us to make Brentor a base for visits to lines in Devon and Cornwall. Ted was the son of Mr W.E.Crawforth, a guard at Wallington and secretary of the "Southern Counties Touring Society" who many of you will remember arranged wonderful tours of trolleybus tram systems and even better rail tours. His best achievement, I think, was to

talk London Transport into allowing a steam hauled rail tour which included the Inner Circle Line. Steam was a common sight on the northern section between Paddington and Smithfield Sidings. But I believe that this was the only steam passenger train since electrification to go round via Victoria.

Callington

On the 30th June 1954 we travelled from Brentor to Bere Alston, caught the 10.50 am from Bere Alston to Callington with class O2 0-4-4T No. 30236 and two coaches. I was surprised how open the countryside had become after Gunnislake. On the return at 1pm from Callington we attached four vans at Gunnislake and at Calstock we attached another class O2, No. 30192, on the front, arriving at Bere Alston at 1.42pm. Leaving there, we went to Plymouth Friary and returned to Brentor up the main line.

On the 1st July 1954 we travelled from Brentor to Yeoford, Yeoford to Barnstaple Junction, and Barnstaple Junction to Torrington for another of the lines the Colonel had involvement with.

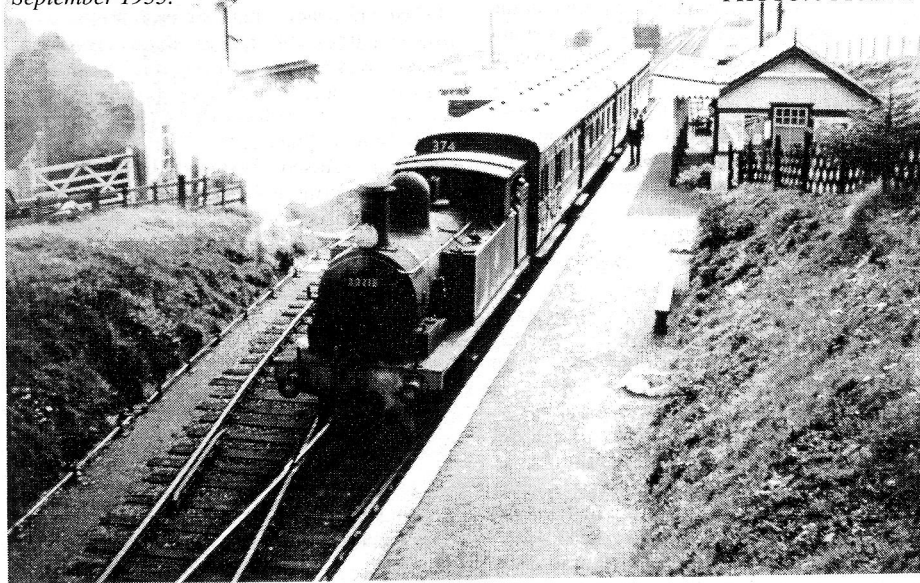
North Devon & Cornwall

Leaving Torrington at 3.55pm for Halwill with Ivatt class 2 No. 41298 and one coach on this very rural light railway, at Hatherleigh we attached four loaded cattle vans for onward shipment to somewhere, but this meant a bit of shunting en route. We arrived at Halwill at 5.21pm returning via Halwill to Launceston, Launceston to Okehampton, and Okehampton to Brentor.

Most other lines in Devon and Cornwall were covered on this and subsequent visits, but we had just lost out on the Princetown Branch and the Yealmpton Branch had closed earlier. The Culm Valley must be mentioned from Tiverton Junction to Hemyock, with its gas-lit coach which I understood was used because the curves and stops for crossings meant that the train never went fast enough to charge the batteries on an electrically lit coach. This line seemed to go along the side of farm yards, etc., but it was the milk depot at Hemyock that had kept the line open. ●

Ex-LSWR O2 class 0-4-4T No. 30216 calling at Luckett, PDSWJR, with a Callington train, September 1955.

PHOTO: J M Jarvis



WHERE WAS HFS ON CENSUS NIGHT?

PHILP SHAW *has been searching the 1911 census data*

The 1911 census (or most of it) has been made available on the internet two years earlier than the normal 100 year period of secrecy. The census is fully indexed and I have searched for Stephens and the two key members of the Salford Terrace staff, William Henry Austen and James Arthur Iggulden.

There is a major surprise; Stephens is probably not there! The most likely explanation is that on census night, Sunday 2nd April 1911, he was away at army camp, as a list of army personnel in the census is not available until April, when I will search again. However, it is also possible that there is a serious transcription error in the name index, combined with him being at a totally unknown address, which has made it impossible for me to identify him. It is also just possible that he was staying on railway business in one of a few other locations around the country that still have to be published or, finally, that I have made a mistake!

Ashby House

Anyway, some useful information has come to light. In the 1901 census, Stephens was shown as being a boarder at Ashby House, Priory Road, Tonbridge (due to a transcription error he is recorded as Henry F Stephens). The head of the household was Charles Standen, a timber merchant traveller, his wife Mercie and their three children, Ellen, Henry and Alice. In 1911, Charles and Mercie Standen were still there with daughter Alice, and there were also three boarders, but not Stephens. As far as we know, Stephens still maintained a room at Ashby House for the rest of his life, but as time went on, he probably used it less frequently. Ashby House was demolished many years ago. The family home at 9, Hammersmith Terrace, Hammersmith, was occupied in 1911 by his widowed mother,

Rebekah Clara Stephens and a housekeeper. The house is still in private occupation.

WH Austen

The location of Austen and Iggulden in 1911 has been much more straightforward. William Henry Austen (aged 32), his wife Fanny (aged 31) and their two children William Holman (aged 8) and Ena (aged 2) were resident at 115 Lavender Hill, Tonbridge. This is a turning off Priory Road and close to the Salford Terrace offices. William Holman Austen joined the Salford Terrace staff in 1932 and the artefacts donated by him formed the nucleus of the Colonel Stephens Museum collection at Tenterden. Ena Austen was also interviewed by us before she died. Their father was, of course, the Colonel's right hand engineering man.

Arthur Iggulden

The Iggulden family lived at 46 Vale Road, Tonbridge. Alfred James Iggulden (aged 45), a butcher, was head of the household, his wife Eveline Jane (aged 39) and two children Winnifred Doris (aged 13) and James Arthur (aged 11). It was James (always known as Arthur) who joined the Salford Terrace staff when he left school and became accountant and secretary to the engineering practice. Arthur Iggulden was interviewed extensively by us and several railway artefacts were donated by him to the museum and by his son Michael.

Check for yourself

Readers may like to check for themselves on the internet if I have missed a trick in not spotting Stephens. Another mystery yet to be solved! ●

**The census website is:
www.1911census.co.uk**

SOCIETY NEWS

AGM

The 22nd Annual General meeting of the Colonel Stephens Society will be held at 11.30 on Saturday 16th May 2009 at the Shropshire Wildlife Trust, 193 Abbey Foregate, Shrewsbury SY2 6AH.

AGENDA

1. Welcome from the chairman and introductions
2. Apologies for absence
3. Report of the last AGM
4. Matters arising
5. Officers' reports:
 - Chairman
 - Secretary & Publicity Officer
 - Treasurer
 - Membership Secretary
 - Archivist
 - Editor
6. Website: report on progress
7. Election of officers for 2009/10
8. Subscriptions for 2009/10
9. Date and venue of next AGM
10. Any other business

The meeting will be followed by lunch at 12.30 in the same venue.

Secretary & PO needed

Nominations for all the officer posts listed in the agenda above are invited. All the current officers have said that they are willing to stand for a further term - **EXCEPT the Secretary and Publicity Officer, Guy Hardy.** Unfortunately, Guy feels that he is unable to contribute effectively to the committee's work because of problems with his complicated house move. We do hope that a member will be able to take on this, not too arduous, role. Nominations for all posts should be sent to Les Darbyshire whose address is on page 2.



VOLUNTEERS are required to help organise the next two Society events.

BP&GVR Centenary

It is hoped that we can celebrate the centenary this year of the introduction, by Colonel Stephens, of passenger services on the Burry Port & Gwendraeth Valley Railway. The idea is to visit the site of the BPGVR Pontyates station in August by which time the Gwendraeth Valley Railway Society will have reinstated the platform and a length of track. (See the news item on page 20). We need a volunteer to co-ordinate the arrangements.

AGM and Members' Days

The date and venue for next year's AGM and Members' Days have not yet been decided. The East Kent Railway and the Derwent Valley Railway have both been aired as possibilities. We need someone to step forward with firm proposals and an offer to help arrange the event.

If you would like to help fix these thoroughly enjoyable events, please contact our chairman, whose address is on page 2.

MEMBERS' WEEKEND

Continuing our recent very enjoyable tradition of surrounding our necessary, but otherwise unenticing annual general meeting, with an opportunity to explore one (or in this case two) of the Colonel's lines, we are meeting in Shrewsbury on Saturday and Sunday 16th and 17th May. The timetable appears on the opposite page.

Shropshire & Montgomeryshire

Saturday provides opportunities to explore the site of the Shrewsbury Abbey terminus of the Shropshire & Montgomeryshire Railway, and, it is hoped, the site of the planned visitor centre. The AGM, followed by lunch, will be at the Shropshire Wildlife Trust nearby. After lunch we take a coach tour of the remains of the S&M. Members of the Shrewsbury Railway Heritage Trust will join us for this tour. We can discuss with them their plans for the visitor centre and their other work such as the oral history project which aims to record the reminiscences of railway employees in the Shrewsbury area.

Snailbeach District Railways

The following day there will be a coach tour of the remains of the Snailbeach District Railways at Pontesbury and Snailbeach. A tour of the mine at Snailbeach has been arranged. This will take about 1½ hours and will cost £5. Please bring Wellington boots and torches - hard hats will be provided. Lunch has been booked at the Stiperstones Inn for 12.45. The coach leaves promptly at 14.00 to return to Shrewsbury. These timings are critical. We will have to pay more for the coach hire if it is late back in the depot.

PLEASE NOTE: If you don't want to go underground you need to let Stuart Marshall know by mid-April by telephone (01799 500528) or email: stuart.j.marshall@ntlworld.com

There is an optional tour of the surface buildings only for £3.

Accommodation

Members are, of course, responsible for making their own arrangements for accommodation in the Shrewsbury area for however many nights they will need (and, of course for paying for it!). Kerry Bayliss reports that he has booked in at the Bayston Hill Travelodge for the Saturday night for £32 for two people. www.travelodge.co.uk/bayston-hill or 01743 874256.

The lunch immediately after the AGM will be paid for by the Society. Voluntary contributions will be sought during the coach journeys to pay for the coach hire. As in recent years, there may also be raffles with mouth-watering prizes to help towards these costs. Lunch is booked at the Stiperstones Inn www.stiperstonesinn.co.uk The cost will be the responsibility of members.

Goodies

We hope to have available during the weekend the chic Society badges, membership leaflets, the 'Fascinating Facts' leaflet, some posters, the last remaining copies of 'The Colonel's Guide' and, possibly, some Cordex binders to keep your copies in pristine condition. On previous occasions some members have brought along examples of their modelling activities. We would be delighted to see your efforts, especially if they have an SMR or SDR connections. But remember, we have no suitable insurance to cover any loss or damage, so it's your responsibility!

Albyn Austin writes:

On the Friday 15th May, I am hoping to have a little walk along the top end of the Cleobury Mortimer and Ditton Priors route, which is a permissive footpath; the Evans Way. I am planning to have lunch at the Boyne Arms at Burwarton SO 615 852, on the B4364 to Bridgnorth, and leave about 2pm for Cleobury North to have a walk on the track bed. If anybody else wishes to join in, that would be pleasant. ●

MEMBERS' WEEKEND

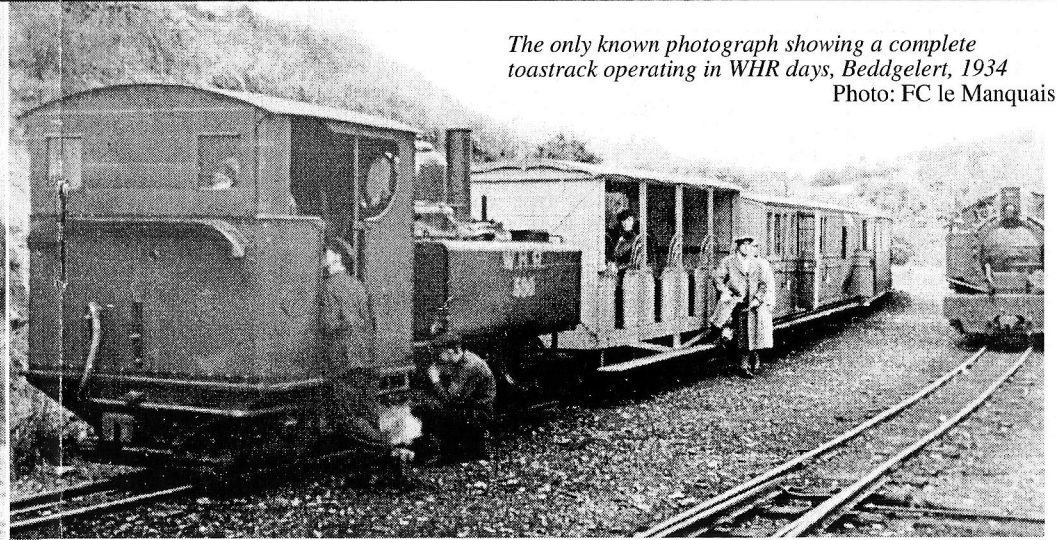
Saturday 16 th MAY	Activity	Location
11:00	Arrive Shrewsbury <i>Members arriving by train can be met if they wish. Contact Stuart Marshall on 01799 500528 or email: Stuart.j.marshal@ntlworld.com</i>	Shropshire Wildlife Trust 193 Abbey Foregate Shrewsbury SY2 6AH Close to the car park at Abbey Foregate [Parking charge £2 for the day]
11:30 to 12:30	AGM	Shropshire Wildlife Trust
12:30 to 13:30	Lunch	Shropshire Wildlife Trust
14:00	Start of tour of the remains of The Shropshire and Montgomeryshire Railway	
18:00	Arrive back	Abbey Foregate car park
Sunday 17th MAY		
9:30	Meet at Abbey Foregate car park for coach to Snailbeach	Abbey Foregate Car park
10:00	Stop to look at the remains of the loading dock	Pontesbury
10:30	Start of Mine Tour about 1½ hours long. <i>Please note there is a charge of £5 per person for the guided tour, which will go underground to some of the old mine workings after going round the surface building. Wellington boots and torches will be required. Hard hats provided.</i>	Snailbeach
12:30	Return to coach for drive to the Stiperstones Inn	
12:45	Lunch	Stiperstones Inn
14:00	Coach leaves for Shrewsbury	Stiperstones Inn

A WELSH HIGHLAND GALLERY

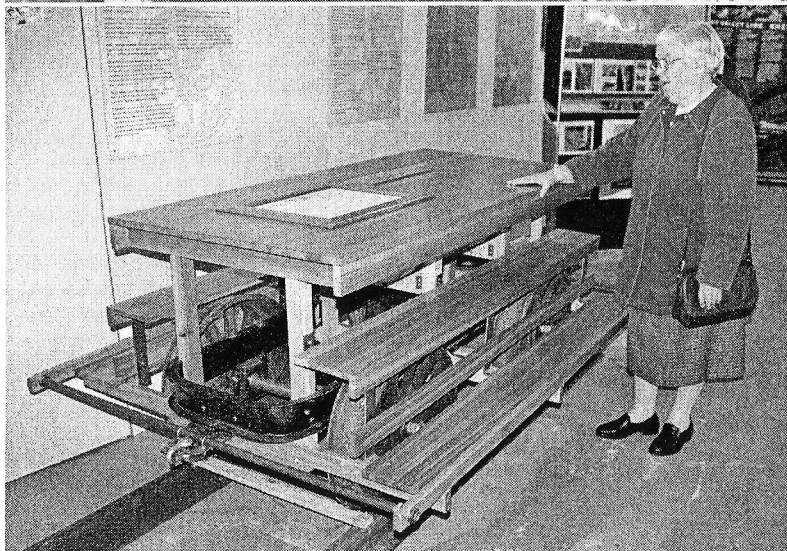
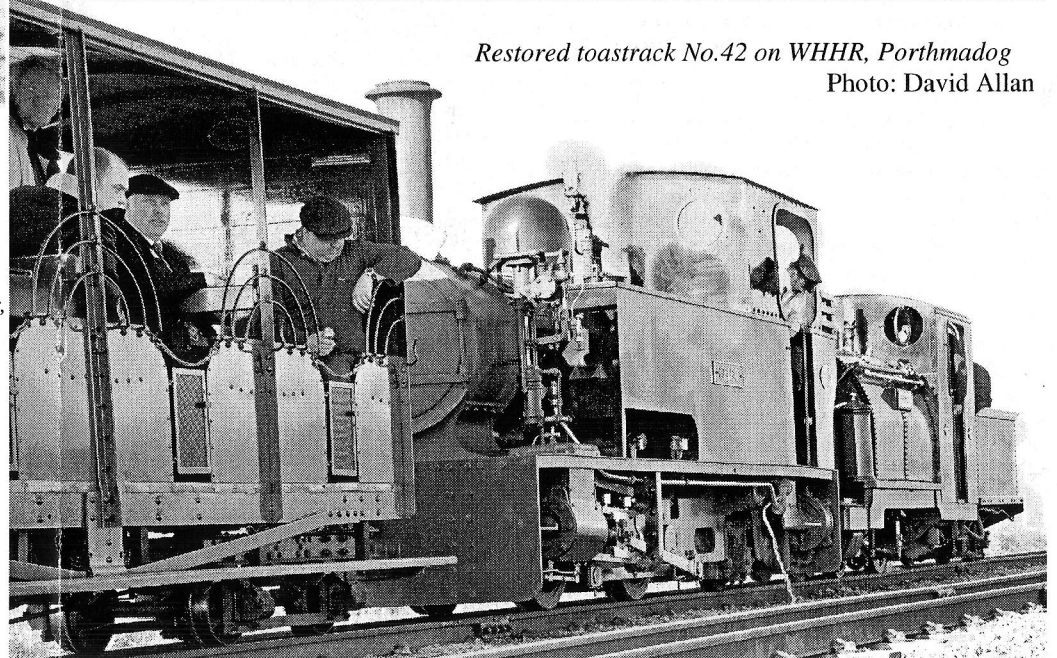
Morse gangers' trolley at Nantmor, mid-1930s
Photo: Ellen Jones Family Collection



The only known photograph showing a complete toastrack operating in WHR days, Beddgelert, 1934
Photo: FC le Manquais



Restored toastrack No.42 on WHHR, Porthmadog
Photo: David Allan



◀ *Ellen Jones, some three generations later, with replica gangers' trolley.*

Photo:
David Allan

“SUPPORT YOUR LOCAL LINE”

The Editor offers a rough guide to the Colonel's legacy in the shape of revived lines and surviving artefacts

This was the slogan the Colonel used on his railway timetables and other publicity material, frequently supplemented by *travel in safety across country away from the dusty and crowded roads, seeing beautiful scenery not visible from the highway, using home-produced coal instead of imported oil.* Surprisingly, given that most of the lines were lightly engineered and built in sparsely populated areas generating relatively little traffic, his legacy lives on in many parts of the country. Thanks to the hard work of dedicated enthusiasts there is much to see up and down the country. So, why not resolve to 'support your local (or indeed not so local) Colonel Stephens line' this year, using this rough guide to what's to be seen.

KENT & EAST SUSSEX RAILWAY

The KESR is a Mecca for Colonel Stephens addicts. The last section of line closed to freight traffic in 1961. But preservationists have gradually re-opened the line from Tenterden to Bodiam, just over 10 miles. Although Tenterden station building is immediately recognisable from photographs taken over the last hundred years, much of the rest of the site has been radically changed to meet the needs of both visitors and the operation of a line that has nearly 100,000 passengers a year (signal box, restaurant and carriage & wagon works, for example). The Colonel Stephens atmosphere is more readily appreciated at Northiam and Bodiam stations.

As for the trains, the vintage train set, which is usually the second and fourth train from Tenterden on normal running days, is likely to be hauled by Terrier No. 3 *Bodiam*, bought for the line in 1901, Terrier No. 78, which often ran on the line in BR days, or SECR P class tank no. 753, often hired by the line before WW2. It also operated the short section serving Hodson's mill at Robertsbridge before the line eventually

closed altogether. Your train might be headed by ex-BR Pannier tank No.1638. Even that has a tenuous link with Stephens, as it ran on the former Burry Port & Gwendraeth Railway in BR days. Currently also in service is BR class O4 0-6-0 diesel of the type which hauled freight trains on the line in the final years. Outshopped from Tenterden Carriage & Wagon Works last year was the SECR Birdcage brake end S3368S, which is likely to be in the vintage train set. Special events this year include a branch line weekend (21/22 March) marking the centenary of 753 which will haul three SECR coaches, the Gala Weekend (2-4 May) featuring the Bluebell's class O1, the forties weekend (16/17 May) and the Ashford weekend (6/7 June exploring the links between Ashford works and the KESR.

A good plan is to catch your train at Northiam for Bodiam, returning to Northiam via Tenterden. Refreshments are usually available at Northiam and Bodiam. There is a full restaurant at Tenterden and a splendid gift shop. If you wish to see the fleet of locos there is a viewing platform at Rolvenden.

More info: 01580 765155 main web site: www.kesr.org.uk Operating Department: www.kesr-operating.org.uk

COLONEL STEPHENS MUSEUM

Make sure you leave yourself enough time to visit this superb museum. It is open on the railway's operating days from 21 March until the end of October. It usually shuts at about 4.30pm. Among the priceless collection of artefacts from the Colonel's empire are the famous *Gazelle*, reputedly the smallest standard gauge steam loco in the world, and an atmospheric reconstruction of his Tonbridge office, including a mannekin of the man himself.

More info: www.hfstephens-museum.org.uk

ROTHER VALLEY

The Rother Valley group is striving hard to reinstate the line from the current Bodiam

terminus to its original junction with the main line at Robertsbridge. News of progress appears elsewhere in this issue (p.21). No train service yet, but it is hoped to run brake van rides soon. The station site at Robertsbridge is open on Wednesdays, Saturdays and Sundays. Catering and shop (*The Colonel's Cupboard* - really good selection of railway magazine back numbers) are open on those days.

More info: www.rvr.org.uk

EAST KENT

The East Kent Railway is working to preserve part of the EKR network which served the east Kent coalfields. Trains (diesel hauled) run from Shepherdswell, alongside the main line station, to Eythorne, a round trip of about four miles. Services start at Easter and run most weekends during the season. A reproduction of a typical Stephens station building has been erected at Shepherdswell. The visitor centre, in a restored signal box from the Elham Valley line, contains artefacts from the EKR with displays explaining the history of the line. The website has very useful information about the existing remains of the EKR and how to explore them.

More info: www.eastkentrailway.co.uk

RYE & CAMBER

There is no preservation group for the Rye & Camber. But our Society organised a walk along the route last autumn (see the report in *Colonel 93*). The definitive book on the line is *The Rye & Camber Tramway: a centenary history*, by Laurie A Cooksey. Plateway Press, 1995. 1 871980 26 7. The route can be traced for much of the way from the site of the Rye terminus by Monk Bretton Bridge, on the far side of the River Rother, to the former Camber Sands station building which is still standing.

WESTON CLEVEDON & PORTISHEAD

The WC&PR Group is energetically working to preserve the remains and records of the line. Among its activities is a complete route survey. Its aims include:

Continued on page 18 ►

Before you visit READ ALL ABOUT IT!

20509. Mitchell V & Smith K: *Shrewsbury to Newtown (Including Minsterley, Snailbeach and Kerry) Middleton Press 2008 1st 96pp, NEW copy £15.95*

20532. Pearce A (Ed): *Snailbeach Lead Mine Shropshire Peter Burgess Shropshire Mines Trust Limited 2008 1st 172pp, includes 11 pages on the Snailbeach District Railways, NEW copy. £11*

20087. Johnson P: *An Illustrated History of the Shropshire and Montgomeryshire Light Railway OPC 2008 1st 128pp. At last a modern, detailed study of The S&MR, by the well respected author Peter Johnson. In series with his previous works of the Welsh Highland Railway and The Festiniog Railway (both available, but hurry stocks are low). Great value too. NEW copy £21.99*

18856. Mitchell V & Smith K in association with Gray A & Seymour M: *Branch Lines around Portmadoc 1923-1946, the Welsh Highland and Festiniog Railways Middleton Press 1993 1st 96pp fine £8*

20280. Stretton J: *The Welsh Highland Railway - a Phoenix Rising Caernarfon - Porthmadog Past and Present Series Nostalgia Collection 2004 1st 96pp fine £6*

6321. Welsh Highland Light Railway (1964) Ltd: *Welsh Highland Light Railway Guide Book and Stock List (Porthmadog) The Railway. c.1984 f £3*

6384. Welsh Highland Railway (Caernarfon) Guide Book Welsh Highland Railway c.1998 20 pp f £2.50

See also the review pages 24/25

All the above are available from stock, first come first served, Post & Packing included to UK CSS members.

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► *Continued from previous page*

encouraging local authorities and land-owners to preserve as much as possible of the remains of the railway' recording and conserving the remaining physical elements and memories, marking the route of the railway with plaques, promoting an awareness of the heritage of the railway to the general public and providing educational opportunities. The group also seeks to reinstate some replica elements of the railway. The website includes useful details of footpaths and cycleways which give access to the route

More info: www.wcandpr.org.uk

ASHOVER

The Ashover Railway Light Railway Society also has an excellent website. Originally formed to collect historical records of the railway, it now aims to restore a 2 ½ mile section from Ogston Reservoir to Ashover Butts and run steam trains. One of its recent achievements was to rescue the famous 'Where the Rainbow Ends' café which used to be a popular venue at Ashover Butts.

More info: www.alrs.org.uk

The line was noted for its employment of Baldwin 4-6-0Ts, an example of which (No.778) can be seen at the Leighton Buzzard Narrow Gauge Railway www.buzzrail.co.uk An original Ashover carriage is being restored by the Golden Valley Light Railway, located within the Midland Railway Centre at Butterley.

More info: Narrow Gauge Coach fund, 31 Dale Cres, New Upton, Chesterfield S42 6DR

SNAILBEACH

The project to restore the Snailbeach District Railway seems to have ground to a halt. The website carries this announcement: "We are going ahead with the construction of a private railway as always planned. As a private railway we do not issue press releases nor publically [sic] advise progress. Being privately funded we only advise interested local bodies of progress". However, our Society, as part of our Members' Weekend, is planning to visit the engine shed at Stiperstones and associated buildings as well as the mine itself.

See pages 12/13. Information about the history of the line may be found at our own website:

www.colonelstephenssociety.co.uk/SDR
And the Colonel Stephens Museum website:
[www.hfstephens-museum.co.uk/Colonel - StephensRailways/snailbeach-district-railway](http://www.hfstephens-museum.co.uk/Colonel-StephensRailways/snailbeach-district-railway)

The Narrow Gauge Museum at Tywyn has a public notice not to trespass from the SDR *See the front cover.* See: www.ngrm.org.uk/Collections/IndustrialRailways/
See: www.ngrm.org.uk/Collections/IndustrialRailways/SnailbeachDistrictRailway/SDR001



FESTINIOG

The Ffestiniog is so well-known that it hardly needs a description here. Stephens was appointed manager in 1923 and chairman from 1925 until his death in 1931. The main contributions by him and his successor, W H Austen, were much-needed management skills. The current FR and the associated Heritage Group have been very keen to preserve and restore the physical features of the line including track, infrastructure and rolling stock. A visit will therefore enable you to experience much of

the flavour of the line as it existed during the Stephens era, although not the aura of decline!

More info: including timetable: www.ffestiniograilway.co.uk

WELSH HIGHLAND

This is one to visit this season if you can. All being well, the entire line will be reopened from Caernarfon to Porthmadog, linking up with the Ffestiniog, crossing the standard gauge Cambrian Coast line at Cae Pawb and running through the streets at Porthmadog. At the time of writing, the 2009 timetable had not been finalised, but reports suggest that, initially at least, it will be operated in two sections: Caernarfon to Beddgelert and Beddgelert to Porthmadog. Because much of the infrastructure was destroyed in 1936 when the line closed, there is less of it to see than on the FR, but the WHR Heritage Group is working hard to restore and replicate where possible. John Keylock's books reviewed on page 25 are essential reading, not forgetting his article also in this issue on page 4.

More info:

www.welshhighlandrailway.net
www.whr.bangor.ac.uk

WELSH HIGHLAND HERITAGE RAILWAY

The separate WHHR operates from near Porthmadog station, on the Cambrian Coast line, to Pen-y-Mount. It was formerly known as the WHR (P) to distinguish it from the longer WHR (C). It is constructing a museum at Gelert's Farm, covering both the FR and the WHR. It is restoring the famous *Russell* and a train of historic vehicles. The WHR was one of the lines noted for operating Baldwin locomotives. No. 778, normally based at Leighton Buzzard, will be the visiting loco for the line's gala on 2/3/4 May.

More info: railway.whr.co.uk

BURRY PORT & GWENDRAETH

The project to restore the BP&GVR is getting under way (see page 20). You will

have a chance to inspect progress at Pontyates Station, if current plans for a centenary celebration mature.

More info: www.bpgvr.co.uk

SHROPSHIRE & MONTGOMERYSHIRE

If you wish to explore the remains of the S&MR, your best bet is to come to the Society's Members' Weekend at Shrewsbury on 16/17 May which includes a bus tour of the remains in best CSS tradition. Meanwhile, you could join the Shrewsbury Railway Heritage Trust by calling Phil Hughes, Membership Secretary on 01743 359853

CALLINGTON BRANCH (PDSWJR)

The truncated Callington branch, once part of the PD&SWJR, is still part of the national rail network and now runs as far as Gunnislake. Take the Tamar Valley Line train from Plymouth to Gunnislake. En route you will travel across the magnificent Calstock viaduct. Stop off at Bere Ferrers to visit the Tamar Belle. Browse the enormous collection of artefacts and records in the visitor centre, use the Victorian gents and watch a demonstration of traditional signalling. You could even stay for a few nights in a Gresley carriage!

More info: www.tamarbelle.co.uk

www.carfreedaysout.com/tamar

NATIONAL RAILWAY MUSEUM

And finally, if find yourself within striking distance of York, pop into to the NRM to see the KESR horse bus (and many other delights of course).

More info: www.nrm.org.uk

◀ *The flat crossing at Cae Pawb, where the WHR crosses the Cambrian Coast line. This is only one of only two flat crossings in the UK and the only one with a narrow gauge line crossing a standard gauge one.*

PHOTO: Courtesy the Welsh Highland Heritage Group.

Gwendraeth Revival Begins

The latest Gwendraeth Railway Society newsletter reported that an historic meeting took place on 8th January near Pontyates station on the BP&GVR between Mike Franklin of Network Rail and Stuart Thomas, chairman of the Gwendraeth Railway Society and other GRS representatives, including our own Guy Hardy, to discuss the agreement finalized last year with Network Rail. Pontyberem, Pont-Henri, Pontyates and Glyn Abbey station sites were visited. It was agreed to add to the project the short Carway branch which leaves the main line south east of Glyn Abbey halt. The branch has original Vignoles type flat bottom rails held on the sleepers by spikes believed to have been laid by the BPGV in about 1866. An immediate outcome of the agreement is that track clearance has already begun.

to the P&BR last year. It has been stripped down and refurbishment is well under way.

Centenary outing?

Guy Hardy has suggested that we organise an outing in August to Pontyates to mark the centenary of the conversion of the BPGVR to a passenger line. He confidently expects that, by that time, there will be a platform with signboard and re-laid track "as far as you can see" in either direction. No doubt a visit to a local hostelry would be included. All we need is a volunteer to help co-ordinate the event. Please send expressions of interest to our Chairman, Les Darbyshire, or the editor (addresses on page 2).

New Website

Meanwhile, you can catch up with developments on this exciting project by visiting the GRS website: bpgv.co.uk •



'Pontyberem' moved for restoring

Another major stage in the Gwendraeth project took place when former BPGVR No. 2 *Pontyberem* was extracted from the Great Western Society's site at Didcot and transported to the Pontypool & Blaenavon Railway. A start has already been made on its restoration, including the removal of tank, cab and bunker. The picture above shows No.2 loaded at Didcot for transport to Wales. Because of height restrictions much of the cab had to be removed. GRS chairman Stuart Thomas is on the left and Guy Hardy on the right. Diesel 0-4-0 03 141 was also relocated

We've got talent!

We know that we have talented members. But did you know that Alan Garner who, with his wife Mary, stuffs *The Colonel* into envelopes each quarter, is an accomplished GWR Broad Gauge modeller? Ample proof appears in *Model Railway Journal 187* with pictures of two of his beautiful express engines *Dragon* and *Emperor*.

Notes for contributors

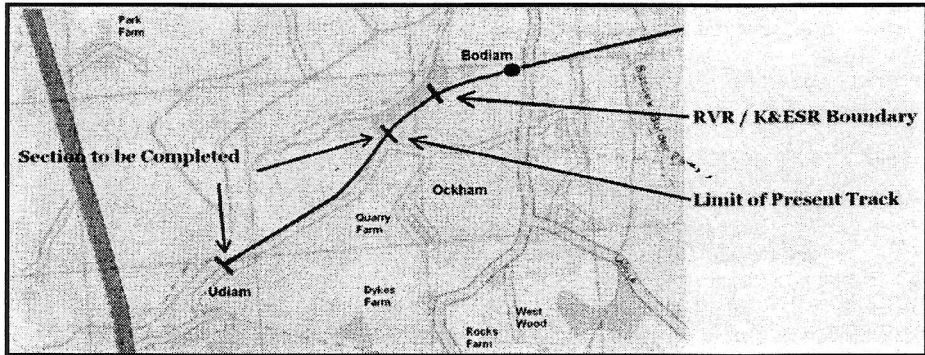
Contributions to *The Colonel* are very welcome. Please send them to the Editor (address on page 2). They may be in the form of a Word document, an email attachment, a floppy disc, a CD or a typescript. Steam age authors may, of course, send them as a manuscript - but please write legibly. Please ensure 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 •

Rother Valley Extending

The Rother Valley Railway, whose objective is to restore the 'missing link' between the current KESR southern terminus at Bodiam and its original junction with the main line at Robertsbridge, has announced major developments.

Project Manager

Mike Hart, following his work on the Welsh Highland Railway, will be in overall charge of a project. Alasdair Stewart, Civil Engineering Manager for the WHR has been appointed Project Manager. The cost of



Anonymous benefactor

An anonymous benefactor has agreed to provide match funding from the RVR Trust for the westward extension from Bodiam on a pound-for-pound basis. The first phase of this project was carried out in 2004. The cost of the remaining work on this 700 metre section is estimated at £100,000. According to *Phoenix*, the RVR newsletter, the Trust has requested RVR Ltd to initiate work as quickly as possible with a view to completion by 8th April this year. This would enable the group to satisfy all obligations and secure land for the railway.

his salary is being met by a "third party". Graham Baldwin, General Manager of the KESR said in a recent blog: *Our colleagues at Rother Valley Railway are extending the track a few hundred metres towards Udiam. The most asked question I get is 'when will K&ESR reach Robertsbridge?' That is not in our hands, but the A21 was only 2½ miles away and now it's nearly half a mile less!*

Robertsbridge

Meanwhile, the RVR volunteers continue to focus on the Robertsbridge site. The plan is to run brake van rides for the public this year. ●

THE ROTHER VALLEY RAILWAY

Robertsbridge Station, East Sussex TN32 5DG

REBUILDING THE RVR FROM ROBERTSBRIDGE TO BODIAM

Visitor centre open Sundays and Bank Holidays 9.30 to 17.00 (or dusk if earlier)
For membership, telephone: 01580 881833, or go to www.rvr.org.uk

DISPATCHES

Letters to the Editor

EKR 'Walton Park'

My enquiry requesting information on a works general arrangement drawing for the Hudswell Clarke 0-6-OST *Walton Park*, which served as EKR No.2 appeared in 'Test Les' in *Colonel* 82. Les Darbyshire responded that he believed the Hudswell Clarke technical records to be held at Armley Mills Industrial Museum in Leeds. I also had correspondence from a number of members referring to various bits of published information. During March 2006, I contacted the museum only to find that, whilst they held the Hunslet Archive, they could not deal with my request until it had been put to the copyright owners for approval. Writing to the copyright owners and enclosing an sae brought no response. Subsequent enquiry of the museum over a period of time revealed an ongoing legal tangle involving the museum and the copyright owners. For much of 2007 and the early part of 2008 I discontinued my enquiries as I had other things on my mind.

Early in July 2008 renewed contact with the museum brought the news that the archive had been placed on 3-year loan in June 2007 with the copyright holders LH Group Services Ltd, of Burton-upon-Trent. I was advised to contact a Mr Henry Noon and I wrote to him with my request. Within a couple of days I had an email from him. The significant part reads: *The HC system is difficult. We are currently cataloguing the entire archive, which runs to over a million items, so I'm afraid it will be some time before we can help you. We will log your enquiry and come back to you asap.* I have heard nothing from them since. I let the museum know of my success in obtaining a reply and my disappointment that there could be a lengthy delay. The response from the museum hailed my receipt of a response as real progress. Staff at the museum confirmed the problems with the archive as follows: *The HC archive is difficult partly as a large part of it is in rolls and also because they rarely produced GAs.* The

staff offered to see if they could assist as they had undertaken a partial inventory of everything that had left on loan. I advised the museum of my need of drawings for the main structural items of the loco. That was late July 2008. I have heard no more. I think it is going to be a case of waiting for LH Group Services to complete their indexing and then seeing if I can afford whatever it is they wish to charge for the drawings I need.

**Robin Fielding
Sittingbourne**

A More Glossy Magazine ?

You state you have limited feedback to your editorial, so may I offer my observations? I like people's recollections of the Colonel and his railways. I like articles on modelling his lines and particularly those dealing with construction of models and layouts. I appreciate reviews of books and kits or RTR models. But I am not very interested in articles on the Colonel's civil engineering or what he could gain from below ground or his contractors.

I suggest that we need to upgrade the magazine, with decent paper, better photographs - perhaps even colour, with a larger modelling section. We need to modernise to attract the punters.

**Christopher Mitchell
Tenterden**

[Chris also mentioned, as did several others, that Hythe Kent Models, referred to in Albyn Austin's article on a model track in Colonel 93, sadly closed in 2007. My apologies for not checking this before publication - Ed]

Setting the Record Straight

What an excellent edition of *The Colonel* the Winter 2008 (No. 93) was with the various articles on the Rye & Camber Tramway. Unfortunately there were several errors in the captions in the centre spread:

Captions 1 and 8: The driver of *Camber* was 'Jokey' Rhodes, not 'Jonty'; caption 3: The 4mm/ft model of Rye Tramway station is not mine. I assume it to be Michael Pannell's. It runs on 9mm gauge OO9 track. It was several years later that Peco produced their 12mm gauge track for us to be able to model

accurately 3ft gauge. Caption 4: The photographer was H C Casserley, not 'Cassidy'. Caption 5: I was with Mike Pannell when he took this photo at Golf Links station in the early 1990s. The model straddling the RC&T running line is his excellent 16mm/ft model and, just visible in front, his OO9 4mm/ft model.

I apologise for being such a stickler for accuracy, but we must 'keep the record straight', mustn't we?

**Laurie A Cooksey
Ramsgate**

[Indeed we must Laurie. Several other members expressed the thought that 'Hopalong' was unlikely to have been the photographer in question - Ed]

S&M Loco Mystery

I would like to know the true identity of the locomotive that became *Hecate* and later *Severn* of the S&M. Most published accounts have hitherto suggested that this engine was formerly Bristol Port & Pier Co. No.2 but an illustration of this locomotive at the intermediate location of Abergorki Colliery clearly shows this engine to have been at least overhauled by Pecketts and fitted with their style of cab. It would appear to be stretching credibility to suggest that a later rebuild would have substituted a 'wrap over' weatherboard for this arrangement. Is it not far more likely that *Severn* was once BP&P Co. No.1 which was sold to Yorkshire, possibly to a colliery owned by Markhams of Chesterfield, fitted with a new saddle tank (but not the boiler which would have been previously replaced) by them and then passed to Griff Colliery at a later date prior to sale to the S&M? This possibility would appear to explain the locomotive's retention of a bent leading weatherboard (which was peculiar to number 1) along with the distinctive saddle tank profile which matches certain Markham products.

**Mark Smithers
By email**

Les Darbyshire replies:

I know very little about the Bristol Port & Pier Company, except for what is in the RCTS book on GWR Absorbed Locos. I have not seen the picture of the B P & P loco at Abergorki,

but if it shows a Peckett cab then I agree with you that it is unlikely that this would have been removed and the old front weatherboard replaced. The cab front on *Hecate* certainly looks exactly like the weatherboard on B P & P No.1, as illustrated in the RCTS book. However, I would imagine that both locos had similar, if not identical, weatherboards and looked very similar in most respects apart from the open splashers on No. 1, which could easily have been replaced. Your conclusion that the Abergorki loco and *Hecate* are different machines seems reasonable to me, but how do you know which was No.1 and which No.2? Does a picture of No.1 post-B P & P exist?

Brian Janes also replies:

I have looked at this subject quite closely and wrote an article for the *Tenterden Terrier* (No 98 Winter 2005). The article only sought to pull together the various strands of thinking then current. Later you raised with me the possibility of a Markham connection via Bristol P&P No 1. This is an attractive theory which is at least as likely to be right as any other but has a great drawback in that there seems to be no hard proof to back it except perhaps some aspects of its physical appearance and the, obviously Stephens originated, report that the engine came from Griff Colliery and therefore not South Wales. The Industrial Railway Records are contradictory as they support both Griff and South Wales as the possible origin of the Loco; but they have no record of it in Yorkshire.

I have enquired of the Markham Company's successor and they have confirmed that the records for the relevant period do not exist (Markham were general engineers although they built about 16 locos in the 1891-95 & 1909-1914 periods for associated companies). I have been unable to find hard evidence of the loco being at Griff Colliery apart from the 1922 Locomotive article; and indeed the colliery railway layout seems unsuitable for an engine of this type (of course it may have been there briefly). In summary therefore my view is currently that it was definitely either BP&PR No 1 or No 2 (St Helens Railway and LNWR via James Cross). The evidence for No 2 is slightly harder as we know it was in South Wales and there is anecdotal evidence on the S&MLR of *Severn* being bought from there. However *Severn's* physical appearance favours No 1 but there is no hard evidence yet to support this attractive theory.

Let us hope Mr Smithers can find some hard evidence somewhere.

REVIEWS

Branches & Byways Kent. John Scott-Morgan. Hersham: Oxford Publishing, 2008. 112pp, 297x220mm, 238 illus, maps. Hardback. 978 0 86093 616 9 £19.99.

Four of the fourteen lines featured in this latest offering from John Scott-Morgan are members of the Colonel Stephens family: KESR, EKR, the Sheppey Light and the Hawkhurst branch. They are in fact the first four in the book. They account for 34 of the 103 pages (leaving out of the equation the introduction). The KESR has by a fair margin the most photographs (35). The

Colonel's lines account for 108 of the total of 238. Each line has a brief introduction, but the photographs (all black and white and very well reproduced, often to a large size) are relied on to provide the real story. Mr. Scott-Morgan is well known as an assiduous collector of photographs and he has made good use of them for this book. There are few showing the lines in the early years of last century; the majority were taken in the thirties, the late forties and the fifties. None are from the preservation era. Many of the images show familiar scenes, but a substantial number were new to me. There is, for example, a sensational full page aerial view of Hawkhurst station in about 1955, showing almost the entire layout, including the coal yard, the top of the water tower and what seems to be hundreds of hop poles arranged in gigantic stooks. What a boon this photo will be to modellers. The author seems to have a predilection for shots of the tiny halts which were such a feature of the Colonel's lines, for example Harty Road and Brambledown on the Sheppey Light, Roman Road, Poison Cross, Richborough Port ('the station that never saw a passenger') and others on the East Kent and Salehurst, Junction Road and St. Michael's on the KESR. One very welcome feature is that the pictures show much of the infrastructure. Posters are prominent in many of them, conveying the

atmosphere of the time. For example, a coronation poster is prominent in a 1953 shot of Bodiam whilst a large ad at Richborough Port proclaims that 'They come out best on Kodak film'. Not many people will have seen that one! Typical Stephens-style infrastructure has been captured; signals facing both ways, corrugated iron buildings, level crossings with no gates, and the simplest of wooden platform benches. The delightful title page shot shows a Terrier departing light engine from Tenterden with the porter about to deal with a pile of luggage and

goods, with the canopy posts still in wartime white stripes, the round water tower and some renewed fencing. Pity that the renowned three-armed signal coincides with the gutter between two pages. A most unexpected and welcome picture is of Laurel and Hardy during their visit to the Romney Hythe & Dymchurch in 1947. If you would like a collection of fine photos of the Colonel's lines in the

south and you are also interested in the long-disappeared branches of the SR in Kent, then this book is highly recommended.

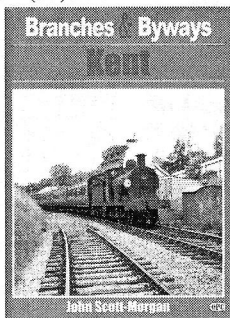
Ross Shimmon

The Kent & East Sussex Railway. Hugh Nightingale. Wellington: Halsgrove, 2008. 144pp, 220x235mm, 140 illus. Hardback 978 1 84114772 7 £14.99.

Hugh Nightingale has been photographing the KESR for over 30 years. This volume of colour photographs ranges over that entire period. The author is in the 'trains in the landscape' school. Emphasis is largely on the locos, both resident at the KESR and guests from other lines.

A number were taken during the Colonel Stephens weekend in 2007. Captions include notes of the weather conditions and camera angles as well as of the trains. Very enjoyable.

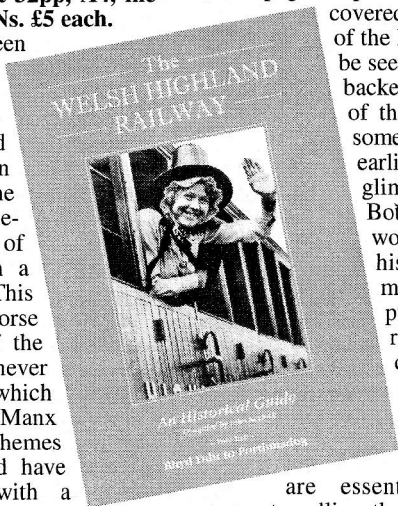
RS



REVIEWS

The Welsh Highland Railway—An Historical Guide, compiled by John Keylock. Part one: Caernarfon to Rhyd Ddu (2005) Part two: Rhyd Ddu to Porthmadog (2008). Welsh Highland Heritage Group. Each part 32pp, A4, inc glossy card covers. No ISBNs. £5 each.

These books have been produced to provide, as their title suggests, a guide to travelling on the re-opened Welsh Highland Railway with an emphasis on the history of the line. The “new” WHR has arisen, phoenix-like, from the ashes of many earlier schemes with a most complex history. This history includes converted horse tramways (at both ends of the line), a partly built but never completed electric line, which could have resembled the Manx Electric, and a myriad of schemes which, if completed, would have covered Caernarfonshire with a veritable network of narrow-gauge lines. The books attempt to present this history in a simplified form, and relate it to what is to be seen on the ground today by taking the reader on a journey along the line. In this they succeed admirably, with enough detail to satisfy the averagely curious traveller. Anyone wanting even more should buy James Boyd’s superb books on the subject!



The journey taken is in the direction Caernarfon – Porthmadog, broken at Rhyd Ddu. If you are travelling in the opposite direction, you will have to read the books backwards! Each part has an excellent double-page map of the half of the line covered, showing the features of the line as well as what can be seen from it. The maps are backed up by a description of the journey pointing out some of the remains of earlier schemes that can be glimpsed from the train.

Both books contain a wonderful selection of historical photographs, many never before published. Indeed, your reviewer could not recall having previously seen *any* of the photos in Part One, and a good few in Part Two were new too. They

are essential companions for anyone travelling the line who is interested in knowing something of its history and who wants to know a little about what they are looking at out of the window. They are beautifully produced on quality paper and represent good value – and all the profits go to support the line!

Les Darbyshire

PS. Nigel Bird can supply one volume at £6.50 including postage and packing or both at £12

Modelling The Colonel's Railways ?

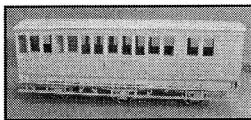
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Press Digest *Our regular round-up of the railway press*

Recognition is at last dawning that what we now call heritage railways make a significant contribution to their local economy. The editor of *Heritage Railway* notes in issue 121 that the **Welsh Highland Heritage Railway** (the small one) contributed £250,000 last year from its 35,000 passengers. You could not miss the entry into traffic of the new build A1 pacific *Tornado* in the mainstream press, never mind the railway mags. One of the most striking images was of the finished engine in works grey with its internet address on the tender. Not to be outdone, there is a similar shot of the latest **Welsh Highland Railway** (the big one) NGG 16 articulated Garratt, No. 87, also in works grey and internet address on its bunker emerging from Boston Lodge. A four-page article describes its restoration which has cost £½ million. In the same issue it is alleged that £4m owed to the **Festiniog Railway** by the North Wales Trunk Road Agency has not yet been paid and will delay the completion of the restored **WHR** from Caernarfon to Porthmadog. However, a recent press release announces that the golden bolts ceremony marking the completion of the tracks for the whole **WHR** route was to take place on 28th February, with No.87 to make the first movement along the final section. Public services were due to begin from Caernarfon to Beddgelert on 8th April, while the service will extend through the Aberglasyn pass to Hen Hafod on 21st May. Through services will begin after the summer peak season this year. **Carriage lighting** is not a common topic, but the Brian Janes writes about the acetylene variety in an occasional series on Stephens's engineering innovations in the *Tenterden Terrier* winter 2008 issue. He dismisses an enthusiast myth that the **KESR** provided lighting only in the old royal saloon. He quotes CF Klapper's report that Stephens used acetylene on locomotive headlights. A diagram, close-up of the roof equipment and shots of coaches using the system on the **S&MR** and the **KESR** enhance the article.

A charming comment from Klapper appears in an article entitled 'The rise and fall of the light railway', which, believe it not, fell out of a second hand book into the hands of Nigel Bird. The article is dated July 1968, it appears to be from the *Railway World* of blessed memory. Klapper concludes his piece by describing Stephens as: "the outstanding **Colonel Holman Fred Stephens**, ingenious engineer, indefatigable financier and negotiator, irascible administrator and the present writer's good friend".

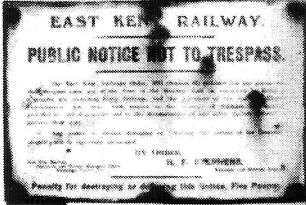
The Colonel himself also features in a new development at Robertsbridge on the **Rother Valley**. The RVR magazine *Phoenix* No. 46 reports that their shop has been renamed 'The Colonel's Cupboard', whilst the buffet is now 'The Six-Five Special', both with eye-catching signs. Work continues on the platform and bridge No. 1 in preparation for the running of trains. Still in the Rother Valley, a flurry of excitement was caused by the news in the *Railway Modeller* for January that Base Toys has produced a 4mm model of a Dodge dropside lorry in BRS livery labelled 'Rother Valley'.

Railway Bylines is one of our favourite mags. The January issue did not disappoint, with a twelve-page, fully illustrated, article on the **Callington Branch**. There are also four shots of the **KESR** white elephant, the Hawthorn Leslie 0-8-0T *Hecate*, in four different liveries and an atmospheric shot of a Baldwin 4-6-0T on the **Ashover**. Meanwhile, the modelling press seems to be developing a **Fairlie** theme. *Model Railway Journal* 188 describes the building of 'Taliesin' in ¼" to 1ft scale. At the other end of the scale spectrum, German manufacturer Roco is reported by *Model Rail* to be planning an HO scale ready-to-run **Festiniog** Double Fairlie.

Did you see that *Heritage Railway* 119 carried a five page article by Mark Smithers entitled 'A themed event for Colonel Stephens Railways?'. Although the author seemed to have forgotten the Stephens weekend on the **KESR** in 2006, it enabled us to write a full reply and place tie-in ads. ●

NEWS IN BRIEF

EKR sign fetches £1150



This notice not to trespass was sold at auction for £1150 in January. The Society was ready to

help the Colonel Stephens Museum to buy it, but the museum was outbid. Clearly the credit crunch has yet to reach railwayana sales.

Selsey clearance

Ken Browne reports that clearance work has been carried out at the Chalder station site of the Selsey Tramway, pictured right. "I have just discovered that Chalder has been completely stripped of vegetation" said Ken. It reveals lovely detail preserved by the brambles; a base of the bench post, the air vents and the hut base



with the retaining bolts still in situ. Ken was worried that the clearance was a prelude to demolition and redevelopment. But the owner of Chalder Farm assured him that he 'knew of its historical importance'. The

work was apparently carried out by enthusiasts from Hunston. Ken also reports that the lifting bridge at Hunston is being restored by the Arun Canal Society who are relaying 12ft of track using original rail from the chalkpits museum, spikes found at the site and half round sleepers. Does anyone know more about these projects?

Bind up your Colonels!

Guy Hardy reports that bookseller Robert Humm is offering a bound set of *The Colonel 1985 to 2003* for £100. Could be a useful investment to bind yours up?

JIC Boyd 1920-2009

Adrian Gray reported on the Yahoo discussion group that JIC Boyd, legendary chronicler of the history of the Festiniog railway and other lines in north Wales, died peacefully on 20th February.

STOP PRESS!

Don't buy your Christmas cards just yet. The society is planning to issue its own cards, probably featuring *Gazelle in the snow at Kinnerley*. They should be available by July. A further announcement with prices will follow in a later issue of *The Colonel*. •

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Deadlines for 2009/10

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

95: Summer 2009: 15th May

96: Autumn 2009: 15th August

97: Winter 2009: 15th November

98: Spring 2010: 15th February

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

Jackson's Jottings

CLOSER TO HOME

CHRIS JACKSON continues his trawl through the archives of the *Railway Gazette*.

The Gazette continues to pontificate on the fact that other countries seem to do better, notably Japan. Coming closer to home, mid-1911 saw a couple more of the Colonel's LROs approved: one for the second phase of the BPGV conversion and another for some of the more ambitious (but eventually unsuccessful) extensions of the East Kent network

September 15 1911 –

Light Railway Order

The Board of Trade has confirmed the undermentioned Order made by the Light Railway Commissioners: East Kent Light Railways (Extensions) order, 1911, authorising the construction of light railways in the county of Kent from Eythorne to Great Mongeham, from Coldred to Maydensole, from Coldred to Stone Hall, and from Eastry to Hammil, in extension of the light railways authorised by the East Kent Light Railways Order, 1911.

September 29 1911 –

Light Railways in Japan

Reference was made in these columns a few weeks ago to the probability of a "boom" in railway construction in Japan. The "boom" appears to have set in already with respect to light railways. Since the passing of the Light Railway Subsidy Law in August last year, the applications filed for charters number 136, with a total mileage of 1,952, and a capital of over £10,000,000. Up to the present charters have been granted to 66 companies with an aggregate capital of about £4,290,000. New applications continue to reach the Railway Board at a rapid pace, and it is expected that by April next double the number now registered will have been received. It may interest manufacturers having dealings with Japanese railways to know that the Railway Board has recently been re-organised and is now under the direct control of the Minister-President. The business connected with the South Manchuria Railway has been separated from the Board and transferred to the jurisdiction of the Colonial Bureau. The Railway Board controls all business relating to the State

Railways of the country, as well as business relating to private railways, light railways and tramways.

October 13 1911 –

Light Railway Order

The Board of Trade has confirmed the undermentioned Order made by the Light Railway Commissioners: – Burry Port & Gwendreath Valley Railway (Light Railway Extension) Order, 1911, authorising the reconstruction and working as a Light Railway of a further part of the railways of the Burry Port & Gwendreath Valley Railway Company, in the County of Carmarthen.

[sic - the classic spelling mistake – legal title is Gwendreath not Gwendraeth! JJ]

October 27 1911 –

Light Railway Order

The Board of Trade has recently confirmed the undermentioned Order made by the Light Railway Commissioners: – Mid-Lincolnshire Light Railway (Extension of Time) Order, 1911, extending the periods limited by the Mid-Lincolnshire Light Railway Order, 1908, for the compulsory purchase of lands and for the completion of the railway and works thereby authorised and for other purposes. ●

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