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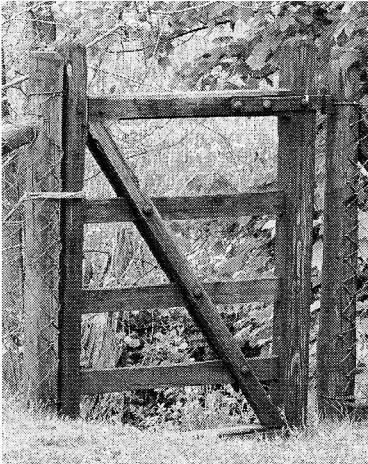
# THE COLONEL

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**Number 95**

**Summer 2009**

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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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**An Index to *The Colonel*** issues 1-94 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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## Editorial: We live in interesting times

**A**s our chairman, Les Darbyshire, pointed out at the Annual General Meeting, developments on many of the railways that once formed part of the Colonel's railway empire are flourishing. Who would have believed that in the dark days after World War Two?

Amongst all the doom and financial gloom surrounding us, we can celebrate minor and major strides forward. Apart from the once unimaginable reconstruction of the Welsh Highland Railway, which we plan to savour at our Members' Weekend in 2011, there is the recent 700 metre extension west of Bodiam on the KESR and even a small reconstruction on the erstwhile Hundred of Manhood & Selsey Tramway.

We all have the chance to inspect the task ahead of the Gwendraeth Railway Society on Sunday 2nd August. We can visit

the remains of Pontyates station and talk to GRS members about their exciting plans to restore traffic to the historic Burry Port & Gwendraeth Railway.

Meanwhile, last month in Shropshire, we were able to reflect on the passage of time. Les stood on the track bed at Kinnerley comparing what was there (or rather not there) now with what was there last time he was there about ten years or so ago; over bridge filled in, station building gone, WD loco shed gone. Not much preservation here! Would there be anything to see in another ten years? The moral must be to visit the remains while we can and support the preservationists to the hilt.

**Ross Shimmon**

*Front cover: This gate at Maesbrook station, seen on our tour of the SMR, is said to date from the time of the Colonel. Photo: Kerry Baylis*

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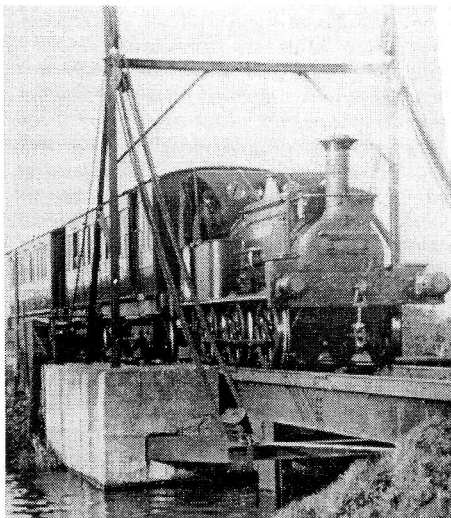
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### Cheap at half the price!

As in previous years, members and guests travelling on the coaches for the superb tours of the remains of the SMR and SDR during the Shrewsbury weekend were asked to make a donation towards the cost. Unfortunately, judging by the relatively small amount raised this year, many passengers must have thought it was for a driver's collection, when in fact it was to offset the Society's costs for the coach hire. Nigel Bird is therefore suggesting that those who travelled and who thought that the collection was for a tip, might wish to make a donation of £5. Otherwise, the hefty subsidy that the Society will have to make this year may well mean major changes in the financial arrangements for future members' weekend outings. Nigel's address is opposite. ●

## GOLDEN SPIKE AT HUNSTON

**LAURIE A. COOKSEY** reports on the ceremony held to mark the installation of track on the site of the lifting bridge at Hunston on the former Selsey Tramway



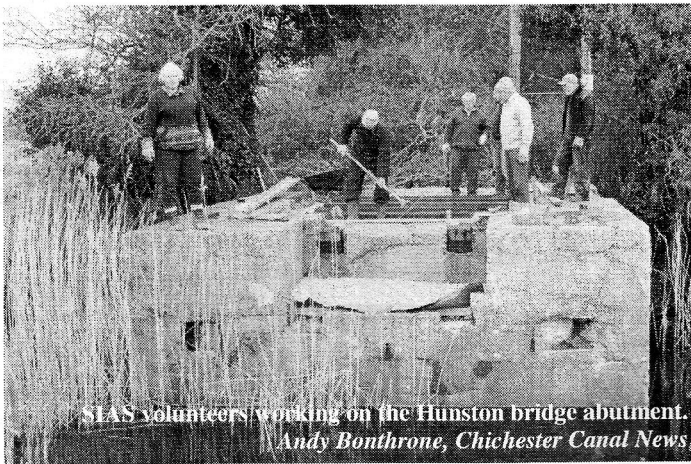
the local Ffestiniog Railway group and a 7mm/ft scale diorama featuring a working model of Hunston lifting bridge. Built by Ian Hellyer, the rolling stock included a superbly constructed and painted Agenoria kit of *Selsey* and two of Robert Kosmider's ex-Lambourn Valley 4-wheel carriage kits.

### **Bowler hats**

At 12.30 the 50-seat trip boat *Richmond*, arrived at the jetty and John Blackwell (chairman of the SIAS) alighted to join John Mills (Senior Archaeologist of West Sussex County council) and me. Wearing bowler hats for the occasion, we were then driven by Linda Wilkinson (Chairman of the CSCT) along country lanes, farm tracks and across fields to the northern abutment of the former lifting bridge. On the southern bank of the Portsmouth & Arundel Canal (the abutment on this side had been blown up by the Canadian army in 1942), we were surprised to see a gathering of some 70 locals who had come to witness the event on the strength of a single sentence in *The Chichester Observer* and some posters

**T**o represent The Colonel Stephens Society, Ross Shimmon and I were invited by the Sussex Industrial Archaeology Society (SIAS) to

“The Official Opening of the newly laid track on the Tramway Bridge abutment at Hunston” on the Selsey Tramway on Bank Holiday Monday, 4th May. Arriving at the field adjacent to Hunston Jetty soon after 11am, after setting up the Society’s stand, we were able to view the displays in the marquee belonging to the SIAS, the Chichester Ship Canal Trust (CSCT),



SIAS volunteers working on the Hunston bridge abutment.  
Andy Bonthrone, *Chichester Canal News*

displayed in the vicinity. I had expected the 30ft length of original Selsey Tramway track to be laid directly on the ground, but it was spiked to freshly creosoted sleepers on a bed of shingle of a far higher quality than that which Holman Stephens would have provided in 1897!

### **Platelayers' trolley**

Chained to the track was the surviving wheel set of the push-along 4-wheel platelayers' trolley rescued from the canal several years ago. Unfortunately, a third of one of its wheels had rusted away, but Amberley Chalk Pits Museum (who also donated the two rails) have done a superb job in straightening the buckled axle, so that it now looks as good as new.



*Laurie Cooksey drives in an original HMST spike.*  
Ross Shimmon

### **First track for 74 years**

Having sailed the quarter mile or so from Hunston Jetty, *Richmond*, with Ross and the other specially-invited guests on board, did

not arrive at the site until 13:10, resulting in the ceremony being delayed by around a quarter of an hour. From the rear of the vessel, Alan Green, (a committee member of the SIAS who had prepared the drawings and specification for the track laying) in a short speech said that this was the first piece of track to be seen on the formation in 74 years; the Tramway had closed in January 1935. John Mills and then I were asked to drive the two original spikes found recently on the site into a sleeper, followed by John Blackwell who similarly drove in the ceremonial golden spike to much applause and camera flashing from the boat and those on the southern canal bank. The ceremony concluded with a champagne toast raised to Colonel Stephens. All were invited back to the field next to Hunston Jetty where the official guests were treated to O'Hagan's award-winning sausages with onions in a bread roll, but we had to buy our own delicious organic ice cream made on the adjacent farm.

### **Chalder clearance**

We had earlier discussed the recent clearing of the undergrowth on Chalder station platform. Not only did Linda Wilkinson drive John Mills, John Blackwell, Ross and me to view the site, but she then took us to see the former Tramway Cottages in Church Road Selsey, the location of Selsey Town station, just round the corner, hidden under a housing development, the site of the short-lived Selsey Beach station (a car park and children's play area) and the 1911 Tramway embankment north of Ferry, enjoying a new lease of life as a public footpath between there and Sidlesham.

### **Local interest**

Returning to Hunston Jetty for the last time at 15:45, most of the display had been packed away and the Society's stand quickly followed suit, but Ross and I were lucky enough to relieve the barbecue of the last two sausages! Thus, apart from the 2-hour drive back to Faversham, ended a most enjoyable day, keeping alive memories of the Selsey Tramway. It was remarkable to see the great amount of interest shown by local people. Our grateful thanks go to all those

*continued on next page ►*

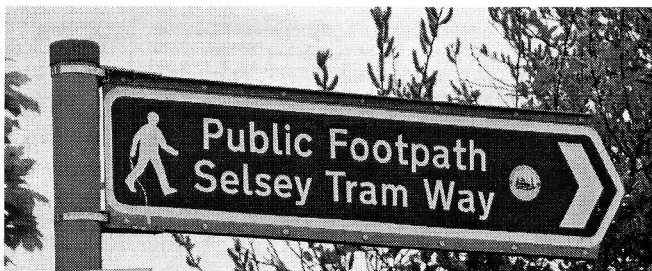
► From previous page who worked so hard to make it all possible and for making us welcome.

#### Postscript

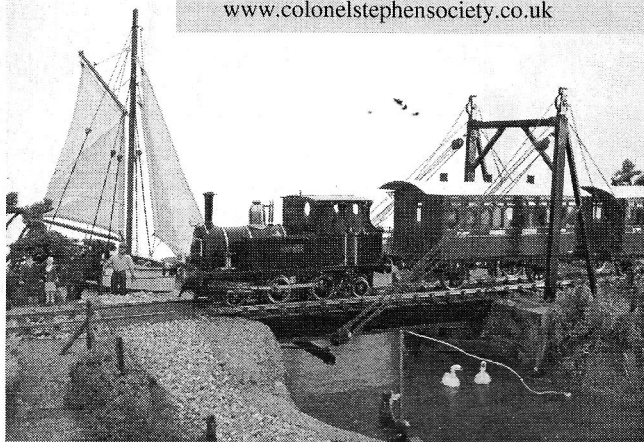
CSS member Joe Whicher also took part in the celebrations. His report, to be published elsewhere, concludes: "Following this bonanza of transport-related enthusiasm, Richmond took the guests back to Chichester whilst everyone discussed this quintessentially English happening when it was agreed a good time was had by all". •

#### PHOTOS:

Above: public footpath notice at Selsey Beach. *Ross Shimmmon*. Right: Ian Hellyer's 7mm model of Hunston lifting bridge and HMST 2-4-2T Selsey. *Joe Whicher*. Below: Left to right: John Mills, Laurie Cooksey and John Blackwell (holding the golden spike) before driving the spikes in. *Ross Shimmmon*.



More photos can be seen on:  
[www.colonelstephensociety.co.uk](http://www.colonelstephensociety.co.uk)



# LIGHT RAILWAYS IN THE FIFTIES - PART 3

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

Nineteen fifty five saw me completing my national service and my appointment as a fireman at Nine Elms. As I was still living at home with my parents, I did not work my rest days like most who were married and needed the extra money. So I continued to make various visits mainly in a line south of Birmingham. There are just too many to mention here.

David Powell may like to know that, if possible, we always travelled to Oxford from London via Princes Risborough and Thame. Once, we even caught the evening rush hour train from Paddington that had a slip coach for Princes Risborough. This was the only time I rode in a slip coach. Health and Safety would not allow such a thing today!

## **Hellingly Hospital Railway**

One minor line worth a mention was the Hellingly Hospital Railway. I wrote to the hospital for permission to ride the line and received a reply with an indemnity form which I had to sign over a stamp and a statement that it could not be guaranteed that a train would run on the day of my visit. The journey to Hellingly was itself part of a great day, travelling from East Croydon to Groombridge, then quite a busy junction with its well-known refreshment room. From Groombridge the Eastbourne-bound train ran via the Cuckoo Line with its sharp curves, gradients and scenery. The windmill between Rotherfield and Mayfield appeared on one side of the train one minute and on the other the next.

Arriving at Hellingly, I could see that there was a wagon of coal in the loop for the hospital, so there was a good chance of a ride on the line. I walked up to the hospital, looking for the pavilion on the sports field that was the body of the former tram that

provided the passenger service on the line until it was withdrawn in 1931.

At the hospital boiler house, I found the crew and offered them my paper work. They showed me round the boiler house. We then set off in the little 0-4-0 electric locomotive, with its trolley pole just about staying on the overhead wire, down to Hellingly station to pick up the wagon of coal. We propelled it back to the hospital. After walking back to the station, I had some time to wait and got talking to the booking clerk. I was surprised to learn that he had printed stock tickets to stations all over the country and to some towns in Ireland. They were purchased by many nurses and staff from the hospital when they went home on leave.

## **Hawkhurst Branch**

Finally, to get back to the Colonel, on 9th May 1960 we travelled on the 12.31pm Paddock Wood to Hawkhurst. H class 0-4-4T No. 31537 with two-coach set No. 737 formed the train. We arrived at Hawkhurst at 1pm. Having been told that it was a long, hilly walk to the town, we returned on the 1.05pm to Paddock Wood with the H class propelling, arriving at 1.35pm. Why had this line been left so long for us to visit? I suppose we all felt that this line was safe, little realising that Dr Beeching would be along very soon with mass closures to follow.

I have been very lucky to experience what I have. But one small regret is that I had been asked to go on a private hire coach from London to Chathill for the closure of the North Sunderland Light Railway. I declined and therefore, as far as I know, I have never travelled on any the railways of Sebastian Meyer (the Light Railway King of the North). ●

# OLD KING COAL

*One of the most interesting recent 'threads' on our Yahoo discussion list concerned the quality of coal in the East Kent coalfields and then one thing led to another. ALBYN AUSTIN explains*

I posted a note about a pre-World War I article in the *Railway Magazine* on the East Kent Railway which extolled the virtues of Kentish coal with analyses showing that it matched South Wales coal in quality and likely quantity. Some Kentish coal analyses were as good as best Welsh steam coal and some were excellent house coals. The article suggested that Kent could become another South Wales. This was at variance with my understanding of the coal's quality - poor, which was why very limited development of the coalfield took place. Several replies gradually explained the problems while not disputing the quality of the coal.

## Disasters

Brian Janes said the coal was very deep, and so the workings were extremely hot and unpopular with the miners. Also, the pit shafts went through very wet strata which were expensive to sink. There were several disasters when water broke into the shafts suddenly under pressure and men were drowned. Consequently the pits were expensive to keep dry. A lot of the coal was very friable, breaking up into small pieces very easily; not ideal for locomotive use. Lack of capital before 1914 and the post-war slump in demand for British coal meant that the coal field was not developed, even though the coal was of good quality.

## Chislet

Nick Bastable added that he thought Chislet colliery closed when its main customer, BR, ceased to use locomotive coal. He suggested referring to *The Kent Coalfield* by AE Ritchie, published in 1919, which mentions the EKR. It includes a few interesting photographs of the collieries and workings as well as a comprehensive history and geography of the coalfield. The two-volume history of the East Kent Railway by Stephen Garrett also outlines the problems

associated with lack of capital.

Fortunately, the discussion group includes members who actually used the stuff as firemen on the railway. A first-hand account is often worth more than a pile of books. John Cant said that he thought if you asked any of the firemen who worked with Kentish coal, you would get a mixed answer. His initial experience was at Norwood Junction. They usually had Yorkshire Hard, but sometimes got Tilmanstone. This "was like earth", but he didn't think Chislet or Betteshanger was a lot better. However, Croydon B power station used a lot of Kentish coal. It was ground even finer, mixed with air and blown into the boiler combustion chamber to be ignited by gas jets; a very volatile mixture. He said his wife used to moan because grit from the power station used to blow over the washing!

## Snowdown

The older Croydon A station may have used some other type of coal as it used a moving grate from a hopper falling off as ash at the other end of the furnace. At Nine Elms they sometimes had Snowdown. This was good Kent coal. It was firmer, had a shine and burned well, rather like Welsh coal, but not as good. Snowdown was used on the main line. He did not know if Stewart's Lane used Kent coal on the main line, but he thought not.

Monty Baker also replied with his experiences. He was employed on the footplate on the KESR in the 1930s and, after the war, on the footplate of the Romney, Hythe & Dymchurch Railway. He said the Tilmanstone coal supplied to the KESR was terribly dirty, full of slate, which was thrown off while travelling by the firemen at pheasants and rabbits. In later years he was surprised to be told by George Barlow of the RH&DR that they were now using Tilmanstone coal. It appeared that the



Tilmanstone workings were now approaching Betteshanger. The quality of the coal had become far superior and remained so until the miners' strike and the closure of the Kent Collieries. As BR already used Betteshanger coal, it would have been logical to use Tilmanstone if the quality was the same. Mark Lancaster added that he had a conversation with a former Brighton footplateman. He worked on steam up to the time of its withdrawal from the Central Section. He said Tilmanstone was always full of slate and difficult to raise steam from. He could always recognize it at a glance and, to prove his case, pointed out Tilmanstone coal in some black and white photographs.

**The editor's neighbour, Michael Croucher, who was a young fireman at 73E (Faversham), adds the following :**

Kentish coal in most cases had limited use. Tilmanstone pit was a very wet mine and many of the seams tended to flood due to the geographical position of the pit and the location of the various coal faces. The coal was of poor quality for steam locomotive use. However, it was a suitable source for supplying power stations in the area; Waddon Marsh, Croydon A and B stations and Kingsnorth on the Hoo peninsular come to mind. It was a very fine coal, soft in texture and consequently it broke up very easily, leaving a great deal of dust. Its use on steam engines was limited to those employed on shunting duties; the nature of the coal required frequent cleaning of the fire. I do recall, as a young fireman, the 2.10pm Dover Marine boat train coming to a stand at Shepherd's Well short of steam due to the poor quality of the coal. A Faversham C class 0-6-0 was sent to assist as far as Faversham. I am uncertain how the Merchant Navy fared after that.

Snowdown coal was much better and used more widely on steam engines. The

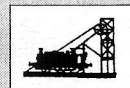
normal firing method was little and often, It was to be found at most of the sheds in the area; Dover, Ramsgate, Faversham and Gillingham. No doubt it was used at other south eastern section sheds as well. It was also commonly used at the power stations. I can recall working a coal train from Snowdown colliery bound for Waddon Marsh being relieved at Beckenham Junction by a Norwood Junction crew. Betteshanger coal was used more frequently on steam engines. It was quite freely used at all depots, including Stewart's Lane, although not in great quantities as they tended to rely on Yorkshire Hard. This was a very free-burning coal and in most cases clean. The downside was that it burned quickly and consequently one worked harder firing the locomotive.

Chislet coal was smaller. The texture was hard to soft and consequently did not require much breaking up. It was not dusty. I do recall being told by a driver when using this coal to make sure that I did not overload the firebox, as one of its characteristics was that when it was burning freely it had a tendency to swell up, which could result in some of the brick arch to become dislodged. If used correctly it was an excellent steam coal. I cannot recall whether it went to the power stations; I think not. Faversham, as did Dover and Gillingham depots, worked the coal trains bound for power stations in the area. ●

*[The picture above shows the editor's wife, Pat, on a visit to Betteshanger pit in 1963. We had not met at that time! - Ed]*



## The East Kent Railway



**Ride the Colliery Line from  
Shepherdswell to Eythorne**  
Booking office: 01304 832042  
[www.eastkentrailway.com](http://www.eastkentrailway.com)

## COAL OR OIL?

**INSIDE MOTION**, the internal newsletter of the Ffestiniog and Welsh Highland Railways, carried some articles in 2007 on the conversion of oil burning steam engines to coal. These extracts, reproduced by kind permission, offer valuable insights into the running of a heritage line

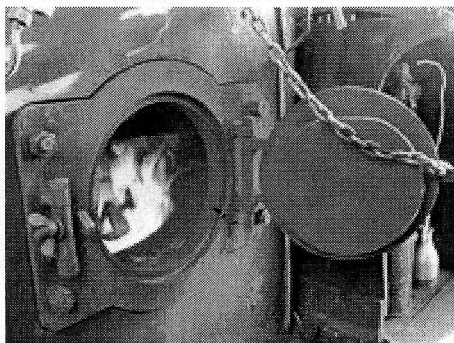
### *Nigel Burbage reported:*

I have been approached by a number of of volunteers who have posed the same question: *Why is the company converting engines back to burning coal?* The answer is simply one of cost. Back in 2003 the company was buying its oil for around 14 pence per litre (ppl). Over the next three years the cost had risen to 35 ppl. Fuel, after wages, is one of our largest costs and, in our market place, we cannot simply pass on increases in the order of 157%. As we burn somewhere in the region of 900,000 litres of oil each year, some form of action was necessary for survival.

As an accountant I can point out the financial issues facing the company and give a broad indication of options available. It is then for others to take these options and either add to them or prove something doesn't work, until a working consensus is reached. The company board went through a process of evaluating options (such as increased dieselisation, curtailment of train services outside peak periods, etc.) before deciding to explore coal burning in more detail. It engaged the services of an experienced qualified engineer to assist in a pilot project to identify whether coal burning was feasible and would deliver the savings anticipated.

Two engines (*Taliesin* and *The Earl*) were converted and proved the financial point. *The Earl* typically burned 1.5 tons of coal a day at £110 per ton, costing £165 for a day's work. In its previous incarnation (and *Merddin* a mechanically similar engine) it would burn 900 litres a day on average, costing £324. As we spent almost £250,000 on fuel in 2006 (with some coal turns but, admittedly, no FR diesel service) the savings should be apparent.

Having made the financial point, the



board took the decision last autumn (2006) to convert more engines and to invest in coal and ash handling plant. It is one of the very few financial decisions I have been involved with on this railway where it has been possible to demonstrate a genuine commercial payback for an investment.

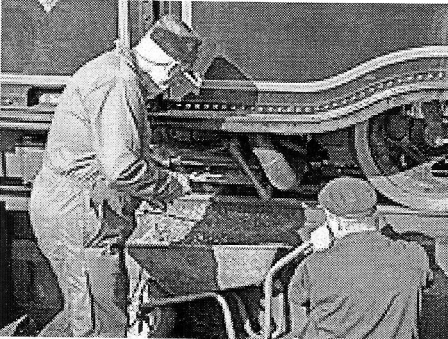
### *Paul Lewin added:*

Last year (2006) we converted *The Earl* to coal-firing as a trial and this has helped to understand better the issues involved. As a result, more locomotives will be changed over, but we are mindful of the fact that the majority of the savings come from converting a few key locomotives. We now feel sufficiently confident to invest further in the infrastructure which supports coal firing. Providing suitable equipment involves costs which have been provided for in the budget over the next two years.

Once we are clear of winter maintenance and conversion activities we will start work to develop our facilities. At Minffordd the storage area will be extended so that coal deliveries do not spill off the concrete. We have already taken the first steps to provide a fuelling area next to Glan-y-Mor carriage sheds. The permanent way winter programme includes the provision of the

new fuel siding, no.17. A mechanical digger will be procured to fuel locomotives. The intention is that it will fill a hopper that allows crews to dispense coal into bunkers by gravity. The capacity of this hopper should be sufficient for several days' use. We will keep the conveyor belt as a reserve system.

Once we have coaling-up arranged, we will turn our attention to organising better ash disposal. Providing these facilities does take time and we hope to get the best solutions within the budget allocated.



Since those reports, the cost of oil has gone down substantially although it is on the rise once more. Earlier this year, our Wales correspondent, Nigel Bird, reported that WHR No.87 is coal-burning, while No.138 was at Dinas with fitters from Boston Lodge working on her. Her firebox had been converted it was planned to return her to service later in the year as a coal-burner. K1, the original Garratt is coal while 143 is still an oil-burner. On the FR it was understood that *Linda* was scheduled to come back as coal burner this year, but will be left oil fired. It was said to be worth an extra coach to do so.

The FR was reported to be experimenting with various blast pipes (Lempor) to get the best out of coal. Work was going on to convert locomotives to piston valves. The official policy was said to be mixed fuel and engines are set up to be switched very quickly if required. It is a "fairly straightforward" job.

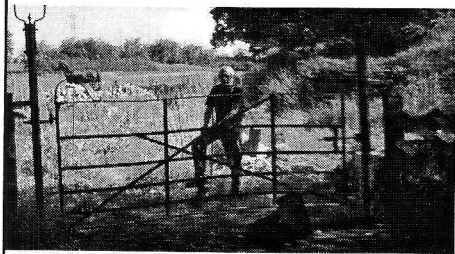
Of course, there is no Welsh Steam coal these days, nor even Betteshanger, so where

does the coal come from? In April the FR was using Russian trebles, previous batches had come from Poland, said to be better quality, and from Australia (not very well received). Nigel's contact thought that the Severn Valley burns coal from a colliery in Nottinghamshire. The price is apparently high but it is possible that they mix it with cheaper foreign stuff. The KESR is known to use coal from Russia and from Poland.

Meanwhile, the April *Railway Magazine* reported that coal from Ffos-y-fran near Merthyr Tydfil was due to come on the market that month. It would be "the first large-scale supply of Welsh dry steam coal available to heritage railways for 14 years". Production was likely to continue for up to 14 years. The latest twist to this story comes from *Heritage Railway 124*, May 2009: "The Welsh Highland Railway was blamed for a massive lineside fire near Beddgelert. More 100 acres of grass caught fire after, it was claimed, sparks flew from a locomotive on the newly opened four-mile stretch on 20 April." •

*The pictures show an open firebox and ash disposal on the FR, courtesy of Inside Motion.*

## Colin Cuts First Sod



Member **Colin Shutt**, renowned for his replica Ford railmotor which appeared at Tenterden during our members' weekend in 2007, is pictured above cutting the first sod on his East Wressle & Brind Railway.

Will it and the Ford rail lorry he is building be ready for a visit by members taking a detour after the AGM and tour of the National Railway Museum in York, we wonder? •

# ANOTHER MEMORABLE WEEKEND

*The Society's newly-elected secretary and publicity officer,*  
**KERRY BAYLIS, reports on this year's members' weekend**

Once again the CSS Members' Weekend has come around and gone. It only seems like yesterday that many of us met up in Devon for the 2008 jolly! This year it was Shrewsbury for the Shropshire & Montgomeryshire and the Snailbeach District Railways.

## **Kinnerley Junction**

After the brief AGM (reported on elsewhere in this issue), came the part that most members enjoy. Stuart Marshall, our Archivist, with the help of members of the Shrewsbury Railway Heritage Trust (SRHT for short) managed to pack a lot into a short timescale. Following the buffet lunch, we started with some much-needed exercise by walking the first part of the track bed out of the old Abbey Station. After half a mile or so, we boarded two coaches and headed off to follow the route of the railway as much as was possible. A stop was made at Shrawardine to view the site of the viaduct and we then made our way to Kinnerley Junction. Through the help of the landowner we were able to walk up to the site of the shed and workshops. The WD-built water tower is still in situ and even has the pipe with part of the 'bag' still fitted. Not bad, considering everything closed 49 years ago! Society members helped to identify a grounded van body that we believe may have been used as a store by the army although it is known that similar van bodies were placed at locations before the army commandeered the railway in the 1940s.

## **Maesbrook Station**

Leaving Kinnerley, we made our way to Maesbrook Station, the home of Terry Mansell and his wife, who are both members of the CSS. Terry, who has lived there since early childhood showed us round and produced many artefacts that he had collected over the years. Two interesting

features were a gate from the original S&M before the army took over and the 'Potts' weighbridge house in the yard.

## **Melverley Viaduct**

From Maesbrook we headed for the Tontine Inn for a welcome cup of tea, or maybe something stronger! Following our break, one coach meandered its way back to Shrewsbury via various points of interest, while the minicoach headed up to Criggion. Although unable to stop due to time constraints we crossed Melverley Viaduct and saw the sites of Crew Green and Criggion stations and also the source of most of the traffic on the branch, the Breidden Quarry Companies crushing plant. Heading back towards Shrewsbury, we stopped at a couple of bridges that have not been demolished and finished our tour back at Abbey Foregate.

## **Pontesbury in a cloudburst**

An earlyish start was made on Sunday morning when one coach left for the trip to Snailbeach. After stopping at Pontesbury to view the exchange siding – in a cloudburst I might add – we continued to the Snailbeach Mine. This was originally a lead mine in the 19<sup>th</sup> century and was then mined for pyrites up to the mid 1950s. Following an introduction to the site in the old engine shed, originally home to the Snailbeach District Railways' locomotives, the party split up with some doing a site tour and the remainder an underground tour. We entered the mine and walked in for about 200 yards to a large cavern that was being worked when the mine closed. Well, walked is probably the wrong description as at times the roof level was below 5 feet! Although hard hats were supplied (thank goodness!) we all had to supply our own torches and boots. It was explained that in olden days the only light was from a candle. It certainly

makes you think. After the tour, we travelled the short distance to the Stiperstones Inn for a very enjoyable meal and then headed back to Shrewsbury, our Members' Weekend 2009 at an end.

Thanks must be given to Stuart and the members of the SRHT for making this another memorable CSS weekend.

### **David Powell adds:**

The last time I was at what is now the Shropshire Wildlife Centre, where the AGM took place, was around 1956 when it was a timber yard and I bought some 2 x 1 for my first model railway baseboard! The grounded MR 8 ton box van body seen at Kinnerley is easily reproduced in 7mm with Slater's kit 7040. At one stage, such bodies could be seen at several SMR stations.

### **Two contrasting thoughts from Les Darbyshire:**

Preparing for our AGM in an 800-year-old building and seeing, through the stained glass windows, two GWR Castles double-heading a special, quite surreal I thought; one sort of preservation seen from another. Then, standing on the track bed at Kinnerley and comparing what was there (or rather not there) now with what was there last time I came about ten years or so ago: over bridge filled in, station building gone, WD loco shed gone. Not much preservation here! Will there be anything to see in another ten years?

### **Albyn Austin was impressed by Snailbeach:**

The Sunday saw us head out beside the Welshpool line, visit Pontesbury and walk the track bed to the vicinity of the exchange sidings, now private woodland, in the pouring rain. Plans for a narrow gauge line near the quarry were reported to be on hold. It was still raining at Snailbeach but the engine shed was opened for us, and we were briefed about the mine and the railway. There is a very nicely rebuilt hopper wagon, which was pushed out when the rain eased, and a Fordson tractor similar to the one that worked the line in its last years. ●

## **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*

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

*Tel: 01974 821281 Fax: 01974 821548*

*Email: nigelbird.books@virgin.net*

*Website: <http://www.nigelbirdbooks.co.uk>*

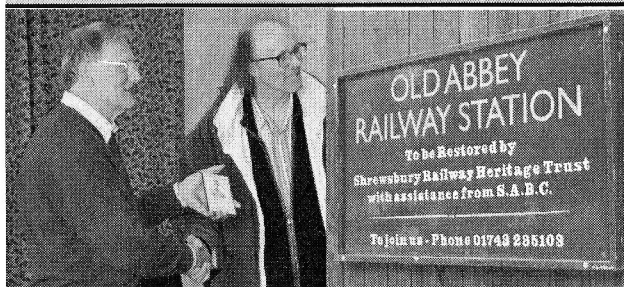
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# A SHROPSHIRE GALLERY

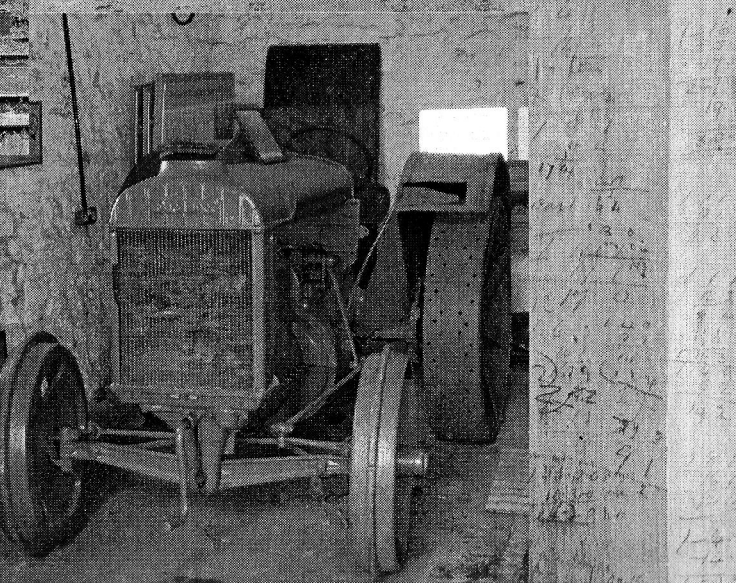


*Clockwise from left: Les Darbyshire presents Mansell Williams, Chairman of the SHRT, with a CD of last train on the SMR; announcement at side of SMR Abbey station site; Ted Jones of SHRT presents Les with map of SMR; group huddle in pouring rain at Snailbeach; graffiti inside weighbridge at Maesbrook showing weights of goods for transport; tractor inside Snailbeach loco shed; ex-MR 8 ton box van at Kinnerley; weighbridge at Maesbrook: some of the group on Maesbrook platform. Middle: restored SDR hopper wagon at Snailbeach.*

**PHOTOS:**  
David Powell,  
Les Darbyshire,  
Stuart  
Marshall,  
Ross Shimmom  
& Kerry Baylis

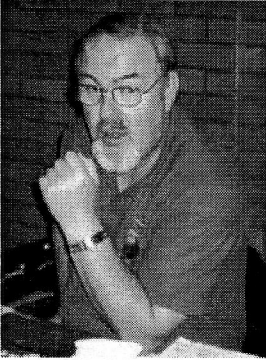


For more photos visit:  
[www.colonelstephensociety.co.uk](http://www.colonelstephensociety.co.uk)



## SOCIETY NEWS

### Kerry takes over



Kerry Baylis (pictured) was elected unopposed at the AGM as the new Secretary & Publicity Officer. He takes over from Guy Hardy who decided to stand down because of other commitments. Chairman Les Darbyshire

thanked him for his work, especially in raising the profile of the society. All the other officers were re-elected unopposed for a further year. A full list appears on page 2. •

### 10,000 visitors

Bruce Hunt, our web manager, reported at the AGM that the Society website, relaunched last year, had received its 10,000th visitor. Members may have caught site of Bruce on BBC TV with Julia Bradbury in a Countryfile programme featuring a walk across Brunel's Saltash viaduct. Bruce appealed for more photographs and other contributions to the website which is growing into a substantial resource. Check it out at:

[www.colonelstephenssociety.co.uk](http://www.colonelstephenssociety.co.uk)

Bruce's address is on page 2. •

### Recruitment steady

David Powell, our Membership Secretary reported to the AGM that recruitment for our small specialist society "remains encouraging". We gained 21 new members and the total membership stood at 308, a net loss of just four on this time last year. Main sources of new members are the web site, distribution of brochures and 'missionary work' especially at shows. •

### Bird: Income drops - so does expenditure

Society Treasurer, Nigel Bird, reported in his absence, that "as might be expected, given the present downturn, we as a society are suffering a little". A slight fall in subscription income and a fairly large drop in donations was noticeable. However, this was matched by a fall in expenditure, helped by the fact that committee members absorbed some of their costs. The committee does not meet formally, but conducts its business entirely by email. Overall, the finances were in good shape and he saw no reason for an increase in subscriptions for the coming year. The meeting later agreed to maintain them at the current level. The accounts appear on the opposite page. •

### Exciting three-year programme ahead

Following the great success of our meetings in recent years, Society chairman, Les Darbyshire, announced at the AGM a three-year programme of members' week-ends. Next year, the AGM will be held at the National Railway Museum at York, followed by the opportunity to see some of the large collection of Stephens-related items, including, of course, the KESR horse bus. It is hoped that we can combine this with a visit to the Derwent Valley Railway and/or to Colin Shutt, builder of the replica Ford railmotor seen at Tenterden in 2007. It has not yet been possible to fix a date for the NRM meeting, but it is expected to be in May, 2010. Les told the meeting that Nigel Bird has offered to organise the 2011 week-end on the Welsh Highland, possibly based at Beddgelert, to enable us to explore the re-opened line. The East Kent Railway has offered to host our 2012 meeting at Shepherdswell, which could be followed by a visit to Robertsbridge. •

# SOCIETY NEWS

## FINANCIAL STATEMENT YEAR ENDING 6.5.09

(2008 Figures in brackets)

### INCOME

Subscriptions	£2066.00	(£2210.00)
Donations Received	£546.50	(£836.19)
Back Issue Sales	£ 0.00	(£59.20)
Badge Sales	£14.00	(£15.00)
Binder Sales	£0.00	(£22.60)
Guide Sales	£9.50	(£22.00)
DVD Sales	£3.00	(£117.00)
Biography Book Sales	£14.00	(£130.50)
Advertising in The Colonel	£130.00	(£0.00)
AGM 2008: Buffet Charges	£54.00	(£0.00) -
Raffle at AGM	£32.00	(£0.00)
Rye Meeting: lunch charges	£367.50	(£0.00)
Raffle at above	£25.00	(£0.00)
<b>SUB TOTAL</b>	<b>£3261.50</b>	<b>(£3412.49)</b>

### EXPENDITURE

Printing The Colonel (3 issues)	£528.00	(£845.00)
Postage and Stationery for The Colonel	£419.34	(£375.08)
Printing Membership Forms	£93.00	(£138.00)
Donations Made	£500.00	(£1000.00)
Made up thus-		
£500-Ffestiniog Railway (Re WHR/FR Archive Preservation)		
Committee etc., expenses.		
(D Powell)	£81.58	(£89.31)
(R Shimmon)	£38.18	(£62.53)
Kerry Baylis (attending exhibition to promote CSS)	£30.00	(£0.00)
AGM 2008 costs (coach, food etc)	£168.00	(£0.00)
Rye Lunch/Walk	£385.00	(£0.00)
Advertising (Heritage Rly. Mag.)	£131.10	(£0.00)
Membership Fees		
Welsh Highland Heritage Group	£15.00	(£0.00)
Shrewsbury Railway Heritage Trust	£25.00	(£0.00)
<b>SUB TOTAL</b>	<b>£2414.20</b>	<b>(£2710.92)</b>

Balance as per Bank Statement 6.5.09      £2444.55

#### Deposit Account

Balance at 9.5.08	£3299.27
Plus interest earned	£34.01
Balance at 9/5/09	£3333.28
<b>TOTAL CASH ASSETS.....</b>	<b>£5777.83      (£4896.52)</b>

**Nigel Bird**  
**Treasurer**



## SOCIETY NEWS

### Help Celebrate the BPGV Centenary at Pontyates

All Society members are invited to take part in the celebrations on **Sunday 2nd August** to mark the centenary of the conversion of the Burry Port & Gwendraeth Valley Railway to carry passengers. **Guy Hardy** reports that the celebration will be centred around a display at Pontyates station, which they are cleaning especially. Gwendraeth Railway Society Chairman, Stuart Thomas, has had Romanian volunteers in action on the job. GRS members are invited back for a reciprocal visit working on their narrow gauge railway in Transylvania. The form of the event will be guided walks along the BPGV right of way with slide/video presentations in the evening of the canal and the railway with talks by the managing director and a local canal aficionado. They are hoping to arrange a visit to the nearby Llanelli and Mynydd Mawr Railway at Cynheidre (the oldest railway in Wales), where they are thinking they might have their steam engine primed up. They are also working at replicating the tour of the line by vintage bus which CSS members found so enjoyable in 2006. At Pontyates, CSS Treasurer Nigel Bird will have his bookstall, your editor will have the society stand and the Gwendraeth Society will of course be there also. Come along for another cracking day out! More details will appear on our website and on our Yahoo discussion list as they emerge. ●

### Donations

**Les Darbyshire** reported that, although it had been agreed at last year's AGM that the Society would support the Colonel Stephens Museum in its attempt to acquire an EKR 'Public Notice Not To Trespass' notice, the museum was outbid. It was agreed to support the museum in another bid, this time for an EKR hand lamp. It was hoped that the museum would be successful this time. The committee was given discretion to decide on future grants. Suggestions from the floor included support for the work

On the Rother Valley extension from Boddiam and a possible further donation towards the restoration of the WHHR *Russell*. ●

### Insurance

The AGM was informed that the outgoing secretary, **Guy Hardy**, had put in place public liability insurance in time for this year's visits to the remains of the S&M and S&D railways that weekend. ●

### LUCKY WINNERS

The winners of the raffle held during the coach tour of the remains of the SMR during the Members' Weekend were:

**Chris Jackson**, who won the book by ES Tonks on the Shropshire & Montgomeryshire, **Stuart Marshall** who chose the *Snailbeach District Railways*, also by ES Tonks, while **Paul Blurton** went home with a copy of the Middleton Press volume *Branch Line to Shrewsbury*. The first two were donated by Nigel Bird; the third came from Ross Shimmon. The raffle raised £63 towards the costs of the weekend. ●

### Presentations

During the AGM, Les Darbyshire presented the Chairman of our hosts, the Shrewsbury Railway Heritage Trust, Mansell Williams with a CD copy of the film of the last train on the S&M. In reciprocation, Ted Jones of the SRHT presented Les Darbyshire with a framed, detailed map of the S&MR. It was agreed that, since the Society has no premises of its own, it would be given to the Colonel Stephens Museum in Tenterden. Philip Shaw has indicated that it will be displayed alongside the famous S&M locomotive *Gazelle*. ●

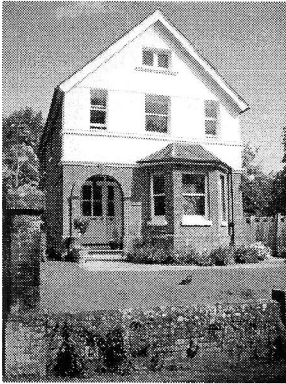
### Cards

Members at the AGM saw mock-ups of the Christmas cards and notelets to be sold by the Society later in the year. Based on superb paintings by renowned artist Jonathan Clay, featuring *Gazelle* and trailer at Kinnerley, the cards are expected to sell at £1 each including envelopes, postage extra. Full details in the next issue. ●

## NEWS

## HFS Found at Robertsbridge!

In *Colonel 94*, Philip Shaw reported on his search of the recently released 1911 Census to find out where Colonel Stephens was living at that time. His first attempts drew a blank. But further work has been



more successful, as Philip says:

*At last I have found him! The address is Hillside, Robertsbridge (where we know that he lodged from time to time). He is shown as "Ed Holman Stevens" in*

*the name index. The other occupants were Sarah Reeves aged 56, Head of Household and her aunt Sarah Butcher aged 84. HFS is classified as a "Boarder" and a "Civil Engineer" Both of the ladies were widows!*

But there is a further minor mystery to be solved; in the 'marital status' column he is recorded as "LYW". We have been unable to discover what this means, but it has been suggested that it is a transcription error for U/M or unmarried. The photo of 'Hillside' (above), taken in 2008 was supplied by Brian Janes. ●

## North Devon & Cornwall Junction Video

Recently-joined member Ian Pringle has reminded us that we can enjoy memories of the last days of steam-hauled over the Colonel's North Devon & Cornwall Junction Railway, filmed by Ian in the 1960s and released by Branch Line Video on their DVD *Memories of the Barnstaple - Torrington - Halwill Junction Lines*. Content includes then and now views, useful for visitors to the areas. Available from good video stockists or direct from BLV, 84 Himley Green, Leighton Buzzard LU7 2QA for £18.95, including P&P. ●

## SHOWS

In addition to the shows mentioned overleaf at Waterbeach, Cambridgeshire, and Wells, Somerset, Alan Bone reminds us of the Erith MRS exhibition at Bexleyheath (St. Martin's Church Hall, Erith Road) on Saturday & Sunday **19/20 September**, and their annual charity Wilmington exhibition (St. Michael's Church Hall, Church Hill, Wilmington, Dartford) on Saturday & Sunday **10/11 October**. Many of the preserved railways connected with the Colonel will be represented. ●

**David Powell** tells us that the June issue of *Steam Days* has good article on the Tanat Valley Light Railway. Its link with the original 'Potts', says David, means that many SMR fans have a soft spot for the line. ●

## 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](http://www.rvr.org.uk)

## MODELLING THE COLONEL'S LINES

Andrew Hastings describes his 4mm layout 'High Middenden'.

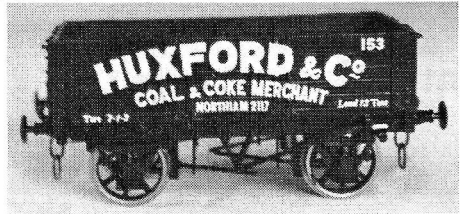
Why KESR? Holiday memories of one of the best preserved railway rides, the purchase of a blue 'Terrier' and an appreciation of light railways were the main



reasons. High Middenden purports to be a 'might have been' twiglet branching off the northern section of the KESR. It is set in the austerity era of the 1940s, the last years of independence. In common with many others, the line was run down, overgrown and worn out after years of wartime over use.

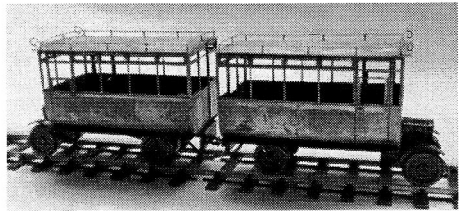
The locomotives are Terriers, either *Bodiam* or an ex-IoW variant with an extended bunker, and an *Austerity Conqueror*. A five train sequence, representing one day's services has been developed. Three passenger trains run to and from Tenterden and Rolvenden. A parcels van is added to the early morning service and there is an occasional horse box or cattle wagon brought in by passenger train. The last train of the day sometimes runs as a mixed, carrying perishables. A daily goods brings in the usual coal, agricultural goods and sundries. Wagon loads are removable. A petrol terminal was added to hide the fiddle yard and to allow for a block train of tankers. The sequence takes about 30 minutes.

The next outing for High Middenden is at the Farmland Museum and Denny Abbey at Waterbeach, Cambridgeshire on **26 July**.



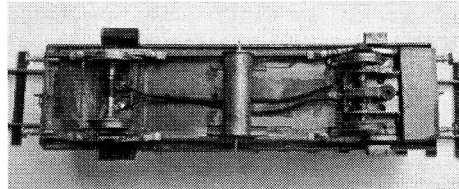
Andrew has also sent in the above picture by his son, SJ Hastings, of a 10mm scale open wagon built from Tony Riley kit.

Richard Jones has sent in some shots of railmotor kits in the course of construction, pictured below:



Above is a *Taurgem* kit of a *Ford* set. Below is the underframe of the *Pickering* railcar made up from Trevor Charlton sides.

Richard suggests that the motorising method may be of interest to those building the *Steam* and *Things* kit; split axle pick up on all four wheels.



Robin Gay's 4mm (P4) layout based on Rolvenden will be showing for the first time at Wells town hall, Somerset on **8th and 9th August**. Set in the 1920s, it is based on Les Darbyshire's drawings, backed up by photographs.

Both Andrew and Robin will be glad to meet Society members at these shows. Please make yourself known to them. ●

## ROBERTSBRIDGE - OR BUST

GRAHAM BALDWIN, *General Manager of the KESR, poses questions about the "inevitable" extension to Robertsbridge*

I drove down to Bodiam West to see the extension. It is thought provoking to say the least. The inevitable extension to Robertsbridge raises a number of issues and questions. To stir the pot here are a few provocative thoughts:

Visitors fund our existence. Our journey time is already at its maximum length for young families. To maintain journey times we would need lifting barriers to enable round trips, or we could split the service at Bodiam (i.e. Tenterden - Bodiam and Robertsbridge to Bodiam) but that would need more trains. Which or both? We timetable for crossings to be train crew operated as we cannot guarantee crossing keepers, apart from on special event days.

If you lived in west Kent or Surrey or London, would you use the A21 to go to Robertsbridge or the cross country route to Tenterden? My guess would be the former. Could Tenterden then become a relative ghost site? To prevent that we would need a really attractive offer at Tenterden (eg large Museum) to encourage visitors to the site.

If lots of visitors go to Robertsbridge would we need a large buffet there and a shop? The answer, of course, is yes. Would we then be paying twice the overheads for say 1.25 times the current turnover?

If there was a Parkway station on the A21 should stations at Salehurst and Udiam be re-created? They would slow down journey times and, even if they were "Halts", we would have to timetable trains to stop when planning passing moves. In recreating a heritage experience there is a strong argument for reproducing the stations. Could the halts be built for exhibition purposes and the trains not stop there at all, apart from during special events?

Where would the locomotives come from to do this job? We need a couple more engines like the Pannier. Loco owners want covered accommodation for their engines

and high steaming fees.

What sort of increase in passenger numbers might we expect and for how long? Is the extension to Bodiam a good model to use as an example?

An extended railway would increase direct costs (fuel, permanent way, f&c, s&t) by 30%. What would be the impact on locos and rolling stock from the extra mileage? The impact on catering and the shop would be potentially double the overhead for stock and labour. What would the increase in revenue be? We could not justify adding 30% to our costs for 25% additional revenue. Philip Shaw would remind us that running trains is a loss-making exercise. I don't have all the answers, but the questions do need answering. ●

*This article is based on one in the internal newsletter of the KESR, with the kind permission of Graham Baldwin.*



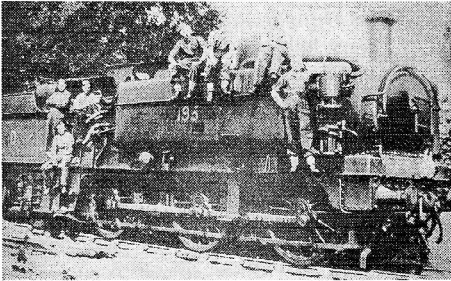
▲ Ex-SECR O1 0-6-0 No.65, pictured by Graham Baldwin during the highly successful 'The Last Train's Gone' Gala on the KESR in May, held to mark the 55th anniversary of the last trains to run over the full length of the line.

# DISPATCHES

*Letters to the Editor*

## Rail Guns

Further to the article in the last issue on rail guns, I enclose a couple of photos of the Dean Goods locomotives that were used.



They were standard GWR engines modified by the War Department for use when smoke and steam given off would be a disadvantage to the security of the trains they were hauling, eg armoured tanks. As you will see they had pannier tanks added, together with condensing gear.

**Helen Brett**

## St Leonards on Sea

*[Many thanks Helen. I couldn't get permission to reproduce the photo from Steam Railway 292, January 2004, p86 which shows the left hand side of WD199 at Hull Springhead. The above photo of WD195 is from the RVR archives/museum - Ed.]*

For a publication based on the historical activities of a light railway engineer living in the latter part of the 19th and early 20th century, it never ceases to surprise me how many editions you and your predecessors have achieved. I look forward to No.95.

Following up on the *Heavy Metal in Kent* article in 94; as a boy I lived within 200 yards of Eythorne station. During the early part of the war a rail-mounted gun was held for a few months on the single goods siding immediately to the north of, and parallel to, the station platform. However, it could not fire from this position and was subsequently moved onto an upgraded section of track (OS 286496) which used to serve the branch to Coldred colliery. In this latter position the gun was out-rigged for firing. But I have no first-hand knowledge of the event.

**John Simmonds**  
Via email

## Driver Gatford

Having read with interest Albyn Austin's article on Driver Gatford and his probable movements in *Colonel 92*, I was fascinated to come across a letter of 29th May 1940 from WH Austen to the WC&P's receiver concerning certain payments, a copy of which I attach. It says, in part:

*With regard to the last paragraph of your letter, the cheque for £3.3.0 in favour of Driver T.J. Gatford represents assistance towards the cost of the removal of his furniture from Clevedon to Rochester. This man ceased to be employed on the closing of the line, May 18th 1940.- He has been a good servant, and has been with the Company for a considerable number of years, and it was considered it would not be unreasonable to help him to a small extent...*

This is confirmation of Albyn's researches and a nice insight into the generous patronage behind the operation of the Stephens empire. I am sure that the three guineas were most welcome in the Gatford family's move back to old haunts.

**Brian Janes**

**Colonel Stephens Museum, Tenterden**

Mr. Thomas Gatford came to the WC&PR from the Shropshire & Montgomeryshire where he was working in 1935. There is a picture of him on the SMR Terrier *Dido* outside Kinnerley shed on page 35 of *The Shropshire and Montgomeryshire Light Railway* by Keith and Susan Turner. I lent the book to my father, guard Dan Carey, when he was in hospital in 1982. He said: *Have a look on page 35 and tell me if you know anyone.* When I replied that I didn't, he retorted: *Yes you do. That's Tommy Gatford there.* He wondered what had happened to him after the line closed. No one seemed to know; he just disappeared from Clevedon. By this time father was working on the GWR. Mr. Gatford arrived on the WC&P in 1936. He replaced driver Albert Sharpe, who retired through ill health. He became the driver in father's crew and was present for the trial run of *Clevedon* after she

*Letters to the Editor*

was overhauled. Father said that he was a damned good engine man. He also told me that he was a RSM in WW1 and had been in charge of an engine shed in France, so he must have been in the Railway Operating Division of the REs. I believe that he had been a long-serving soldier before going to work on the Snailbeach Railway. I remember him well as he took me on my very first footplate ride on Terrier No.4 when it was new on the line in 1937, instructing me to blow the whistle, open the regulator and apply the brake slowly; something I will never forget. I often used to talk to him at Clevedon station while waiting for a train to depart. He always had time for a chat with me. I was at Portishead station when both dad and Mr. Gatford told me the line would be closed before I was old enough to work on it. They were right. I think you will find that Mr. Gatford was a Ministry of Aircraft Production policeman here in Swindon. There was a big Army supply depot which had a large railway complex with three or four steam locomotives plus some Gardner diesels, guarded by uniformed policemen. I bet he looked smart in his uniform.

**Howard Carey  
Swindon**

*Caught on camera*

Thank you for pointing out that I appear in *Branches and Byways: Kent*, with Laurel and Hardy on the RHDR. I see I am also on the top of Page 15; a 15-year old with back slightly to camera and a haircut that looks like Frank Spencer's beret, with Nelson Wood, who was leaving for Robertsbridge on the late evening service that ran Wednesdays and Saturdays in Summer. He taught me to drive the railcars, with me doing most of the driving to Robertsbridge and back. I'd already done a day's work in the office at Tenterden. This was just before going to the EKR as agent at Eastry.

The other man in uniform was Harry Simmonds with his wife and daughters who had come down from Tintown up the hill to meet him from work. The next photo below is the only one I've ever seen of Jimmy

Norton, the printer and station agent at Rolvenden. He's closing the gates.

**Monty Baker  
Via email**

*Hecate/Severn*

I was intrigued by the Dispatch relating to the S&M loco *Hecate*, renamed *Severn*, in *Colonel 94*. There is much confusion and disagreement about this engine. Three examples follow.

In the September 1934 issue of *The Railway Magazine*, Charles Klapper wrote the first of two articles on the S&M. In the first he devoted almost a paragraph to No. 2 *Hecate/Severn*, basing his findings on information provided by RW Kidner. Klapper claimed that No.2 was built in 1840 by Bury for the Shrewsbury & Hereford Railway. But that cannot be right, as the S&HR was not constructed until the early 1850s. If Bury did build the loco, and it did have many of that engineer's hallmarks, he did not build it for the S&H. Klapper goes on to state that No.2 was purchased from Griff Colliery by the S&M in 1911, a Mr. Hartley overseeing the transaction. Apart from the Shropshire and Hereford theory and Griff Colliery, the whereabouts of No.2 from its construction to its arrival on the S&M is left to the reader's imagination. Klapper bemoans the fact that, by being scrapped in 1931, it was not allowed to reach its centenary. The Colonel himself had considered the possibility, Klapper states.

The second opinion on No.2 comes from George Woodcock in his 1970 publication by Goose Books, *Minor Railways of England and Their Locomotives*. Woodcock devotes a lot of space to *Hecate/Severn* which he believes was built by Bury, Curtis and Kennedy at their Clarence Foundry in Liverpool. He opines that it might have been a conversion of an earlier 'main line' loco. Indeed, he states that a similarly converted loco worked on the Bristol Port and Pier Railway. He does not suggest, however, that *Hecate/Severn* ever worked on that line. He dismisses the idea of Klapper that No.2 was

► *Continued on next page*

# DISPATCHES

## Letters to the Editor

► From previous page

built for the S&H, whose early passenger engines, he insists, were built by Vulcan Foundry in 1853 when the line opened. Woodcock says that originally the loco was named *Crewe* and may have worked on the LNWR. He avers that the engine was obtained by Colonel Stephens from Mr Hartley for £350 in 1911. Woodcock agrees with Klapper that it had worked at Griff Colliery, Nuneaton. It was reconditioned by Bagnall's before going to the S&M. He gives the date of scrapping as 1932.

The third commentator on *Hecate/Severn* is Jim Pike in *Locomotive Nameplates*, published by Sutton in 2000. He cautiously supports the theory that Bury built the loco for the Shrewsbury & Hereford in 1840. This seems very strange thirty years after Woodcock disposed of the idea. Moreover, Pike adds that it was named *Severn* by the Shrewsbury & Hereford. He claims that it was renamed *Hecate* by the S&M, but 'quickly' reverted to *Severn*. Interestingly Klapper states that the renaming took place in 1916 when No.2 received brass nameplates lettered *Severn* in place of the painted *Hecate*.

Add to all this the views of other commentators and the information in the original Despatch by Mark Smithers in *Colonel 94*, plus the replies by Les Darbyshire and Brian Janes, and No.2 *Hecate/Severn* provide a mystery worthy of Sherlock Holmes.

**Alan Cliff**  
Lock's Siding

### Private Owner Wagons

Referring to the closure of Hythe Kent Models, previously a good source of P O wagon models, I have, over the past two years had ten PO wagons produced for me by Robbie's Rolling Stock (Robbie Burns, 2 Whites Close, Abergavenny, Monmouthshire NP7 5HZ [www.robbiesrollingstock.co.uk](http://www.robbiesrollingstock.co.uk) They have a list of over 1,000 transfers for 00 and N gauge, mainly for open wagons and they can supply wagons with lettering you ►

► specify. Simply supply a photograph of the original prototype. At present, the price of an open wagon, ready to run, is £9.50, plus postage. Another source of wagons from the Colonel's lines is the online store at the KESR [www.kesr.org.uk](http://www.kesr.org.uk) They currently have available KESR and WCPR wagons.

**Bryan Marshall**  
Bangor, Co. Down

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## Deadlines for 2009/10

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

**96: Autumn 2009: 15th August**

**97: Winter 2009: 15th November**

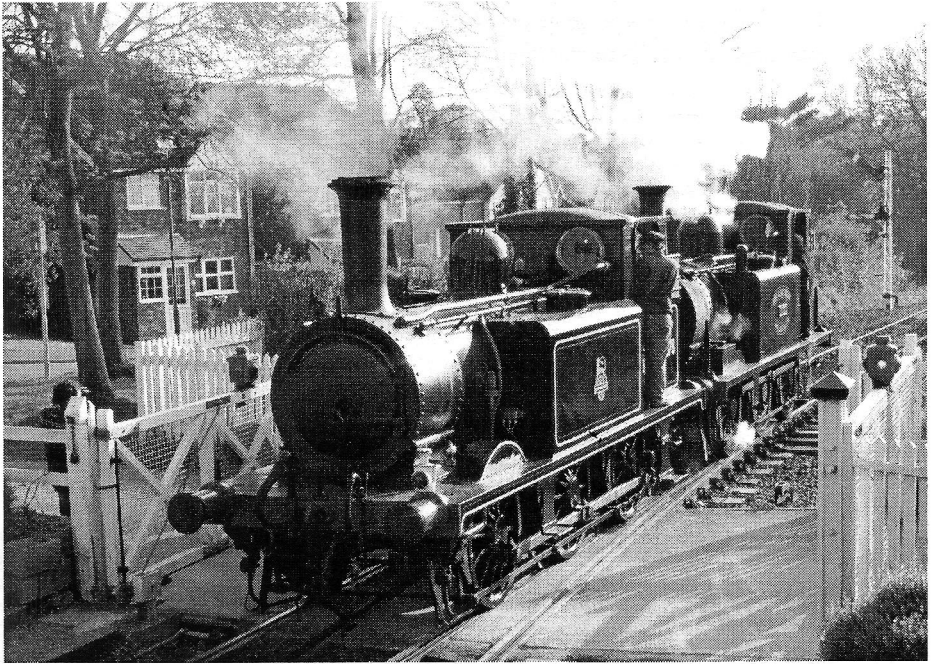
**98: Spring 2010: 15th February**

**99: Summer 2010: 15th May**

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

## Notes for contributors

Contributions to *The Colonel* are very welcome. Please send them to the Editor (address on p2). 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 ●

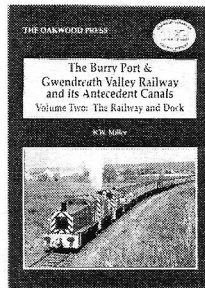


## “Friends Reunited”

This was how Hugh Nightingale of the Terrier Trust described his delightful photograph, *above*, of 32678 and *Bodiam*, leaving Tenterden. 32678 is recently back in traffic. Both engines were worked hard during the recent ‘Last Train’s Gone’ gala, marking 55 years since the last trains ran on the whole line, the closure of the Headcorn to Tenterden section and the withdrawal of regular passenger services. If you missed the gala, the Tenterden gift shop still has a few booklets with some fabulous photographs and a full timetable of the three days. Apart from anything else, it demonstrates just how complex the operating of a heritage railway can be. Fascinating stuff. The Terrier Trust exists to secure the future of both the Terriers on the KESR. If you wish to join the Trust either download the membership form from [www.terriertrust.org.uk](http://www.terriertrust.org.uk) or write to the secretary: Rebecca Nightingale, The Terrier Trust, 28 Manor Drive, Kingsnorth, Ashford TN23 3LP●

## Recent publications

The long-awaited second volume of *The Burry Port & Gwendreath Vallery Railway and its Antecedent Canals: The Railway and Dock*, by RW Miller has just been published by the Oakwood Press at £19.95. 344 pages long, it is copiously illustrated and is in the same style as the same publisher’s



*The East Kent Railway*. The first volume is still available at £12.95. A full review will appear in a future issue.

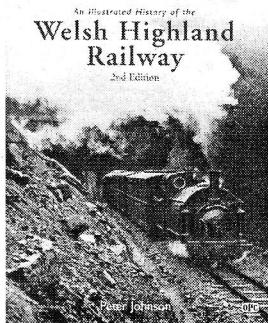
Meanwhile, Member Gerald Jacobs has published the third edition of Book 5 of his labour of love *Railway Track Diagrams (Southern and T/L)*, Bradford on Avon, 2008, £14.95 ISBN 978 0 9549866 4 3. Apart from the national network, it includes the current KESR and EKR track layouts. ●



## REVIEW

**An Illustrated History of the Welsh Highland Railway. 2nd edition. Peter Johnson. Hershaw: Oxford Publishing, 2009. Hardback. 292x216mm, 144pp. Illus. £19.99. ISBN 978 0 86093 626 8**

The first edition was fully reviewed in *Colonel 89*, page 21. It was deservedly popular, having been reprinted twice. This new edition looks strikingly different, with a sombre monochrome picture on the dust jacket of *Palmerston* with a test train on the newly opened WHR in 1923, compared with the multi-coloured cover of the first. Inside, by contrast, there are many coloured illustrations, not only the those covering work on the recent rebuilding, but also historic plans, maps and tickets.



Although published at the same price as the first edition, the revised version has 16 more pages. The difference is immediately obvious with new, detailed maps by Gordon Rushton on the endpapers.

Although the most striking difference between the two volumes is the large number of colour photographs and text describing the rebuilding project, it is noticeable that the first chapter on the development of the route from 1863 to 1914 has increased by eleven pages as the author uncovered more

sources of the early history of the line. Peter Johnson has, of course, been intimately involved in the reconstruction project, having drafted the 1999 Welsh Highland Railway Transport & Works Order. He is also the railway's official photographer. The book undoubtedly benefits from this connection, with some stunning aerial shots and many pictures of the engineering works, including works trains. Those who harbour the delusion that narrow gauge railways are quaint throwbacks to an earlier age might have their mind changed by several pictures of heavy engineering as the work progressed. Also new to this volume are appendices covering slate tonnage 1883-84, revenue for 1877-1918 and traffic from 1877-1915 on the NWNCR, traffic and receipts on the Croesor & Portmadoc Railway, 1904-19 and WHR traffic and receipts, 1922-33. As in the first edition, there is a good index, but the list of Parliamentary Powers has not reappeared.

The big question that has to be answered when a new edition of any book appears is: is it worth buying the new one? In this case, I think the answer is yes. There is a great deal of new material covering both the early history and recent developments. The colour pictures of the reconstruction work are fascinating and cover such recent events as the first trains to use the flat crossing of the standard gauge Cambrian line. But will there need to be a third edition to encompass the running of the full service from Caernarfon to Porthmadog? Highly recommended.

Ross Shimmer

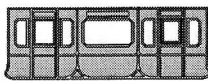
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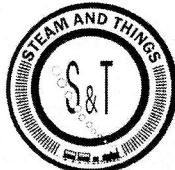
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## Press Digest *Our regular round-up of the railway press*

**T**he indefatigable Ian Dack has sent in more cuttings from that treasure chest at Weybourne station on the NNR, plus some other sources. Chief amongst the gems is a series entitled 'Belligerent Baldwins' which started in the November 1997 issue of *British Railway Modelling*. As Ian says "These drawings must be some of the best available" Another gem from Ian is a beautifully illustrated articles on the Brighton **Terriers** in *Model Rail* for February 2002. It includes prototype photos and instructions for modifying the Dapol/Hornby model to represent the various modifications made to them over the years. The late Les Spratt's model of *Bodiam* is also featured. Dapol has just introduced **Terriers** in N gauge, which has excited interest in many magazines, including the June 2009 *Railway Modeller*. Unlike the 00 models, there are two versions; the original style bunker and the extended one. But as the *Modeller* says they are in effect compromises between the A1 and A1X. Neither has the elegant wing plate of the original. Still, it is a marvel that a recognisable Terrier has been produced in such a small scale. While we are discussing **Terriers**, get hold of a copy of *Railway Bylines* for June 2009. There are four delightful shots of *Bodiam* on the **KESR** with a society special in 1967. Another shot of the same special appeared in the previous issue. The early history of preserved lines is now receiving a fair amount of nostalgic attention, so it was good to receive from Christopher Mitchell a copy of an article from *Railway World* for January 1984 on a trip on the 'Last Steam by-way' (known to us as the **KESR**). The copy of the article is accompanied by some caustic corrective comments from Chris! By the way, we see from the auction house ads in several magazines that a smoke box number plate from 32670, otherwise **KESR** No.3, has recently fetched £2,900. There's still not much sign of the downturn affecting railwayana prices.

If you have been following the exchanges in 'Dispatches' about the **SMR**

locomotive **Hecate/Severn**, you might like to track down the *Railway Modeller* for July 2005 for a well-illustrated article by Bob Alderman on scratch building the loco in 7mm. More of Ian Dack's finds include a two-part article on the **SMR**'s predecessor 'The Potts' entitled *The Potteries Railway and How it Failed*, by Brian Janes in the *HMRS Journal*, starting in the July-September 2007 issue. Coming full circle, there is a feature, with four colour shots, on the last train on the **SMR** in *Back Track*. Unfortunately, no date appears on this photocopy. The **LSWR** Saddleback 0-6-0STs saw service on the **East Kent** and the **KESR**. They feature in two more articles retrieved by Ian Dack, one from the October 2000 issue of *Steam Days*, whilst the *SLS Journal* for September/October has two photos of each loco. Speaking of saddle tanks *The Southern Way No.4* has a very grainy shot of *Daphne* on the scrap line at Eastleigh in 1932, accompanied by a Terrier.

As we noted in the last *Colonel*, JIC Boyd, well-known historian of the **Festiniog** and other railways died earlier this year. *The Guardian* carried a short obituary of him by Peter Johnson on 10th April. A longer one by AC Gray appeared in the *Festiniog Heritage Group Journal* 97, Spring 2009 and another by John Keylock in *Welsh Highland Heritage* 43. *The Guardian* travel section on 30th May had a two-page feature on the **Welsh Highland**, with a superb large aerial shot of a train in the Aberglaslyn pass. Most of the railway magazines have covered in detail the re-opening of the **Welsh Highland** line. But did you notice that one newspaper referred to WHR No. 87 as a 'Grey Carrot'. Think about it. *Steam Railway* 363, May/June reported that the WHR opening to Beddgelert had boosted traffic by 90%, compared to the same period in 2007.

We are used to 'free gifts' these days, but we've never received one with a preservation society magazine. Is this a first for *The Phoenix* of the **RVR**? The latest issue includes a 4mm card kit for a Stephens station building. ●

# Jackson's Jottings

## APPLICATIONS TAILING OFF

**CHRIS JACKSON**, continuing his trawl through the archives of the *Railway Gazette*, finds that light railway applications are tailing off in late 1911, although there are references to interesting proposals that might have gone ahead but for WWI. Meanwhile, the Belgians continue to crack on.

### 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.

### December 8 1911 –

#### Light Railway Applications

The number of applications made to the Light Railway Commissioners last month for Light Railway Orders was 10, the applications in May last numbering 11. The total new mileage proposed is 53¼ miles, at an estimated cost for construction of £403,552. Of the new mileage, 5¼ miles are accounted for by a proposal of the North Staffordshire Railway, which seeks authority to work as light railways the “Canal Extension Railway” and part of the “Pool Dams Branch”, to widen and deviate the Canal Extension Line, and to construct new lines between Trentham, Newcastle-under-Lyme and Silverdale. Other proposed extensions of existing or authorised steam lines are Southwold Harbour (1 mile on the 3-ft. gauge), and East Kent (5¼ miles on the 4-ft. 8½-in. gauge). New steam line promotions on the 4-ft. 8½-in. gauge are, in England: Brandsby, 9½ miles; Swaledale, 10 miles; and in Wales, Conway Valley, 10¼ miles; and Milford and St Bride’s Bay, 11 miles. The only new proposal of the tramway class is an extension of 1¼ miles on the 3-ft. 6-in. gauge by the York Corporation.

### December 22 1911 –

#### Light Railway Development in Belgium

The report of the Belgian National Light Railways Company for the past financial year states that a total of 3,787 km. of light rail railways has been opened to traffic, whilst an additional 373 km. are under construction and 323 km. authorised. This gives an aggregate length of 4,483 km., a figure in excess of the total mileage of the main railway system. In addition, 129 new lines are at present before the Government for consideration, which brings the total length of all the light railways, constructed, building, authorised and under consideration, to 6,350 km., or approximately 3,970 miles. This mileage is divided into 306 distinct schemes. The length of the different routes varies considerably, amongst the new projects being five with a route length of 7.6, 18.9, 22.9, 29.9 and 31.7 km. respectively. The shortest of these is a light railway in Luxembourg, which is estimated to cost about £1,760 a mile - £1 a yard. This district is rather hilly, and on the score of cheapness, motor omnibus or Renard\* train services have in certain instances been proposed instead of light railways. The *Chemins de Fer Vicinaux* are mainly steam operated, but a steady, if slow, progress continues to be made in their conversion to electric traction. Thus the important Verviers – Spa line and the Mechlin Tramways are being electrified, whilst the numerous lines running into Ghent will also probably be converted. In the last case, it is proposed that the municipality will supply current. The total capital expenditure on Belgian Light Railways now amounts to over £12,110,000.

\* A Renard train was a multi-section powered road train. As Chris says “One wonders how the roads of the time would have stood up to it - let alone getting around the corners on rural lanes”. •