

ISSN 0268-778X

# *The* COLONEL

Number 112

Autumn 2013



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

## THE COLONEL'S STORES

**Subscriptions** *The Colonel* is distributed to members of the Colonel Stephens Society only. Membership of the Society costs £10 annually in the UK. Joint membership for two people, one *Colonel*, same address, is £12. Overseas membership is £15. Applications to our Membership Secretary (address on p.31).

**An Index to *The Colonel*** issues 1-111 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 Secretary (address on page 31). Price to members for up to 20 issues is £1.60 per issue, including UK postage. Orders above 20 at cost after contacting the Secretary. 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.

**DVDs** containing 39 rare **Shropshire & Montgomeryshire Railway photographs**, mostly of locomotives, from the WD Detachment photograph album, provided by Mike Christensen, author of *The SMLR under Military Control*. Book and DVD were reviewed in *Colonel 104*. This superb DVD is available from our Secretary (address on page 31) at the bargain price of £3 including p&p.

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**PLEASE NOTE PRICE INCREASES. More stores on page 31.**

**Website:** Visit our constantly updated website  
[www.colonelstephenssociety.co.uk](http://www.colonelstephenssociety.co.uk)

## Editorial: *Heritage to the Fore*

**R**unning heritage railways in the 21st century is no sinecure. Like it or not, they have to be tourist attractions competing with theme parks and the like in order to bring the visitors in. That means, among other things, good publicity and marketing, attractive events, clean, modern toilets and catering to compete with the many other organisations aiming at the tourist pound. None of these things is easy to achieve in the inevitably old buildings and vehicles which form the basis of our beloved preserved railways. Trying to achieve this with limited resources and in the face of many volunteers whose motivation stems from an interest in the historic rather than the modern can be a difficult balancing act. All this has to be done in addition to the hard graft of maintaining an operational railway just like any other. As a recent press release from the

Rother Valley Railway stated, lauding the work of volunteers from Network Rail and LU to lay track at Robertsbridge; "It's one thing to produce computer driven designs on a screen and quite another to actually wrestle with real track materials on the ground. One thing's for sure, everything you touch is heavy!" It's good to see organisations whose main concern is with the 'Big Railway' taking time to assist heritage railways. There are increasing examples of this as it is realised that many people travel by train to heritage sites. It is also heartening to see many heritage railways emphasising the historical aspects of their lines, developing museums, restoring original stock, and re-creating scenes from the past by reinstating infrastructure.

Ross Shimmon

*Front cover: Wrestling with real track materials on the ground. See page 26.*

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### IT'S THAT TIME!

Yes, it's time to renew your subs to the Colonel Stephens Society. We have been able to hold them down for several years, by keeping costs under control. One method we have used is to buy postage stamps in advance, so we were able to delay the impact of the recent savage increases.

But the last AGM reluctantly agreed that, to avoid running deficits, the basic subscription rate would have to rise to £10. We think that this is still very good value, comparing well with most other societies.

So please renew now in order to guarantee receipt of future issues of *The Colonel*. A renewal form is enclosed.

Our new **Christmas card** is featured on page 17. This time it is a strictly limited edition of 100 packs of five cards. There will be no reprint. **So please order early for Christmas!**

## A RIVAL TO THE COLONEL

TOM BURNHAM *unravels the story of Railway Developments Ltd., a potential rival to the Light Railways Syndicate Co. Ltd., and Economic Railways Co. Ltd., both of which involved the Colonel*

**T**he Light Railways Act of 1896 was passed amid considerable enthusiasm for the potential of improved communication to counter the depressed state of agriculture and to enable industry and employment to be more widely distributed across the country. In addition to light railways promoted by local interests and by main-line railway companies, several commercial companies were set up with the aim of profiting from the development of light railways under the new Act. Readers of *The Colonel* will probably be familiar with the Light Railways Syndicate Ltd. (incorporated in 1895) and the Economic Railways Co. Ltd. (incorporated in 1898) as both these companies involved H F Stephens as the engineer of the schemes they put forward. Also involved in both were the solicitor E W I Peterson and the barrister Henry C Gollan, although the other investors in the two companies were different.

### Walter Tait

One of the eight original subscribers to the Light Railways Syndicate was Walter John Tait, who described himself as a retired stockbroker, and gave the address of his father, a doctor, in Randolph Gardens, London NW. Tait described himself as a "retired stockbroker" (although he was only about 34) – in the 1881 census he is listed as a "merchant clerk" and in 1901 as a "commission agent". By September 1895, he had fifty of the 355 £1 shares that had so far been issued. W J Tait was born in the port of Coquimbo, Chile, in about 1861. His father George A F Tait, was surgeon to a British company dealing in copper and copper ore, and is still commemorated locally in the name of the "Pasaje Doctor Jorge Tait". In addition to his medical duties, Dr Tait also served at various times as the British and United States consul in Coquimbo.

### H C Gollan

Also in Coquimbo at this period was Alexander Gollan, a member of the Consular Service and father of H C Gollan, who was born in Coquimbo in 1868. We do not know how closely the two were acquainted, but it seems likely that it was through H C Gollan that Tait came to be involved with the light railway mania of the 1890s. However, his association with the Light Railways Syndicate does not seem to have been a long one. Possibly he fell out with E W I Peterson, who seems to have been an abrasive and litigious character, intolerant of those who did not subscribe to his own low-church variety of Anglicanism.

*"an abrasive  
and litigious  
character"*

### Cornwall

Be that as it may, we next come across W J Tait in Cornwall. In March 1898, it was reported in the local press that a syndicate connected with china clay extraction in West Cornwall was promoting the Penzance, Newlyn & St Just Light Railway to link these places, passing the Leswidden china clay workings en route. The engineer of the proposed line was John Russell, of Victoria Street, London.

### Economic Railways Co Ltd

They did not remain alone in the field for long, as on 1 April 1898, Stephens, Peterson and Gollan, with a number of other investors, registered the Economic Railways Co. Ltd. Among the objects of this company

were the construction of "(1) A Railway commencing at a point near the Station of the Great Western Railway Company in Penzance... and terminating at a point between or near the Land's End and the Town of St Just in the same County, (2) A Railway or Tramway between the Town of Penzance and the Port of Newlyn." In pursuit of these aims, the company applied for a Light Railway Order for a St Just, Land's End & Great Western Junction Light Railway, with Holman F Stephens as the engineer.

Although the Penzance, Newlyn & St Just had attracted a good deal of sympathy from the local councils, in mid-July 1898 the china clay syndicates ran into serious financial difficulties. With the disappearance of the railway's sponsors, it seemed as though the Economic Railways scheme would be the only one to be considered by the Light Railway Commissioners at the public inquiry that had been fixed for mid-August.

### ***Railway Developments Ltd***

However, rescue was at hand, as a company called Railway Developments Ltd. was incorporated on 23 July 1898 and took over the promotion of the Penzance, Newlyn & St Just. With an ambitious nominal capital of £100,000 (of which only £1870 was issued by December), the company's managing director was W J Tait. By coincidence or otherwise, the company's objects were identical, word for word, with those of the Light Railways Syndicate. Among the other investors in the company were Captain (later Major) Arnold Ernest Carrington of the 7th Battalion, Royal Fusiliers, Sir Israel Hart, a wholesale tailor and former mayor of Leicester, Lewis Henry Isaacs, a London architect, William King, a ship owner from Plymouth, John Russell, the civil engineer, and William Leggatt and Joseph Samuel Rubinstein, of the London solicitors Leggatt, Rubinstein & Co.

### ***Pyrrhic Victory***

After a second round of amended plans, Railway Developments beat their rivals by obtaining a Light Railway Order for the Penzance, Newlyn & West Cornwall Light Railway (confirmed 28 August 1899), though this was a pyrrhic victory as no

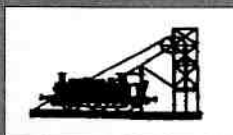
construction ever took place.

Railway Developments Ltd. went on to promote a number of other abortive schemes: A light railway from Duns (North British Railway) to Cornhill-on-Tweed in 1899. The Leicester, Anstey and Newtown Linford Light Railway in 1899. This would apparently have been a 5-mile electrified extension from the Leicester Tramways at Woodgate to Newtown Linford, including a connection to the Great Central Railway. The Highbridge, Wedmore & Cheddar Light Railway would have connected with the Somerset & Dorset and Great Western Railways at Highbridge and the Great Western at Cheddar. A Light Railway Order was granted in 1900, but the powers lapsed in 1905. The Wotton under Edge Light Railway would have connected with the Midland Railway at Charfield. A Light Railway Order was granted in 1900.

### ***The Last Laugh?***

W J Tait sold his shares in Railway Developments Ltd. in August 1900. By December 1900, Captain Carrington was the sole director and secretary, in 1901 no return was filed with Companies House and in December 1902 the company was dissolved. In many ways, Railway Developments Ltd., had a similar history to its rival, the Light Railways Syndicate. However, as one of the Syndicate's projects (the Sheppey Light Railway) was actually built and worked for half a century, perhaps Stephens and Peterson had the last laugh after all. •

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## RETURN TO BERE FERRERS

NIGEL BIRD *recounts a recent tour of the remaining branches (and pubs) in the far west of England*

**W**ay back in 2008, the CSS had a memorable (aren't they all?) members' weekend, based at The Tamar Belle, Bere Ferrers. This delightful location is adjacent to Bere Ferrers railway station on the branch line from Plymouth to Gunnislake (formerly the line went on to Callington) via Bere Alston, in which the Colonel, of course, had a hand.

I am sure all those that attended had an enjoyable time; with Chris Grove as mine host it's hard not too.

country.

Three of us left from Carmarthen station to meet up with Mark at Bristol Parkway, then on to Bere Ferrers. Sadly the Tiverton-Plymouth section was by motor coach, as engineering work prevented us going all the way by train.

### *Back on the train at Plymouth*

It was such a beautiful evening that we sailed passed Bere Ferrers (despite much waving from Chris on the platform) onto Calstock, 'just for the ride'. On our return we settled in to our accommodation for the

week, Chris's adapted sleeping cars. A good night's kip was had by all; just as well as we were going to be very busy. We had trips planned (by train) for all of the Cornish branches and some of the Devon ones to boot. On Monday we visited Looe (what a delight this branch is) and



*"A Colonel-esque contraption"*

Every year four loyal hardworking CSS members [*That's their story-Ed*] have a few days' away together (Steve Parr, Mark Bladwell and Iain Fraser, oh and me). Over the last few years, we have always been 'oop north', usually based on the Settle-Carlisle line at Ribbleshead or, last year, at Wylam.

### *Cornish branches by train*

For this year's trip we went south to Bere Ferrers, with the intention to travel all the Cornish branches by train as well as sample some of the local ales in the west

Falmouth.

### *Seems like Blackpool*

On Tuesday we travelled the Newquay branch, with a stop en route at Bugle for lunch (and ale), a highlight of which was a local saying "ah Newquay, that used to be in Cornwall" we know what he meant, sadly it seems like Blackpool now. A stop was made at Saltash on our return to view Brunel's wonderful Royal Albert Bridge from the Tamar Road Bridge, very impressive!

On Wednesday we were joined by royalty in the shape of Chris Redwood (he of

WC&P fame\*) for a few hours at "The Bridge" Topsham (on the Exmouth branch) what a pub that is. It should be listed by the National Trust it has so much character. After lunch we travelled the Barnstaple



Then ...

branch, sadly the last train for Lynton had left in 1935. A great day was had by all.

### ***Wet, wet, wet***

Thursday was our last day out and about and boy was it wet. We took the train from Plymouth to Penzance, then bus to Helston for The Blue Anchor (Home Brew Pub), which I have waited to visit since the late 1970s. It is one of only four original brew pubs in the UK (the others being The Three Tuns, Bishops Castle, The All Nations, Madeley and Ma Pardoe's, Netherton and was the last one I needed to bag the

set. It did not disappoint, even though the weather did.

### ***Colonel-esque contraption***

As a result of our very busy schedule we had little time to view all the many and varied exhibits that Chris has at The Tamar Belle, however as always there was lots going on. The main things that caught my eye were the recent arrival of some narrow gauge stock and loco and a very Colonel-esque contraption; a signal box built on an old cattle truck wagon chassis! The frame (ex-North London stirrup frame) was in place (a great fit too) but still open to the elements. Since our visit a donation of £500 towards this project has been authorised by your committee, which will go towards glazing and setting up a Stephens-style office with mementos and an historical interpretation of the Colonel's involvement with the P&DSWJR's Bere Alston & Callington Light Railway. A very unusual and worthwhile project. Looking around Chris's site (and at Chris) I do wonder if he and The Tamar Belle represent the second coming of "The Colonel". It looks so much like



... and now on the Callington Line

the pictures of old of some of our man's railways. Lots to do, not enough time or money, but run by someone whose passion never diminishes. Good on yer Chris.

He is always after new helpers (maybe the CSS should arrange a working week to help him out?) to get many of the outstanding jobs done (I just wish I was closer) and it's a grand place to stay to explore Cornwall and Devon (especially by rail, we had a South West Rover, excellent value). He would welcome your call on 07813 360066 or write to The Tamar Belle, Bere Ferrers Station, Yelverton, Devon. PL20 7LT, I am sure. We returned home on Friday, and it was even wetter with the promise of snow, so our intended call at the West Somerset Railway to see the GWR steam railmotor didn't happen. A great few days. I am sure we will be back soon! •

\* Redwood, Christopher. *The Weston, Clevedon and Portishead Railway*. 1981, Weston-super-Mare, Sequoia Publishing. ISBN 0 905466 42 X  
The Tamar Belle's website is:  
[www.tamarbelle.co.uk](http://www.tamarbelle.co.uk)

## Return to Robertsbridge

We were hoping to arrange a CSS group visit to participate in the KESR 'Return to Robertsbridge' event. But details were published too late to make suitable arrangements. By the time you read this, it is likely that it has already happened. But, if you were there, the editor would be very pleased to have reports and photos by members for the next issue. Deadline for the Winter issue is 10th November. Address is on page 31.

## 'Russell' on the Mend

John Keylock recently contacted Les Darbyshire to report that with the receipt of a couple of generous donations and some matching funds, the WHHR have now got enough funds in the kitty to finish the restoration of this famous loco. The Society has twice contributed financially towards its this project. As Les says "I look forward to seeing her (him?) running again". •

## 'Heritage' to the Fore

There are heartening signs that some so-called Heritage Railways are taking seriously their railway heritage. The latest issue of the **Festiniog Railway Heritage Group's Journal** (114, Summer 2013) enclosed a flyer with details of the latest Vintage Weekend on 11th-13th October.

The railway has, of course, a spectacular collection of original vintage locomotives and rolling stock. But more than that, their chairman Fred Howes lists the work expended on non-essential items which continue the process to restore the FR to its former glory. Old style mile posts have appeared along the route (something the KESR did a few years ago), old FR disc signals that "were once standing forlornly at several locations are being positioned to recreate old scenes". Efforts are also being made to restore visible lengths of traditional FR style boundary walls and fences. All this is in addition to the huge efforts to recreate the lengthy slate wagon trains and their preservation by erecting a shed in which to house them. Bravo FR! •

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## REMEMBERING THE RYE & CAMBER

Laurie Cooksey shares some notes made by Ken Clarke  
of interviews with former Rye & Camber Tramway staff

**F**rom as early as 1967, the late Ken Clarke, of Rye, was requesting information in the railway press stating that he would shortly be publishing his book on the Rye & Camber Tramway. I was unaware of this when I started on what was to be my *Rye & Camber Tramway, A Centenary History* in 1989, (published by Plateway Press in July 1995), but when I found out in 1991, I suggested to Mr Clarke that it we might publish the history jointly. No way! His book was going to be published and it would be so much better than mine could ever be, as he had travelled on it (as a toddler) and he had interviewed several former members of the tramway staff and others closely associated with the line. Everyone in Rye knew full well that his book would never see the light of day, but when he passed away, his wife, Joyce, kindly donated many of Ken Clarke's notes to the Colonel Stephens Museum at Tenterden. No actual manuscript has ever been discovered and Ken Clarke's work appears to have been writing up his notes over and over again. Here are a few notes in Ken Clarke's own words, that members may be interested in, that did not make it into my book. \*

*Notes made by Ken Clarke following a conversation with Percy Sheppard, the tram's conductor, in August 1965:*

Before 1914, Mr W E Colebrooke kept **chickens** on the Rye side of Rye Tram station. People often dropped pieces of food on the track from their picnic baskets, or buns when they were standing there. Hay was placed on a rack at the rear of the carriage shed and Percy Sheppard found that one day they had laid eggs therein. He encouraged this process by feeding them!

The Insurance Company's inspector came every 6 or 8 weeks to **inspect the boilers** and fireboxes of the steam locomotives. He got into the inspection pit (made of concrete).

A forge was probably originally sited mid-way along the eastern side of the **1922 shed**, but it was later positioned across the end. The points leading into the shed were sprung to the curved line rather than the straight road.

An accumulator was charged to run the **two electric bulbs in the Bagnall carriage**. The light given off was very poor and unreliable when the accumulator ran down. Only the Bagnall carriage was used on the

8pm service as the Rother Ironworks carriage did not have any lighting.

**Handbrake:** This existed on the Bagnall carriage. It was seldom used, but was there in case the carriage ran away. Percy would throw the **morning papers** from the tram into the front doorway of "Beachlands".

**Boards over the windows:** Summers were hot and the inside of the carriage was very hot indeed, so in the early days, the glass was removed and boards substituted on the Bagnall carriage. The boards were also inserted when the weather was wet in summer, otherwise they were removed and the second class portion of the coach left open to the air.

The **point blades** at Rye would often be fouled by small bits of metal and/or stones, especially on the set outside the locomotive shed, which sometimes led to the derailment of the locomotive.

Prior to taking the 8pm tram to Golf Links one evening, Tom Hambrook, a former Tramway driver, closed the carriage shed doors. The acetylene lamp on the locomotive flooded and was almost out when he arrived back at Rye and, after uncoupling

*(Continued on page 10)*

*(Continued from page 9)*

from the carriage, he ran straight into the shed doors.

On one occasion, Percy Sheppard lost his footing and fell from the Tram just outside **Golf Links station** on its way back to Rye. He was not injured, just shaken up. He lost some of the company's money, but he was not held liable for it.

**Items carried on the Tram:** Water, parcels, luggage, boxes of fish at 3d per box (sometimes a trunk would be used), groceries, timber and sand until the lorries arrived. Sand was collected in between passenger trips. No tickets were issued, but there was a parcels book and items carried were entered therein, with a receipt being torn out and given to the customer.

*Petrol Tractor and Bagnall carriage at Rye with Bagnall carriage overshadowing it. March 1937. (JM Jarvis, copyright: Online Transport Archive)*



**Christmas Tips:** These came only from the golfers, who were usually very generous. On one occasion, Lady Parkins walked down the track from Rye station to give the men working on the track their Christmas Box. Percy looked back on those old aristocratic days, when the world was for the old very poor, with nostalgia. He did not accept the accusation that the poor had to go 'cap in hand', the rich gave of their own free will. The rich also took a sincere interest in those

working men, but the Rye & Camber Tramway staff found little sympathy from their own class.

**Sheep:** To remove sheep from the track, steam was blown through the steam cocks. The whistle was used on leaving both Rye and Camber Sands. The acetylene lamp was attached to the front of the steam locomotives on a little notch just below the chimney.

**Rye Harbour Ferry:** This was run as an independent concern by the Cutting family (of Rye Harbour). Rye & Camber tickets were issued by Gafford (the Company secretary) to the ferryman as and when he required them and their numbers were duly noted. The ferryman never had tickets of his own.

**Work done during the winter when the Tramway was closed:** Maintenance, re-fencing, re-aligning the curved rails, fagotting on the section between "Squatter's Right" and Camber Sands. The bogies would be removed from both carriages to be turned at Rother Ironworks. The locomotives' wheels were also turned by the Foundry.

**The permanent way trolley** was never taken down the track on its own for repairing

the track, but only with a truck containing the necessary equipment. Second-hand Southern Railway standard gauge sleepers were cut in half for use on the Tramway.

One day, a ship carrying timber was wrecked near Camber and the wood was scattered liberally over the sands there. An engine went down and collected a large amount, which was unloaded at Rye and sawn up for various purposes. More timber became buried at Camber Sands.

This piece of "stealing" was not discovered by the authorities, but many others acquired some of the timber as well!

#### **Petrol Tractor:**

George Wratten built a small arrangement inside the cab for sprinkling sand on the track in wet weather to prevent slipping of wheels. The petrol tractor had great pulling power but, unlike the steam locomotives, little weight and, therefore, slipped badly if the track was wet.

According to Geoffrey Ashbee in August, 1965, the paint used on the petrol tractor was Robbilac green and black. George Wratten's spanners, always in immaculate condition, were made by the American Company, Billings and Spencer.

On one occasion, the petrol tractor cracked a wheel near The Dives and a steam locomotive had to be fired to bring the wounded tractor and train home to Rye very slowly.

At Camber Sands station, Messrs Thompson's were followed by Messrs Caister (?) at the new (1939) station. Messrs Phillips built a new tea shop, complete with toilets, which was very profitable during the one season that it was open.

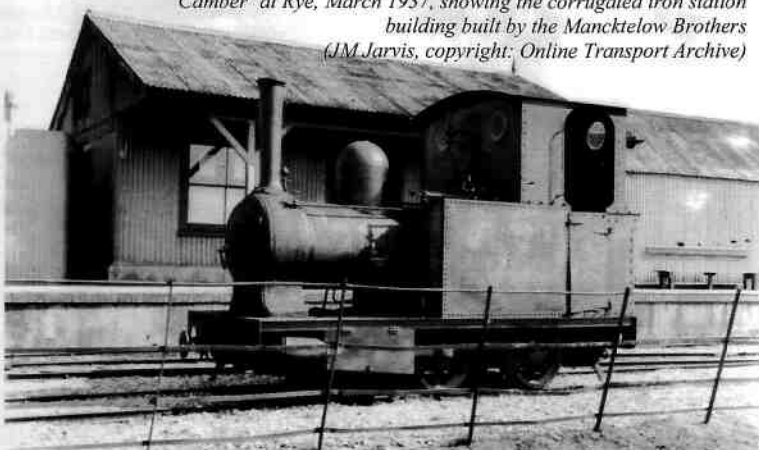
**The track from the 1939 Camber**

**Sands station** was used to reinstate the run-round loop and spur to the jetty at Golf Links station.

*From a conversation Ken Clarke had with villagers in Horsmonden in August, 1965:*

The Mancktelow Brothers had built the corrugated iron station buildings for the **Rye & Camber Tramway** in 1895 and the **Hun-**

*'Camber' at Rye, March 1937, showing the corrugated iron station building built by the Mancktelow Brothers (JM Jarvis, copyright: Online Transport Archive)*



**dred of Manhood & Selsey Tramway** two years later. In 1965, George Mancktelow had been dead for over 20 years and he would have been in his 80s when he passed away. There had been him, with just his wife, and no children, which was regarded by the locals as a good thing! He had been a builder of houses and schools, some of the latter being very fine buildings. His building firm later went bankrupt and he turned his hand to farming. He received the nickname "Diddler", for ever doing battle with the law, even when he was in the wrong and 9 times out of 10, he would win in court! His attitude was that 'laws are made to be broken!' •

*Laurie Cooksey is the author of 'The Rye & Camber Tramway. Brighton, Plateway Press, 1995. ISBN 1 871980-26-7, and 'The Selsey Tramway (2 volumes). Didcot, Wild Swan, 2006. ISBN 1-905184-15-8 (vol 1), ISBN 1-905184-16-6 (vol 2).*

## A SAVIOUR OF THE POTTS

*One of the many strange characters the Colonel associated with in order to finance his schemes was J H Whadcoat. BRIAN JANES tells us more*

**H**olman Stephens mixed with an odd variety of characters in his mission to build light railways but few can have been as charitable, if libertine and perhaps slightly questionable a financier, as John Henry Whadcoat.

Whadcoat was born at Droitwich, Worcestershire in 1851. His early career is unknown but he married in Hackney, London, at the tender age of 19, Mary Prout, a lady some 6 years his senior from Modbury, Devon. They were to have 10 children in the next 18 years.

### Banking

By 1887 he had moved to London and in partnership with his brother, William Edward, established a banking business, Whadcoat Brothers and Co. He lived with one family in Enfield, later Highbury; with his second family installed in the desirable Victoria Park district of Hackney. His lawyers were resident at 110 Cannon Street in the City and were certainly F C Matthews and Co, the leading light of which, Francis Claughton Matthews, became a close associate for the next 20 years.

### Railway Finance

Whadcoat prospered and, apparently under the influence of Richard Green-Price and the contractor Charles Chambers, became involved in railway finance, particularly in some of the lines on the Welsh Marches such as the Golden Valley Railway and several small lines round Leominster. Green-Price was an ambitious but not particularly successful land-



### Freemason

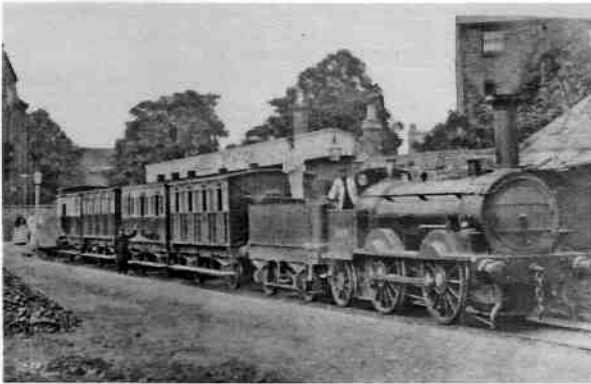
We next find him in Halifax in about 1880 as a chartered accountant and stock-broker where he became a prominent citizen and Freemason. In Halifax he also probably met his long-term mistress Annie Guthrie, who was born in Huddersfield, with whom he had a separate family of 6 children. His contacts with this prosperous and expanding town remained strong throughout his life, enough to become involved in the formative years of the Rugby League when it broke with Rugby Union in Huddersfield in 1895.

owner and part-time businessman. He had moved to Shrewsbury, became interested in reviving the then closed Potts and in 1888 floated the Shropshire Railways with a view to reconstructing the line. Green-Price soon became mired in financial and contractual difficulties and Chambers and Whadcoat, with his firm of 'influential agents, brokers and financiers of the City of London', became involved and soon took control. Whadcoat's reconstruction efforts failed amidst acrimony and contractual disputes in 1894 and his banking business was wound

up in 1896, but he retained effective control of the railway which went to sleep for another ten years.

### **Many Homes**

Whadcoat, still a very prosperous and youthful (45) man, then seemingly devoted himself to many charitable and Freemasonry activities, eventually becoming Grand Deacon of England. He was as peripatetic in residences and town loyalties as in his private life; from the 1880s he had many hous-



es: one or two in London, a fashionable holiday mansion in Scotland at Drumstinchall, Dumfries, one in Halifax and one in Poole. His longstanding association with Halifax was matched by one with Poole, commencing in about 1897 where he subsequently became a Justice of Peace and Mayor.

### **Bodiam Manor**

For a brief period in the mid-Edwardian period he leased Bodiam Manor. The manor (now a school) overlooks the Kent & East Sussex Railway and Stephens himself was then resident, if he was resident anywhere, at nearby Robertsbridge. It is however by no means certain that this was the conduit to meeting Holman Stephens. Stephens was also a London Freemason, and further he had close connections with the Irish MP Jeremiah MacVeagh who would also have been familiar with Freemasons in Belfast and Dublin, places where Whadcoat was an honorary member.

### **Shropshire Railways Company**

However the connection with Stephens was made, Whadcoat was taking a renewed interest in his Shropshire Railways property by the November 1906 Board meeting and he, as Chairman, was at last considering selling off the rails and other fittings. At this meeting Whadcoat however announced that he had been approached by Holman Stephens whom he then formally met at Shrewsbury on 20th December. This was the start of what turned out to be a complex but successful proposal to revive the line. Whadcoat and his family gave or sold all their many holdings to Stephens on 15th July 1909. As a result the Shropshire Railways Company continued in being, with the Shropshire and Montgomeryshire Light Railway as the operating company, and reconstruction commenced in late 1910.

### **Charitable Affairs**

Whadcoat now disappears from Stephens's world to pursue his charitable affairs, one of which was to set up one to give annuities to widows in Yorkshire in 1914, the same year he passed his surname by deed poll to his mistress Annie and her children. He does not appear to have stayed long at Bodiam, leaving about 1908, although the area clearly made an impact on him for he named his subsequent Poole residence 'Bodiam'. Further, his wife Mary lived in Market Street, Rye after his death in 1924 and to the end of her life, as did one of her daughters.

### **Considerable Influence**

Following what was probably only a brief acquaintance, Whadcoat's influence on Stephens's work was considerable. Not only did he hand Stephens the keys to the Potts, he also bequeathed him Francis Claughton Matthews, who became a close associate and whose firm, latterly run by his nephew, acted as Stephens's principal legal advisers for their remaining years. ●

*Photos of the Old Potts are from the Leslie Darbyshire collection.*

## THE ASHOVER ATTRACTION

DAVID WILLMOTT looks at some of the personalities behind the Ashover Light Railway

**T**he ALRS was pleased to be able to offer hospitality to members of the Colonel Stephens Society for the 2013 AGM.

### *Why so popular?*

One important question is to ask why the Ashover Light Railway, conceived and operated for most of its life purely as a mineral railway, should attract so much attention from enthusiasts and modellers. Passengers were only carried for 11 years. Initially the service was very popular (the railway had to acquire the "Wembley" carriages second hand to cope with the unexpected demand) but became a victim of its own success when competing bus services were introduced offering a quicker and more direct option.

Ashover and the Amber valley. Waiting at the Ashover terminus was the "Rainbows End" cafe to provide tea and sustenance prior to making the return journey to Clay Cross. The cafe is currently in the possession of the ALRS in an IKEA-style flat pack form.

### *Benevolent owners*

The Clay Cross Company, which built, owned, maintained and operated the ALR, was run by members of the Jackson family who could probably be described as benevolent owners who took a keen interest in local affairs. Brigadier General Geoffrey Meinerzhagen Jackson DL, JP, TD was Director from 1891 to 1930, and Managing Director from 1930 to 1946. It is said that he vowed

*An interesting view in Clay Cross yard showing two of the Wembleys in the foreground, with Gloucesters, further Wembleys and sundry 'D' type wagons in the background.*



that any employee of the Clay Cross Company who was wounded in war service would be guaranteed employment on his discharge, even if this

### *Local affection*

However, there is still much local affection, especially amongst those of more mature years for the "Peggy" railway. Certainly, the ALR did offer the workers from the mines and foundries of the Clay Cross area an opportunity to escape from the industrial smog and noise to the sylvan delights of

meant walking to work whilst only having one leg. When the locomotive *Joan* was being reassembled on Armistice Day, the process was halted at a critical moment for the two minutes' silence to avoid General Jackson's anticipated wrath.

### *£1 note*

On the opening day of the ALR the train

crews were unable to attend the speeches and ceremonies in Ashover, but were recompensed by General Jackson giving each of them a (crisp?) one pound note out of his wallet.

### **Saluting his car**

General Jackson employed a chauffeur to drive his Rolls Royce, and the story goes that Clay Cross employees would salute the car as it passed, whether it contained the general or not. In spite of this apparent affection, strike action did take place in the company's mines and works, maybe as a measure of solidarity with other workers.

### **Working methods**

Many of the working methods attributed to Colonel Stephens were also evident in the Jackson regime. For example, 'why spend a pound when ten bob would do'? The various bridges needed on the ALR as it crossed and re-crossed the river Amber were allegedly designed to use bridge girders that were already available in the Clay Cross works. The four Gloucester carriages and the second hand Wembleys\* were all mounted on bogies obtained from the War Department. The same source accounted for the Baldwin locomotives, the mineral wagons, track and

### **1920s Society**

However, it must be remembered that in 1920s society a person's place in the world was still subject to various conventions. When being interviewed for Bob Gratton's book\*\* Bridget Jackson (General Jackson's daughter) was asked if Colonel Stephens was a frequent visitor to the Jackson home. "Oh no", she replied, "you have to remember that daddy was a General, *he* was only a Colonel"

**“Daddy was a General - he was only a Colonel”**

The appointment of Captain May as Secretary and Manager of the ALR was almost certainly based on advice received from Colonel Stephens.

Once it was realised that there was a potential for "leisure" passenger traffic, the ALR did

promote its services, especially at holiday times such as Easter and Whitsun. (Was the Easter weather better in those days?) Posters were produced giving details of the timetable on "The Little Railway", and newspaper advertisements

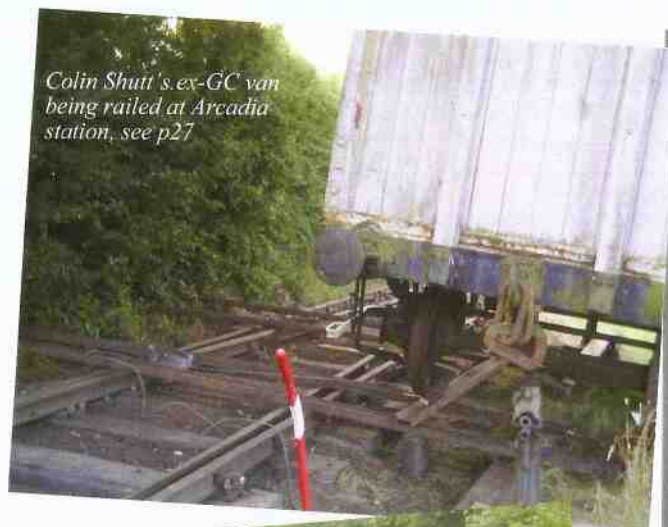


*ALR Baldwin Joan at Ashover Butts, August 1947.  
Jim Jarvis, copyright Online Transport Archive*

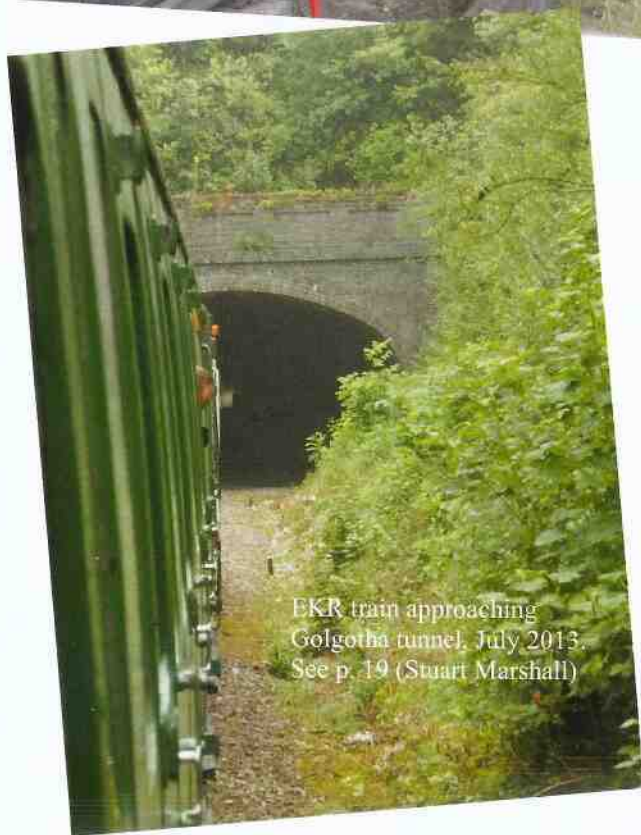
pointwork. In later years cannibalisation and interchange of serviceable parts were required to keep an operational Baldwin.

ments mentioned the possibility of travelling from Chesterfield by bus to catch "the toy train" (sic) at the ALR's Chesterfield Rd.

*Continued on page 18 ►*



Colin Shutt's ex-GC van being railed at Arcadia station, see p27



EKR train approaching Golgotha tunnel, July 2013. See p. 19 (Stuart Marshall)



This year's Christmas card features this evocative painting by Jonathan Clay of the S&MR Shrewsbury Abbey station with 'Ilfracombe Goods' No.3 centre stage, flanked by a Ford railmotor and, just visible, the passenger shelter on *Gazelle*.

The cards are sold in packs of five, complete with envelopes. One pack of five cards is £6.25, including post and packing. Minimum order is one pack - there is no maximum. Please send your order, with your name and address, stating the number of packs you require, with a cheque or postal order payable to 'The Colonel Stephens Society' to:

Nigel Bird, Bryn Hir, Llanio Road, Llwyn-y-Groes, TREGARON, Ceredigion SY25 6PY

*Please allow fourteen days for delivery*



(► *Continued from page 15*)

Station, reached by a set up steps from what is now the A61 road. The acquisition of the open-sided Wembley carriages allowed heavy passenger loads to be accommodated, and allegedly permitted passengers to leave a moving train, pick some attractive wild flowers, and reboard the train!

### **Memories to be recorded**

There are still many memories of the ALR to be recorded. For example the veteran MP for Bolsover, Dennis Skinner, came to present a replica nameplate to the winner

light so maybe there is some more film out there, who knows? •

*David Willmott is Publicity Officer for the Ashover Light Railway Society, 3 Glen Road, Whatstanwell, Matlock, Derbys DE4 5EH*

*\* These were converted open-sided carriages which had run at the British Empire Exhibition at Wembley in 1924 and 1925.*

*\*\* The Ashover Light Railway, by Robert Gratton and Stuart R Band. Didsot, Wild Swan, 1989. ISBN 0 906867 72 X*



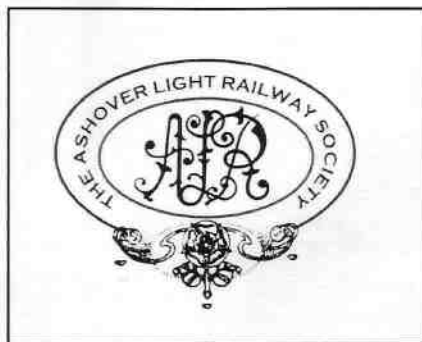
*Ashover Butts station.*

West Sussex County Council copyright

of a recent prize draw, and he entertained all present as he spoke for at least 20 minutes without pausing, or recourse to notes, about his time as a youth playing in the works yard at Clay Cross. His claim to have released wagon handbrakes and then watched as they moved away did take a bit of believing in light of the ALR's policy on axle box maintenance (replace limestone dust with oil only when absolutely necessary).

### **Only one colour film**

As far as the committee of the ALRS are aware, there is only one colour cine film in existence that shows anything of the railway, and we have a copy of this. "New" photographs of the ALR continue to come to



**[www.alrs.org.uk](http://www.alrs.org.uk)**

## DIESEL GALA ON THE EAST KENT

STUART MARSHALL reports on the event held on 27th and 28th July

I had a great time after arriving at Shepherdswell on the 11:16 train from London Victoria. I was disappointed to find the Fowler loco *Snowdown* with the brake van still at



Shepherdswell, which meant the brake van rides on the Wigmore Lane extension were suspended. This was soon forgotten when they opened the level crossing gates at Eythorne and the train I was on proceeded to the end of the line. At Eythorne I decided to have a cup of tea, eat my lunch and wait for the next train from Shepherdswell to arrive. This was a stroke of fortune as those waiting on the platform were told that they had repaired the Fowler and it was on its way and so gave a good photographic opportunity.

### Leaking oil pipe

I found out talking to the owner/driver of the Fowler that the problem was a leaking



rubber oil pipe: one of a number of re-

placements for copper pipes that had been stolen from the engine over the winter. The owner said that he had to drive round to find someone with the appropriate high pressure connector to make the repair.

After a brake van ride up and down the Wigmore Lane extension I took the next train, made up of the class 101 DMU and the Ruston and Hornsby loco 'The Buffs', back to Shepherdswell in time to catch the train back to London.

### What would the Colonel say?

Looking round the line, I think the Colonel would have been proud of them, as they have to maintain everything on a shoe-string and in the open. What they have achieved is down to a small dedicated team of volunteers, which include a fair number of youngsters, and long may they continue with the good work. It is a pity that I don't live closer as I would love to become involved with the line.



### Would he buy a class 14?

Visiting the line made me think of which diesel locos and rail cars would appeal to the Colonel if he was still alive and running a franchise of branch lines today? My choice would be the class 14 and the new Parry People Mover, class 139 and even the bogie version they are currently working on, as all have hydraulic final drive. If you are interested, Parry People Movers have a website [www.parrypeplemovers.com](http://www.parrypeplemovers.com) and publish an occasional online newsletter which makes interesting reading. ●

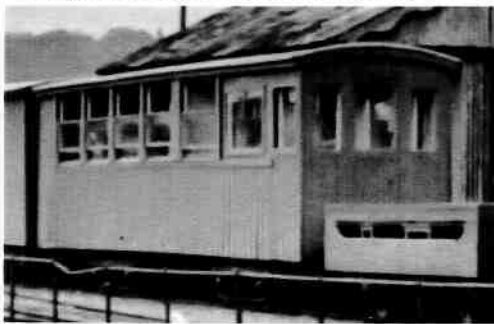
## Back on the Rails

*Sixty-eight years after it last stood on Rye and Camber Tramway rails the chassis of the Bagnall coach stands again on original rails at the Colonel Stephens Railway Museum at Tenterden, reports BRIAN JANES*

**W**hen the Camber tram was built as Colonel Stephens's first essay in building a complete railway he intended it to be run with an internal combustion-engined railcar. It must have rapidly become evident that this was impractical and an urgent order was placed with W G Bagnall, Stafford, in May 1895 for a steam engine and carriage. These arrived on 12th July in the nick of time for the formal opening the following day.

### *The Coach*

Much modified over the years, the coach trundled up and down the estuary land of the River Rother, behind steam and petrol engines carrying happy golfers (probably including at least one future prime minister)



and even happier holidaymakers. With the coming of the Second World War these passengers disappeared, and the line slumbered, only revived briefly to carry service personnel and workers for essential preparations for D-Day. Unlike its locally-built companion, the Bagnall coach escaped the humiliation of losing its body and when the exhausted tramway gave up the ghost and was torn up in 1946 the coach found further use as a farm shed at nearby East Guldeford. Leaving its home rails for what might have been thought the last time, it was reportedly

hauled down the main road on its own wheels much to the ire of the road authority who did not appreciate the resultant grooves.

### *Into Preservation*

When the embryonic preservation movement started they took an interest in the, by now, somewhat tired coach. Comprehensively photographed and measured by enthusiasts from the Narrow Gauge Railway Society at Brockham Museum, attempts to move her there in 1962/63 failed due to her weight and lack of suitable transport. Over the next two years body sections were removed and eventually on 7th August 1965 the frame and complete roof were transported to Brockham. Difficulties there led to a move to Amberley Chalk Pits museum in about 1981. However the woodwork did not survive and with no 3ft gauge trackage available the frame was stored out of sight but not of mind.

Back in 1946 some lengths of track remained, notably those imbedded in the concrete road, and others, probably those that had been left in the minefield. Improbably, the late John Miller, even more improbably walking a dog in the early 1980s, tripped over the grass encased rail. He called in Laurie Cooksey, then living in Camber, who agreed to have them in his garden. A small team from the museum retrieved the rail and some spikes which remained with Laurie until he moved house, whence they moved to store at Tenterden.

Meanwhile the hiatus at Amberley persisted until a chance visit by an active Amberley volunteer and meeting with the author prompted the possibility of a gift between museums. The bureaucracy of this ground slowly but eventually it came to Tenterden in 2009. A trip to the Chalk Pits with a lorry and the most helpful assistance of the Amberley volunteers saw the emergence of the chassis from a somewhat muddy storage

site. Fettled and repainted by Laurie Cooksey and his assistant it was reassembled at Tenterden. The chassis proved extraordinarily simple, not to say primitive, with no secondary suspension. It has been said that it was adapted from some French secondary railway's design but I am sure that even French peasants would object to riding any distance in such a design. My personal opinion is that the bogies in particular were adapted by Bagnall from one of its very basic standard cane trolleys that were built in quantity for colonial use. Still at £125 (say £13,000 in today's values) it was probably something of a bargain and it was certainly successful for its purpose. However, it has suffered quite severely from 50 years' heavy use with minimal maintenance, 15 years'



farm yard service and another 40 years of benign neglect in preservation. Hopefully it is now stabilised.

### **New site**

John Miller and I were never happy about the position and presentation of the coach chassis after it arrived from Amberley. Now with the active help of Henry Edwards, our benevolent landlord, we have moved it to its permanent position. This involved a lot of hard work over two days, first levelling the new site with Matt Stubbs's work and expertise assisted by Henry and me. Then on day two came the laying of original Camber tram rail, retrieved with such effort and care all those years before. Despite considerable corrosion in the foot of the rail this proved amenable to spiking with both original and new dog spikes to new half sleepers, slightly shorter than the originals but cheap. Finally came the awkward, but relative straightforward and quick, moving of the chassis itself. Finally it had to be fenced off from the adjacent Museum picnic site, partly with the use of a Rye and Camber fence gate retrieved by the irrepressible Laurie from under the turf of Romney Marsh. All his work was actively pursued on the second day with the addition of Paul Rand of the K&ESR P/W gang and the ever enthusiastic K&ESR Tuesday Group. There were also quite a few interested spectators who, on enquiring what was happening, were told 'having fun'.

Now, who wants to build a body? •

## **MEET THE COLONEL!**

**Visit the Colonel Stephens Railway Museum at Tenterden**

- See the Colonel in his reconstructed Tonbridge office
- Get up close and personal with the famous 'Gazelle'
  - Study the many artefacts of the Colonel's lines
- Latest exhibits include the Light Railway in War Time, workshops activity and improved Selsey and Rye & Camber displays

*Admission free to Colonel Stephens Society members  
Open from 12.30 to 4.30 on days when the K&ESR is running*

## SOCIETY NEWS

### **AVOID DECEMBER CHRISTMAS BILLS - RETURN YOUR SUBSCRIPTION RENEWAL PROMPTLY!**

This final issue of another year of *The Colonel* means that your Membership Secretary is once again asking you to renew your annual membership subscription promptly, as 85% of you already do – thank you. Despite some careful HFS - style housekeeping (stocking up on stamps) we can no longer keep the increases in postage prices at bay. As discussed and agreed at this year's AGM these are reluctantly having to be increased to

- ▶ **£10 for UK members,**
- ▶ **£12 for joint (one journal and two or more members at the same address), and**
- ▶ **£15 overseas (air mail) for the coming year.**

### **Renewal Form**

Please send your cheque or Postal Orders to our Membership Secretary with the enclosed renewal form. You need to complete your name and membership number only, unless there are any changes to your addresses, telephone numbers or e-mail. There is no need to enclose SAEs as the new membership cards will be sent out with the Winter issue of *The Colonel*.

### **MEMBERS' WEEKEND**

In addition, if you are planning on coming to Kent for the 2014 members' weekend 10/11 May (AGM at the East Kent Railway on the Saturday and various activities on the Sunday (*possibly* the Col Stephens Museum, KESR and Robertsbridge, still to be confirmed), please indicate in the box provided as this helps significantly with the event planning. Please note that details, especially for the Sunday are still at the initial planning stage.

### **DONATIONS PROGRAMME**

Can we please give a big thank all those who in the past have included contributions to our important donations programme with their subscription renewal. This way, the individual contributions are consolidated and, collectively, they can and do make significant differences to important projects related to Colonel Stephens and his railway heritage.

### **'WHY DON'T WE?'**

Finally, for new members, the recurring questions: why don't we offer a PayPal/direct debit/standing order facility for subscriptions and gift aid for donations? Basically, we don't because of the significant additional costs and complications of the former and the additional administration and accountancy charges of changing to a registered charity to take advantage of the latter. ●

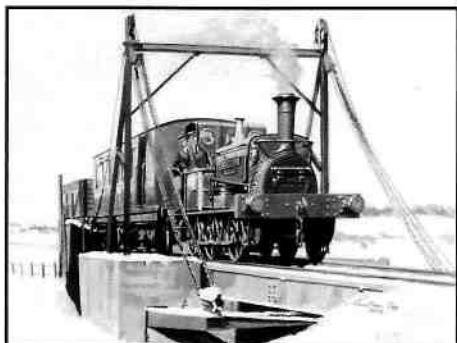
## Last Chance Card

**Remember our Christmas card last year?**

It depicted the Selsey Tramway's *Sidlesham* crossing the lifting canal bridge near Hunston (pictured right in B&W, but in reality in full colour). It was so popular we did a last minute reprint and there are just a few left. The price is the same as last year; one pack of five cards with envelopes £6.25, inc p&p. **Orders as before to:**

**Nigel Bird, Bryn Hir, Llwyn-y-Groes,  
TREGARON, Ceredigion, SY25 6PY.**

*Please allow 14 days for delivery.*



## WANTED!

**New editor for *The Colonel*.**

High satisfaction level.

No pay.

Help given.

Experience with Microsoft Publisher software would help, but not essential.

Apply to Chairman or Editor

(addresses, page 31)

## 400 up!

Membership Secretary, **David Powell**, reports that we now have 400 members on the books. Ian Wilson of Lymington brought up the 400 and, instead of a round of applause, a copy of Brian Janes's *Colonel Stephens, a Celebration* is in the post to Ian to mark the occasion. Welcome Ian and congratulations! ●



## Nigel Bird (Books)

**Bryn Hir, Llwynygroes, Tregaron,  
Ceredigion, SY25 6PY**

**Tel: 01974 821281**

**email : [nigelbird.books@virgin.net](mailto:nigelbird.books@virgin.net)**

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# PRESS DIGEST

Our regular round up of  
the railway press

**T**he LU150 celebrations have been dominating the enthusiast press lately. Metropolitan carriage 353 has featured in many pieces. It was, of course, **WCPR** no.7 at one time. The *Railway Magazine* for May showed the Queen inspecting the vehicle at Baker Street station. The August issue reports that work on the ex-GWR 2-8-0T 4253 is progressing well at **Rolvenden**, with hot-riveting of the bunker completed. Many parts needed for the loco's restoration have been collected off-site. The purchase of ex-GWR 0-6-2T 5668 and its component collection is also reported. Since then, we have spotted 5668 in the yard at Wittersham Road. Still with the same issue, the arrival of double-deck Glasgow tram 488 at **Boston Lodge** for restoration is noted. Another one for the volume of tales of the unexpected, the tram apparently arrived in two parts - lower deck and upper deck. Colin Shutt's acquisition of the Ruston & Hornsby 48DS class 4wD of 1954 from the GCR(N) Ruddington is reported, along with a delightful photo of the engine at Arcadia station on his **EW&BLR**, accompanied by his dog. But then, you read about this news first in our last issue! Member Dana Whiffen reported on our visit to **Ashover** in the July issue of the *East Kent Railway News*, incidentally the 100th issue of that magazine. The article is accompanied by a photo of the famous Pirelli bridge, together with a contemporary shot of the station building at Fallgate. On the cover is a view of **EKR** No.2 *Walton Park* outside the shed at Shep-

herdswell. The July issue of *Where the Rainbow Ends*, the magazine of the **Ashover LRS**, contains, amongst other things, a delightful collection of photos of those atmospheric **Baldwin 4-6-0Ts**, including an overhead shot showing much glorious detail. On the back cover. In the same issue is a letter with photos of the ex-**Ashover** Hibberd four-wheel diesel now owned by the **Ffestiniog**. As you would expect, *Phoenix*, the magazine of the **Rother Valley Supporters' Association** contains much on the impressive developments at Robertsbridge. But the editor also has time for history, with a shot on the cover of P class 0-6-0T *Pride of Sussex* laboriously taking water at Hodson's Mill, Robertsbridge under the watchful eye of Stephen and Graham Langer. The very same engine is currently out of service under overhaul at **Rolvenden**, and due back in service in 2019, according to the *Tenterden Terrier*. Another photo in *Phoenix* shows Robertsbridge in 1964 with Terrier 70 and two Pullman cars about to be delivered for use on the **K&ESR** where they are still in service today. Sometimes it's difficult to know which of these two columns to use. You may think that the shot of Terrier 683 in *Southern Way 22*, rusting away at Eastleigh in 1945 truly belongs as a 'Blast', but we've a bit more space here. 683 worked on the **S&MR** from 1923 to 1931 when it was purchased for spares by the SR. Issue 23 of *SW* has two good features on the dying years of the **East Kent** - fascinating stuff, including much on infrastructure and rolling stock. •

## TRANSFERS for PO Wagons:

Photographed around the Colonel's railways!

Arnell, Bognor Coal, Bottrill, BW & Co., Chichester Coal  
Corrall, Cory, CWS, Firbeck, Foster, Frank Keep, Proctor  
Jury Brick, Tilmanstone, Willmer and many more .....



*in a scale of your choice*

\* and don't forget our custom work (see our other advert for contact details !!)

## BLASTS FROM THE PAST

**I**an Dack has been delving again. First out of the envelope was a copy of *Steam World* for December 1998, with an article on the making of the film *Oh, Mr Porter!* in 1937, starring the **KESR Northiam** in disguise. Mention of that film prompts reference to a cutting the late Monty Baker (who drove *Northiam* during the filming) sent us. It is from the Roy Hudd column of an un-named publication, clearly about show business. The main focus is on Laurel and Hardy, complete with a photo of Monty with the pair at the **RH&DR's** 21st birthday celebrations. The caption reads: *Tony [Monty] Baker, 'train driver to the stars', has a memorable laugh with Laurel and Hardy in 1947!* The *Railway World* for May 1959 carries an article on that favourite of the magazines, the **KESR** by R F Roberts. It includes a nice shot of the lovely three-arm signal that used to grace the platform end at Tenterden and, amongst others, a platelayers' trolley at Northiam. A full colour picture of the **SMR Gazelle** in army 'uniform' on parade at Longmoor is on the cover of the June 1971 issue of *Model Railway News*. The inside reveals part 26 of our chairman's long-running series on Light Railway Modelling, this time featuring **EKR Adams** radial no.5. All Les's drawings are now obtainable through our website, but his accompanying notes are worth a read. He finishes off: "A model in 4mm scale would present no difficulties at all, as you can buy at kit! [*Presumably the old K's one*]. Even for scratch builders, the design is quite straight forward and should present no serious problems." Hey, ho! Perhaps the most interesting Blast comes from the December 1986 issue of *Model Railway Constructor*. It is headed 'Wrong Side of the Tracks'. Written by Andrew Emery, self-styled Adjutant of the Colonel Stephens Society, it features crossings on the **WC&PR**, the **East Kent**, and the **KESR**. Among the photos reproduced is the familiar one of the **WCPR Manning Wardle** No.5 crossing the Clevedon triangle in 1935 with a small crowd of passers-by including a school boy in full

uniform with a smart bike. He's more interested in the camera than the train. *Steam World* for December 2011 features 'Callington in Colour' including nice shots of that iconic train shed, plus, inevitably, one of the famous viaduct, this time with an O2 hauling a carmine-liveried LSWR gate set. A rather poor photocopy of the November 1947 issue of the *Southern Railway magazine* has come to the editor's offices. No note of the source we're afraid. It marks the retirement of Frank Wood of Kelly Bray, Callington, after 49 years' service. He began with East Cornwall Minerals Railway (predecessor of the **P&DSWJR**) as a fireman on one of the two 'Kelly' locomotives built by Neilson's. He helped peg out the track from Bere Alston to Calstock and was the fireman on the first train to cross Calstock viaduct. We may reproduce the whole item in a future issue, but the accompanying photo of 'Kelly' engine No.2 is too poor to use. Nigel Bird has been doing some delving of his own. Sorting out a load of issues of *The Railway Magazine*, two contained material on the **Ashover**. The July/August 1944 issue records a visit to the line when *Bridget* and *Joan* were in steam. The former **Leek & Manifold** transporter wagon was noted in pieces. A photo in the same issue shows **ALR** petrol-electric 'tractor' *Amos*. The September 1950 issue carries a fuller article to mark the closure of the line on 31 March. There are five accompanying photos including a nice one of a short passenger train on the reversing triangle at Ashover. It refers to another article in the October 1925 edition which we have not seen. Coincidentally, there is also a photo in that issue of **KESR** 0-8-0T *Hecate*. The latest issue of *Tenterden Terrier* includes an article by Charles Judge on the meticulous trials undertaken by BR in 1957/8 to determine if the Drewry 204hp diesels could replace the Terriers on the **KESR**. Finally for now, the *Railway Magazine* for August 1956 featured an article on the **WC&PR**, including pictures of some of the locos and rolling stock, including the Drewry railmotor and trailer. ●



## AMAZING PROGRESS AT ROBERTSBRIDGE

**Y**oung engineers from London Underground and volunteers from Network Rail, reports **Mark Yonge**, put aside their computers and padded office chairs for the day to help the Rother Valley Railway build part of the extension to bridge the gap from Bodiam Castle to Robertsbridge in Sussex. In their own time, and under the close supervision of experienced old railway hands, they worked with bars, shovels, jacks and hammers to lay the new track.

look forward to the next volunteer working party in August."

Mark Yonge concluded "We are very grateful to our friends from London Underground and Network Rail, and to others who helped us including our site contractor, Andrew Wood, and the members of the K&ESR permanent way team."

Over half of the former track bed has been purchased and planning permission has been obtained. A new station next to the

Network Rail station at Robertsbridge is under construction. The platform is nearly complete and a double track layout is needed to allow for train movements as the works progress. ●



Mike Barlow, LU principal engineer commented, "It's one thing to produce computer driven designs on a screen and quite another to actually wrestle with real track materials on the ground. One thing's for sure, everything you touch is heavy!" Joanna Lymboussis from Network Rail added "We learned a great deal and it was a real pleasure to work with everyone from LU and RVR. It was wonderful to be at Robertsbridge and we very much

### Carriage shed work begins

At the other end of the line, passengers on K&ESR trains can observe the rapid progress being made on the new carriage shed at Rolvenden. The footprint looks massive, as it will have to be to provide much needed under cover storage for much of the railway's working stock, as well as vehicles awaiting restoration. But, once the K&ESR

and RVR are reunited there will be a second carriage shed available, located at Robertsbridge capable of stabling a five coach train. Extra land to accommodate this shed has recently been purchased. Meanwhile, construction of a new five-coach platform at Robertsbridge Junction station, together with other infrastructure work is underway, including a new water tower. ●

## RVR Wins Award

The RVR has won the Restoration Award of the Engineering Excellence Awards 2013 by the Institution of Civil Engineers South East region. It recognises the very best infrastructure projects in Kent and East Sussex.



ICE South East England  
Kent & East Sussex Branch

Engineering Excellence Awards 2013

Restoration Award  
Winner

Rother Valley  
Restoration Phase 5

**ice**  
Institution of Civil Engineers

Rother Valley Railway Heritage Trust  
Rother Valley Railway Supporters  
Association  
Complete Land Management LLP  
GCM Foreman Limited  
D J Williams & Son  
Besser Limited

Project Team:

Simon Ridd  
Graham Bassant  
Alan Hayward  
John Stevens

Andrew Wood Plant Hire  
Cedric Jones Limited  
Russell Norman Planning  
Rother Valley Railway Limited  
J C White Contractors Limited  
Berry Storage Limited

*Jeff French*

Jeff French  
ICE Senior Vice President

*Rob Jones*

Rob Jones  
ICE Kent & East Sussex Branch Chair

The Rother Valley was amongst a list of ten on the short list and its submission read: 'Rother Valley Railway at Robertsbridge – a £432,240 scheme to provide and refurbish five bridges as part of the restoration of this rail route and is submitted by

the Rother Valley Railway Trust'. Commented Gardner Crawley, Chairman of the RVR, "we are delighted to have been selected for this prestigious award and our thanks go to our benefactors and supporters who have contributed generously to this project". ●

## SHUTT'S SHUNTINGS

Colin Shutt's lovely replica Ford railmotor visited the DVLR in July to help celebrate the line's centenary. It was a busy time. Colin did three runs per day plus photo



shoots as well as a great deal of positioning movements. The railmotor apparently reached 15 mph on some

of the runs. It missed the final run of the day due to overheating of the transmission caused by overloading. Not surprisingly; everyone wanted a ride.

While Colin was there, he managed to acquire an ex-GCR goods van No.539249. It was used as a signal & Telegraph mess and tool van for working on site. By all accounts it was a tussle getting it on the track once it was delivered. A picture appears on page 16. ●

## THE ROTHER VALLEY RAILWAY

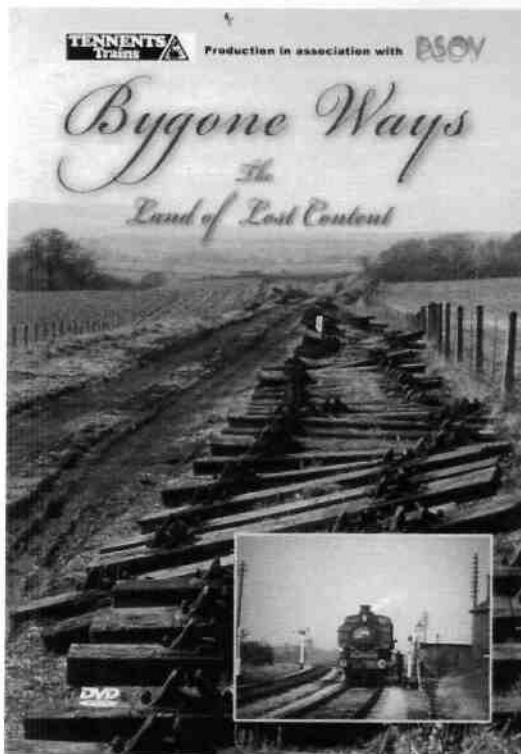
Robertsbridge Station, East Sussex TN32 5DG

**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)

# REVIEWS



It's not often that a new DVD is produced featuring material on the Colonel's lines, but John Tennent of Tennent's Trains in Halesowen has recently put out this offering. Narrated by himself and also featuring poems by A E Housman (hence the title), this DVD contains coverage of two trips on the Shropshire & Montgomeryshire, both in colour and black & white. The quality is really quite good considering the age. It gives us a fresh look at some aspects of the S&M.

If anything, what follows is more interesting, as he visits the industrial lines of the Stiperstones range of hills to the south east of the S&M. Some good views of the near derelict Snailbeach District Railway, another part of the Stephens empire are seen, together with some more modern shots. Useful modelling material! Moving away from the Colonel's lines, he visits two, unknown to me, narrow gauge tramways further south from Snailbeach. One, the Clothercote tramways, was

planned to be more extensive, the projected destination being Dorrington, on the GWR/LNWR north to south route, some ten miles distant. The line was built to 2' gauge, but the WD locomotive purchased was of 1'10" gauge. When the locomotive, perhaps unsurprisingly fell of the track and overturned into a field, it lay there for 25 years, before finally being cut up for scrap. Following a look at the joint branch to Minsterley, the rest of the DVD features many of the GWR branches in the three counties of Shropshire, Herefordshire and Worcestershire. Overall, a most enjoyable look at the featured railways, with plenty of ideas for modelling schemes.

**Keith Patrick**

**Bygone Ways: The Land of Lost Content.** DVD, running time: 1.5 hours. Available from Tennent's Trains, Shop 1, 130 Hagley Road, Hayley Green, Halesowen, B63 1DY. £19.99. ●

**Last of the Bristol Channel Sailing Trawlers,** by **Edmund Eglington** is the book Albyn Austin refers to in his *Dispatch* on page 30 in relation to the article by Graham Hallett on the Wick St. Lawrence Wharf. See the 'Sailing By' website; [www.sailing-by.org.uk/content/last-bristol-channel-sailing-coasters](http://www.sailing-by.org.uk/content/last-bristol-channel-sailing-coasters) which contains an extract on the Lydney Harbour entrance.

**Tamar Valley Trains,** by **John T R Snell.** BEH Publications, 2013, no ISBN. £5.95  
[www. Brucehunt co.uk](http://www.brucehunt.co.uk)

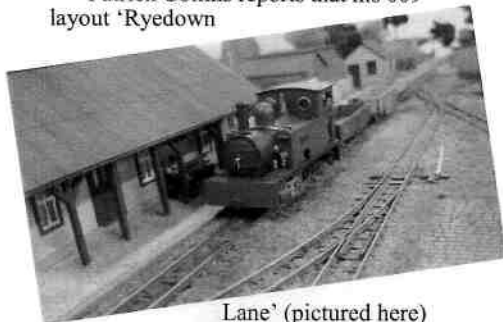
Obtained from Bruce Hunt in the margins of our AGM at Ashover was this fascinating little booklet by John Snell, long-term employee on the Callington line. Whilst this is by no means a comprehensive history of the Callington branch, it provides an interesting insight into the workings of the line; with pictures of many of the staff, tickets and some of the goods carried including flowers, fruit and Lyons cakes! Well worth £5.95.

**Ross Shimon**



## EXPO NARROW GAUGE at SWANLEY in October

Patrick Collins reports that his 009 layout 'Ryedown



Lane' (pictured here)

which he says "portrays one end of a fictitious Colonel Stephens built and run narrow gauge line somewhere in the depths of Wessex" will appear at this year's ExpoNG.

Patrick will be doing his bit by distributing CSS leaflets. He'd be pleased to say hello to any passing CSS members on the day. Expo NG is at White Oak Leisure Centre, Hilda May Avenue, Swanley, Kent, BR8 7BT on Saturday 26th October. [www.expong.org/](http://www.expong.org/) ●

## WARLEY 2013

Don't forget this year's Warley National Model Railway Exhibition at the NEC Birmingham on Saturday/Sunday 23rd/24th November. Why not pop in to have a chat with our stalwart exhibitor Ned Williams? Apart from Ned, among the full size exhibits this year will be the Leighton Buzzard Baldwin and MotorRail 'Simplex'. ●



## Robin Fielding 1942-2013

It is with great sadness that we have to report the death of Robin Fielding, a member of the Colonel Stephens Society since its early days. He tragically died in St Thomas's Hospital while being prepared for a heart operation.

My first encounter with Robin was shortly after he joined the Society, when we were in lengthy correspondence over many (usually esoteric!) aspects of the rolling stock of the East Kent Railway which he was planning to model in O Gauge, and we later met at many exhibitions and other events.

He was a very versatile and expert modeller with a great attention to detail. His latest project, Grove Ferry, was a model of a projected East Kent line and was in S-Gauge, meaning that practically every item had to be completely scratch built. Some of you will have seen and admired it at the Camrail Exhibition in 2011. He was a long standing member of the S Gauge Society and, until last year, held the position of Chairman. This involvement with S-Gauge did not stop him continuing to model in O Gauge as well and he was working on a K&ESR "Northiam" in that scale.

Robin's career was with the Police Force in Kent, and he retired with the rank of Inspector, latterly at Police HQ at Maidstone. Fittingly, his final journey to Lynsted Church was accompanied by a Police escort.

Robin was a true gentleman and his passing is a real loss to the Society and to modelling. We shall miss him greatly.

We extend our condolences and deepest sympathy to his wife Mary and family.

### Les Darbyshire

◀ Part of Robin's Grove Ferry Junction, with several typical features of the Colonel's lines, including a round hut and wind pump. (Ross Shimmion)

# DISPATCHES

Letters to the Editor

## *A Scoop for The Colonel*

Another very interesting issue (*Colonel 111*) but the main news item as far as I was concerned was Colin Shutt's acquisition of the 48DS Ruston - a loco move not reported anywhere else as far as I know. The full details are, this is Ruston & Hornsby 371971 of 1954, better known as QWAG (Quorn & Woodhouse Action Group if I recall correctly) and comes from Great Central Railway (Nottingham) i.e. Ruddington, not Loughborough as implied by the reference to 'GCR'. It is 4-wheel, chain drive, not 0-4-0 rod-drive incidentally. What a delightful railway Colin has, enhanced by this great little loco. I very much look forward to another visit some time.

Peter Nicholson via email

## *Does Size Matter?*

Another great issue - many thanks Ross. Also nice to see your letter re *Gazelle* published in the *Railway Modeller* [July 2013] to counteract the claim, in the previous issue that the *Flying Bufferbeam* is the smallest standard gauge steam locomotive. Good publicity for the Museum and the Society!

I don't know how you measure size in locomotives though, to decide which is smallest? Overall size, grate area, cylinder size tractive effort? I'm sure I could add a few more if I thought about it. Also what about internal combustion locos like the WC&P Muir-Hill "shed"? How would you compare those with steam?

Albyn Austin via email

Regarding *Gazelle*, she wins the "Smallest Loco" prize hands down, at least on the basis of weight. The *Flying Bufferbeam* weighs 12t 10cwt, whereas *Gazelle* in original condition was only 5t 6cwt. I would not think the weight is much different in her present condition, so there is a least a two-to-one difference. As for steam v. diesel, I just don't know.

Les Darbyshire via email

[We have written to the Buckinghamshire Railway Centre at Quainton Road, where the *Flying Bufferbeam* is under restoration, but

no reply has been received -Ed]

## *Terriers quest*

I hope you all enjoyed my article on the Wick St. Lawrence Wharf, my first-ever in print since schooldays. If anyone can add anything concerning the wharf or the station at Wick St. Lawrence I would be pleased to hear via my email address. I am also researching the WC&PR Terriers and I am stuck on two fronts. Does anyone know whether there was a pattern to the names that the Terriers carried? Was it a case of sticking a pin in the map somewhere between London and Brighton, or was it a good money spinner to get towns and villages to have their names displayed so elegantly? Any help would be appreciated. Lastly, I have had difficulty obtaining the GWR loco history sheet from the National Archives. They sent me the sheet for the GWR No. 6, an 0-4-2T withdrawn in the early 1900s. Can anyone help on this?

Graham Hallett

hallettgraham@btconnect.com

## *Wick St. Lawrence*

Perhaps the most intriguing question is the economic justification of the whole plan. Other than loco coal and very small amount for the local community, the wharf saw very little traffic, and surely can't have justified the expenditure. It was also very difficult to reach and could handle only very small ships. I recall that Edmund Eglington, in his wonderful book, pointed out that the wharf would never get much traffic, as Weston and Clevedon had much more accessible quays while Portishead was a port. He couldn't understand what the thinking was. He also explains how a two man sailing vessel could be reversed up the creek and sailed down without an auxiliary motor, even with the wind in the wrong direction, and how tricky it was to enter Lydney in a tight time window in similar circumstances. He also recounts the difficulties of unloading with the steam crane - a lethal device. Does anyone know how much the wharf cost or how much it saved per ton of coal delivered?

Albyn Austin via email

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## MORE STORES

Not listed on page 2 (we ran out of room!) are the following 'must have' items for Colonel Stephens fans:

**Key rings** £1, plus 80p p&p

**Coasters** £1.50, plus 80p p&p

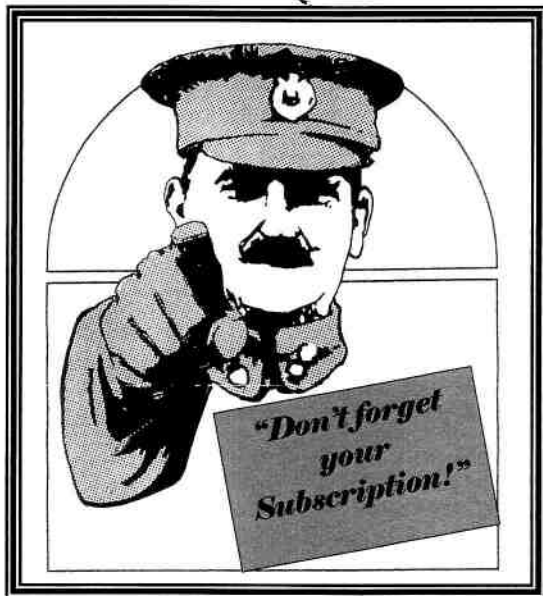
**Mugs** £5, plus £2.80 p&p.

All are well made and feature the famous Colonel logo.

Orders to our Secretary - Address opposite.

Cheques payable to :

'The Colonel Stephens Society'. •



**Notes for contributors** Contributions to *The Colonel* are very welcome. Please send them to the Editor (address above). 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 •

## Deadlines for 2013/14

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

**113: Winter 2013: 10th November**

**114: Spring 2014: 10th February**

**115: Summer 2013: 10th May**

**116: Autumn 2014: 10th August**

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

## Jackson's Jottings

### ***TOO LITTLE, TOO LATE***

CHRIS JACKSON *continues his trawl through the Railway Gazette*

#### **The Light Railways Bill is passed at last**

*Readers will recall from earlier Jottings (Colonel 99) that the 1912 Light Railways Bill looked likely to be derailed completely by a heated debate over the use of trackless trolley systems in place of electric tramways. Efforts to encourage the promotion of rural light railways by making available more generous public funding were also being watered down. Removal of the more contentious clauses allowed the bill to complete its passage through Parliament before the end of the year, but the loss of key provisions resulted in lukewarm cheers from the Railway Gazette. Of course, history tells us that the Act was too late to have any meaningful effect before the start of the First World War and the rise of motor transport.*

#### **November 22, 1912: Light Railways Bill**

In the House of Commons on Monday the House proceeded with the consideration of the Light Railways Bill as amended in Standing Committee. Mr. J.M. Robertson (Parliamentary Secretary to the Board of Trade), being in charge of the measure, moved the omission of an amended clause giving the Light Railway Commissioners power to authorise trackless trolley systems, and the clause, after discussion, was negatived by 35 to 134 – Government majority 181. The Bill was then read a third time.

#### **December 13, 1912: Light Railways Bill**

The Light Railways Bill was read for a third time and passed in the House of Lords on Wednesday. The Bill was committed to a Committee of the whole House on Tuesday, when an amendment was moved and negatived, with reference to trackless trolleys. It has been passed practically in the form in which it left the House of Commons.

#### **December 20, 1912: The Light Railways Bill [Editorial comment]**

The Light Railways Bill, which received the Royal Assent a few days ago, does nothing towards the promotion of light railways

on the Belgian model, nor does it amend the existing law sufficiently to satisfy the hopes expressed more than once by the Light Railway Commissioners. In some respects, however, it makes things easier for light railway promoters. It is provided, for instance, by Clause 1, that if any order under the Act of 1896 is not confirmed by the Board of Trade on the ground that the proposals ought to be submitted to Parliament in consequence of their magnitude or their effect on existing railways, the Board may itself submit the proposals to Parliament. Under present conditions, when an order is not confirmed for either of the reasons above-mentioned, the promoter has himself to begin all over again. Another clause provides for an extension of the present limit for special Treasury advances from £250,000 to £750,000. The cost of acquiring the necessary property should be modified to some extent by Clause 4 as to varying Section 92 of the Lands Clauses Consolidation Act, 1845. A clause has been inserted requiring applications for advances for the purpose of a light railway under the Development and Road Improvement Funds Act, 1909, to be referred to the Light Railway Commissioners for report. The powers of the Commissioners are to be continued for a further five years, and they may act as arbitrators in questions arising out of Light Railway Orders. ●

The next issue of  
*The Colonel* should drop  
through your letter box in  
time for Christmas - but  
only if you pay your subs in  
time!