

NARROW GAUGE NEWS

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EDITORIAL: As we go to press, the news that another industrial narrow-gauge line is due to be closed - it is possible that it has already gone - comes to our hearing. This is the 18" gauge short line of the Wooden Box Refractories of John Knowles (Wooden Box) near Burton-on-Trent, Staffs. The motive power consists of two quaint little 0-4-0 well tanks built by the Hunslet Engine Co. Ltd., Leeds, around 1895 and 1905. Used for the haulage of clay from the mines to the processing plant, these two locos have borne the brunt of the traffic for some considerable time, and it is believed that the boilers are now unfit for further service.

The bi-annual magazine has gone to press and copies should be available for despatch in the near future.

NARROW-GAUGE PHOTOGRAPHS: We have received a list of about 400 N.G. post-cards, which can be obtained from: CITY PHOTOGRAPH SERVICE, 56 Berkeley Avenue, Greenford, Middlesex. Prices are 1/- each, or 9/- per doz. (Postage 6d extra) Cash with order. Members can obtain this list by sending a foolscap S.A.E.

LONDON & SOUTH-EAST AREA NOTES: The date of the next meeting in this area has had to be altered, as follows: Saturday 6th September, 1958; at 6.30 p.m. for 7 p.m. start. Venue: Railway Tavern, Liverpool Street, London, E.C.2. Member, R.D. Butterell, will be giving a talk on 'Early Miniature Railways'. The meeting held on the 31st May last was fairly well attended, when Member Mr. F. Church gave a fully illustrated talk on the Austrian Lines he is so very familiar with. This was very much enjoyed by all present.

NOTES:

From: Mr. E.K. Stretch, Newcastle, Staffs;

TAL Y LLYN: Loco No. 1 'Tal-y-llyn' did not arrive before Whitsun, as had been originally intended, but will be delivered to Towyn by June 14th. Locos No. 4 'Edward Thomas' and No. 6 'Douglas' have been lined out in black, with yellow edging. Loco. No. 3 'Sir Haydn' has only been passed to work at 90 lbs per sq. in pressure, and will therefore only be in use on light duties this year. The interior of the Tal-y-llyn 1st Class coach (No. 1) has been completely re-painted and the roof re-panelled. The open coach, No. 12 has been stripped of its Penrhyn body (ex Penrhyn 'C') which was in very poor condition, but as the under-frame was only built in 1955, a new open body is to be fitted. The Corris brake van (No. 6) is being stripped down, and rotten and damaged timbers (including one complete end) renewed. The Glyn Valley 1st class coach (No. 14) entered service on Whit Sunday.

WELSHPOOL & LLANFAIR: The whole of this line is now very badly overgrown with grass, and from a distance the rails are invisible; except at level crossings. The loco has been removed to Oswestry.

ISLE OF MAN: It appears from the summer timetable that Santon Station (on the Port Erin line) has been closed. As this station was used as a crossing place, there have been some alterations to the times of trains. Services are once again slightly less than last summer.

RAVENGLASS & ESKDALE: According to the timetable leaflets, services began on May 12th; but the full summer timetable does not come into force until June 9th.

MANX ELECTRIC: The threatened closure, (following a considerable loss on the first year's nationalised working) has been averted for a while, Tynwald having decided that by a majority of one, to continue the subsidy and authorise a loan for track renewals. The repainting of cars in green and white (with white interiors) continues, and two Snaefell cars have now received the new livery.

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MORE TAL-Y-LLYN NOTES: A second Glyn Valley coach has been acquired, there is a possibility also of obtaining a Corris Coach. Another purchase is a tramway-type coach, Kerr Stuart built, discovered in Derbyshire and is 3 ft. gauge. Believed to have worked on a Scottish Hydro-Electric contractor's line. It is intended to have three more Penrhyn-type open coaches in service this summer, assembled at Towyn from parts made in Birmingham; like No.13, which entered service last August. The rails of the Crich Mineral Line have been purchased.

Dolgoch platform is being lengthened at the down end to accommodate the longer trains. The building of a retaining wall near Dolgoch, where a long-forgotten culvert (blocked) caused a landslide early in the winter, has delayed work on the new carriage shed at Pendre, for which most of the materials are to hand.

CORRECTION! Mr. E.K. Stretch points out that the entry in N.S. 1956 /5 is incorrect! viz. The extra train stopping at Dolgoch only was not an innovation of the 1956 season; it ran for the first time in 1953, was publised in 1954 and every subsequent season, destination boards were used in the middle of July 1954 on the coaches on the stopping train for the first time. The 'express' used them from the day it began, that season. The headboard on the loco first came into use during the 1954 season, and the express head lamp code was certainly in use in 1955 and probably in 1954.

THE PROPOSED RAILWAY BETWEEN RUTHIN & CERRIG-Y-DRUIDION Courtesy of Mr. J.I.C. Boyd

This line would ~~have~~ been a narrow-gauge branch of the existing standard-gauge Denbigh, Ruthin & Corwen Railway (later absorbed by the L.N.W.R.) and incorporated in the same session as the D.R. & C.R. Its length would have been 16 miles, to 1'-11½" gauge, with rails of 35 lbs/yd. The maximum grade was to be 1 in 30, and the minimum radius 5 chains. The authorised capital was £99,500, but by January 1st, 1878 insufficient capital had been raised, and Vignes states ... 'It is doubtful if this railway will be finished for some time ...' Mr. Boyd says that he is quite sure that no physical items of evidence that work was ever begun are to be found. As the line would have passed over the Denbigh Moor, through one of the bleakest parts of N.Wales, one might ask why the scheme was ever promoted? This line was evidently planned to connect with the North Wales Narrow Gauge line from Beddgelert to Corwen.

Mr. Boyd continues 'Incidentally, by an Act of 1873, a branch of the Cambrian Railways, of which I have seen no previously published mention, a line between Llanfyllin and Llangynog was promoted. It was to be of similar gauge and weight as the foregoing, with a rise of 1 in 40 for 3½ miles. Here again, the authorised capital of £60,000 had not been raised by January 1st 1876, and the project was abandoned.'

'NARROW GAUGE FILM'

Mr. C.J. Whafham, Society Member from Teddington, sends in an interesting piece regarding a long sequence in the film 'Seven Wonders of the World', of a steam-worked line in the mountainous tea country of Darjeeling, India. Gauge appears to be about 3 ft. The film gives a wonderful impression of the line, which twists and loops us to precipitous heights. A familiar sight is also struck by the sprinkling of sand by the crew, clinging to the front of the loco, Festiniog style, and by animals on the line, Tal-y-llyn style, except that the animals encountered are elephants!

(From the foregoing account, the line appears almost certain to be the Darjeeling-Himalaya Railway.-Ed.)

ROMNEY, HYTHE & DYMCHURCH RAILWAY:

Mr. Clifford John sends in some of the latest information available on this line, as follows:-

The diesel has not been sold and was returned to the makers on October 25th last. A new superheated boiler has been delivered 4-8-2 No.5, and is similar to that for the Pacifics, but with longer smokebox. No. 7's new boiler is complete at Gowers of Bedford, but awaits superheaters. The boiler of No. 9 has been condemned and sent to Gowers for replacement. The new one will be superheated, so Mr. John is informed.

NOTES FROM N.E. Danger

The Vale of Rheidol, as most Members will be aware by now, opened at Easter, and the Summer season has been extended. Weekdays, May 24th to September 13th; Sundays, May 25th to September 7th. Last year was the first time that Vale of Rheidol trains ran as early as Easter since 1930.

From a cutting in the Daily Telegraph of February 26th, it appears that the Cattenden and Upnor is unlikely to last more than a very few years. According to the report, the Depot at Upnor is to close by 1963.

The Real Photograph Co. of Southport, has acquired most of W.H. Whitworth's English and Welsh negatives, and Mr. Danger has been in touch with one of the Directors of the Company, regarding the dates of some of these subjects in the 15" gauge category, and can state that the next catalogue will contain some very interesting 15" and other narrow gauge subjects.

Mr. Danger also mentions the fact that a Mrs. Audrey Lawrence of The Cottage Moor Road, Bramhope, LEEDS, organised a tour, by bicycle, of the North Wales narrow gauge lines round about Easter, since then a further notice has appeared in the Railway Magazine to the effect that a further tour is to be undertaken on July 19th, and August 9th. The name by which this organisation is known is: International Tramping Tours, Moor Road, Bramhope, LEEDS.
