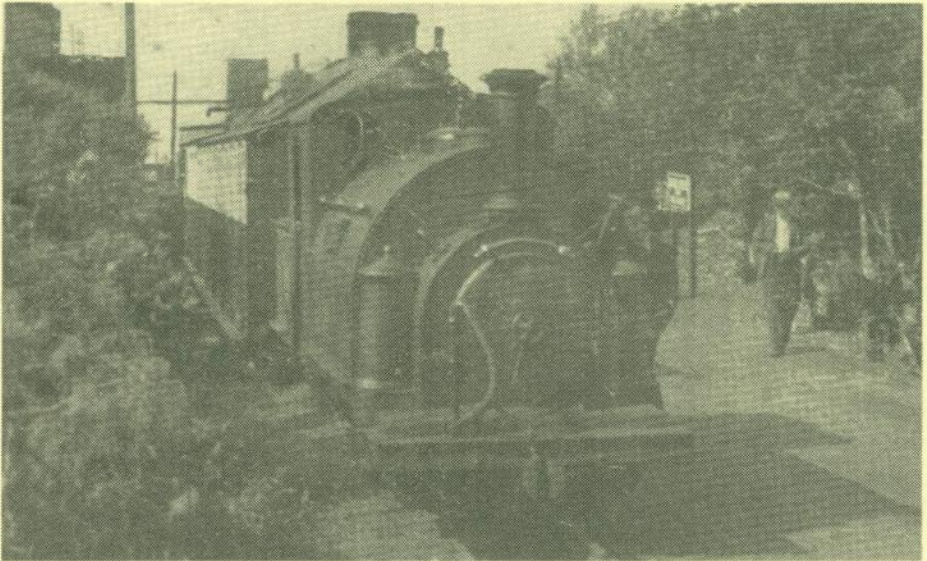


THE NARROW GAUGE



THE NARROW GAUGE RAILWAY SOCIETY

No.15 - 18 (1955 - 56)

THE NARROW GAUGE

Issued by the Narrow Gauge Railway Society, Leeds, Yorkshire, England.

December 1955 *

[*No. 15 in sequential order]

Greetings to all members, especially those who are isolated and unable to get along to meetings, etc., - your support is equally valuable to us as that of the chaps 'on the doorstep'. To all, whether in these islands or across the seas, we hope you had a Happy Christmas, and wish you a peaceful New Year.

Magazine

We hope the magazine has improved a little, and naturally, one of our New Year Resolutions will be to improve it still further if we can. Two readers have asked for a return to the numbering system; however, commencing with the next issue, a Continental System will be used, i.e. as there will be four quarterly issues (time alone does not permit us to produce more than that at the moment) these will be numbered as follows :-

1956/1 Due out at the end of March
1956/2 Due out at the end of June
1956/3 Due out at the end of September
1956/4 Due out at the end of December

Closing date for contributions is the 10th of the particular month indicated (Incidentally, there were two items in the last issue which need correcting :

Page 5 - Locomotive No. 823 was used on the train

Page 7, para. 2, line 9 - insert the following after 'that it'...."may have been copied from the tramway. The latter....."

Subscriptions are now well overdue; remember, it is 10/- a year (5/- if under 18 or if you live, or are stationed in HM Forces, overseas). All subscriptions should be sent direct to the Hon. Treasurer (see page 12).

Those of you who are undecided whether or not to renew your membership, are reminded that every subscription we receive is helping to ensure that some item of narrow-gauge interest is preserved - the T. Green loco at Harrogate, for example. In the next issue we shall publish a list of members whose sub. is still outstanding. Make sure that your name is not on it; if however, for reasons best known to yourself, you do not wish to continue membership, please write and tell us, so that our records can be brought up to date (incidentally, don't forget to return the card, and badge if issued).

Front Cover photograph is by A. E. Rimmer, well known as a photographer of narrow-gauge subjects. Many will recall seeing a number of his photographs in the Railway Magazine from time to time. Mr. Rimmer is now a member, and has forwarded us a photo of the Festiniog Railway locomotive "Prince" at Boston Lodge, taken on August 20th this year. The station nameboard reads 'Boston Lodge for Port Meirion', the train having arrived from Portmadoc. We are grateful to Mr. Rimmer for permission to print this photograph, which no doubt will be of interest to many readers.

Back Cover photograph, reprinted from an earlier issue, shows the workmen's coaches on Messrs. Bowater Lloyd's 2'6"-gauge line at Sittingbourne, in Kent. We understand that they are painted GWR green, with white window frames and black underframes, and vertical planking is used in their construction. Inside, there are bench seats fitted, and some coaches have one door at one end, others have two doors in the centre. We are indebted to Mr. F.J.McMillan, of Hayes, Middx., for the photograph.

Meetings

The meeting which was arranged in Leeds on October 1st was very poorly attended, and the attendance at the Annual General Meeting was not very encouraging. To those members who did make the effort to attend, we say "Thank you". A report of the AGM will be issued later, and members may care to note that next year's AGM will be held in London, at the request of the London & South East (Joint) Areas.

Representation

Owing to the amount of narrow-gauge railway interest in the Manchester/Liverpool area being adequately catered for by the Talylyn Railway Preservation Society and the Festiniog Railway Society, it has been decided to discontinue representation in that part of the country for the time being at any rate. Our thanks to the members who have previously helped to further the interest in narrow-gauge railways in that area, an interest which, we feel, has been fruitfully directed to the admirable efforts of the two Societies mentioned above.

Representation in the London, and South Eastern areas continues as hitherto :

LONDON (postal districts) : Mr. C.H.John, 5 Lavington Road, West Ealing, London W.13.

SOUTH EAST : Mr. W.J.K.Davies, Merton Court, Knoll Road, Sidcup, Kent.

Badges are available from Mr. A.S.Dunning, 41 Longdon Road, Beaumont Park, Huddersfield, Yorks. Price 3/6 plus 2½d. postage. The design is a head-on view of a L & B type locomotive, with the letters NGRS in a scroll below, outlined in green on brass and lacquered. The design is distinctive, based on a suggestion by one of the Manchester members last year.

Ashover Light Railway

We have received a very interesting letter from one of our members, Mr. R.M.Fitzmaurice of Rotherham, who sends details of a visit to the site of the former Ashover Light Railway on 8th October 1955.

CLAY CROSS & EGSTOW STATION. The site is quite derelict and apart from the easily-traced roadbed, the only remains of the station, offices, locomotive and carriage sheds are an engine hoist built of girders, a trespass notice headed A.L.R. dated 1925, and portions of the brick-built structure used for transshipment from narrow to standard gauge wagons. It was also noticed that the carriage which has been on the gas works site for some years has been removed, although the bogies from this carriage and two similar bogies still remain.

FALLGATE SIDINGS. Apart from the general air of dilapidation the layout here remains basically complete. The crushing plant at the Clay Cross end is still in use and material is shot into standard type ex-W.D. wagons which are then stored in the sidings before being drawn up a short incline onto a tipping device. Here the contents are discharged into a large hopper and are then passed into lorries by means of an endless belt.

Nineteen wagons appear to be in regular use and sixteen are numbered as follows : 3, 7, 9, 13, 15, 21, 22, 27, 29, 33, 35, 49, 51, 61, 62 and 66. Three of the wagons still in use cannot be identified as repairs have been made with new timber and the numerals not renewed. Wagons 5 and 24 are in the 'main line passing siding' out of use and wagons 25 and 63 are overgrown and isolated due to tipping to form a rough lorry road, on the short remaining section of 'main line' at the Clay Cross end of the layout.

It might be of interest to add that a further wagon lies overturned, without bogies, providing an excellent illustration of the type of construction used in the underframe, and that the hopper tipping device mentioned earlier appears to have the major portions of two bogies incorporated in its construction - perhaps from this very wagon.

Sufficient portions of the makers plates remain on two wagons to indicate that they were built at Darlington by the Blake Boiler, Wagon & Engineering Co. Ltd in 1918.

Wagons are moved by a Rapier tractor, which although kept in the open appears to be in good condition, in distinct contrast to all the wagons which are in very poor shape even for the somewhat unnatural task on which they are now employed.

ASHOVER BUTTS. A quick visit and somewhat cursory examination of the site revealed nothing apart from the foundations of the station buildings and traces of the abandoned roadbed.

Announcements

If you are interested in Continental Railways, you will enjoy reading "European Railways", published (every other month) by Robert Spark, 15 St. Stephen's House, Westminster, London S.W.1. Examples of subscription rates : 1/6 per copy (25 cents), one year 10/- U.K. and Commonwealth (\$1.50 in U.S.A. or Canada).

Mr. K.E.Hartley, 43 Doncaster Road, Selby, Yorks., can supply prints of the following Sand Hutton railway subjects : 0-4-0WT "Esme", almost head-on in 1925, 4-wheel 2-ton goods wagon in 1925, locomotive depot 1954, bridge remains 1954, coach body 1954. Please enclose s.a.e. for your requirements.

Regulations and Constitution

Below are set out the Regulations and Constitution of the Narrow Gauge Railway Society :

- 1) The Narrow Gauge Railway Society (hereinafter referred to as the Society) was formed in November 1951 with the intention of promoting and maintaining interest in all forms of narrow-gauge passenger, freight and industrial railway operation (15" to 4'0" gauges generally).
- 2) membership shall be by application and open to all persons over 14 years of age. There shall be a President and Vice-President, Ordinary Members and Life Members.
- 3) (a) The affairs of the Society shall be administered by the Hon. Secretary, Assistant Hon. Secretary, Hon. Treasurer, and a Committee of members to be elected at an Annual General Meeting. The Committee shall elect a Chairman annually at the first meeting

following the Annual General Meeting. A special meeting may be called by the Committee at any time.

- (b) Agents shall be appointed by the Committee, and empowered by these Regulations to organise sub-committees where there are not less than six members, the areas under their administration to be self-supporting as far as possible.
- 4) The Annual Subscription shall be 10/- due on November 1st in advance for the year, payable only to the Hon. Secretary or Hon. Treasurer (Members joining between 1st May and 30th June pay half subscription rate to 31st October, United Kingdom only. Members joining after 1st July are credited with a full years membership to the following 31st October (i.e. 15 months hence)). When members are three months in arrears they will be notified and allowed a further month in which to pay their subscriptions. Members still in arrears at 30th April will be removed from the register. Life Membership is available on a single payment of £3/3/-.
 - 5) Visits to systems and installations shall be arranged where practicable, but no liability will be accepted for the personal safety or belongings of any member or person attending such visit or meeting arranged by or on behalf of the Society.
 - 6) Members may not use the Society's name for private purposes. The Committee may request the resignation of, or exclude any member acting in a manner prejudicial to the well-being of the Society.
 - 7) The Society shall be a non-political independent organisation, but co-operation with other transport study organisations of a non-political character shall be encouraged.
 - 8) If the total membership decreases to less than nine persons, the Society shall be wound up and the funds and assets shall be disposed of at the discretion of the remaining members.
 - 9) All property, including rolling-stock, equipment, models, books, documents and other miscellaneous items donated to, acquired by or purchased on behalf of the Society shall become the sole property of the Society and no individual member shall acquire any right or title thereto. All such property shall be in the absolute control of the executive committee who shall have power to grant access to, sell or otherwise dispose of as shall be deemed necessary from time to time.

The above Regulations and Conditions were approved by the Convention at Leeds on 10th October 1953, with subsequent amendments to Regulation 3 (a) and addition of Regulation 9.

Vale of Rheidol Railway

Many of you will know that things have been more encouraging on the Devil's Bridge - Aberystwyth line of B.R. (Western Region). The three locos have been to Swindon for overhaul and repainting in B.R. (unlined) green, the coaching stock repainted, and a long-overdue publicity drive brought one of the finest narrow-gauge railway posters seen for a long time. A coloured reproduction of one of Mr. J.I.C. Boyd's photos headed the poster, which gave details of the train service. Also the L.M. Region put out a very interesting poster showing four main Welsh narrow-gauge lines, the Talylyn (2'3"), Vale of Rheidol (1'11 1/2"), Snowdon Mountain Railway (2' 7 1/2") and the Great Orme Railway (3'6"). This was of course before the Festiniog had re-opened to the public.

One of our new members, Mr. N.E. Danger, writes :

"Chalked on a notice-board at Aberystwyth Station....."the popular Sunday Excursion to Devil's Bridge will continue to run on September 4th and 11th.....the newly-introduced weekday evening service continued for a week after the advertised date. This third return trip (three days per week) has meant two trains crossing.....for the first time since 1939. Then both Capel Bangor and Aberffwd were block posts and trains crossed at the former. Now all traffic uses the down road at Capel Bangor, points being unlocked

only to give access to the carriage shed. It is believed that this year's timetable is the first for over 25 years requiring trains to cross at Aberffwd" (Can anyone confirm this? Ed.) " Rhiwfron siding appears freshly lifted, although lever frame and rodding remained (it is believed that the points were taken out in GWR days, but the track left). Parcels traffic was noted at a few halts."

We are grateful for Mr. Danger's notes, and would welcome some similar notes from other members, especially those overseas.

Festiniog Railway

The F.R. carried 11,371 passengers in nine weeks running, of which 10,000 were carried in under seven weeks.

Since the regular services ceased, several odd jobs have been finished off on "Prince" and repairs carried out on the two coaches. Seventy wagons which were lying idle at Blaenau have been brought down to Minfford, some of these are being scrapped to raise cash, whilst others have been put into traffic (i.e. in use or stored). Only vehicles in advanced states of decrepitude are being scrapped at present. A certain amount of clearing work has been done towards Minfford, and the sunken road in the sidings there has been cleared to facilitate the unloading of coal, also to extricate the wagons embedded in the bushes (fifty-four came out!).

Still Running

According to our notes, the following narrow-gauge lines are still operating; if anyone knows of any that have closed, or others that are running, please notify the Asst. Hon. Librarian as quickly as possible (All we want is the name of the line, gauge, locality and type of stock in use, for further research) :

Vale of Rheidol; Talylyn; Isle of Man; Manx Electric; Snaefell Mountain; Snowdon Mountain; Great Orme Railway; L & C B E R; Ravenglass & Eskdale; Romney Hythe & Dymchurch; County Donegal; West Clare (C.I.E.); Cavan & Leitrim (C.I.E.); Hythe Pier; Brighton (Volk's); Southend Pier; Groudle Glen; Fairbourne; Ramsgate Tunnel; Shipley Glen; North Bay Railway, Scarborough; Queens Pier (Ramsay, I.O.M.); Welshpool & Llanfair; Festiniog; Padarn; Penrhyn; Pen-yr-Orsedd (Nantle); Penmaenmawr & Welsh Granite; Bowater Lloyd's, Sittingbourne; Nocton Estate Light Railway; and certain private industrial lines. These are the main ones, and we would welcome details of any other narrow-gauge lines of any kind, anywhere.

Sand Hutton Revisited

K.E.Hartley

Not since 1937, when I had tried to follow the course of the track as nearly as possible by motorcycle, had I paid a visit to Sand Hutton, so that a remark made to me by our Hon. Secretary early last year, determined me to re-visit the former 18"-gauge Sand Hutton Light Railway at the earliest opportunity, and to find out just what remains today of the late Sir Robert Walker's unique 6 ¾ -mile long narrow-gauge line. Thus it was that, in April 1954, I found myself at Warthill, formerly the most important point on the line, and where connection was made with the London & North Eastern Railway.

The only sign that the light railway had once been there was a large flat expanse of land, now partly divided into two by a growth of trees. Nothing remains of the loading bank from

which goods were loaded from 18" to standard-gauge wagons, nor is it now possible to trace the trackbed up past White Syke Cottages, as could have been done in 1937. Since that date, too, the short lengths of metals left embedded in the roadway by the demolition contractors at various points have likewise disappeared.

There is still a gravel pit at Sand Hutton, but the first actual relic of the S.H.L.R. is the former locomotive depot, which is easily seen from the roadway leading into the village. This is a fairly large structure of brick, corrugated iron and wood, and is now in use as an implement shed. Considering that 23 years have passed since the line was closed, it is in fair condition. The main dimensions are 60'9" long, and 21' wide; brickwork extends to 4' high and there are 7'-wide doors at the Warthill end. The ends, and clerestory to the roof, are of wood, while the combined sides and roof are of corrugated iron. Ample room was afforded the four 0-4-0WT locomotives which worked the line.

Fifty or sixty yards further on, the line crossed a stream by a light bridge formed of flat-bottom rails supported on four concrete piers, with the narrow-gauge sleepers laid directly on top of them. This bridge still remains, without the track, but the small embankment leading up to it appears to have been levelled off. In view of the fact that no other buildings except small wooden shelters at "Sand Hutton Central" and "Bossall" existed on the main line, and from what I learned locally, I did not consider that I need explore further in the direction of the latter station, but decided to visit the former Claxton Branch terminus, where there was once a small goods shed, with a loop and sidings, and near which were the Claxton Brickworks. Disappointment awaited me, however, for no trace now exists of either railway or brick-yard. This I learned from a Claxton man who had worked on the line; he told me that, when in operation, the line was pretty busy, and usually had two locomotives in steam daily.

From Claxton I made my way to Harton, where I had been told by a Sand Hutton resident that I should find the body of the saloon coach which operated the Saturdays Only passenger service. Sure enough, there was the rather dilapidated carriage, less bogies and running gear, in use as a cricket pavilion by the local village team. The main portion has had one of the slatted longitudinal seats removed, and the windows on the other side blanked off with corrugated iron sheeting. One end has no floor and has been adapted to house the mower etc.

The coach is painted white, but is pretty shabby. Dimensions (from Sir Robert Walker's article in the December 1924 issue of RAILWAY MAGAZINE), are : length over headstocks 31' 3", width 4' 9" (4' 6" inside) height 7' 8". The main saloon held 20 persons; one end was open but had waterproof curtains and seated 10, whilst the other end was a small private saloon. At each end was a platform 2' 0" in length.

Vacuum brakes, torpedo ventilators and electric lighting were fitted. Tare weight was 6 tons 5 cwt. and the vehicle was built by Robert Hudson & Co., Leeds, in 1924.

The line was dismantled in 1933 (by Thos. Ward's, Sheffield, I was informed) and the route is now almost untraceable.

N.G.R.S. Officers and Committee

Hon. Secretary : E.G.Cope, 10 Piece Wood Road, Tinshill Lane, Leeds 16.

Assistant Hon. Secretary : R.N.Redman, 11 Outwood Walk, Horsforth, Leeds.

Hon. Treasurer : J.M.Birdsell, 7 Broomhill Drive, Leeds 17.

Chairman & Magazine Editor : T.H.Spink, 37 Eldon Terrace, Leeds Road,
Wakefield, Yorks.

Hon. Librarian : R.P.Lee, c/o Hale Cote, Milton Street, Swinton, Yorks.

Assistant Hon. Librarian : A.S.Dunning, 41 Longdon Avenue, Beaumont Park,
Huddersfield.

Industrial Representative : K.Lister, 95 Dewsbury Road, Leeds 11.

Model Engineering Representative : P.S.Halton, 18 Eden Crescent, Burley, Leeds 4

Technical Advisor : P.G.Brennand, 37 Norwich Avenue, Hunslet Carr, Leeds 12.

Please remember to enclose an s.a.e. when writing to any of the above for information etc.
(Note : ALL subscriptions must be paid DIRECT to the Hon. Treasurer.)

European Visit

It is proposed to arrange a week's visit to certain European narrow-gauge lines, probably Austrian/Italian or Swiss/ Austrian. Full details will appear in the next issue of the magazine, or will be circulated to members if ready before.

Irish Visit

A visit to Irish lines is being arranged for the beginning of July. Details are being worked out now and will appear in the next issue of the magazine (March).

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