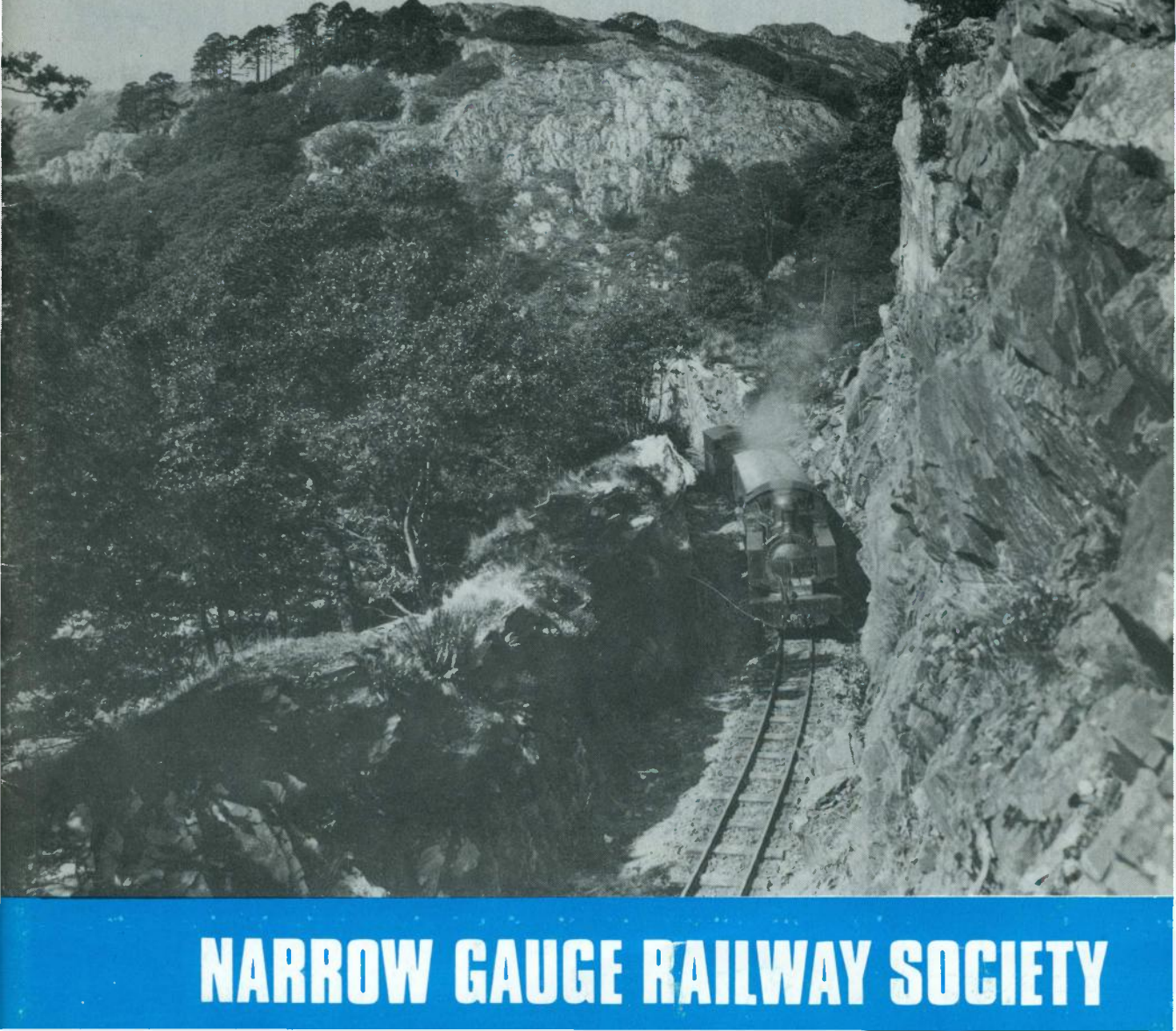
THE NARROW GAUGE

No. 90



NARROW GAUGE RAILWAY SOCIETY

NARROW GAUGE RAILWAY SOCIETY

Serving the narrow gauge world since 1951

SECRETARY : M. Portsmouth, 15 Ham View, Upton-on-Severn, Worcs. WR8 0QE
MEMBERSHIP SECRETARY : P.A.Slater, The Hole in the Wall, Bradley, Ashbourne, Derbys.
TREASURER : J.H.Steele, 32 Thistley Hough, Penkhull, Stoke-on-Trent, ST4 5HU

The Society was founded in 1951 to encourage interest in all forms of narrow gauge rail transport. Members interests cover every aspect of the construction, operation, history and modelling of narrow gauge railways throughout the world. Society members receive this magazine and Narrow Gauge News, a bi-monthly review of current events on the narrow gauge scene. An extensive library, locomotive records, and modelling information service are available to members. Meetings and visits are arranged by local areas based in Leeds, Leicester, London, Malvern, Stoke-on-Trent and Warrington. Annual subscription £5.50 due 1st April.

THE NARROW GAUGE

ISSN 0142-5587

EDITOR : M. Swift, 47 Birchington Avenue, Birchencliffe, Huddersfield, HD3 3RD
BACK NUMBER SALES : P.A. Slater, The Hole in the Wall, Bradley, Ashbourne, Derbys.

Published quarterly by the Narrow Gauge Railway Society to record the history and development of narrow gauge rail transport. Our intention is to present a balanced, well illustrated publication, and the Editor welcomes original articles, photographs and drawings for consideration. Articles should preferably be written or typed with double spacing on one side of the paper only. The Editor appreciates a stamped addressed envelope if a reply is required. A range of back numbers, and binders for eight issues are available from the address above.

Printed by Hadfield Print Services Ltd, Mount Pleasant Street, Ashton-under-Lyne, Lancashire, OL6 9HZ

EDITORIAL

No 90 WINTER 1980/81

These paragraphs have often carried appeals for specific articles, and some have borne fruit. One was for first hand reports on visits to long closed narrow gauge lines, and in this issue Jack Steel tells of his experiences on the WHR more than fifty years ago. Everyone who has stood on the trackbed in Aberglaslyn (and who hasn't?) must have secretly wished that they too could have occupied a corner seat behind RUSSELL or the Baldwin. Well, of course reality was not quite so rosy as the dream, but the journey was certainly memorable and rarely described because it was made by so few.

Another appeal was for articles on practical preservation, and Lt Col Barrie Turner deals with an unusual project in distant Cyprus. The finished locomotive is no longer accessible to outsiders because of political change, but, if one door closes another often opens, and we can also include a glimpse of Cuba. This country has a wealth of narrow gauge steam still at work, so perhaps a future visitor can enlarge on this by producing a comprehensive article?

This issue is the last of the current year because the first two issues were combined as *The Lochaber Narrow Gauge Railway.* Despite our initial doubts this special number was well received and sold out in twelve weeks, necessitating a reprint. Some additional information has been received, and will be published in a future issue.

Cover: RUSSELL approaching Nantmor on a train from Beddgelert in the early days of the Welsh Highland Railway. In this issue, Jack Steel recalls his trips over the line more than fifty years ago.
(F. Frith & Co Ltd. N.G.R.S. Library collection)

WELSH HIGHLAND CIRCULAR

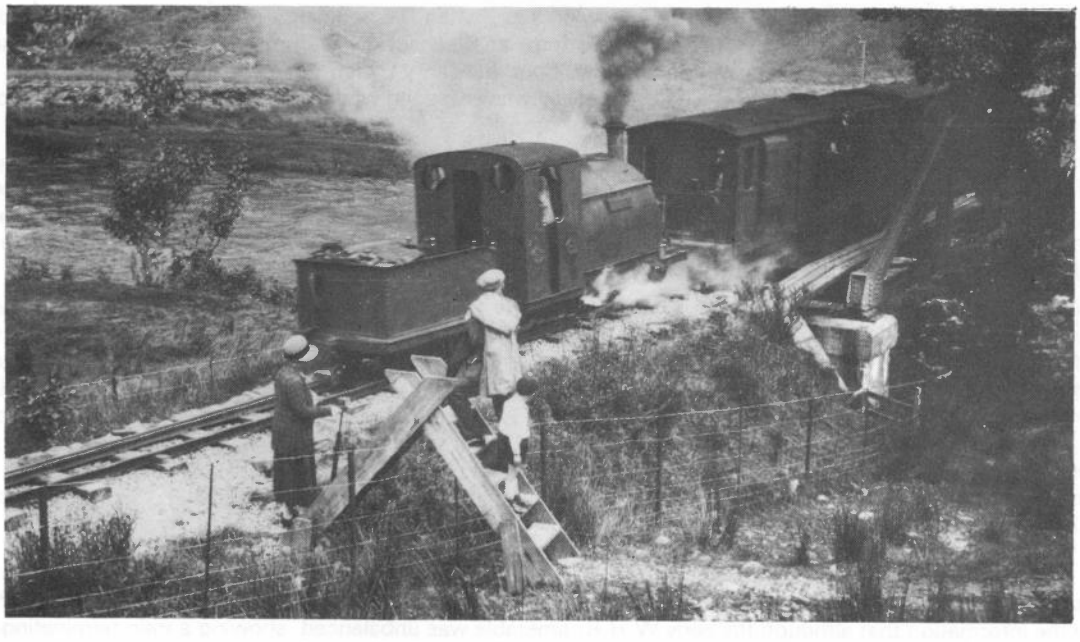
Jack Steel

My story begins at Llandudno Junction. Travelling to Penmaenmawr for our holiday in 1929 meant taking a through train from Leeds to Llandudno as far as Colwyn Bay, then a slow train that should have taken us to Penmaenmawr, but always seemed to entail a change at the Junction. Whilst waiting here I explored the station and found one of the small buff timetables of the Welsh Highland Railway, then barely six years old. Dad confirmed that a round trip from stations on the North Wales coast was possible, but my question: "Could we go?" was not answered as our train swept into the platform.

During the 1928 holiday our outings from Penmaenmawr had been by Red Rambler charabanc, because Grandma (a retired headmistress) stated firmly that you saw more when travelling by road. This year our chara trip came to a sudden end when our driver and a competing Royal Blue driver locked their vehicles together on the road over Penmaenmawr headland, (this was before the present road with tunnels was built) and we had to edge our way out along the narrow wall with the sea crashing on the rocks far below.

This seemed an obvious opportunity to press for an outing by rail, and I trotted out my: "Could we do the Welsh Highland trip?" the following evening. So, the next morning found us on the end of the crowded platform at Llandudno Junction. A few minutes late the train from Llandudno came weaving in—a "Cauliflower" 0-6-0 piloting a 17in 0-6-2 "Coal Tank", with eight six-wheelers and the observation car in the rear. Consternation—it was full. But not to worry, thirteen horsehair upholstered chairs were brought from the first class refreshment room and placed in the aisle. We took our places, and were off.

Our late arrival in Blaenau meant that we had just nice time to cross the road to the Festiniog Railway station before their train shuffled in, three bogies and two "bug boxes" behind JAMES SPOONER. The locomotive and four-wheel carriages were dark green, the bogies in faded varnished teak. The crew took one look at the crowd and returned to Duffws "To fetch more coaches". About twenty minutes later an approaching cloud of wet steam heralded the arrival of JAMES SPOONER with two more bogies and an extra "bug box". A corner seat was found for me—but on the mountain side of the train—so that my impressions of the journey are somewhat limited. However, as well as the water stop at Tan-y-Bwlch I also recall taking water at Boston Lodge.



A train from Portmadoc, hauled by PRINCE or PRINCESS, crossing Bryn-y-felin bridge on the approach to Beddgelert, about 1927. *(R.A.Appleton)*

We arrived at Portmadoc an hour late, with half an hour to make the connection with the Welsh Highland train to Dinas Junction, and have the "lunch break" promised in their timetable. We were directed to follow the line from Harbour Station, over the bridge, and keep right. This meant that the first building we approached was Sergeant Williams' Café. There he stood—all 6ft 2in of him, with his wide moustache bristling. (He had been a London police sergeant). "Refreshments, Ladies and Gentlemen!" he called out. As you hesitated he hustled you through the door: "Boiled eggs on the left, ham sandwiches on the right!" he commanded*. Twenty minutes later we emerged fed, and continued on to the New Station.

Having reached the north side of the Cambrian Railway crossing we had only minutes to wait until RUSSELL arrived with a brake composite coach and a saloon. A quick run round, and we were off. Whilst the gait of the F.R. trains was slow, that of the Welsh Highland was positively creeping, with the wheels keeping up a noisy "Bang - Bang—Bang - Bang" over the rail points. The iron telegraph poles added to the light railway atmosphere as we passed slowly across the marshes towards the distant mountains. At Pont Croesor the locomotive took water from the tank, and we eventually reached Beddgelert where we were promised an hours wait.

The guard urged us to walk down to Gelert's Grave, or take tea in the village, but most passengers hung around the station. The odd box Brownie camera would be pointed at the locomotive, but this was about the limit of activity. Hamilton Ellis and his wife, who were sharing our compartment, recalled their unfortunate experience two years before when they had believed the timetable which promised: "A buffet car on all trains". At Portmadoc they were told that it had been left at Beddgelert, but when they arrived there found that it sold only biscuits and fizzy lemondade.

Eventually we were off up the bank to South Snowdon, father and I being very puzzled by all the other bits of railway formation we could see from the train. After we arrived at the latter station the guard came round and asked us to move into the first class, which he unlocked. Our wooden third class compartment was wanted for a flock of sheep. Then we were off down the hill towards Llyn Quellyn in style, with Mother complaining that the upholstery was damp.

As the journey neared its end we were really banging along, rolling wildly from side to side at what seemed like thirty miles an hour. Having seen the state of the track, I held my breath. Then the guard, who wore a tightly belted raincoat, trilby hat, a celluloid "Come to Jesus" collar, and carried a curved money bag and bell punch, came swaying along the footboard collecting tickets. We dribbled round the curve into Dinas Junction, and came to a halt just in time to tumble out into the L.M.S. train for Penmaenmawr.

The scene was now set for a repeat in the following year, when the popularity of the area had increased to bring more tourists onto the Festiniog Railway platform at Blaenau. The return to Duffws "To bring more carriages" took an hour, and we waited another hour at Tan-y-Bwlch to cross an up train drawn by WELSH PONY. It was a hot day, and the enforced delay was enlivened when all Bessie Jones' display of "pop" exploded! How we passengers cheered.

There were a number of changes on the Festiniog. The previous year petrol locomotives had been in charge of shunting at Blaenau and Portmadoc, but in 1930 PRINCE and PRINCESS had taken over these duties. It was also the year that the bogie carriages appeared in rainbow colours. They used gloss paint which, apart from being in pastel colours, wore badly. The L.M.S. also used gloss paint on non-standard stock, and after the first sunny day the maroon colour became a tomato red.

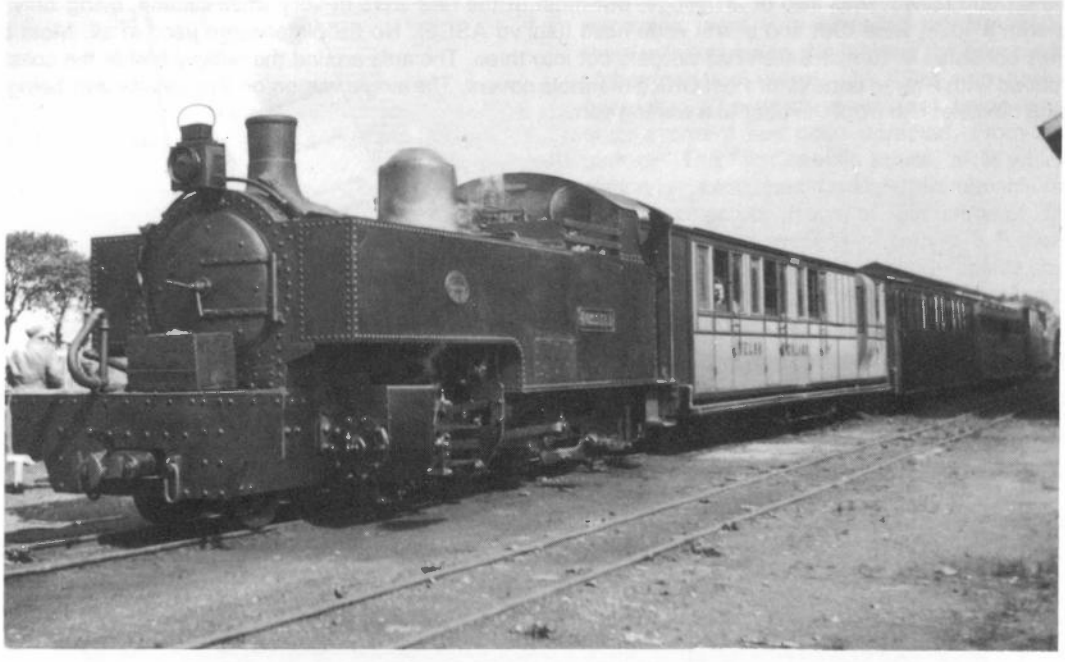
By this time the timetable advertised a train connecting the two stations at Portmadoc but the staff at Harbour station always maintained that there was no such thing. However, just before the W.H.R. train arrived at the north "New" station, a Fairlie would arrive at the south "New" station with empty carriages to make the connection. Because there were more passengers our train comprised five bogies, the extra vehicles being in dark blue—no relation to the rainbow hues of the F.R.—and two were still lettered N.W.N.G. The run round loop was too short for such a long train, and a complicated pole shunting procedure had to be employed to get the locomotive on the front end of the train. There was a very long loop around the back of the building, but we merely thought that the crew were too thick to use it. No-one told us that it was only laid in very light track totally unsuitable for a locomotive.

*This anecdote has earned me many a pint in Portmadoc pubs during the past few years! From the same source came the information that although the early W.H.R. timetable was unbalanced, showing a train terminating at Beddgelert, the crew did not lodge here, but returned light to Portmadoc New, where they parked the locomotive. In return for a few coppers, this was lit up by a local schoolboy early in the following morning.

It was whilst waiting for all this manoeuvreing that the ladies suggested that if the men were gentlemen they would rescue the platform seat from the jungle of brambles to enable them to sit down. By the time the seat was recovered the train was ready to leave, and we took our seats in a semi-open coach. The bogies on this let out pig-like squeals on curves, and when I again travelled in it on the F.R. in 1970 it still squealed.

By now we could usually talk the driver out of the one hour wait at Beddgelert, and after about twenty minutes we were off. The permanant way gang had their trolley—the floor and wheels of a long decayed wagon—here, and attached it to the rear of the train by a threadbare piece of rope. As we squealed our way round the curves towards Pitts Head passengers kept putting their heads out of the window and saying: "They're still with us". Actually they came all the way to Tryfan Junction. The earlier start from Beddgelert was engineered to allow time for a decent cup of tea in the refreshment room at Dinas, run sensibly by the Snowdon Mountain Tramroad. Tea, in those days before coffee bars, made an important contribution to the day excursion. To while away the time whilst they fetched more stock at Blaenau the F.R. had set up a tea bar. Most passengers arriving from the L.M.S. trains had Holiday Contract tickets, and were obliged to book again for the journey over the narrow gauge. The F.R. booking clerk never had any change, and always made up the difference with Observation Car tickets! The fare, by the way, was 4/9d. (23½p)

These recollections may seem very distant to younger readers, but in April 1980 I attended the S.L.S. annual meeting in Manchester, and, over tea, found myself in conversation with one of the older members of the Manchester Locomotive Society. We talked about the Welsh Highland Railway, and he told me that as a boy he had to get to Beddgelert. Travelling to South Snowdon he found that the line from there to Beddgelert and Croesor Junction was still under construction, but had met the engineer, Mr Prendergast: "Who was damned interesting!" and saw that he reached his destination.



RUSSELL on a southbound train at Dinas Jc around the time that Jack Steel travelled over the line. *(N.G.R.S. Library collection)*

A WET SUNDAY AT DUNGENESS

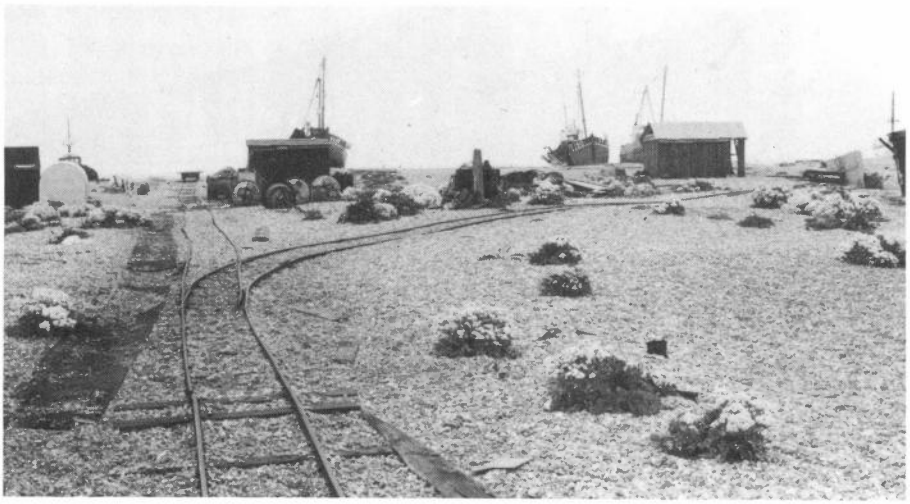
John de Havilland

In the summer of 1979 I took a trip on the Romney Hythe and Dymchurch Light Railway down to Dungeness, and in the twenty minutes that is allowed for a view of the lighthouse and a quick cup of tea in the cafe, I took a couple of photographs of TYPHOON and then thought I would go and look at the sea. The standard summer weather of high wind and stinging rain made me keep my head down, so that I almost walked into a chain link fence surrounding a Coastguard installation. When I looked up I saw that on the other side of the fence was a railway!

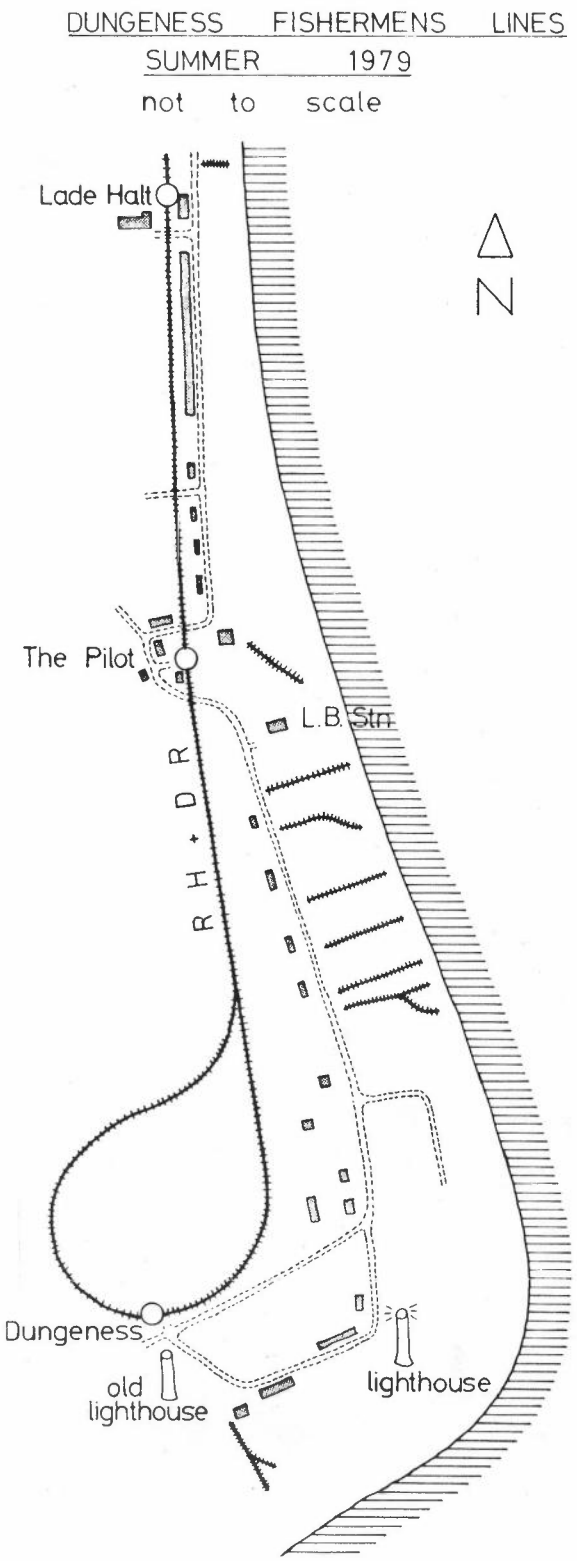
Linking the various pieces of equipment: sirens, fog horns, radar, boxes and concrete bases was a 2ft gauge railway, laid in light rail about 14lb/yd, partly on steel sleepers and partly concreted into the pathway. The sign indicated that the installation was operated by Trinity House, nobody was about, no wagon could be seen and the rails looked very corroded. Having a hand-pushed railway in this terrain made a lot of sense, for after walking for a couple of minutes on this giant shingle beach your legs go all wobbly, and carrying any kind of load must be impossible. I remembered from some reference in the past that there was once a number of railways operated by the local fishermen between the coast road and the foreshore. Having now missed the train from Dungeness, I decided to walk to Lade Halt along the coast road rather than wait an hour. I might even see some remains of the old fishermens' lines.

The first railway that I came upon was a surprise to me for it was still in use, it had a branch, and a stock of three wagons. This was of 2ft gauge and started from the road beside a number of old central heating fuel tanks with the fishing boats' registration numbers painted on them. The track was mainly of 12 and 16lb/yd rails, with some 20lb/yd material, spiked and nailed to odd bits of timber with the occasional steel sleeper. A right hand jubilee point started a branch, which curved round to form two parallel lines at the winch huts, used to haul the fishing boats out of the water. Two of the wagons were old Allens of Tipton skip frames with rough slatted timber floors, and the other had Hudson axle boxes and a flat timber floor. The distance from the coast road to the foreshore was about 200 yards.

The second railway was also of 2ft gauge, but most of the rails were of very small section, being only 1½in deep with a 1½in wide foot and a ¾in wide head (8lb/yd ASCE). No fishplates were used at all. Most of the sleepers consisted of former British Rail sleepers cut into three. The area around the railway beside the coast road was paved with a large number of Post Office manhole covers. The single wagon on this railway was being used to bring boxes of fish from the boat to a waiting van.



The junction on the southernmost line, which is typical of the fishermens' railways. Note the boats drawn up on the beach in the distance.
(John de Havilland)



The third fisherman's railway was also of 2ft gauge, and appeared not to have been used for some time. The single wagon looked as if it had been cut down from a brick drying car.

The fourth railway was very different. It was of 15in gauge, and the shingle that it had to cross was so undulating that the sleepers had been built up to form two timber trestles, one 3ft high and the other 2ft high. All the rail was about 16lb/yd. The single wagon, I have since been informed, had been provided by Ian Jolly earlier in 1979 (which explained its good condition) in exchange for the previous wagon on this railway, which had axle boxes of Heywood origin, and was originally on the Eaton Hall railway.

The next railway was of 2ft gauge with rails of 20 and 25lb/yd, but with no fishplates. About two thirds of the way along the railway were two abandoned wagons, both having collapsed owing to corrosion.

The sixth railway was of 2ft gauge, with a simple boarded skip frame as transport. There were no facilities at the road side, and very little at the shore end, although the wagon and track looked as if they were regularly used.

The next railway was also of 2ft 0in gauge, but had obviously been abandoned for some time because some of the rails were missing, those remaining were very corroded or damaged, and there was no wagon. Next along the beach was the lifeboat station, where the RNLI was having an open day. The weather was not being kind but quite a crowd had been attracted. From the car park of "The Pilot" public house, after which the station is named, was the eighth fisherman's railway that I came across. It was of 15in gauge of 20lb/yd rail on one third sections of former B R sleepers. There was an old R H & D R wagon upside down at the sea end with a broken axle. This railway was not in use.

I found just one other railway. It was almost opposite Lade Halt, and was only 50 yards long because the road is a lot nearer the sea here. Of 2ft gauge, it is laid with 20lb/yd rails fixed to the sleepers with galvanised clout nails. There were no fishplates. The track, sleepers and single wagon with Hudson axle boxes, had all been tarred to give some protection against corrosion. The wagon was chained and padlocked to the track, the only one apart from the wagon provided by Ian Jolly that I had seen so secured. Having now missed the train at Lade Halt I wandered slowly up to Madieson's, my legs like jelly. But I had seen ten railways previously unknown to me—not bad for a wet Sunday at Dungeness.

RAILS OF THE RIVERBANK

Morris F. Portsmouth

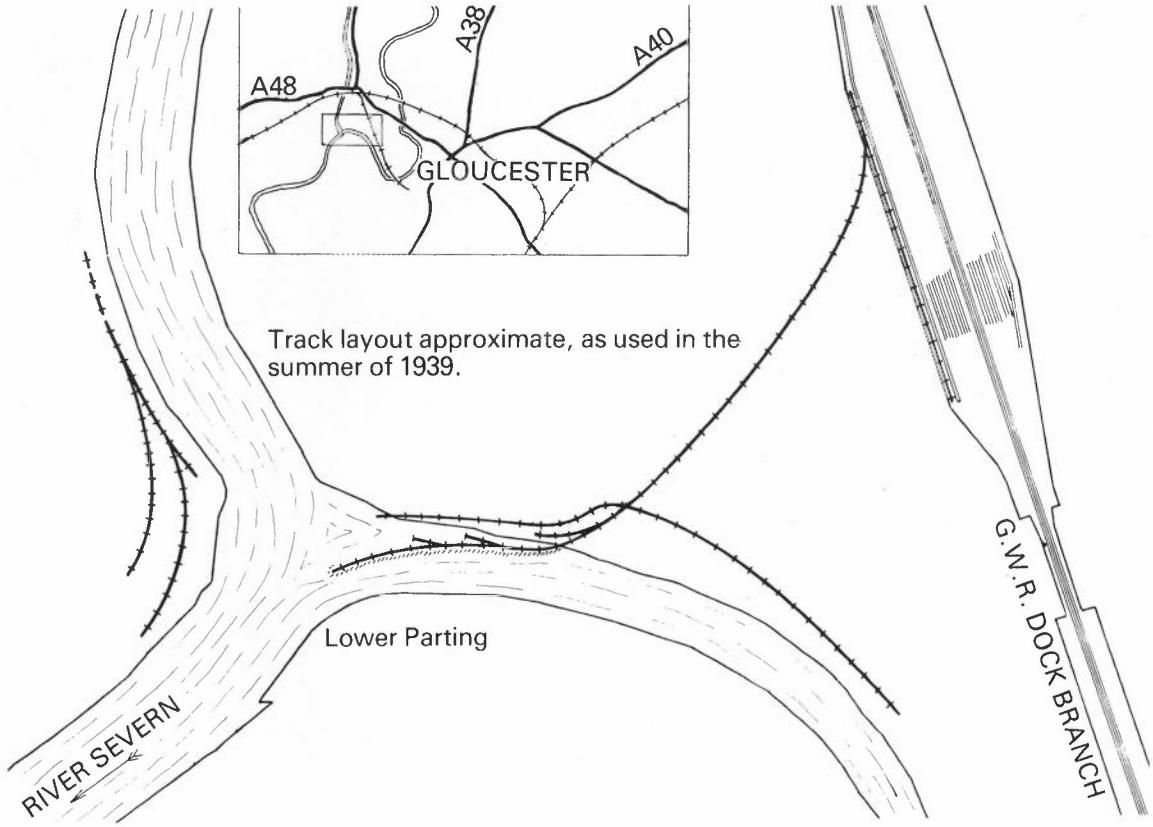
In 1932 responsibility for the upkeep of tidal defences on the Severn estuary passed to the newly formed River Severn Catchment Board. This was no mean task due to the combined effects of the large flood range of Britain's largest river, and the huge tidal range in the estuary which occasionally produces that well-known phenomenon, the Severn Bore. With the formation of the Board a determined effort was made to bring the ancient flood defences up to an acceptable standard, and a programme of works known as the Lower Severn Improvement Scheme was started. At the peak of the work over 250 men were employed, though it should be remembered that labourers were only paid nine old pence (3.75p.) per hour.

The estuarine silt is notoriously difficult to handle when wet, in our climate that means most of the time, and one good shower will turn a site into a sticky morass. It was realised from the start that the only way to maintain progress throughout the year, high tides permitting, was to use light railways and a large quantity of equipment was soon obtained. There was another good reason for using light railways. Even to this day, many flood embankments, or sea walls as they are often called, are built with narrow crests only four to five feet wide and railways were the only practical means of transporting spoil, sometimes for considerable distances, along the top of these embankments to the dump site.

The first light railway equipment was bought by the Board in 1935, though light railways are known to have been used as early as 1929 on the Lower Avon Improvement Scheme under the auspices of the Lower Avon Commissioners of Sewers. The use of railways soon became universal, the smallest sites being where turf was carried on a single flat skip chassis, pushed by hand from the river's edge to the embankment across the very soft warthland regularly inundated by high tides. Other small jobs would have used three or four skips drawn by a horse, but the larger sites would involve considerable amounts of light railway equipment.

A typical large site was at Elmore Back where three dragline excavators loaded spoil into eight trains of four, six or eight wagons, according to the type of locomotive, which then hauled them over two and a quarter miles of track to widely dispersed disposal dumps. The loading area was known as Clapham Junction which must have been a fair description. Many sites involved extensive trackwork with full complements of pointwork and turntables, all of which is believed to have been supplied by Robert Hudson Ltd. The track was of 2 foot gauge with 20 lb/yard rail and steel sleepers. Fishplates and fishplate bolts were ordered by the ½ ton and many cast-offs

Transferring stone by hand at the G.W.R. Docks Branch sidings. Note the variety of main line wagons, and the number of men (nine) employed. 10th May 1939.



must still lie beneath the meadows. The biggest demand was for extra wooden sleepering which was obtained frequently in five ton loads from local sawmills. All the material was off-cuts, often with the bark still on, roughly four feet long, three inches thick and anything from six to ten inches wide. When running over soft ground or on newly tipped areas the sleepers would have to be very close together and the task of maintaining, extending and constantly levelling up the track called for a considerable labour force. When running overland the system had the great advantage of not the damaging the surface, even in winter. Damage was confined to the narrow strip of the track in contrast to that caused by the Athey wagon or dumper systems which were later brought into use.

Some of the accompanying photographs were taken during 1939 of the building of river training works at Lower Parting near Gloucester, where two branches of the Severn meet, and show quite clearly the sort of use to which the railways were put. A short line was laid across the fields from the site to the sidings on the G.W.R. Gloucester Docks Branch. Stone was transferred by hand from standard gauge wagons to the skips, and these were run to the site and shunted one by one to the end of the track and tipped. The plan shows the approximate layout of the tracks in use and it can be seen that as the stone placing progressed the siding used for shunting was moved nearer to the end of the track. The railways were also used on the realignment of the banks and floodbanks on the two opposite riversides.

The locomotives were, without exception, standard Ruston & Hornsby products and between 1935 and 1939 a total of ten locomotives were acquired, all new. One further locomotive was required in 1942 but the requisition for a new locomotive was turned down by the Ministry of Supply so a second-hand model dating from 1934 was purchased. However, since it was disposed of six years later together with the four oldest locomotives it is presumed that it was not an altogether successful buy. The table shows all known details of the locomotives, regrettably all the Board's files relating to light railways appear to have been destroyed in the reorganisation of the Water Industry in 1974/5, and the information shown in the table survives only thanks to member Bob Palmer who had the foresight to copy the details some years earlier.

The present whereabouts of only three locomotives is known. No.10 was purchased by Bob Palmer in 1972

Tipping one of the first loads of stone at Lower Parting, Gloucester, clearly showing the two men with poles holding down the wagon frame. 10th May 1939.

and is at present on the Bromyard and Linton Light Railway. No.5 is with the Dowty Railway Preservation Society at Ashchurch and is believed to have changed hands in 1972 for the princely sum of £35, and No.9 is on a peat bog in Ireland. All the other locomotives were disposed of between 1948 and 1951. No.9 was the last to go, and was sold in 1972 with 66 skips and about a mile of track to M.E. Engineering Ltd. No.4 subsequently spent some time at Norden Clay Mines but nothing is known of the later history of the other locomotives.

The earlier locomotives were completely open, but later models were fitted with cabs which were totally enclosed on three sides. This was considered to be a likely source of danger, in that if a locomotive tipped onto its open side the driver could be trapped in water or soft mud. If this was possible on a site either open locomotives were used, or on some of the cabs the closed side was also cut away. From new the locomotives were the builder's standard "Lincoln green" livery with gold lining, and only the remaining locomotives were repainted in a similar plain green in later years. Before leaving the subject of locomotives it is worth mentioning that the Catchment Board also used light railways on the upper reaches of the Severn, and at least one locomotive was delivered new to Melverley in Shropshire.

The rolling stock consisted entirely of standard Hudson 1 cubic yard "Rugga" type side tip skips, and similar double end tip skips. The latter were particularly useful when extending forward a new embankment. A train with an end tipper at the head and two, three or four side tippers behind was pushed to the end of the track thus building up the new embankment forwards and sideways at the same time. The track would be extended in short lengths and would need to be well sleepered on the newly tipped material.

Difficulties were constantly encountered due to the nature of the excavated material. Efforts were made to ensure that wet material from the river bed was mixed, skip by skip, with drier material from above the water line on the river bank. As mentioned previously the river bed is a highly glutinous clayey mud and when dropped from the ½ or ¾ cubic yard bucket of a drag line excavator it stuck firmly in the body of the skips. The adhesion

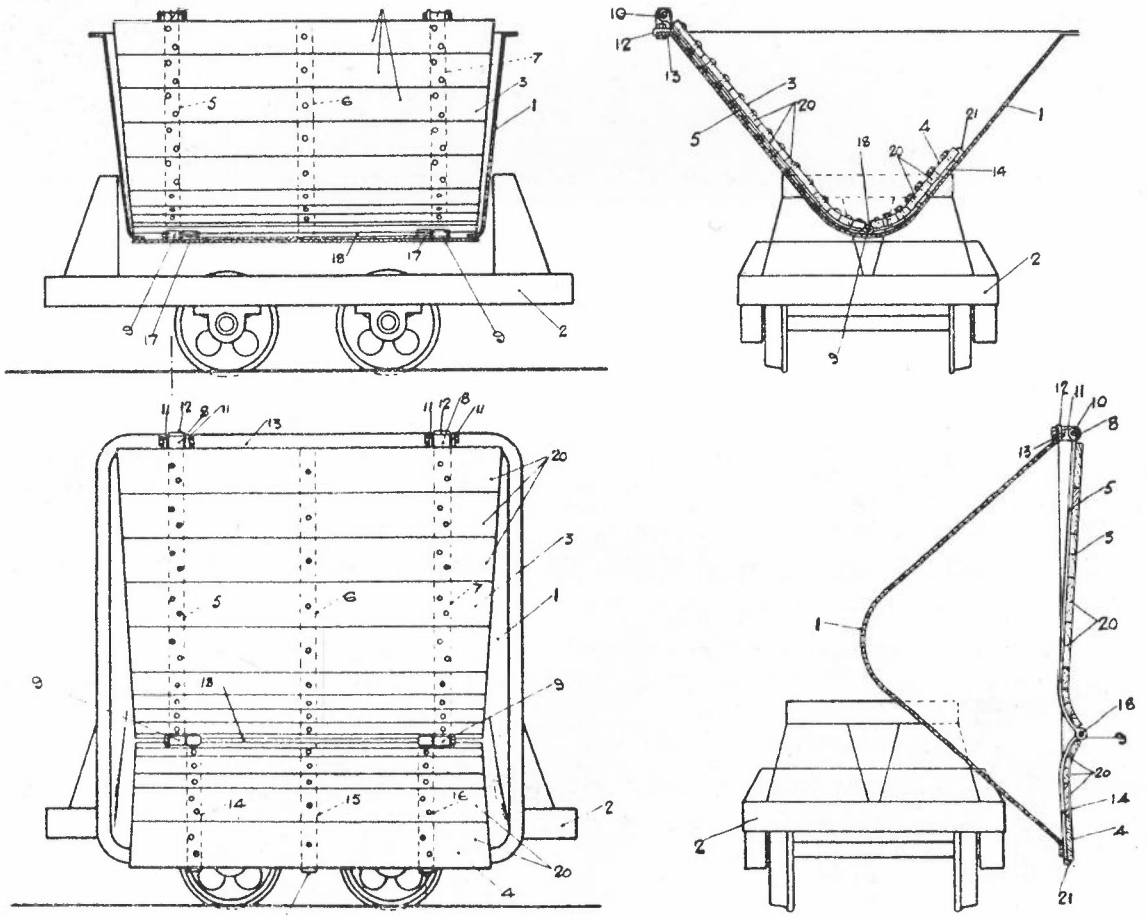
Works progressing at Lower Parting, with a second siding installed. Note that eight men are employed here, and the almost new skips on the right. 17th May 1939.

The training wall at Lower Parting nearing completion on 5th June 1939.

was further increased by vibration in transit, so that when the skip was tipped by two or three strong men the whole mass remained in the body, and could overturn the entire wagon and take it down the embankment or fill edge, sometimes with adjoining wagons too.

A variety of methods were tried to overcome this problem, such as a simple iron hook which would clamp the chassis to the rail on the opposite side to the tip, but all too often this also lifted the rail. A more usual method would be to use a long, strong wooden pole wedged into the chassis, and held down by two or three hefty men while others tipped the body. One of the photographs shows this quite clearly.

Another solution was devised by Mr. F.W. Rowbotham, who was District Engineer from 1932 to 1974. This was a false bottom hinged to the skip body, and a trial model made up in the Gloucester workshops and fitted to a wagon was completely successful. The District Chairman, Mr. Philip Sturdy, was greatly impressed and recommended that Mr. Rowbotham should patent the device. He took action that same day and actually paid the cost of the initial patent. One more wagon was fitted with the device and the two wagons were in use when the Boards Annual Inspection took place shortly after. However, the Chief Engineer, Mr. Barton, took a dim view of subordinates taking out patents whilst in the Board's employ, and chose to ignore the train with the two fitted wagons. Little further became of the device since light railways ceased to be regularly used shortly afterwards.



These drawings appear in the patent specification 580,033, and clearly show the false bottom in the loaded (above), and tipped (below) positions.

A special train at Binn Wall, Severn Beach, with members of the Board making their annual inspection in September, 1948.

A copy of the drawing from the original patent specification is shown and the action of the device is fairly obvious. Even sticky clays would readily fall from the vertical face presented by the device with the skip body in the tipped position.

In September 1948, on the occasion of the Board's Annual Inspection, the bodies were taken off about 10 wagons and planks were fitted lengthwise on each. The track was specially levelled up and Members of the Board and some of the staff were given a long ride down the full length of the improvement works in progress. It was a glorious sunny day with a pleasant sea breeze, and the members are recalled as being like kids on a Sunday School outing. It was the high spot of the day, they all got sunburned and on their return were served with coffee at the site base. This exercise is believed to have been repeated on at least one other occasion in 1959.

Sometimes works were required which were a little out of the ordinary. On a site at Hempsted near Gloucester it was necessary to build a temporary but substantial timber viaduct over a wide flood relief channel, and on another occasion at the end of the war, when work was in progress on the West Channel of the Severn at Alney Island, all the spoil had to be taken over the A417 road so two level crossings were made, and a flagman was kept on duty during working hours.

Hazards that were encountered showed similar variety, apart from the obvious regular risk of flooding. The lower estuary is very exposed to south-westerly gales and on one occasion in the late forties at Berkeley a whole train of eight empty wagons were blown off the top of the floodbank. Another time, one early morning the whole site was infested with green caterpillars, so thickly that the locos could get no grip at all on the slight inclines out of the borrow pit even when using sand. The caterpillars disappeared as quickly as they came, and within a short time normal service was resumed.

When not in use the equipment was kept in a yard at Maisemore until 1954 when a new depot was opened at Hall Green, Malvern. A skip chassis was actually recovered by Bob Palmer from the riverside mud at Maisemore in 1971 and is now in use at Bromyard, not even having needed grease in the bearings. During the war much of

the stock of rail was commandeered and was driven vertically into the ground on Alney Island to discourage the landing of enemy aircraft. A stock of light railway equipment was retained at Malvern long after Athey wagons and dumpers had come into general use, primarily because of the work on top of the sea walls, but it saw little use in later years and was finally sold in 1972. Reconstruction of the floodbanks is still in progress today but in a much more ambitious scale and using modern earthmoving equipment.

I would like to thank F.W. (Freddy) Rowbotham for his help in providing much of the information for this article, also Bob Palmer for the locomotive details, and Vic Hill for his help with the photographs.

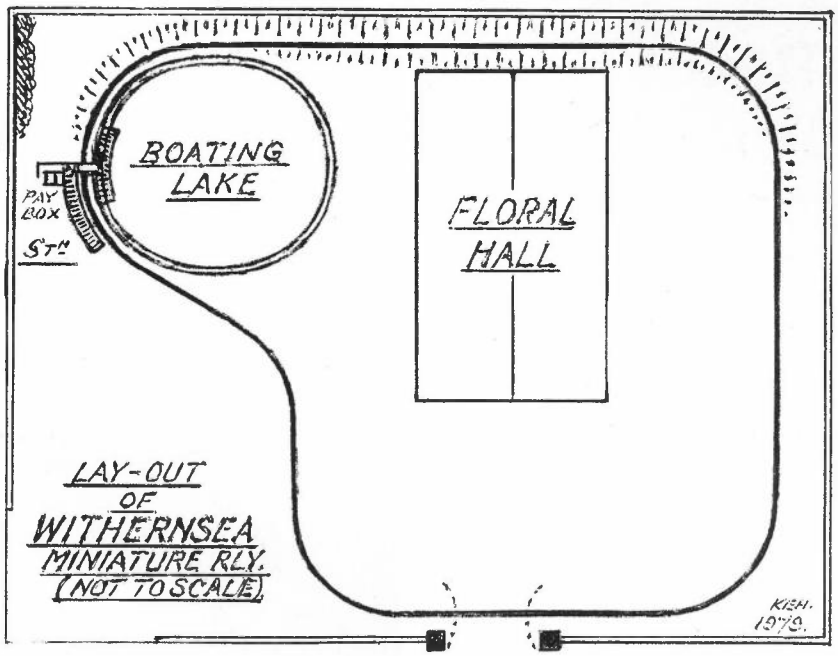
No.	*h.p.*	*Engine*	*Works No.*	*Purchase or delivery date*	*Purchase price*	*Sold to*	*Date sold*	*Sale price*
1	10	Lister 10/2	172339	19/6/1935	£310			
2	10	Lister 10/2	174527	16/11/1935	£310	Cox & Danks Ltd	7/1948	£1150
3	10	Lister 10/2	174530	19/9/1936	£310	with No. 11		
4	20	Lister 18/2	179889	25/9/1936	£368			
5	20	Lister 18/2	181820	5/11/1936	£378	Dowty R.P.S.	11/1972	£35
6	20	Lister 18/2	181821	10/11/1936	£378			
7	16/20	Ruston 2VSO	186230	15/6/1937	£356	Matthew Bros	6/1951	£225
8	16/20	Ruston 2VSO	192849	28/6/1938	£414			
9	16/20	Ruston 2VSO	193974	23/12/1938	£414	M.E. Engineering Ltd	14/11/1973	£287*
10	25/30	Ruston 3VSO	198241	26/7/1939	£472	R.S. Palmer	11/1972	£30
11	16/20	Lister 18/2	170191	21/7/1942§	£335	Cox & Danks Ltd	7/1948	

*Sold with 66 wagons (£705), and approximately 1680 yards of track (£1848).
§Built in period 3-7/1934. Purchased from C. Jones Ltd.

Shepperdine Sea Wall Improvement Scheme on 25th October, 1956, showing quarry overburden being tipped to reinforce the rear of the sea wall. Note how the track was slewed as tipping progressed, and the dragline loading skips in the background.
(F.W. Rowbotham)

WITHERNSEA MINIATURE RAILWAY

Ken Hartley

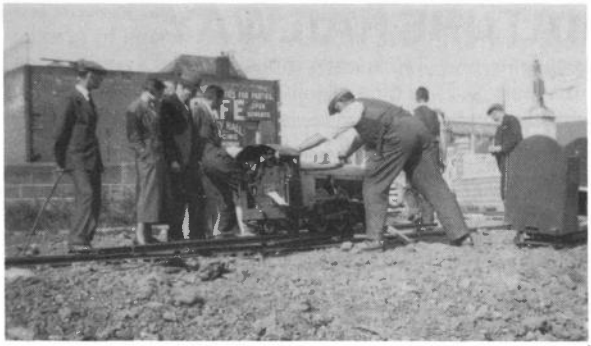


Forty-five years ago, near enough, we spent our annual holiday (unpaid in those days) at the quiet Yorkshire coast resort of Withernsea. We travelled by the L.N.E.R. from Ossett, then our home town, and changed at Hull onto the branch train. I was interested to find how rural this line proved to be, for once clear of Hull much of it was single track, I believe. At the Withernsea terminus the track ended with a turntable and buffer stops, end-on to the main street, and I think that only one long platform was provided.

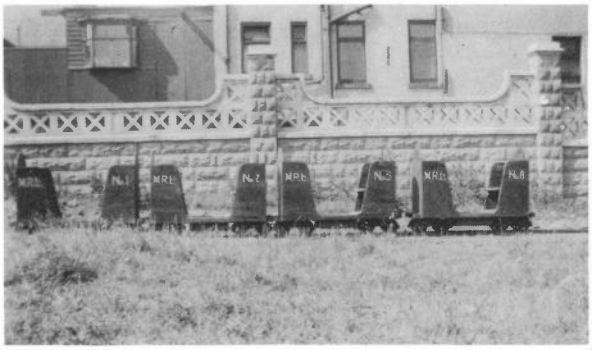
More interesting, and totally unexpected, was the discovery of a new 9½in gauge miniature railway approaching completion on a site about mid-way along the promenade. Track-laying, as well as the simple station and booking office, was almost complete, and the locomotive and some rolling stock had already arrived, but had not been placed on the rails. The accompanying plan shows that part of the site was occupied by a modest "Floral Hall", and a small boating lake for children. The railway ran on a pleasingly irregular, continuous circuit, partly in a shallow cutting, without any siding or loop, although a pair of spring buffer stops on site seemed to indicate that a siding would later be incorporated. (It never was.) No shed was provided for the train—not even the economical expedient of a mock tunnel. Bearing in mind the lack of respect many now have for other people's property it is quite amazing that in the 1930s a stout tarpaulin was regarded as adequate protection from the weather and thieves, not only at Withernsea, but elsewhere.

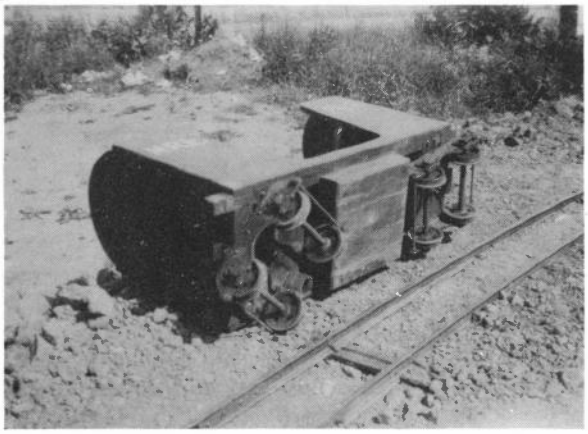
The track was prefabricated in sections with steel sleepers, and presumably came, like the rolling stock, from the Southport firm of Parver Models. There were at least five bogie coaches, numbered 1, 2, 5, 7 and 8, each capable of carrying two adults or three to four children. They appeared to be well constructed of timber, with neat, strongly built bogies apparently devoid of any form of springing. Four of these vehicles normally formed a train, and they were painted a fairly dark brown, lettered in yellow, and had black running gear. No brakes were fitted.

My main interest, of course, was in the locomotive, one of the well-known G.N.R. "Atlantic" type built originally by Bassett-Lowke. Its age was doubtful, and its name, LILY, carried on brass plates fixed to the rear driving wheel splashers, was hardly a suitable choice. There were no Bassett-Lowke plates, but the leading splashers carried oversize brass plates bearing the name "Parver Models—Southport". It would seem that they, or possibly a previous owner, had fitted a crude, tall, side window cab which completely spoilt the neat outline of the locomotive. It was finished in L.N.E.R. green, lined out, and lettered L.N.E.R. 1419 on the tender.



Placing LILY on the rails, and (right) checking it over before a test run.
(K.E. Hartley)





Four of the two-seater coaches and, (right) details of the bogies.
(K.E. Hartley)

This official postcard was on sale at Withernsea in 1935. *(collection K.E. Hartley)*

With only seven days holiday, I naturally kept a watchful eye on progress, witnessed the placing of the locomotive on the track, and obtained a number of photographs, some of which are reproduced. Towards the end of the week all was sufficiently complete to allow running to commence, and we were able to travel over the line once or twice.

Together with our next-door neighbours, we returned to Withernsea the following year (1935), when we spent a very enjoyable week which naturally included further journeys on the miniature railway.

It was ten years before I was able to visit Withernsea again, but—alas—the main attraction was no longer to be seen. The railway, Floral Hall and boating lake had all been swept away without a trace, possibly in 1938, when the clouds of war were gathering, and south-east Yorkshire had been chosen as a possible invasion site.

Although I have no further knowledge of the Withernsea Miniature Railway or its equipment, a few words on Parver Models may not be out of place. This small firm commenced operations about 1929, and was largely run by a man named Greenwood, from premises at 66A Eastbourne Road, Birkdale, Southport. The workshop adjoined the house, and was equipped with three lathes, a shaper, a drill and power hacksaw, as well as woodworking tools, because the firm apparently did quite a lot of woodwork, building rolling stock, track, pointwork and so on.

During the Liverpool & Manchester Railway Centenary Celebrations in 1930, a large exhibition of model locomotives was on display in the St George's Hall, in Liverpool. Parver Models had two miniature locomotives on show there, a 4-4-2 and a 4-6-0. They were of freelance design and, I understand, for 6¼in gauge track, a very unusual gauge used to some extent before 1914, and for two machines built during the early 1940s. Both locomotives had 7½in diameter coupled wheels, 3in diameter bogie wheels, outside cylinders 1 7/8in bore and 2½in stroke on the 4-4-2, but 3in stroke on the 4-6-0. The boiler pressure was 110 lb/sq in.

The firm also prepared a design for a 15in gauge "Pacific" of G.W.R. outline—this was in 1931—but I doubt if this ever came to fruition. In the previous year a man named Willoughby had designed a 5in gauge 0-6-0 tank for the firm, which was offered as either sets of castings or finished locomotives. This project was, however, soon overshadowed by the 7¼in gauge "Midge" design published by *Model Engineer.* I have no knowledge of other Parver products or when the firm went out of business, but in more recent years a 9½in gauge 4-4-2 named RUBY has operated at the "Kings Arms", Cardington Beds., and is described as one of their locomotives. Perhaps other members can comment on this?

CUBAN STEAM

Photographs by D. Trevor Rowe

In the last ten years more and more countries have become accessible to tourists, and in many parts of the world followers of the steam locomotive have been among the first outsiders to venture away from the cities. What was exotic yesterday has become commonplace today, and when narrow gauge railways in distant lands can be enjoyed regularly on television—as has been the case this year—where can the pioneer turn next?

The latest country to join the tourist circuit is Cuba, virtually closed to outsiders since the Revolution of 1959. More than 170 sugar mill railways were in operation in 1950, including nearly 3000 miles of narrow gauge, and it seemed certain that much of this would still be in operation. A group from North America visited the country in May 1979, and confirmed that there was much to see. A more extensive tour arranged by Railway Travel & Photography of Stafford in May 1980 included visits to sixteen sugar mills and turned up a feast of vintage American steam power. Lists have already been published in *Narrow Gauge News* and elsewhere, but to whet your appetite here are two of the locomotives at the Central Orlando Nodarse. The track measures 34in gauge, but has also been reported as 33in or 34½in. Can anyone confirm the exact figure?

E-1115, a typical sugar mill 0-6-2T by Baldwin (56639/1923) basks in the sun.

1211 is one of two similar 2-6-0 locomotives here, and is also a Baldwin product (47237/1917).

THE RESTORATION OF CYPRUS GOVERNMENT RAILWAY No. 1

Lieutenant Colonel B.S. Turner

The author on the footplate of No 1 after completion of the restoration.
(Public Information Office, Nicosia)

"The Talyllyn Railway is not a toy railway, it is a real working line properly constituted by act of Parliament . . ."; so booms the introduction to a delightful long playing record about the little Welsh line, a record I picked up in Aden quite by chance several years ago. And so it was with the small but comprehensive narrow gauge railway system that once existed in Cyprus, but such is life these days that it would be surprising if more than a handful of railway enthusiasts even bothered to pause and consider the possibility that this remote Mediterranean island ever had a railway system all its own. This is a pity, because the story is a fascinating one, going right back to a time in 1878 when Lieutenant General Sir Garnet Wolseley stepped ashore at Larnaca to begin his tenure as the High Commissioner and Commander in Chief, and continue an association in which Great Britain had been connected commercially with Cyprus for many years previously. For just over a hundred years since that occasion, Britons have served there continuously in government service, in business, and in the Armed Forces, so that more people than one might at first imagine, on reading these lines, may be stirred to remember Cyprus and the quaint little line that meandered across the island from Famagusta Harbour in the east, where so many of them disembarked, over the Messaoria Plain, through Nicosia, and on up as far as the Troodos Mountains in the north west.

The Cyprus Government Railway had a very clear British pedigree in common with many other colonial railways, and it has indeed featured in the railway press from time to time over the last forty years or so, also meriting a cursory mention in one or two books along the way. It is unfortunate that this coverage reflects little more than a brief, fleeting acquaintance with the Railway, and that in almost every case certain inaccuracies are perpetuated. This is now covered, hopefully, by my book *The Story of the Cyprus Government Railway,* (Mechanical Engineering Publications Ltd, 1979) and there is no point in repetition here. However, I decided that the restoration of locomotive number 1 justifies examination in some detail. After all, it occupied five months of my time in 1972, working for much of that period single handed, assisted only by one youth, and pestered by a four year old son who spent much of his own time climbing in and out of a very dirty firebox whenever he was around.

When the idea first occurred to me is difficult to recall. Perhaps I was inspired by the well publicised restoration work that was taking place at home in England on the standard gauge equivalent. Whatever else, I looked hard at the little ten tonner in simple engineering terms; the tools, equipment and lifting gear that I would require, the feasibility of getting on to the site with a mobile crane and trailer, materials, a realistic time scale and so on. Clearly, if I accepted that I would not be in a position to separate the wheels and the boiler barrel from the mainframe, everything else should logically come apart with no more than a two man lift. After that, it was a matter of approaching Mr Kazamias, the Director General of the Ministry of Communications and Works, and clearance to undertake the work in my own workshop, 48 Command Workshop REME, in the Sovereign Base Area at Dhekelia.

Number 1 was a small six-coupled side tank locomotive with an open cab covered by a roof on four stanchions, outside cylinders and outside Walschaerts valve gear. It had been supplied by Hunslet to the contractors, Baker Shelford, for the construction of the 2ft 6in gauge line, to be inherited in due course by the C.G.R. Smaller than its successors and increasingly short in wind and limb, it was confined to the Famagusta Harbour branch for

most of its working life, and was eventually used before the war for raising steam in the sheds. In 1953, as a result of the efforts of Hugh Ballantyne, the old locomotive was rescued in the nick of time from the breakers hammer and, as Ballantyne put it, "stuffed and mounted". There it had remained on its memorial plinth, exposed to the elements in a progressively dilapidated condition. An attempt was made to repaint it in 1968 by a United Nations unit, but without dismantling it was impossible to do the job properly, added to which all the controls and the motion and wheel rims had been covered with a liberal application of silver paint, making matters a good deal worse five years later!

So, in 1972, the wheels began to turn again, literally! With the aid of a mobile crane from the Royal Engineers, and two lengths of track on loan from the Cyprus Mines Corporation, the Workshop Recovery Section manoeuvred on to the site, loaded the locomotive, and carried it off triumphantly to Dhekelia. There, with a lot of grunting and groaning on the part of all concerned (including the locomotive), the wheels turned for the first time in eighteen years as Number 1 was shunted back on a straight bar by a recovery tractor, and on into the spare hangar that was to be her home for the next few months.

Let it be said at the outset that there had never been any intention to restore Number 1 to working order. Apart from its general mechanical condition, which would have involved the expensive replacement or reworking of many components, the original condemned boiler had been refitted in 1952 just prior to its salvation from the breakers. The cost would therefore have been prohibitive, and even if it had been so refurbished, there was nowhere to operate it save on the mining metals at the other end of the island, and the subsequent maintenance would have proved well nigh impossible. The work envisaged was therefore the dismantling of all the removable parts and a complete scrape and repaint. At the same time all the controls and linkages that had been repeatedly painted and had ultimately seized over the years would be freed and made to operate correctly. The first stage therefore was to remove everything that came readily to hand; the smokebox door, chimney, dome and safety valve covers, sandbox and water filler lids and so on. Next came the linkages to the sanding gear and the cylinder drain cocks, followed by the motion, the pistons and slide bars.

The way was then clear to tackle the larger items, such as the cab roof, boiler plates and cleading bands. Luckily, the atmosphere did not seem to have rusted the moving parts which were more affected by paint and a crust of hardened grease and sand, so that once this had been scraped away, a drop of oil, a few blows, and nuts, bolts and securing pins came away fairly easily for the most part. The most difficult operation from this point of view was fairly obviously that of access when working below between the mainframes. All these loose items were then collected together, dismantled to their component parts, cleaned, painted or polished as appropriate, and laid to one side. In the case of the cab roof, boiler plates and the side tanks it was necessary to de-rust

Lifting No 1 from its plinth in Famagusta.
(Army Public Relations Service)

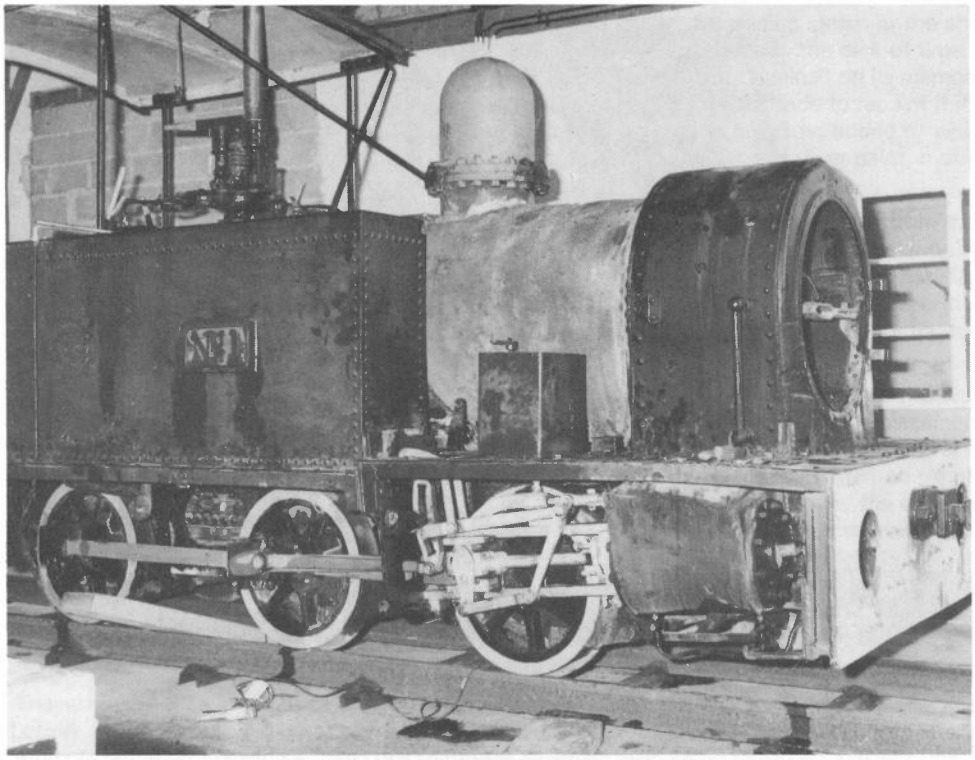
No 1 safety positioned on the trailer for the journey to Dhekalia. (Army Public Relations Service)

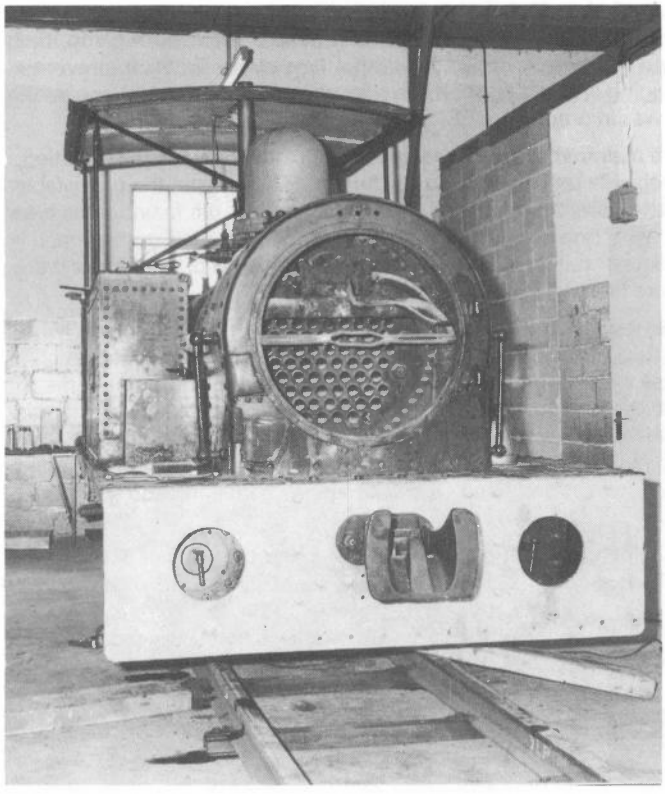
the metal as well and to replace the rotten areas. The asbestos boiler lagging that had been substituted at some time for the original tongued and grooved pine, had absorbed the water and allowed the boiler plates to rust through from underneath to the extent that one plate had to be replaced in its entirety. The cab roof, too, had rusted badly along its transverse centre seam, and this had to be welded with a new strap. To try to prevent a recurrence in the case of the boiler plates, the lagging was left to soak in a fifty gallon drum of waste engine oil for a couple of months while the rest of the work was in progress.

It was now possible to get at the wheels and the mainframes which, as has been pointed out was the intention, were left assembled together with the boiler barrel, side tanks, and also the bunker. Then began the unenviable task of scraping off years of accumulated paint and grime; working on ones back beneath the mainframes was particularly unpleasant, but armed with scraper, wire brush and chisel, everything was cleaned up reasonably well. The whole "carcass" was then given two coats of red lead, and in addition the outsides of the frames were given two coats of gloss black, and the wheels were finished in green with polished tyres.

Reassembly was carried out pretty well in the reverse order; firstly the lagging and the boiler plates were replaced, followed by the cab roof, the footplate and boiler fittings, and then the linkages and the motion. As the moving parts went together again, they were well oiled or greased as required. One interesting point came to light during the cleaning up phase, which enabled the finished article to be made vastly more attractive, and this was that when the locomotive was first made, the handrails, stanchions and beadings had been burnished, and all the brass and copper fittings had been polished. Latterly, they had all been painted over, but during renovation all such items were restored to their former state. Once polished and clear lacquered, the firebox and smokebox cappings in particular, looked quite splendid.

When the locomotive had been reassembled, the final coats of paint were applied and the number and makers plates were fixed in position on the tank sides. The livery of the Cyprus Government Railway locomotives as a whole had been something of a mystery, and this saga is amply covered in the book. Save to say here, that this locomotive was no exception, even with the advice of the manufacturers whose paint shop records and specifications were at variance. Eventually, and after a great deal of research ranging as far afield as Australia and Rhodesia, it was decided to use dark olive green for the main colour. The buffer beams were of course painted red, the usual areas black, and the roof was painted white.

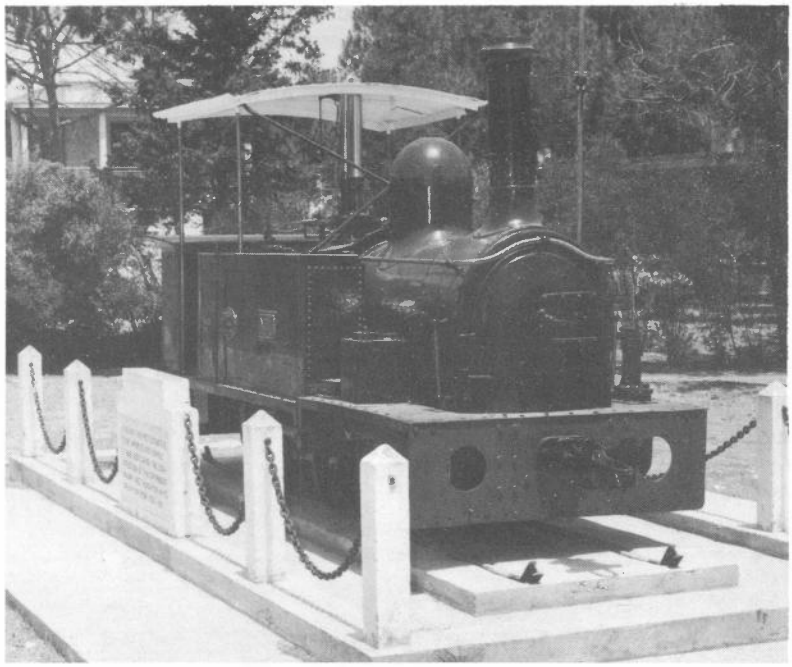




No 1 in the workshop at Dhekalia during the early stages of restoration when removal of various parts was in progress. Note the heavy ABC centre coupler used on the CGR.
(Army Public Relations Service)

Number 1 was at last completed in May 1972 with a huge sigh of relief, not least on the part of those on high who had been eyeing the project with a degree of misgiving. A preview was arranged for Mr Kazamias, excorted by the Commander Dhekelia Area, Brigadier W.P.W. Robertson OBE, and the Command Secretary, Mr A.L. Mussett (to those who understand the system, the financial authority, and therefore a valuable aide in obtaining permission to undertake the restoration), and my helper. This last young man, who must remain nameless, was a young serviceman, an armourer, who was serving a period of detention locally, and who had been employed, ostensibly as a labourer, in my Cypriot apprentice training section during the working day, that is, from early morning until mid-day. To the astonishment of my instructors, they realised that soon after his initiation, he had materialised alongside them in a white coat of his own, acting as an instructor, and very effective he was too! He was in fact the only detainee, and rather than utilise him in the afternoons endlessly weeding the flower beds, it was suggested that I should employ him working on Locomotive Number 1. He was a likeable young man, and one prefers to draw a veil over the origins of his captivity; he was also a splendid tradesman, half my own age, and therefore ideally suited to squeezing beneath the mainframes for the more sinuous tasks. In the end he had become so much a part of the enterprise that he took his place alongside the rest at the preview, and when the publisher of one of the local guide books agreed to include a couple of pages on the railway in his latest edition, there is the lad, standing with great aplomb in the group surrounding the restored locomotive, preserved in his rightful place for posterity.

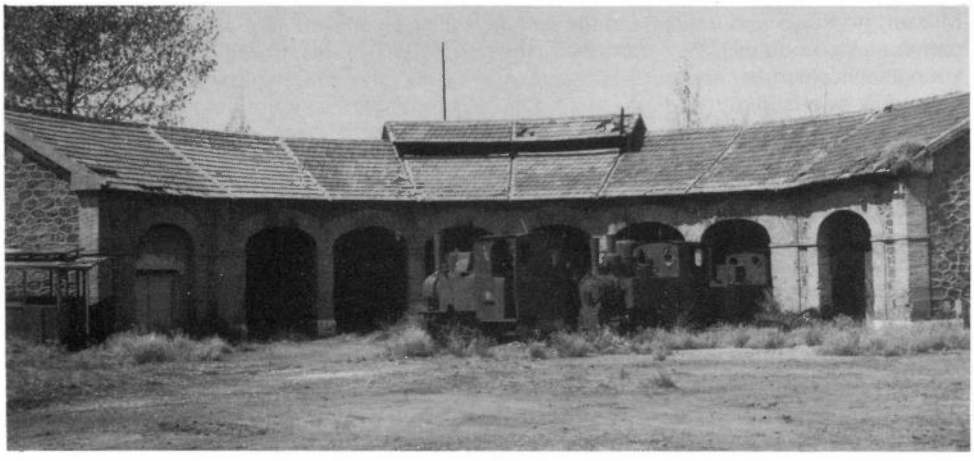
Five minutes on the local television network, a report in one of the Greek language newspapers, and a few months later I was posted back home to the United Kingdom. How Number 1 fared thereafter is largely a matter for conjecture. In 1974 the mainland Turkish Army invaded the island and occupied Famagusta, following which I heard rumours that she had been shipped across to Turkey. To my relief, this was later refuted, and the indications are that Number 1 soldiers on, slowly reverting to the condition in which I had first discovered her. A Canadian Chaplain with the United Nations Force, Captain the Reverend Charlie Black, even managed a clandestine photograph of her. Soon after I had completed my work, there had been moves to erect an open shelter over her, and later on, a proposal to establish a "railway" room in one of the municipal buildings, but for the time being anyway, any such venture is out of the question. Perhaps one day we may see it, but until then one can only dream . . .



No 1 back on the plinth in front of Famagusta station.
(Army Public Relations Service)

SURVIVORS AT UTRILLAS

Graham Leach



The roundhouse at Utrillas, almost without a trace of the track once in the foreground.
(G.A.P. Leach)

In the province of Teruel in Eastern Spain there are two locations with industrial steam locomotives. One is the well known broad gauge coal-carrying F.C. de Andorra a Escatrón, operated by the Empresa Nacional de Electricidad. The other, largely ignored by enthusiasts these days, is about 65 km south west of Andorra, near the mining village of Utrillas.

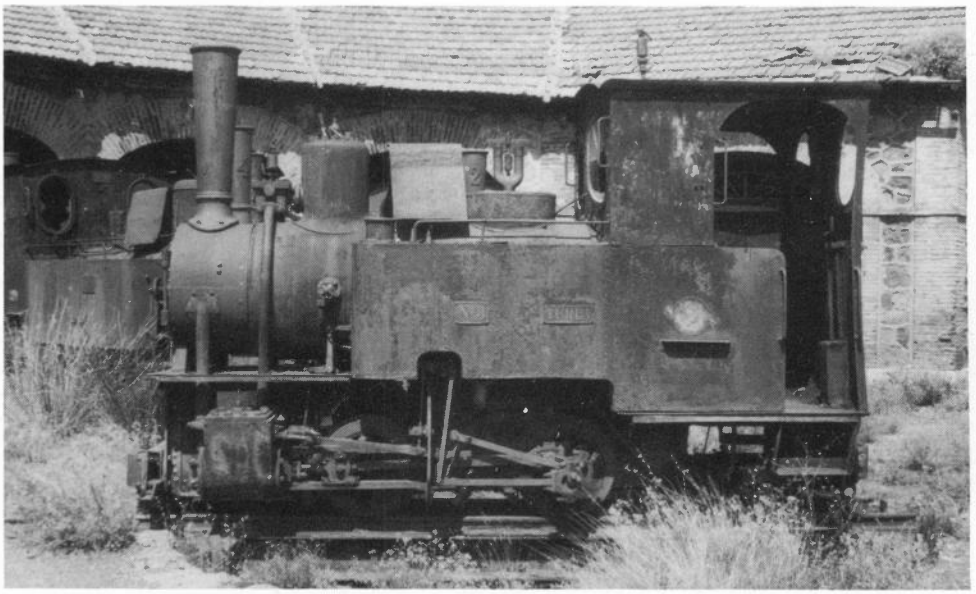
At the end of August 1980 my wife and I drove into Utrillas with great anticipation, as we had received a permit from Minas y Ferrocarril de Utrillas to photograph the disused locomotives at their old colliery locomotive shed. After calling at the company's office in nearby Escucha, we were directed to a desolate area near Utrillas where, until its closure in November 1966, there was an extensive 600 mm gauge system connecting the various collieries with the metre gauge line which ran north to Zaragoza. All that now remains is the superb eight-road roundhouse and turntable, together with the entire stock of nine steam locomotives.

Recorded information on these machines was incomplete and showed 1, 2, 3, 21 and 22 as built by Orenstein and Koppel, and 4 by Arthur Koppel. No works numbers were known for 2, 4, or 21 and that for 22 was incorrect. Full details were on record for 11, 31 and 32. Number 11 is very attractive and must be one of the smallest ever built by Black Hawthorn. A close look at 2 and 4 showed several features, such a cylinders, boiler mountings and smokebox, of Jung design, and the faintly visible numbers 681 and 1032 respectively, stamped on the crossheads. On returning home I contacted Martin Murray, who was able to confirm that Jung 681 and 1032 were both 600 mm gauge 0-4-0T supplied to Arthur Koppel for Spain, so the identities of these are now fairly certain. Number 22 had 6641 stamped on the boiler backplate, according to the Orenstein & Koppel list a much more likely works number than 6671 previously recorded. Unfortunately we could find nothing on 21 so, although it is of the same design as 22, its exact identity is still unknown.

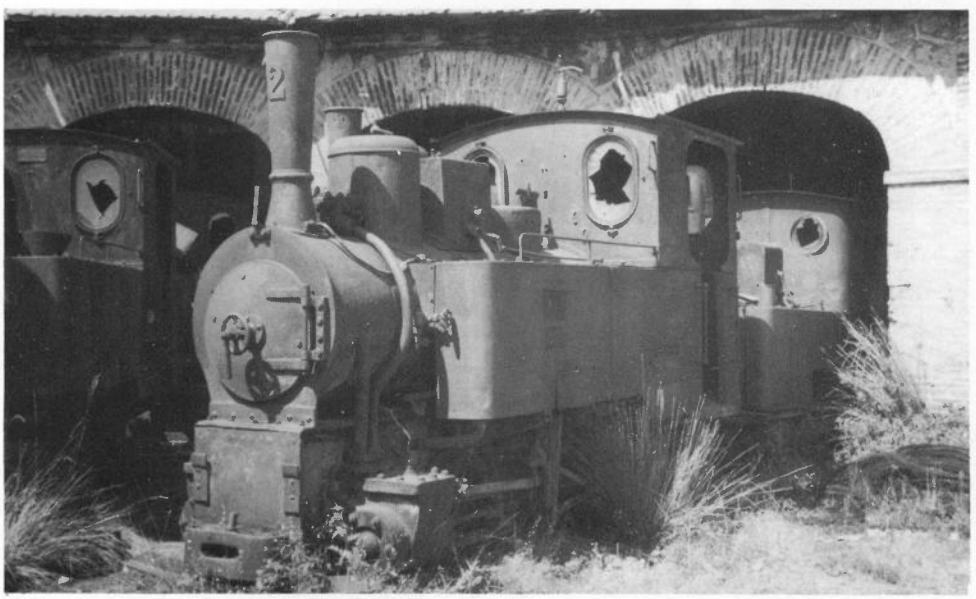
Utrillas is a fascinating place, but rarely visited when the railway was in full operation, being isolated and difficult to reach by public transport. If you are thinking of going now, make it soon, for who knows how long these little gems may last?

The following details of these locomotives are now confirmed:

1	HULLA	0-4-0T	Orenstein & Koppel	1166	1903
2	LIGNITO	0-4-0T	Arn Jung	681	1904
3	TURBA	0-4-0T	Orenstein & Koppel	1167	1903
4	ANTRACITA	0-4-0T	Arn Jung	1032	1906
11	ESCUCHA	0-4-0T	Black Hawthorn	748	1884
21	UTRILLAS	0-4-0T	Orenstein & Koppel		
22	MONTALBAN	0-4-0T	Orenstein & Koppel	6641	1913
31		0-4-0T	Henschel	16032	1918
32		0-4-0T	Henschel	16047	1918



No 3, TURBA stands on the turntable where it was probably placed after working for the last time. *(G.A.P. Leach)*



No 2 LIGNITO, one of the two Arn Jung locomotives, and the diminutive Black Hawthorn. *(G.A.P. Leach)*

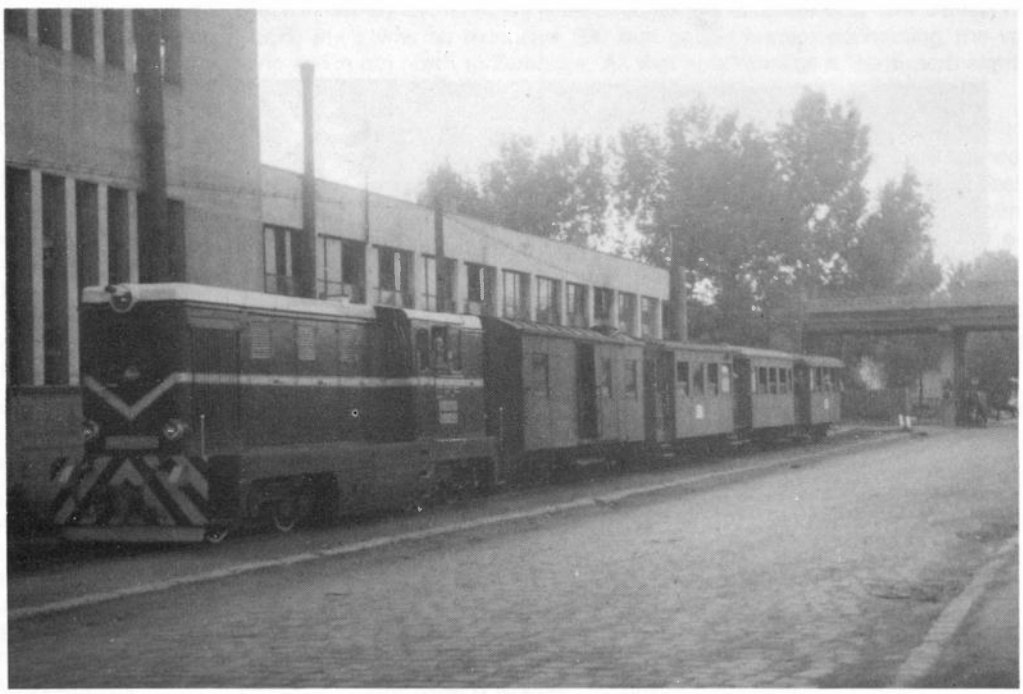
REPORT FROM ROMANIA

M.H. Billington

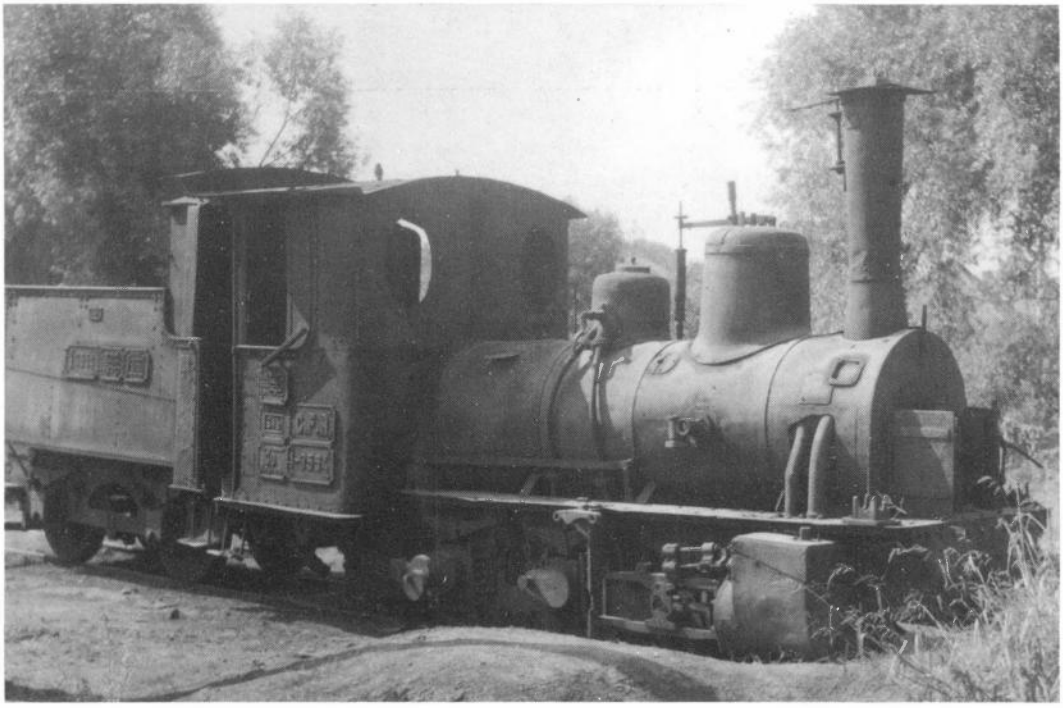
Romania has interested me for many years, but until 1979 I had no opportunity to visit the country. However, on reading the itinerary for a "Dracula Tour" in a travel brochure, visiting most of the places where narrow gauge railways existed I decided to go and see for myself. Our TAROM jet left Gatwick Airport in late August with a full complement of passengers, and in a few hours we landed at Constanta. A rather chaotic baggage check and customs examination followed and, this completed, we left by coach for Mamaia, where we were to spend a week. This was pleasant enough but did not really count with me—I wanted to get away from the flat landscape of the province of Dobruga and into the mountains of Transylvania, the setting for many a story, of which the exploits of Count Dracula must be the best known.

Bucharest, the very attractive capital, was the first place of note visited on the tour. On Sunday I visited the impressive Gara Nord, and managed to photograph the fine old 2-4-0 CALUGARENI, built by Brassey at the Canada Works, Birkenhead in 1869, and now preserved with typical coaches. Unfortunately, its location beside the platform is far from ideal, and partly obscured by pillars. The rear entrance to the Railway Museum lies behind this locomotive, but access here is not permitted and one has to go outside the station into the Cala Grivitei to another entrance a short distance away. However, this door was also locked when I found it that evening. Until I passed along the Cala Grivitei in the coach the following morning, and saw the unmistakable shape of steam locomotives outside a shed I did not realise that there were in fact two railway museums in Bucharest. This second one is about a kilometer from the Gara Nord, on the left hand side just after the main road to Pitesti crosses the railway. From this brief glimpse it looked very interesting and I hope to explore it further on another visit.

The long drive across the flat Wallachian plain to Rîmnicu Vîlcea was uninspiring, but the next stretch of the tour passing the spa town of Călimăneşti, Cozia with its orthodox monastery, and through the Olt valley was decidedly better. At one point one or two steam locomotives were seen hauling open wagons of spoil from



The evening train to Vurpar leaving Sibiu. *(M.H. Billington)*



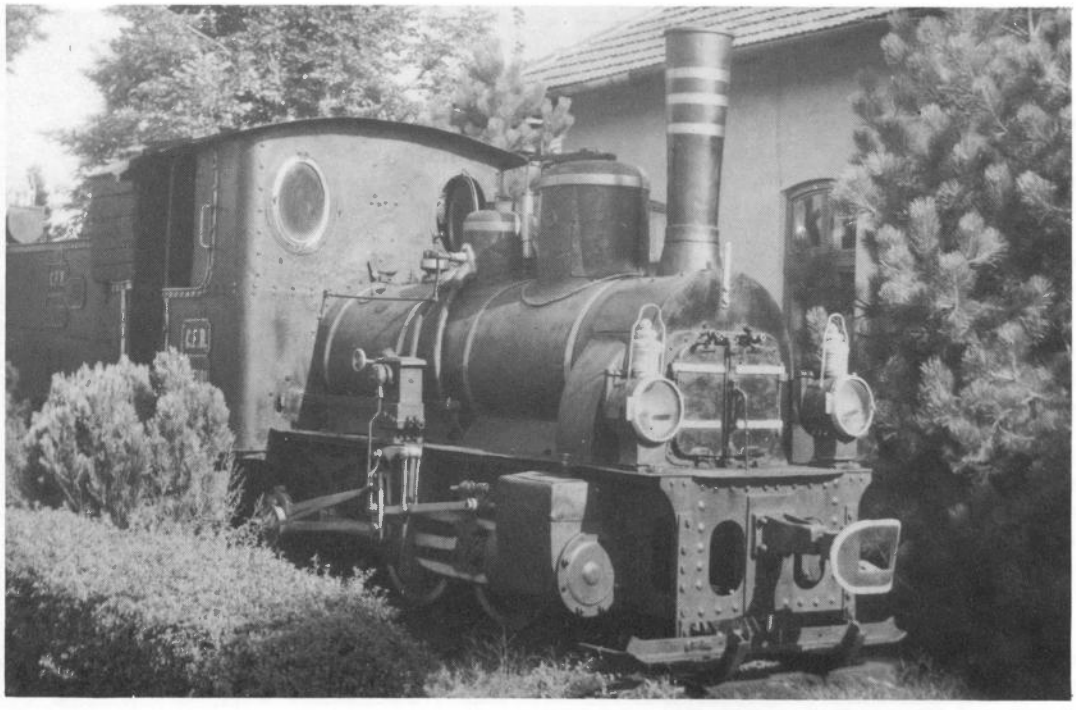
1-3554 moulders quietly away behind the narrow gauge locomotive shed at Sibiu.
(M.H. Billington)

construction work on the far side of the river. According to some old maps I had with me there should have been several narrow gauge lines crossing this road, almost certainly forestry lines because the route was very well wooded, but alas nothing was seen. Still, the scenery was most pleasant, and the sight of another steam locomotive on the outskirts of Sibiu greatly increased my sense of expectation.

I was not to be disappointed for the old Saxon city of Sibiu, formerly known as Hermannstadt, with its thick walls, many churches and superb Bruckenthal Museum also has an attractive station on the eastern edge of the town. The large locomotive shed here mainly housed former Prussian standard gauge locomotives, and to my great joy two 76cm gauge 0-6-0 tender engines. Until 1918 Transylvania was part of the Austro-Hungarian Empire, and was only incorporated into Romania in 1920. It is not surprising therefore that any narrow gauge construction was to the Austrian military gauge of 76cm. Tender engines on the narrow gauge in Europe have always been rare, and ever since I saw D. Trevor Rowe's delightful photographs of the Agnita train taken in 1965 I have longed to see them for myself. True, the trains to Agnita and Vurpur are now diesel hauled, but here were two of the choicest narrow gauge machines to be found anywhere.

This particular type was built for the Hungarian State Railways (MAV) by the Wiener Neustadt works in Austria in 1885, and examples were also to be found in Jugoslavia. On the dump outside the narrow gauge shed, which is situated about a kilometer from the terminus, was 1/3554, formerly MARAMURES 1 and built in 1891. This looked rather woebegone, but the other, 389.001 was nicely painted and preserved on a short length of track beside the standard gauge shed. After photographing the Sef and his party my friend and I returned to the station feeling highly elated, and celebrated with a foaming glass of German style beer, undoubtedly the best we had yet tasted in Romania.

After an excellent lunch in our hotel we resumed our journey through Mediaş to Tîrgu Mureş. En route we crossed the narrow gauge line to Praid with its neat station at Acătari. This line is also diesel worked, as is the Lechinta line. We visited the main station at Tîrgu Mureş that evening, noting the narrow gauge terminus in a corner of the forecourt. The following morning we returned before breakfast, and were fortunate enough to



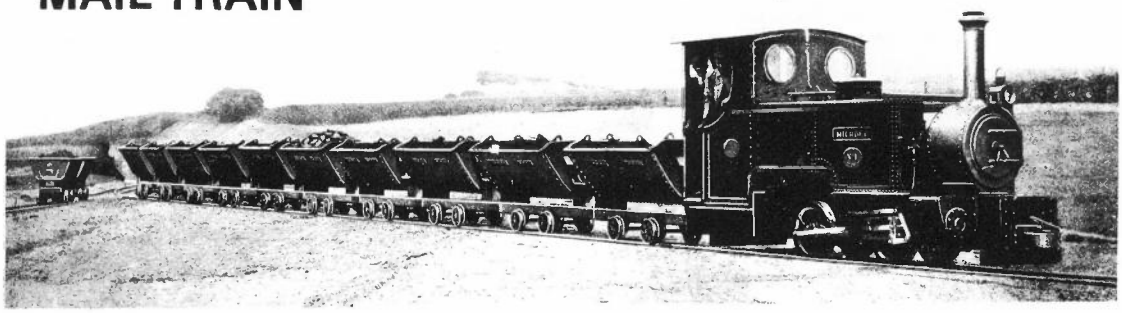
C.F.R. 389.001 preserved amid the shrubbery at Sibiu. *(M.H. Billington)*

see a train for Lechinta leave with a rake of closed saloon coaches very similar to those found in Jugoslavia. I had noted with some pleasure that some of the coaches on the Vurpur train the previous evening were of the open balcony type, so I hope to sample them on my next visit. We easily found the narrow gauge shed a little way from the terminus, where almost the entire steam allocation was a variety of 0-8-2 tank dating from 1923, but some built by the Resita works as late as 1949. All but one were out of use in varying states of decay, but 764.160 was actually under repair. The only other locomotive on shed was one of the neat 0-8-0 tender type seemingly identical to those found in Poland, but again built by Resita in 1949. This too was out of use. We then returned to our hotel for a very welcome breakfast, as it was quite cold even though it was August, and later boarded the coach for the journey to Dracula's birthplace, Sighişoara, a fine old city. Its well preserve castle has a wooden balcony all round the tower, giving a very fine view. From this I ascertained that another little locomotive stood behind the white Orthodox church and, getting my bearings, I descended the tower and made my way to the little garden on the road to the CFR station.

This machine, 388.002, is very nicely preserved and is one of the type rebuilt with an extended smokebox identical to the Jugoslavian class 182. It really looked a treat with red frames and buffer beams, but alas my camera shutter had failed and I was unable to record it on film. At the entrance to the garden is an illuminated plaque giving a diagram of the whole route from Sibiu to Sighaşoara, closed beyond Agnita in 1968. This stated that the locomotive was built in 1896 and used to haul trains on this railway. The journey time for the 73 km was given as seven hours, an average speed barely more than 10 kph, but just why the locomotive was only capable of this snail's pace is quite beyond my comprehension. It would surely not have been strained at a much higher speed.

From this point on the holiday was devoted to tourist persuits, but was none the less pleasant for that. I can recommend Romania as a country to visit for its capital, its mountain scenery, its historic buildings and, at least in the Sibiu area, its railways. I have every intention of returning, and perhaps others will be encouraged to follow.

MAIL TRAIN



THE STIRLING SINGLES

I'd like to point out that my letter regarding the Jaywick 'single' in NG 81 gives the incorrect date for the photograph, which was taken on or about 22nd June 1937, not August 1937 as stated.

WALSALL — COLIN PEALLING

MARGARETS & MERCEDES

The drawing accompanying this article in NG 89 was used without my permission, but to add insult to injury has been altered by someone who is obviously no draughtsman, and carries the wrong date, 1897 instead of the correct date 1893, which is on the original. I do not know the origin of the print used for this reproduction, unless it is from a batch distributed to friends about five years ago, and question the need to bodge up an unsuitable print when a perfectly good original was available for the asking.

I would like to reassure friends who have not already contacted me that I have not yet flipped my lid and am still busy modelling two-footers.

EASTBOURNE, EAST SUSSEX — W.A.D. STRICKLAND

Allan C. Baker replies: "A mutual friend borrowed Bagnall drawings from my collection from time to time, and I know that he passed prints to Bill for the preparation of modelling drawings. I had no objection to this, and usually received prints of the finished drawings.

I sent this print to the Editor for use in the article stating ". . . you have Bill's permission to use this . . ." basing this remark on the understanding that it was prepared from material supplied by me, indeed I think Bill may have given me permission, but it is a pity that I did not ask him for an original rather than using this copy. The print carries the date 1897, and there is of course no way that I would alter this, or the drawing, prior to publication.

(I must apologise to Bill for the considerable embarrassment that this drawing has caused. The print was photographed by our printer immediately following receipt, and the negative stored for future use. Artwork is sometimes touched up to improve the legibility, but it seems that in this case it was done at a late stage in production, and unfortunately not to the usual high standard. As a result it was not apparent until after the magazine was delivered. Ed.)

SOLVING AN ORIENTAL PUZZLE

The photograph on No 86 was also published in *Continental Railway Journal* No 40, Winter 1979/80, and, later an indentification of the locomotive and the line on which it worked. Some of this information amplifies our feature.

The photograph was taken at Sura, on the outskirts of Kuala Dungun, where the ore was shipped. As we suspected, the line closed suddenly in November 1970, but the railway remained in use for clearance work until late July 1971. Steam traction had previously ceased in late 1969, and 6 and 7 were among the last five locomotives at work. Some of the diesels were also identified. The Hitachi 0-6-0D and 6 were 12584/1961 and 12613/1962, 0-4-0D B7 was O&K of c1935, and C13 O&K 20940/1937.

CRJ No 43, SUMMER 1980

A train standing on the "main line" behind the winding house at the incline head, ready to leave for Llyn Cowlyd. One rail of the line to the incline can be seen in the left hand corner. The five vehicles are steel tip wagon frames fitted with temporary seats.

(Conwy Valley Railway Museum)

At Llyn Cowlyd—compare this with the view on p. 19 of NG 86. The O&K certainly appears to carry no name or cabside builders plate. Note the pile of rails on the right, suggesting that construction work had recently ended and materials were being recovered.

(Conwy Valley Railway Museum)

LLYN COWLYD TRAMWAY

The two photographs reproduced here used to hang in the Water Board offices, and are now on loan to the Conwy Valley Railway Museum. They were brought in by a local man, and will almost certainly have been taken on opening day, 20th September 1922, although they are not dated or annotated in any way.

BETWS-Y-COED, GWYNEDD — ALLAN PRATT

The article in NG 86 prompted me to check my old notes, and on 6th July 1969 I found five—not four—steel wagons by Allens of Tipton. One was minus two axleboxes, and all were derailed along the reversing neck, doubtless to prevent them being sent down the incline. One had a screw brake acting on one pair of wheels, and all were painted a well weathered pale green.

In the store at the incline head were four wooden box wagons and two flats with similar underframes. Possibly these were the second pair of bolsters mentioned on p.19, though I remember them as flats only

The Penrhyn records mention that EIGIAU cost £95 and was unloaded at Port Penrhyn on the 18th July 1929, presumably from the LMS. It was overhauled in 1930 and received a new Hunslet chimney with a spun, sheet iron cap. The cab was also cut down by 3in, though no reason is given for this. The records are silent about the nameplates, but those fitted were not in quite the same style as those on other locomotives which were purchased second-hand and arrived without names. I suspect that EIGIAU carried no name before it arrived at Penrhyn, but it is puzzling that it was named after the reservoir that caused the disaster rather than the one it served. The locomotive worked at the Port at some time but was finally sent down from the quarry in 1954, after evidently being out of use. The last entry in the records reads simply "Scrapped".

I had the pleasure of driving EIGIAU after rebuilding by Graham Mullis. From 1932 it had an injector from one of the Baldwins, and I certainly could not get it to work, though I recall that it was cracked. Graham later purchased correct fittings from the O&K GANNET at Piel & Walney Gravel Co Ltd, which was being scrapped.

In 1969 I recorded the gauge of the tramway as 2ft, but EIGIAU had the wheels set to 60cm gauge whilst with Graham Mullis, and hence also at Penrhyn.

WALSALL — COLIN PEALLING

On the edge of the escarpment with a pair of flats carrying heavy machinery negotiating the incline. We presume they are being hauled up, but the stance of the workmen suggests that they may be coming down. *(British Aluminium Co Ltd)*

This advertisement appeared in The River Boards' Association Year Book *in 1953.* *(M.F. Portsmouth collection)*