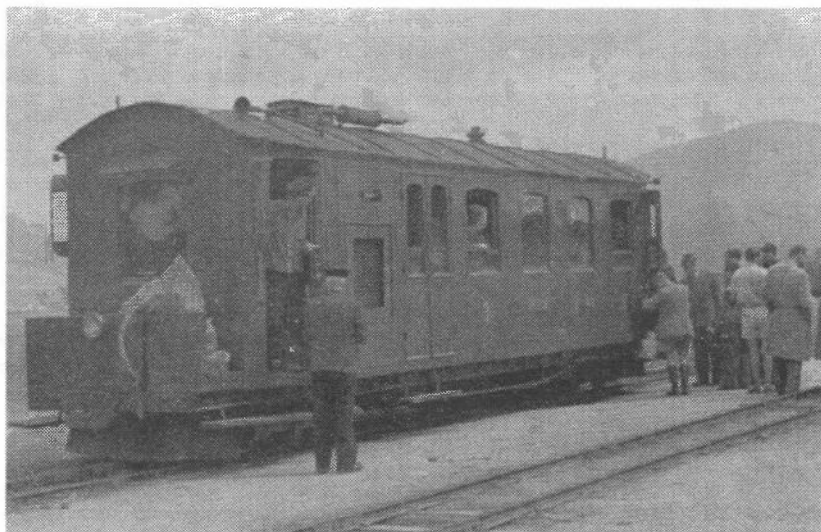


THE NARROW GAUGE



THE NARROW GAUGE RAILWAY SOCIETY

No.20 1956 / 5

THE NARROW GAUGE

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

Editor : T.H. Spink

No. 1956/5 *

[* No. 20 in numerical sequence]

Editorial

Due to a combination of unfortunate circumstances, not the least of which has been a spate of ill-health, we have had to delay the production of this issue. However, better late than never, we send to all members our most sincere good wishes for a Happy and Prosperous New Year.

I was unfortunately not able to attend the AGM this year due to private commitments, nor have I yet had an opportunity to read the minutes of the meeting; from a telephone conversation, I understand that this year you should receive a monthly news-sheet, and a bi-annual issue of this magazine - greatly enlarged, we hope - consisting of articles, drawings and possibly also photographs. This scheme should satisfy those members who are constantly asking for more NEWS, something which we found impossible to give you in a magazine of this type, produced and published as it is entirely by voluntary help in very limited spare time.

In connection with the matter of articles, I would like to mention that we shall be very pleased to receive any articles for publication; should you have any snaps to accompany a script, please send them along so that we can try to illustrate as many articles as possible. These photos will be returned as soon as possible if required, or if you so wish they can be handed to the Reference Department after we have made sketches from them. Please state which you wish when forwarding photos.

May I take this opportunity to remind you that there are still some subscriptions overdue, and without them we cannot continue as we would wish.

Cover Photograph

This shows the Salzkammergutlokalbahn (Austria) railcar, formerly the private saloon of the Emperor Franz Josef, about to depart from San Lorenz to Mondsee. Contrary to a published report, the railcar is quite comfortable and has a fair turn of speed.

Bowater Lloyd's Paper Mill Railway

On July 30th of this year a visit was paid to this very interesting 2'6"-gauge railway. Although only 3½ miles in length, with a branch one mile long, the total mileage adds up to 26 when all the mill tracks and sidings are included.

The first loco to be seen at Sittingbourne was 0-4-4-0T "Monarch" undergoing repairs in the shed. Unfortunately, its teething problems have been prolonged, but when it does work it is highly thought of by the footplate staff. 0-4-0ST "Premier" and "Excelsior" were occupied in shunting. At 2.45 p.m. the main-line train, one of ten scheduled daily, left for Ridham Dock.

These trains carry passenger accommodation at the rear, the amount depending on how near it is to the change of shift.

At Ridham the following locos were seen : 0-4-0 Battery, 2-4-0 fireless "Unique", 0-4-0ST "Melior" (with Hackworth gear) and the standard-gauge 0-4-0ST "Jubilee". "Unique" was hauling 23 four-wheel coal wagons, each carrying six tons, up to Kemsley. Apart from these, and a few refuse wagons, all the rolling-stock runs on bogies; the latest also incorporate roller bearings. Unfortunately we did not see 0-6-2T "Triumph" although it shunts at the dock.

At the Kemsley Mill (one mile back from the dock, but alongside the Sittingbourne line) the rest of the locos were seen about their duties :-

0-6-2T : "Superior", "Conqueror", "Superb", "Chevalier".

0-4-0 diesel.

Fireless "Victor"

0-4-2ST "Leader" was [scattered in pieces] around the repair-shop floor

On the main line once more, the 5.0 p.m. train from Ridham to Sittingbourne was boarded, or to be more exact, 0-6-2T "Alpha" was boarded!

All the locos are in spotless condition, working hard and efficiently, fully reflecting the pride showered upon them by those working on the railway.

In closing, am I hoping for too much to see "The Earl" or "Countess" with a spark-arrester, setting off for the dock at Ridham? After all, the railway could use another loco!

This article by Mr. Halton should have appeared in the last issue, but was held over to make room for the notice of the AGM. Since then, we have received further news about the Bowater Lloyd's line from Mr. D.J.Hyson, as follows :

On November 7th at Kemsley, we found them putting together the 0-4-2T "Leader" after a complete overhaul. They told us that new tubes for 0-4-4-0T "Monarch" had arrived from Bagnalls and that she was to be brought up from the shed at Sittingbourne in the course of the next few days. As usual the line was in spanking condition, and as we prepared to photograph one of the locos, the driver leaned out and said "Don't photograph it from this side as I haven't cleaned this side yet". We obtained official permission to take photos and were amazed at the help and interest shown by the staff, so refreshing from the "What do you want here? This is private property" attitude.

Festiniog Railway

This railway has had a most successful season, and plans are well in hand for both increasing the length of run and adding to the rolling stock, in readiness for next year's running. It is hoped to relay the section from Minfford to Penrhyndeudraeth. The rebuilding of 0-4-4-0 Double Fairlie "Taliesin" was completed and the loco has steamed successfully. It was tested on Sunday, September 2nd and ran the evening train on the following Tuesday and all trains on the Wednesday.

There are now four coaches running :- No's. 11 and 12, of 1880, both guard/composites, No. 17, built 1875 and No. 23, the ex-WHR coach. Work has commenced on the overhaul of No. 18 (1875) and No. 20 (1879), both of which are 6-compartment coaches. The Baldwin 0-4-0 petrol loco has been rebuilt and is now fitted with a Gardner 3LW diesel engine; it will be named "Moelwyn". Several goods vehicles have been repainted dark red with black frames and white lettering.

The railway was visited on Monday 12th November by senior officials of British Railways (Western Region) when Mr. K.W.C.Grand (General Manager), Mr. S.G.Hearn (Chief Operating Superintendent) and Mr. C.J.Rider (Public Relations & Publicity Officer) accompanied Directors of the Festiniog Railway Company and Society on a special train hauled by "Talesin", to Boston Lodge for an inspection of the Works, and then on to Penrhyndeudraeth. This was the first steam-hauled passenger train to work to this station since 1939.

Torrington & Marland Railway

This North Devon line ran from Torrington to Peters Marland and was of 3ft. gauge. The section between Torrington and Dunsbear (about six miles) was taken over by the North Devon & Cornwall Junction Light Railway in 1923, converted to standard gauge, and worked by the Southern Railway. The remainder is still used by the North Devon Railway Clay Company, and I visited this portion in August 1956.

The track was flat-bottom type and in very good condition. The points were of normal type, there being no stub points to be found. Sleepers are cut and made in the Company's own woodwork shop.

The wagons are two-plank and vary in small details, being built in the Company's workshops. On the day of my visit one had just been completed and looked very smart in its red-oxide planking and black strapping. At the rear of the workshops were several metal end-tipping trucks; elsewhere are one or two flat trucks with very small wheels. Neither of these latter types appear to be in common use.

There are two standard-gauge locos for working the sidings, "Peter" and "Progress", both are 0-4-0 Fowlers and were on shed at the time of my visit. The narrow-gauge locos "Efficiency" and "Forward" were both working, whilst "Advance" was in the blacksmith's shop undergoing minor repairs. These are also Fowlers, and of two different patterns.

J.A.Cordingley

The East Cornwall Mineral Railway

This line ran from Kelly Bray, near Callington, to Calstock, a distance of 7m. 4f. 5ch., and was of 3'6" gauge. On being sold to the Plymouth, Devonport & Southwestern Junction Railway, a portion from Kelly Bray to a point about six miles along was reconstructed as standard gauge, whilst the remainder was abandoned in 1908. The reconstructed portion was extended to Bere Alston to join the Southern Railway line from Tavistock to Plymouth.

When I visited the abandoned section in August of this year, I found at the top of the steep incline on to Calstock Quay the remains of the old engine shed, now in use as a hen-house, the water tower, which appeared to be in good repair, and two 'offices'. One of these lay at the head of the incline and looked like a signal cabin, the other was probably used as a store. From here to the junction with the reconstructed portion, the road-bed was not very overgrown considering that the line has been closed for over 40 years.

Some of the wagons were still in use in 1930 at Kit Hill Quarry, being employed to bring down the stone (the quarry being at the top of a hill) by a self-acting incline to an interchange siding, Clitter's Siding, on the standard-gauge S.R. line which had replaced the narrow gauge between Calstock and Callington. According to C.R.Clinker, that authority on early railways, one or two wagons were still in use inside the quarry as late as 1951. The interchange siding and incline were dismantled when the site was visited in May 1956.

J.A.Cordingley

Mr. Cordingley can supply 116-size photos price 4½ d. of "Forward", "Progress" and a view of the loco shed and wagon tipping shed of the Torrington & Marland Railway. His address is The Clock House, Braintree, Essex.

Welshpool & Llanfair Railway

This line was closed to all traffic from November 5th, according to an article in the Railway Magazine. The S.L.S. ran an official 'last train' on the afternoon of Saturday, November 3rd. In connection with this closure, and the note on p.4 of our last issue, we have received notification of the formation of the Welshpool & Llanfair Preservation Section of the Branch Line Society. Membership is separate from that of the B.L.S., and details can be obtained from Mr. I.Hurst, 26 Hillary Mount, Billericay, Essex.

A Message from the Hon. Secretary

When I decided to form the Society in 1951, I anticipated that a handful of people would be interested, but I did not reckon that more than 30-35 would join. The results have exceeded all speculation and in the five years that the Society has been in existence, many new friendships have been made, and much valuable information unearthed and exchanged between members.

The growth of interest in narrow-gauge railways generally, has been considerable in the brief period that the NGRS has been in existence, and there have without doubt been many reasons for this - the activities at Towyn and Portmadoc, the admirable host of publications such as the 'Light Railway Handbooks' by Mr. Kidner and the various books by Mr. J.I.C.Boyd and others, and of course the Birmingham Locomotive Club handbooks by Eric Tonks. All these have stirred the interest, and I hope that we too have done something to promote and maintain that interest, as I intended it should be from the outset. Many will argue that we could have done more; maybe we could, but it should be remembered that it is a hobby, and we can only do what time and circumstances permit.

Anyway, I have, as many of you know, been ill recently, and this has considerably upset things in many ways. I know you will realise, for instance, that production of the magazine depended on being able to get various things done as cheaply as possible, and in this connection we have had to rely on many personal business contacts to ensure that we could produce the magazine within our financial limits. Sickness has played havoc both with myself and Mr. Spink in this respect, hence the delay in getting this issue out to you. We can only say "sorry" and ask you to bear with us.

I think the Society has become reasonably established by now and I am particularly proud of the progress made in the south of England under the guidance of Clifford John and Keith Davies. We are, by general standards, a very young Society yet, and I hope will go gradually from strength to strength, for there is no doubt that the interest in narrow-gauge railways of all kinds, whether they be the Festiniog Railway in North Wales, or a plantation railway in Fiji, is here to stay, and is growing.

Now, for medical reasons, it is necessary for me to relinquish the Hon. Secretaryship of the Society, and to hand over to someone else. At the time of going to press, my successor has not been decided upon, and in all probability an Acting Hon. Secretary will be appointed to carry on until the next AGM. I was very disappointed not to be able to attend the AGM in London, and had hoped to be fit by now. However, such is not the case, and I must accede to the 'M.O's' instructions. Mr. Redman has agreed to handle membership registrations for the next week or two; a minor re-shuffle of duties will be made at the next Committee

Meeting on February 6th, and details will appear in the next news-sheet due out shortly afterwards.

I would like to express my heart-felt thanks to all those of you who have shown interest and support during the past five years, particularly at visits, meetings, exhibitions etc., and I look forward to maintaining many valued friendships which have sprung up in that period. Some of you are on the other side of the world, in the Commonwealth and in America, and though we have never met, your friendship too, is valued. The nature of my (temporary) indisposition prevents me from writing many letters at the moment, and I know that some of you have been waiting for replies to letters for some time. I hope that I shall be able to get round to answering them soon!

May I, in closing, wish you all the very best of 'narrow gauging' in 1957, and the years to come, and hope that you will continue to derive interest from your membership.

Yours sincerely,
(signed) E. G. Cope.

Belgian and Dutch Trams (Part 2)

K.E.Hartley

On another trip out, this time by coach, I visited nearby Holland, the border being crossed at Sluis where, besides Dutch police in dark blue uniforms with silver trimmings and long swords, one also found the narrow gauge again. However, we carried on non-stop to Breskens, in order to take the big vehicle and passenger ferry steamer across to Flushing, on the Isle of Walcheren.

Now Breskens, whatever it is today, was then a regular hive of narrow gauge activity, and trams seemed to be coming and going with some frequency - all 'stoom-trams' too. There was an interesting assortment of rolling-stock, both goods and passenger, belonging, I imagine, to more than one company, as the place appeared to be some sort of tramway junction.

Many of the bogie cars were finished in varnished teak, whilst the goods vehicles were mostly grey. Despite all the 'tit-bits' however, I had no chance to linger, as the boat was waiting; however after inspecting Middleburg, and lots of Dutch folk in national costume (it was market day) we eventually returned to Breskens, and I spent a busy few minutes with my camera. In particular, I snapped No's 1 and 19, genuine tram engines, which were painted black. They were standing at what I might call 'the station' except that no platforms or station buildings were apparent, used by Belgium-bound trams. But a few yards east of these, and standing in lonely splendour behind a wire-mesh fence, was another very interesting item - still a tram, but with a difference. The engine was a German-built 0-4-0T, painted green, with only wheels and motion enclosed, and the car was a very neat bogie vehicle in varnished teak, contrasting somewhat with the motley collection of assorted bogie vehicles and ancient four-wheelers nearby.

I would dearly have liked to spend some time at Breskens, but already the coach party was embussing, and I perforce had to do likewise. However, on reaching Sluis, once more a stop was made to take tea, etc.; I certainly had the refreshments, but spent some vital minutes surveying the narrow-gauge scene which, however, after Breskens, was very quiet, as only rolling-stock (mainly goods) was to be found. Such then were some of my impressions of the old steam trams.

During 1944/45, I spent seven months in and around Antwerp, and apart from the fact that most of the seats were missing from the cars, I could discern little alteration since my 1931 visit, except that only very occasionally did I spot a steam tram-loco, and that on a short

goods train. On moving up into Holland in April 1945, I noticed a tram depot at Turnhout, where there were a number a steam engines and some of the old dark green trailer cars, but nothing seemed to be working. I cannot say whether it was temporary inactivity or not, but certain it is that by now little or none of the stock remains in service.

Last Easter I noticed in a brief visit to Antwerp that the electric trams look much as before, smart in their cream livery - but at least they have all got their seats in again! Bogie cars could be seen hauling bogie trailers and/or four-wheelers, but alas! Not one whiff of steam did I see.

Verily, the ancient glory is departed from Belgium.

(Mr. Hartley can supply 2 ¼ x 3 ¼ prints, price 4d each, of the following :

- 132) Water Tower at Sluis
- 133) Track, old coaches etc at Sluis
- 134) Vans and open truck at Sluis
- 135) Steam tram-loco No. 1 and four-wheel car at Breskens
- 136) Steam tram-loco No. 19 on train at Breskens
- 137) Bogie car and van at Breskens
- 138) German 0-4-0T loco and bogie car at Breskens

Contact him at 43 Doncaster Road, Selby, Yorks.)

Talylyn Railway

This year the railway has carried a record number of passengers, over 37,000. Traffic receipts were £2,128, compared with £1,485 last year. The service was operated entirely by No's 4 and 6; No. 3 required repairs to the firebox which were heavier than expected, but it should be ready for service next season. No. 2 "Dolgoch" is still being overhauled and at present the outlook is not very good as the boiler is in worse condition than expected.

One of the innovations during the summer has been the running of an extra train stopping only at Dolgoch en-route, and carrying, in addition to express headcode lamps[!], boards in front of the chimney and on the carriage sides with the inscription 'Dolgoch and Abergynolwyn only'.

ADVERTISEMENT

- Talylyn Railway : Coloured postcards, Continental size, six kinds, 6d each.
Photo cards, eleven kinds, 4d each.
Official Guide, 32 pages with map, photos and history, 1/- each.
Book of Pictures, 36 photos on art paper, 2/6d.
Calendar on art paper, six large views, 2/6d post-free.
Reproductions of drawings from Maker's Catalogue, with leading dimensions, about 1878, on thin card, Loco's 1 and 2, 6d each.
Working Drawings, scale 7mm/ft., comprising side, end and top views, Loco No's 1, 2, 3 and 4. 1/- each, 3/6 set of four.
Pencils, green and red, triangular, with name of railway etc., 6d.

All obtainable from R.K.Cope, "Brynglas", Beckman Road, Padmore, Stourbridge, Worcs. Unless an item is listed as postfree, extra postage is required.

OUR APOLOGIES to Mr. W.J.K.Davies for omitting to acknowledge the fact that the photograph on the cover of our last issue was one of his usual excellent efforts.

N.G.R.S. Officers and Committee

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

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Please remember to enclose an s.a.e. in all correspondence with any of the Society Officers.

One of our earliest Life Members has suggested that he, and other Life Members, should send a further subscription to the Society funds. This, he feels, would ease his conscience for the receipt of several years' worth of magazines for such a small original outlay. We know that our Hon. Treasurer would be very pleased if any other Life Members would follow his lead.

Hedjaz Railway

According to a report in the Railway Magazine, an American engineering company has a contract to build a 500-mile line between Ma'an, Jordan and Medina, Saudi Arabia. It is presumed that the line will be of 3' 5 1/2" -gauge as was the original, in order to facilitate through running with the line of the Jordan Royal Hashemite Railway.

Some Recent Items of Narrow Gauge Interest

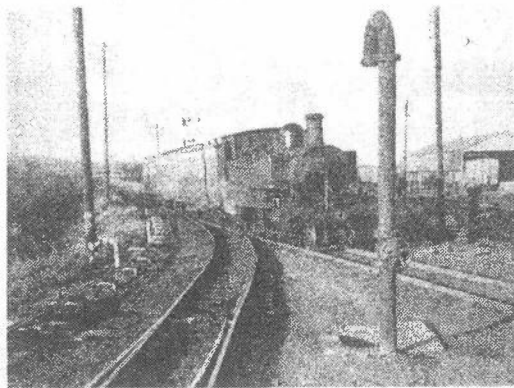
Geographic Magazine, Nov. : Fiji Railway (2ft-gauge), photos and article

Railway Modeller, Nov. : Mixed-gauge track at Vevey Station, SBB. Switzerland,

photo

Model Railway News, Oct. : Mixed-gauge track on Welshpool & Llanfair Rwy, photo
Railway Magazine, Oct. : Dutch Steam Tram and Belgian Railcar, 2'6" gauge, photo
Metre-gauge railways in Portugal, article and photos
RH&DR No.1 "Green Goddess", photo
Nov. : Chemin de fer des Cotes du Nord 0-6-0T No.39, photo of
RCTS special train
Model Engineer, 1st Nov. : New Zealand Rimutaka incline, article and photos
8th Nov. : Great Orme Tramway, article and photos
Baldwin 2-8-2 YG-type metre-gauge loco for India, photo
Trains Illustrated, Oct. : Padarn and Penrhyn, four pages of photos
Dec. : Welshpool & Llanfair Railway, article and photos

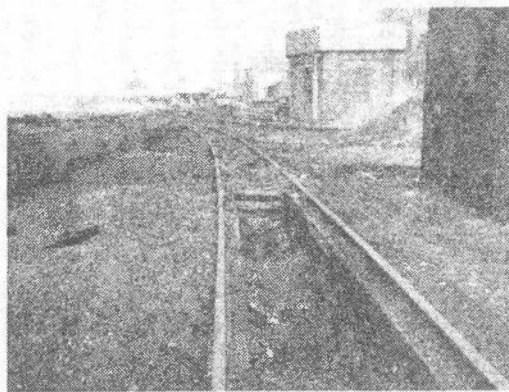
On Friday December 14th, the B.B.C. televised part of a film showing the Oxford & Cambridge Far Eastern Expedition, in which was a sequence about the Darjeeling-Himalayan Railway. I have been in touch with Mr. Barrington Brown, the cameraman, and he informs me that he has three photos of the railway and also two of the Bihar Branch Railway (running from near Patna) and two or three colour pictures of the Darjeeling Railway. 6 x 4 prints would be 2/6d each and colour prints about 7/6d, but for the latter he required a final order rather than a series of ones and twos. Any orders for these should be sent to me please; add sufficient to cover postage. Orders should be in by February 21st at the latest. Ed.



4-6-4T No. 11 & MIXED TRAIN FOR
LETTERKENNY AT STRABANE,
on 4th November 1955.

LONDONDERRY (Victoria Road), FROM
SITE OF LOCOMOTIVE SHED, during
dismantling period. 26th November 1955.

Photos by M. E. Busch.



COUNTY DONEGAL RAILWAYS