HARAKEVET

הרכבת

ISSUE : 11 DATE JANUARY 1991.

A Quarterly Journal on Railways of the Middle East.
Edited and Published by: Rabbi Walter Rothschild.
9, Primley Gardens, Leeds. LS17 7HT. Great Britain.

11:1.
Locomotive 101 (Anglo-Fanco-Belge) with train for Tel Aviv. Jerusalem, August 1974. Photo: Werner Sölch.

First - apologies that Issue 11 is a few weeks late, and appears in January 1991 rather than December 1990. This is the result simply of pressure of work on the editor!

The Middle East situation remains, as always, confusing and disturbing. Since the mention of Iraq in Issue 10, though, several references to a new railway to Kuwait have come my way. My thanks as usual to the many contributors who have sent material for publication — much has to remain on file for future use.

As I go to press, a brief story in the "Jerusalem Post" mentions that on Tuesday 18th. December "an empty train travelling from Jerusalem to Beit Shemesh was attacked by masked youths in the vicinity of the village of Bittir, derailing one of the cars and smashing four windows. A guard on the train opened fire at the youths, wounding one in the leg Border policemen in the area fired tear gas and rubber bullets to disperse the attackers. "What a business! In 4:5 I quoted Herr Conrad Schick who wrote, "On Sunday August 21st. (1892)...the first locomotive arrived with a small train. Some people took the opportunity to go by train in the evening when returning to Jaffa, but in the neighbourhood of Bittir the fellahin had put something on the line, which caused the carriages to leave the rails and turn over" (From P. E. F. Quarterly, Oct. 1892). Nothing changes !

Quite a variety in this issue — old and new, Israel and beyond. I hope to produce an Index of articles so far, to go with a future issue. Enjoy!

11.3.

General Motors G12 Bo—Bo No. 116 and a train of former Esslingen railcars; Haifa East, August 1974.
Photo: Werner Sölch.

11.4. CURRENT NEWS FROM THE LINE

1. **Against the Grain.**

On 30/9/90 Esslingen O-6-OD No. 227 was wheeling a string of loaded grain wagons out of the Dagon sidings at Haifa Central. Its driver was unable to brake in time and the loco smashed through the buffer stops of the headshunt, rearing up on to the concrete block behind it, which had been built there many years ago to protect an adjacent house when such incidents began to happen with some regularity. 227 was sent for lengthy repairs at Qishon Works, but was back in service by the first week in November. This incident led to a shortage of serviceable Esslingen O-6-Os, and G12 Bo—Bos had to take over the Dagon shunting turn for a month.

<P. S. Thanks to Alon Siton for a colour photo of this event - I don't think I can reproduce this here, yet).

2. **Fatal Crash.**

On 21/9/90 freight 304 headed by G12 120 hit a VW tender on a level crossing near Olamit Junction. The tender had crashed through the barriers and three of its occupants were killed.

3. **No Couplers**

On 8/10/90 Co—Co 701 broke down at Ashdod South when hauling coal train 981 from Ashdod Port to the Rutenberg power station. The train stood for eight or nine hours until G26CW-2 615 could be temporarily fitted with automatic couplers and be sent out to haul 701 and train 981 for unloading at Rutenberg. After this 615 was urgently required for regular freight service elsewhere, so the coal trains were halted for three days until repairs to 701 had been carried out at Haifa.

4. **Quintuple-Headed.**

Anyone standing at Binyamina station platform one night in late September would have witnessed a most unusual — perhaps unique — sight. Freight 334 from Lod to Haifa had three locos up front: 163, 610 and 108, of which only 163 was working, the other two being deadheaded. 163 broke down on the hill out of Hadera West and Blnyamlna* 8 station pilot, 124, was sent to the rescue. This coupled up to train 334 but failed to make much progress. Eventually 122 was commandeered from freight 303 and train 334 finally arrived at Binyamina behind five locos.

5. **Ayalon Progress.**

On 18/11/90 work began on the link through Tel Aviv between Central and South stations. According to large signboards at each extremity, this double—track section is due to be completed by April 1992.

6. **Halts Halted.**

On the Nahariyya line, Bustan Ha-Gal11 and Nahariyya Halt were closed as from 2/12/90. The closure of these two little-used halts has had a negligible effect on the timetable.

(NB: When did these halts, each consisting of little more than a shelter and nameboard, open?)

11.5

YOSEF NAVON AND A HISTORY OF "HARAKEVET".

No - not the magazine, but the word. Sybil Ehrlich has sent me a transcript of a 12-minute television programme on Joseph Navon, broadcast on Israel T. V. in the "On the Map" series, on 16th. October '90. This is a part of her translation of the script - which of course is rather stilted, being designed to accompany visual images - incorporating some fascinating insights into the "early days".

"At the top of Jaffa Road, in the centre of town, in the middle of a busy car park, stands an abandoned house. In the second half of the last century, this was one of the most splendid houses in Jerusalem. Today the house stands silent, abandoned and deserted. This was the home of Yosef Navon.

Yosef Navon - an imaginative man, a public servant, and a man of the people. He acquired land, built the neighbourhood and above all he is remembered as the man who brought the railway to the land of Israel - the railway, which gave so much to the economic development of the country and of Jerusalem.

Yosef Navon worked in Jerusalem for only 20 years, and did much for it. He was born in 1858, the son of a respected Sephardi family with roots in the city. H18 father, Rabbi Ellahu Navon, was the representative of the Jewish community on the Jerusalem local council. His mother, Esther Amzaleg, was from one of the wealthiest and most well-known families in the city.

He studied at the Talmud Torah until the age of 13, and then his parents decided that a local education was insufficient, and he was sent to complete his education in Marseilles, France - a daring thing for those days.

When he returned to the country at 16, he began to work in commerce and banking with his partner Frutiger, one of the largest bankers in Jerusalem at that time.

When he prospered, the romantic Sephardi lad Yosef Navon married the sister of Israel Dov Frumkin, the editor of the newspaper "Havatzelet". Gisha Frumkin, the

Ashkenazi girl, was beautiful and educated. It was one of the first Sephardi - Ashkenazi marriages in Jerusalem.

In 1885 the young family acquired the house at 66 Jaffa Road from his partner Johannes Frutiger. Frutiger (a Swiss Protestant) engraved on the house the word "Mahanaim", as in the verse in Genesis 32:2, "And he called the name of the place Mahanaim". This was the first "Mahanaim house" that Frutiger lived in Jerusalem. When he moved to another house he engraved the same inscription on the second house; today only the stone frame remains.

It is almost certain that Frutiger built this house in the middle of the 1870's, and probable that the architect was the Protestant Conrad Schick. The style of the building is a mixture of Western and Oriental style6. This is a two-storey house, in the centre of which is a gable and a circle in the form of a window - the rosette. The house has •3 central balcony adorned with oriental iron engravings. On both sides of the balcony are pilasters, halt-columns embossed in the wall.

On the roof are towers in the form of turrets.

The walls are more than a metre thick and the ceilings are domed on both storeys. The house was beautifully furnished and had the most modern facilities that were almost unknown in Jerusalem at that time, such as

batteries for electricity and a network of electric bells to summon the servants. In the courtyard was a family synagogue, stables for horses and a garage for the splendid carriage. Under the house was a giant cellar in which Yosef Navon, the owner of the house, kept a collection of rare antiques which he had collected on his travels.

The house itself stood in a garden which stretched over an enormous area between Rehov HaNevi'im and Jaffa Road. There wee a grove of ornamental trees, fruit trees and beds of flowers. In the centre of the garden wae a fountain - the *Shadrlvan* - made of coloured marble, in which goldfish swam. Parties for the notables, public figures, Jewish, Arab and Christian politicians took place in the garden. The splendid villa wae called by Jerusalemites "La gulrta dl Navon" - Navon* s Garden.

The banker Frutlger and Navon began to build houses for Jews leaving the old walled city. They were the first to suggest flats for sale by easy payments over long periods. The first neighbourhood planned and built in this way was Beit Yosef in Abu Tor, named after Yosef Navon. The houses were advertised for sale in the newspaper "Havatzelet", almost like today. "For Sale, one room, kitchen and toilet at the price of 75 Napoleons with interest over many years".

In 1882 "Havatzelet", the newspaper belonging to Frumkin, Navon*s brothei—ion-law, published a petition for the construction of a new neighbourhood, Mahaneh Yehudah. It was signed by the young Yosef Navon. However, the first petition went unanswered; Only when the bank presented an easy payment plan for the acquisition of houses did many Jump at it. In 1888 the first 50 apartments were ready. The neighbourhood was called after Navon's brother, Yehudah, who died young. More neighbourhoods followed: Sukkat Shalom, Batel Navon ("Navon*s Houses") and others.

But it seems that Navon's greatest passion was the railway, the railway that brought him fame and that finally caused the downfall of the young entrepreneur.

Navon was 27 when he went to Constantinople to try and obtain a concession to build the railway between Jaffa and Jerusalem. He was there for three years; his negotiations with the obstinate Sublime Porte - the Sultan - ended after three years, and he received the ' Firman* - the concession for 71 years.

In 1892 the railway was inaugurated with great glory and splendour. All the Who's Who of the country were present at the celebrations. On that day Sultan Abdul Hamid bestowed on Yosef Navon the title "Bey". When the first train set of on its way, however, it did not yet have a Hebrew name. Ellezer Ben-Yehudah’s Journal "Hazvi" described it as a "Mass Mechinat Kitor" (lit. "Journey of steam machine") from Jaffa to Jerusalem. Ben-Yehudah was undecided whether to call it "Kronot Mass'* (lit. "Journey Wagons") or "orha" ("[Camel]

Caravan"). David Yellin suggested the word "Katar" for Locomotive, and it was Yehiel Michael Pines who suggested the word "Rakevet" for Train, grammatically constructed like "Hameret" or "Gamelet" ("Caravan of Donkeys or Camels">.

Yosef Navon continued thinking big. He managed to gain the rights to produce electric power in Jerusalem, to bring water to the city, to build a port at Jaffa, and more. But the initiatives were too much even for him. The railway project took its toll of his funds. When Frutlger* s Bank went bankrupt — so did Navon.

In. 1894 he left the country and never returned. He lived alone in France, almost penniless. There, too, he continued planning projects, but these too were not successful. He who was a rising star at 16, was soon extinguished.

His wife and three married daughters remained in Jerusalem in difficult financial circumstances. The magnificent house began to crumble and was sold bit by bit to cover the debts. The last part of the house was sold on Yosef Navon* 6 death in 1934.

Today the impressive house is standing silent, and waiting for redemption."

11.6. **NEW ASHDOD COAL TERMINAL.**

According to an item in "The Israel Commercial Economic Newsletter" Vol. Ill No. 198, Oct. 26 1990, sent by Steve Tish,

"The National Coal Supply Corporation has opened up a new S40-mllllon coal terminal in Ashdod that will make Israel less dependent on oil as a source of energy. Energy Minister Yuval Ne*enan, speaking at the facility's dedication ceremony, noted that the terminal 18 of crucial importance to Israel, especially in light of the Gulf crisis. Fifty percent of Israel's electric power is coal- generated. The terminal will be environmentally safe, as the conveyor from the port to the terminal will be closed and there are special devices to help eliminate coal dust. Israel Railways has invested in hermetically-sealed cars to transport the coal to the Ashkelon power station and industrial users. According to Zvl Tsafrlrl, the company's board chairman, many large companies, including Nesher and Argaman Industries, are beginning to use coal. During the first stages of operation, the terminal will supply 2.5 million tons annually to the Ashkelon facility, and another 200,000 — 300,000 tons to industry."

(Ed.: If all this works out, we could be seeing regular, heavy coal flows from Ashdod, Israel's southernmost port, to the Nesher works near Haifa, the Northernmost post ! Good traffic - but I. R. had better get some more locos fitted with the correct couplings....)

11.7. **THE MODEL RAILWAY CLUB OF TEL AVIV By Uri Ben Rehav**

If, on a Friday afternoon, you should ba on the platform at Tel Aviv South railway Station, and hear strange noises coming from the Shelter - just follow your ears, go down a few steps, and you will find two rooms filled with people. Not just men - there are women and chtl dren as well. The centre of all this bustling activity is a model railway layout, but please don't believe that all these people have run away from home to a political gathering or to play gin rummy (though there'd be nothing wrong with that....). On the layout trains are running, lights go on and off, horns are tooting, everybody is talking at the same time, children are shouting — in short, everyone is having a good time, and you will know that you have arrived at the Model Railway Club of Tel Aviv.

How did all this start ? Well.....

In Spring 1969, at a late hour in the night, Israel T. V. broadcast a programme called "Night Birds". Amongst other items was an interview with a certain Mr. J. Haran, and the reason for his appearance was his unusual hobby: model Railways. Among the audience at home were a few with the samehobby, but as this hobby is virtually unknown in Israel each of them had thought that he was "the one and only one". Needless to say they "cams out of the closet" and, with the good help of Israel T. V., made contact with Mr. Haran and - to make a long story short - became founder members of the Club. The foremost problem was, clearly, (the need for premises. This was solved in a way which would provoke envy in other clubs the world over: Israel Railways not only let the club use part of the underground shelter at the railway station but, furthermore. Gratis, for nil rent! As if this were not enough, they contributed a very nice sum of money as a starter! I wouldn't wonder if other clubs, worldwide, would turn green with envy on reading this.

Today there are some 40 active members, including the wives of some. There are two rooms. In one of which is the layout itself (the biggest in Israel in 1:87 scale). As this is in d.c., and quite a number of members have at home a. c. layouts, a second layout is under construction for these, to give a good run for their rolling stock. The two rooms are adequate for our purpose: each one is t 1.5m x 5. 5m. The size of the layout is 9.5m x 3.0m; On one side is a terminal 5.8m x 85cm., there are three levels, and it is planned for five trains to run simultaneously. As we have HO scale we manage to run long trains to everybody's delight. The second layout, also to HO scale, will be small or because the second room is also used as the place to relax after hard work. Along the walls are placed upholstered seats from old coaches (again a contribution from our benefactor, Israel Railways), a hot water boiler for tea or coffee, some biscuits - this room la also very much in use, especially by the youngest as there is a small additional, unsophisticated HO layout for them too. The general atmosphere is like a big family. For example, last Chanukah we had a party; ladles brought traditional cakes, a Menorah was lighted, there was a very inspired singalong - and it was all so successful that more such parties are planned, as are picnics, visits to I. R. installations and other activities.

A big boost to us is that we are known to the wider public. The biggest newspapers wrote articles about ue — not only the Hebrew but also the English press. As a result the number of visitors and enquiries has increased; some of the visitors have also joined the club. As our membership fee is very low — N. I. S. lO per month - we run a tight budget. Israel T. V. has also contacted us regarding our starring in a special programme this winter. Not long ago we opened up in a corner a repair and maintenance shop for members' locos, as we have among our members craftsmen of many trades, from electronics engineers to carpenters, from musicians to mechanics.

The main layout itself depicts in model form all typical aspects of Israel. Naturally we cannot use ready-made kits for buildings as these are modelled on European or American prototypes. Everything is hand-made and scratch—built. In this regard one of our "showoff" pieces is an exact replica of the new main railway station at Tel Aviv Arlosoroff. Other "points of interest" are a country club (including riding school, tennis court, basketball courts etc. >, a large Arab village on a hill, an industrial complex, a waterfall (with real water !) and. in an advanced state of construction, a motorized turntable for the loco maintenance department and the loco depot.

As not every member can, for various reasons and obligations, visit every Friday, the club produces a monthly newsletter which is published (In Hebrew) and sent by post to every subscribing member. This deals mostly with club news.

To conclude: It is needless to point out that everyone who visits Israel Is cordially Invited to visit us. Throughout Israel, our members between us master most European languages. East and West. A hot cup of coffee, a piece of cake and a nice chat make for a well-spent afternoon - including the opportunity to be a loco-driver !

If you are interested, contact-address Is:
Mr. Url Ben-Rehav, P. O. Box 642, 59106 Bat-Yam, Israel.

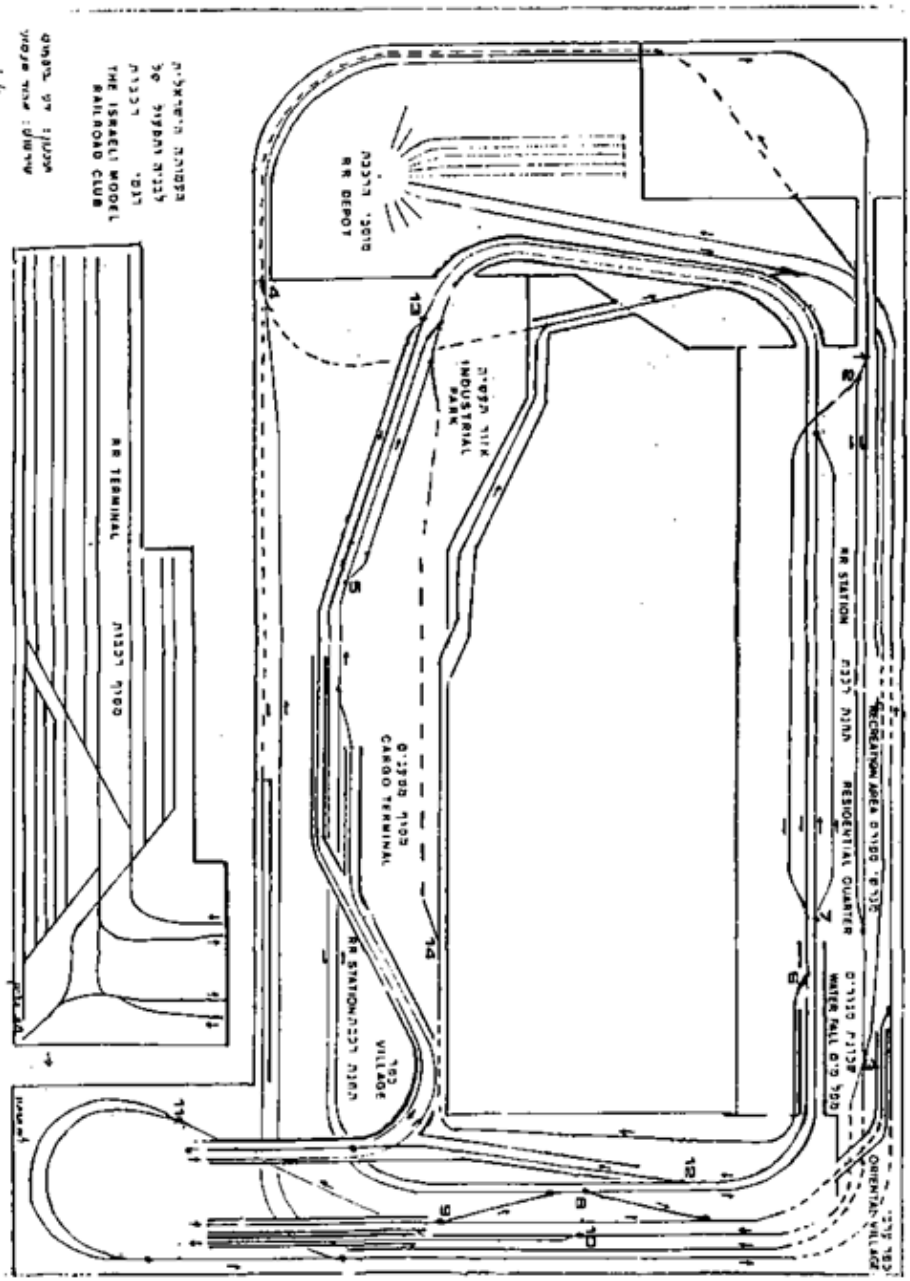
11.8 SOME HISTORY

According to Uri, there had been on earlier layout at this site. in 0 Gauge (7mm. to 1ft.), but one day a vandal broke in and, with the help of an axe or similar object, for no apparent purpose destroyed the whole lot, including rolling stock.
Does anyone know more about this heart-breaking precursor of the Intifada ?

11.9 WATER TANK WAGON AT LOD by Rick Tourret.

Regarding the 4wh. water tank wagon at Lod (10. 4 (a)): GWR No. 88965 was a 10-ton O11 5-plank OPEN A wagon, one of over 10,000 built between 1911 and 1919. This 'fits' the 1912 Metropolitan RC&W works plate, and one can speculate that this wagon was sent out to Palestine in UW1 and was subsequently rebuilt by removal of the plank sides and addition of a steel water tank.

11. 10. Track plan of the Layout of the Tel Aviv Model Railway Club.



11.11.ON ACTIVE SERVICE:AN ARABIAN NI6HT'S TALE By Michael J.O'Connor.

(Michael O'Connor published this article on the Adams 0-6-0 goods locos of the London and South Western Railway that were shipped to the Middle East in "South Western Circular" Vol. 3 No. 6 (1976). Exact details of the dates and numbers involved can be found, by those who wish, on pp. 118f of Hughes ''Middle East Railways" and p. 127 of Cotterell's "Railways of Palestine & Israel", though this latter was amended and updated in "Harakevet" 5:5. Hughes reckons (p.116, footnote c) that there is no evidence that the locos concerned in the article that followed ever worked in Mesopotamia, which would make some of the speculation fruitless - but until anyone comes up with proof either way, I shall keep to O' Connor's text . Ed.)

"The story of the Adams goods engines which were sold to the War Office has been told many times.... It is remarkable how much is known of their exploits in various campaigns, but it is inevitable that the more detailed our knowledge, the more obvious are the gaps in it. The present article is intended to fill one of these gaps in the Mesopotamian campaign and incidentally put scene flesh on the bare bones of transfers and withdrawals.

At the start of the First World War all the lands between the Mediterranean and the Persian Gulf belonged to Turkey and were slowly being developed, mainly with German capital. The principal means of German infiltration was the Baghdad Railway, planned to run from the Anatolian Railway in Turkey proper, across the north of the Arabian Desert and down the Tigris Valley, but in 1914 this was incomplete. From Konia in Anatolia a line stretched east, with gaps where mountain ranges were being crossed, and from Baghdad another section ran north up the river to Samarra, but between the two railheads was a gap which was to remain unfilled for over twenty years.

The Baghdad Railway was a strategic line intended to threaten British influence in the Middle East, but the reason for the Mesopotamian campaign of 1914 was much more immediate. Just across the border in neutral Persia was Abadan with its oilfield which supplied the Royal Navy and to secure the wells of the Anglo—Persian Oil Co. the Indian government sent troops to Basra in late 1914. The limited operation which was planned soon got out of hand and led to a northward push on Baghdad. Early successes were followed by the catastrophe of Kut—el—Amara and the passing into captivity of Townshend's army in April 1916. This had the important effect of forcing the British government to accept that Mesopotamia could not be dismissed as a side-show. The new commander, Maude, took a far more businesslike approach and in March 1917 the British forces reached and captured Baghdad.

In the early days the main supply line was the river, but as Maude advanced he laid a metre—gauge railway and on reaching Baghdad captured the southern end of the German standard-gauge line. At first, when the damage done by the retreating Turks had been repaired, this was operated with the old German stock but late in the year the Adams Goods began to arrive. Only nine came at first, direct from Britain, in October and November, but these were followed in July 1918 by ten more transferred from the Egyptian Expeditionary Force in Palestine.

These were presumably needed for an extension northward to Sharquat and could be spared from Palestine where fifty new Baldwin 4-6-0's were arriving. As northern Iraq was still in enemy hands all nineteen must have been delivered by sea to Basra. From there they proceeded upriver on barges alongside steamers (#1), which took anything from five to fourteen days depending on the state of the river to reach Baghdad. (#2).

After the war the British Army was responsible for the railways in Iraq, the European end of the Baghdad Railway (which by then had reached Nisibin) and the Anatolian Railway itself. Most of the Adams Goods remained in Iraq for the rest of their lives, but three - nos. 027, 030 and 501 — left in August 1919 and reappeared in April 1921 at Rayak in Syria. So much has been recorded many times, but the question remains — where were they between these dates?

The answer to this question is to be found in a couple of contemporary magazines which recorded 30A and 501 A at Aleppo (#9) and 27A and 501A on the Amanus Tunnel section of the Baghdad Railway (#3). All three were therefore at work on the western end of the line. However, the first of these notes was published in June 1919 and referred to conditions In March, i.e. five months before the locomotives are said to have left Iraq. What route did the engines follow to reach Turkey ? Transport upriver from Sharquat and then across the desert to Misibin I think must be ruled out as navigation above Baghdad is very difficult and limited to the period December to May. A more likely solution is that they retraced their steps to Basra, and then via Suez to a port such as Margin in Turkey.

We are on safer ground in reconstructing their later movements. Ray Tustin has recorded (#4) that they arrived in Palestine from Rayak on 24th. April 1921, evidently in parts for 501 was later noted "not erected". They presumably ran on their own wheels to Rayak over the tracks of the Chemin de Fer Damas-Hama et Prolongements, which joined the Baghdad Railway at Aleppo. At Rayak a narrow-gauge (105cm) section of the DHP began, connecting at its other end with the Hedjaz Railway at Damascus, and the most likely route for the Adams goods is dismantling in the DHP shops at Rayak, followed by carriage to Damascus and via the Hedjaz line to the standard gauge military railway at Haifa. An alternative would have been over the DHP direct to Tripoli and transport by sea to Haifa, but lack of port facilities probably ruled this out.

An interesting possibility, in connection with the engines which remained in Iraq arises in the aftermath of the LB&SCR (London, Brighton and South Coast Rly.) oil-fuel experiments of 1902—3. (#5). Ten locomotives were converted, mostly on Holden's system although a "Gladstone" 0—4—2 was given a Johnson burner and another twelve had been marked for conversion when the experiments stopped in 1904. The oil—burners - of which there were presumably twenty—two sets - went into store until March 1917 when they were sold to the War Office and sent to Avonmouth for shipment to Alexandria in SS Port Denison. Incidentally, this vessel also transported twelve Adams goods to Palestine on the same trip. The interesting feature noted by Mr. Bradley was that drawings of the Adams Goods were found in the same file at Brighton as those of the oil—burners, suggesting that it may have been planned to convert them with the old LBSCR burners.

As far as I know none of the Palestinian locos burned oil except experimentally until 1942. Many of the Baldwins were delivered with oil-burners in 1918 but were soon converted to burn coal. (#6) In Iraq however, oil was extensively used because of its local abundance and the absence of coal, and the Adams goods remaining there were converted either during or just after the War. The work was described (#7) by A. Morton Bell, the Carriage and Wagon superintendent of the Great Indian Peninsula Railway, who may well have been responsible for the conversion. Much of the support for the Mesopotamian campaign came from India, and Ball had been associated with Holden in his earliest experiments on the GER with oil. (#8). The Brighton equipment was definitely not used on the Adams goods, which were fitted with the Mexican trough design. In view of Bell's early work, he presumably did not know of the Brighton equipment or find it suitable. (Ed. In that case, who did. and who had it shipped out?)

References: 1. Photograph in Rly. Mag. 44 (1919), p. 100; 2. Naval Intelligence Division Geographical Handbook "Iraq and Persian Gulf", Sept. 1944; 3: "Pertinent Paragraph" Rly. Mag. 46 (1920), p. 131. 4. SLS Journal. Jan. 1944, p. 27. 5: D. L. Bradley "Locomotives of the LBSCR", Vol . 2. 6: Rly. Gaz. 85 (2.8.46) p. 118; 7. Rly. Gaz. 34 (6.5.21) p.695; 8. Obituary "Locomotive" 1963 p.83. 9. Railway & Travel Monthly, 18 (1919) p.382

Not Mesopotamia, but an LSWR Jumbo 0—6—0 on a train (General Allenby's train ?) at Jerusalem. N. B. Tender bears "L. S. W. R. markings", no "W. D. " number. Motorised draisine in foreground Photo: Ron Garraway.

In 10:10 I introduced the book "With Lawrence in Arabia" by Lowell Thomas and incorporated some excerpts. Here is a whole chapter, pages 111 - 118, in the original typeface (to save re-typing); a final selection will be incorporated in issue 12.

CHAPTER XI

LAWRENCE THE TRAIN-WRECKER

Fate never played a stranger prank than when she transformed this shy young Oxford graduate from a studious archaeologist into the leader of a hundred thrilling raids, creator of kings, commander of an army, and world's champion train-wrecker.

One day Lawrence's column was trekking along the Wadi Ithm. Behind him rode a thousand Bedouins mounted on the fleetest racing camels ever brought down the Negb. The Bedouins were improvising strange war-songs describing the deeds of the blond shereef whom General Storrs had introduced to me as "the uncrowned king of Arabia". Lawrence headed the column. He paid no attention to the song lauding him as a modern Abu Bekr. We were discussing the possibility of ancient Hittite civilization forming the connecting link between the civilizations of Babylon and Nineveh and ancient Crete. But his mind was on other things, and suddenly he broke off to remark :

"Do you know, one of the most thrilling sights I have ever seen is a train-load of Turkish soldiers ascending sky- ward after the explosion of a tulip !"

Three days later the column started off at night in the direction of the Pilgrim Railway. In support of Lawrence were two hundred Howeitat. After two days hard riding across a country more barren than the mountains of the moon, and through valleys reminiscent of Death Valley, California, the raiding column reached a ridge of hills near the important Turkish railway centre and garrisoned town of Maan. At a signal from Lawrence all dismounted, left the camels, walked up to the summit of the nearest hill, and from between sandstone cliffs looked down across the railway track.

This was the same railway that had been built some years before to enable the Turkish Government to keep a closer hand on Arabia through transport of troops. It also simplified the problem of transportation for pilgrims to Medina and Mecca. Medina was garrisoned by an army of over twenty thousand Turks and was strongly fortified. Lawrence and his Arabs could have severed this line completely at any time, but they chose a shrewder policy. Train-load after train-load of supplies and ammunition must be sent down to Medina over that railway. So whenever Lawrence and his followers ran out of food or ammunition they had a quaint

little habit of slipping over, blowing up a train or two, looting it, and disappearing into the blue with everything that had been so thoughtfully sent down from Constantinople.

As a result of the experience he gained on these raids Lawrence's knowledge of the handling of high explosives was as extensive as his knowledge of archaeology, and he took great pride in his unique ability as a devastator of railways. The Bedouins, on the other hand, were entirely ignorant of the use of dynamite ; so Lawrence nearly always planted all his own mines and took the Bedouins along merely for company and to help carry off the loot.

He had blown up so many trains that he was as familiar with the Turkish system of transportation and patrols as were the Turks themselves. In fact, he had dynamited Turkish trains passing along the Hedjaz Railway with such regularity that in Damascus seats in the rear carriages sold for five and six times their normal value. Invariably there was a wild scramble for seats at the rear of a train ; because Lawrence nearly always touched off his tulips, as he playfully called his mines, under the engine, with the result that the only carriages damaged were those in front.

There were two important reasons why Lawrence preferred not to instruct the Arabs in the use of high explosives. First of all, he was afraid that the Bedouins would keep on playfully blowing up trains even after the termination of the War. They looked upon it merely as an ideal form of sport, one that was both amusing and lucrative. Secondly, it was extremely dangerous to leave footmarks along the railway- line, and he preferred not to delegate tulip-planting to men who might be careless.

The column crouched behind great chunks of sandstone for eight hours until a number of patrols had passed by. Lawrence satisfied himself that they were going at intervals of two hours. At midday, while the Turks were having their siesta, Lawrence slipped down to the railway-line, and, walking a short distance on the sleepers with bare feet in order not to leave impressions on the ground which might be seen by the Turks, he picked out what he considered a proper spot for planting a charge. Whenever he merely wanted to derail the engine of a train he would use only a pound of blasting gelatin ; when he wanted to blow it up he would use from forty to fifty pounds. On this occasion, in order that no one might be disappointed, he used slightly more than fifty pounds. It took him a little more than an hour to dig a hole between the sleepers, bury the explosive, and run a fine wire underneath the rail, over the embankment, and up the hillside.

Laying a mine is rather a long and tedious task. Lawrence first took off a top layer of railway ballast, which he placed in a bag that he carried under his cloak for that purpose. He

next took out enough earth and rock to fill two five- gallon petrol tins. This he carried off to a distance of some fifty yards from the track and scattered along so that it would not be noticed by the Turkish patrols. After filling the cavity with his fifty-pound tulip-seed of dynamite, he put the surface layer of ballast back in place and levelled it off' with his hand. As a last precaution he took a camel's-hair brush, swept the ground smooth, and then, in order not to leave a footprint, walked backward down the bank for twenty yards and with the brush carefully removed all trace of his tracks, lie buried the wire for a distance of two hundred yards up the side of the hill and then calmly sat down under a bush, right out in the open, and waited as nonchalantly as though tending a flock of sheep. When the first trains came along the guards stationed on top of the cars and in front of the engine, with their rifles loaded, saw nothing more extraordinary than a lone Bedouin sitting on the hillside with the shepherd's staff in his hand.

Lawrence allowed the front wheels of the engine to pass over the mine, and then, as his column lay there half paralysed behind the boulders, he sent the current into the gelatin. It exploded with a roar like the falling of a six- story building. An enormous black cloud of smoke and dust went up. With a clanking and clattering of iron the engine rose from the track. It broke squarely in two. The boiler exploded, and chunks of iron and steel showered the country for a radius of three hundred yards. Numerous bits of boiler-plate missed Lawrence by inches.

Instead of provisions, this train carried some four hundred Turkish soldiers on their way to the relief of Medina. They swarmed out of the coaches and started in a menacing manner toward Lawrence. All this time the Bedouins, lining the tops of the hills, were popping at the Turks. Evidently one Turkish officer suspected that the lone Arab was the mysterious Englishman for whom rewards up to fifty thousand pounds had been offered. He shouted something, and the men, instead of shooting, ran toward Lawrence with the evident intention of taking him prisoner; but before they had advanced six paces Lawrence whipped out his long-barrelled Colt from the folds of his abba, and used it so effectively that they turned and fled. He always carried a heavy American-frontier model weapon. Although very few persons ever actually saw him, it was well known among the British officers that he spent many hours at target-practice, with the result that he had made himself an expert shot.

Many of the Turks dodged behind the embankment and began shooting through the carriage-wheels ; but Lawrence, in anticipation of this, had posted two Lewis machine-guns just around a curve in the track, where they covered the opposite side of the railway embankment behind which the Turks had taken refuge. The gun crews opened fire, and before the Turks knew what had happened their line was

raked from end to end and every man behind the embank- ment either killed or wounded. The rest of the Turks who had remained on the train fled panic-stricken in all directions.

The Arabs, who were crouching behind the rocks popping away with their rifles, charged down, tore open the carriages, and tossed out everything on board that was not nailed down. The loot consisted of sacks of Turkish silver coin and paper currency, and many beautiful Oriental draperies. The Bedouin raiders piled all the loot along the embankment, and with shouts of glee commenced dividing it among themselves, while Lawrence signed the duplicate way-bills and playfully returned one copy to a wounded Turkish guard whom he intended to leave behind. They were just like children around a Christmas tree. Occasionally two men would want the same silk Kermani rug and begin fighting over it. When that happened, Lawrence would step between them and turn the rug over to some third man.

Early in September, accompanied by two sheiks of the Ageilat Beni Atiyah from Mudowarrah, Lawrence left Akaba and trekked up to the multi-coloured sandstone cliff country which the tribesmen called “Rum”. In less than a week he had been joined by a force of 116 Toweiha, Zuwida, Darausha, Dhumaniyah, Togatga, Zelebani, and Howeitat.

The appointed rendezvous was a small railway-bridge near Kilo 587, south of Damascus. Here Lawrence buried his usual bit of tulip-seed beneath the rails, and stationed Stokes and Lewis guns at vantage-points three hundred yards or so distant. The following afternoon a Turk patrol spotted them. An hour later a party of forty mounted Turks put out from the fort at Haret Ammar to attack the mine-laying party from the south. Another party of over a hundred set forth to outflank Lawrence from the north, but he decided to take a chance and hold his ground.

A little later a train with two engines and two box-cars moved slowly up from Haret Ammar, machine-guns and rifles spitting lead from the roofs and from loopholes in the cars as the train advanced. As it passed, Lawrence touched his electric switch and exploded a mine directly under the second engine. The jar was sufficient to derail the lirst, demolish the boiler, as well as smash the cab and tender of the second, upend the first box-car, and derail the second. While the Arabs swarmed around looting the wrecked train, Lawrence fired a box of gun-cotton under the front engine, completing its destruction. The box-cars were full of valuable baggage, and the Arabs went wild with joy. In all, seventy Turks were killed, ninety taken prisoner, and an Austrian lieutenant and thirteen Austrian and German sergeants blown up.

Every fourth or fifth man of the famous fighting

Howeitat tribe is a sheik. Naturally the head sheik has but little power. Frequently these men would accompany Lawrence on a raid. On one such expedition to the railway near Biresh- Shediyah he had to adjudicate for them in twelve cases of assault with weapons, four camel thefts, one marriage settle- ment, fourteen feuds, a bewitchment, and two cases of evil eye. He settled the bewitchment affair by counter-bcwitch- ing the hapless defendant. The evil eye cases he cleverly adjusted by sending the culprits away.

On still another occasion, during the first week of the following October, Lawrence was sitting out in the open near Kilo 500. His Bedouin followers were concealed behind him in the broom-brush. Along came a heavy train with twelve coaches. The explosion following the turning on of the electric current shattered the fire-box of the loco- motive, burst many of the tubes, hurled the cylinders into the air, completely cleaned out the cab, including the engineer and fireman, warped the frame of the engine, bent the two rear driving-wheels, and broke their axles. When Lawrence put in his official report on this raid he humorously added a postscript to the effect that the locomotive was “beyond repair”. The tender and first coach were also demolished. Mazmi Bey, a general of the Turkish General Staff, who happened to be on board, fired two shots out of the window of his private car with his Mauser pistol, which then evidently jammed. Although it appeared advisable for him to take to the camels and the distant hills, Lawrence and his band swooped down on the train, captured eight coaches, killed twenty Turks, and carried off seventy tons of foodstuffs without suffering any losses.

His only European companion on some of his wildest train-blowing parties was a daring Australian machine- gunner, Sergeant Yells by name. He was a glutton for excitement and a tiger in a fight. On one occasion, when out with a raiding-party of Abu Tayi, Yells accounted for between thirty and forty Turks with his Lewis gun. When the loot was divided among the Bedouins, Yells, in true Australian fashion, insisted on .having his share. So Lawrence handed him a Persian carpet and a fancy Turkish cavalry sword.

Shereefs Ali and Abdullah also played an important part in the raids on the Hedjaz Railway and in the capture of great convoys of Turkish camels near Medina. In 1917 Lawrence and his associates, in co-operation with Feisal Ali, Abdullah and Zeid, blew up twenty-five Turkish trains, tore up fifteen thousand rails, and destroyed fifty-seven bridges and culverts. During the eighteen months that he led the Arabs, they dynamited seventy-nine trains and bridges ! It is a remarkable fact that he participated in only one such expedition that turned out unsatisfactory. General Allenby, in one of his reports, said that Colonel Lawrence had made train-wrecking the national sport of Arabia

Later in the campaign, near Derea, the most important railway junction south of Damascus, Lawrence touched off one of his tulips under the driving-wheels of a particularly long and heavily armed train. It turned out that Djemal Pasha, the commander-in-chief of the Turkish armies, was on board with nearly a thousand troops. Djemal hopped out of his saloon and, followed by all his staff, jumped into a ditch.

Lawrence had less than sixty Bedouins with him, but alt were members of his personal bodyguard and famous fighters. In spite of the overwhelming odds, the young Englishman and his Arabs fought a pitched battle in which 125 Turks were killed and Lawrence lost a third of his own force. The remainder of the Turks finally rallied round their com- mander-in-chief, and Lawrence and his Arabs had to show their heels.

At every station along the Hedjaz-Pilgrim Railway were one or two bells which the Turkish officials rang as a warning to passengers when the train was ready to start. Nearly all of them now decorate the homes of Lawrence's friends. Along with them are a dozen or more Turkish mile-posts and the number-plates from half the engines which formerly hauled trains over the line from Damascus to Medina. Law- rence and his associates collected these in order to confirm their victories. While in Arabia, I often heard the half- jocular, half-serious remark that Lawrence would capture

a Turkish post merely for the sake of adding another bell to his collection ; and it' was no uncommon thing to see Lawrence, or one of his officers, walking stealthily along the railway embankment, between patrols, searching for the iron post marking Kilo 1000 south of Damascus. Once found, they would cut it off with a tulip-bud—a stick of dynamite. When not engaged in a major movement against the Turks or in mobilizing the Bedouins, Lawrence usually spent his time blowing up trains and demolishing tracks.

So famous did this young archaeologist become through- out the Near East as a dynamiter of bridges and trains that after the final defeat of the Turkish armies, when word reached Cairo that Lawrence would soon be passing through Egypt en route to Paris, General Watson, G.O.C. of troops, jocularly announced that he was going to detail a special detachment to guard Kasr el Nil, the Brooklyn Bridge of Egypt, which crosses the Nile from Cairo to the residential suburb of Gazireh.

It had been rumoured that Lawrence was dissatisfied at having finished up the campaign with the odd number of seventy-nine mine-laying parties to his credit. So the story spread up and down along the route of The Milk- and-Honey Railway between Egypt and Palestine that he proposed to make it an even eighty, and wind up his career as a dynamiter in an appropriate manner by planting a few farewell tulips under the Kasr el Nil, just outside the door of the British military headquarters

Hugo de Bot of Kessel, Belgium, has sent some fascinating details concerning the background to Israel's first diesel locos - yet the mysteries deepen further.

In 1952 Israel Railways took delivery of three bo-bo diesels, of 1125hp. Numbered 101 - 103, they were hybrids, incorporating American (General Motors) power units with Belgian mechanical parts. Paul Cotterell lists them (p. 91 & 136), as works nos. 700701 - 3, but this seems to refer to the GM-EMD 3RSW engines rather than the locos themselves.

Hugo has co-written a book on the diesel locos built with a GM-EMD licence by Anglo-Franco-Belge for Belgium and Luxemburg (NoHAB in Sweden similarly constructing units for Norway, Denmark and Hungary).

AFB began life at Molenbeek, near Brussels, in 1859, as "Ateliers Charles Evrard". After a fusion in 1862 with "Etablissement Parmentiere" in La Croydre, the company changed its name and became "Compagnie Beige pour la Construction de Materiel de Chemins de Fer". In 1881 the factory in Molenbeek was closed and the complete production was transferred to La Croyére (about 30km. south of Brussels). At the same time a factory was commenced in Raismes (France), Just over the border.

In 1911 the company was called "Société Franco-Beige de Materiel de Chemlns de Fer". In 1928 the company was divided into French and Belgian branches; the French part became "Ateliers Franco-Beige" and the Belgian branch became "Société Anglo-Franco-Belge de Materiel de Chemins de fer" - hence the initials "SAFB". The "Anglo" was because Beyer-Peacock (of Manchester) had a share in the new company. (This participation gave Beyer-Peacock access to the Belgian and Portuguese-controlled markets in Africa. Belgian Industry had always a strong presence in the Portuguese colonies, and even today the Benguela railway in Angola is still technically a subsidiary of the Belgian "Société Générale".)

During the War and Occupation locomotives were built for the Germans. Afterwards GM-EMD gave the firm a licence to build diesel-electric locomotives, and in this way gained access to both the European and African markets. Construction began in 1952 and, after having built about 2,800 steam locomotives, SAFB began with a new series of works numbers - starting with 101. First locos to be produced were the three for Israel - and these took the works numbers as their road numbers too!

SAFB no. 114 was first of a class of six (the "800 class) for Luxemburg, built in 1954. and it is known that some locos were also delivered to the BCK (Compagnie du Chemin de fer du Bas-Congo au Katanga), but it does not appear that many diesels were built before SAFB went bankrupt at the end of the 1950's; the GM-EMD licence was then acquired by "Brugeoise et Nivelles" who, as BN. are still in business.

So - the mysteries. Why did tiny Israel. struggling to survive and in the middle of Austerity, order the first three

of a brand-new series of hybrid, untried locos ? It is assumed that GM designed the locos, but unfortunately all drawings and records were destroyed after the bankruptcy. Who decided to place the order, and who paid for them? Were they a GM "loss- leader", sent to establish a production line and a presence? (War-damaged European railways were still building steam locos at this point). Was the design perpetuated, or were these distinctive locos destined to remain a unique batch?

In the late 1970's the magazine of the "Club Ferroviare du centre" published two photos of No. 101 at the works in La Croyère; in one the cab side bears the legend "Rakevet Israel" (in Hebrew) with, under it, "Israel Railways", and a circular works-plate. The number "101" is painted in a short gap in the coloured band along the solebar. (Note: this is different to the cab-side of no. 103 in Cotterell, Plate 90). In the other, the loco is being towed, ex-works, by an SNCB "Type 53" steam engine. Unfortunately the photocopies I have received are not really suitable for further reproduction.

11.15 NEXT STOP KUWAIT ?

Proof, if proof were needed, that Saddam Hussein of Iraq reads "Harakevet", 18 provided by an intriguing snippet from the 'Jerusalem Post' of 9/11/90:

"Basra - Kuwait rail link.

Baghdad: A train link has*been set up between Kuwait City and the Iraqi southern city of Basra. Iraqi Transport Minister Hamid Hamzah said here the link was 150 km. and was set up in keeping with efforts to reinforce commercial links between Kuwait and the major cities in Iraq."

Nu ? Have they really built 150 km. in three months? Standard gauge, one presumes, since the metre gauge in Iraq is now basically a thing of the past. We look forward to receiving a full photo essay on the construction and opening of this mysterious line

Incidentally, Hugh Hughes, on p. 86 of his book, shows a standard-gauge line from near Basra to Umm Qasr, not far from the Iraq - Kuwait border, as well as the abandoned route of a metre-gauge line from Shu'aiba (near Basra) to Umm Qasr. Presumably the former line has Just been extended? An article in "La Vie du Rail", Issue 2266, 25th-31st. Oct. 1990, ppl0—18, also includes a map showing a "projected" line from Um Qasr to Kuwait.

One of our readers, Andrew Wilson, has recently spent some time in Iraq as a "guest" of the government there. On his return he managed to glimpse what looked like a GM—EM) G12, and visited Baghdad West terminus briefly, where 3 of the 8 platform faces seemed to have been used recently. The "stuffed and mounted" 0—6—0 tank—with—tender, as illustrated on p. 88 of Hughes' book, is still there.

11. 16. STEAM VERSUS DIESEL. By Paul Cotterell.

I have always been fascinated by the might-have-beens of railway history. This subject, at least so far as locomotives are concerned, has received some much-needed attention of late in Britain (for example, in the book "Locomotives That Never Were"). If all the proposals for lines and locomotives made over the years had come to fruition then railways would have penetrated to the most unusual places and some mighty weird machines would have run upon them. Because of their relatively small size and limited means, Palestine Railways did not offer much scope for such schemes, but the recent discovery of some letters on a research trip to Jerusalem throws light on a couple of very interesting proposals which the then PR General Manager, A. F. Kirby, was considering Just after the Second World War. The letters may be seen in the State Archives ("Ganzakh HaMedinah"), Prime Minister's Office, Qiryat Ben Gurion, Jerusalem. The file number is 376/R/ 17/45mem. Two letters concern us presently and, because of their interest, I append them in full. The first letter (ref. number F.6/6/4) is dated 25th. September 1945 and was addressed to the Chief Secretary of the Palestine Government. It is headed • Purchase of New Locomotives':

"For some time past I have been giving consideration to the best means of renewing the Palestine Railways locomotive fleet and. in view of the fact that no fewer than 50 of the prewar fleet of 62 locomotives will fall due for renewal within the next 5 to 7 years, I have investigated the advisability of adopting diesel traction or alternatively the condenser type of locomotive. As a result of my discussions with the Crown Agents and other technical advisers during my recent visit to England, however, I have decided that the railways cannot afford the risk of adopting either of the two alternatives mentioned because, in each case, locomotives of the type and size which we would require have not been developed beyond the experimental stage. There is no firm in England which can yet offer a main-line diesel locomotive of about 1,000 B.H.P. of proved performance over a period of years - in fact so far as I am aware no British firm has yet turned out such a locomotive. The only locomotives of the type which have been in use over any period for main line purposes are those which the American Army have used in Persia. I believe that these have given satisfactory war service but they have not yet been proved as a commercial proposition. (Note 1).

"The condenser locomotive would appear to be an attractive proposition for operation in desert conditions. I was given the opportunity by Major—General McMullen, the Director General of the War Office, of seeing the confidential report made upon the Henshell (sic) type of condenser which was captured intact in Germany. It was clear to me from that report that it would not be advisable for the Palestine Railways to adopt condenser locomotives at this stage. To begin with we should require a very much smaller type than that captured in Germany and we should have to operate under different climatic conditions. Furthermore, the locomotive would need to be newly designed throughout, which would involve considerable extra cost - put by the Crown Agents at as much as £P. 10,000 - and would probably mean that our order would be considerably delayed owing to the extensive amount of work which the Drawing Offices and the designers in the United Kingdom are at present having to cope with.

I have come to the conclusion, therefore, that the most suitable course for the Palestine Railways to follow, both from the long-term economic standpoint and for the immediate postwar requirements, will be to renew the existing Baldwin fleet by an improved type of straight-forward steam locomotive embodying improvements which experience has shown to be necesary. We require a locomotive which can haul a goods train of 800 tons as compared with the present load of 600 tons and which can also be utilised satisfactorily in passenger train services. On a railway of this size it is unnecessarily expensive to have a separate type of locomotive for passenger and goods operation. Such a type of mixed-traffic locomotive is in common use on most of the smaller railways and, if adopted here, will result in considerable savings in maintenance and in the standardisation of spare parts. I have in mind that the type of design which will now be adopted will not only eventually replace the 50 Baldwin type locomotives which are now due for renewal but will also replace the remaining 12 Palestine Railway locomotives which will fall due for renewal immediately following the completion of the Baldwin locomotives." (It is obvious that these 12 locos were the Kitson 2-8-4T's and the P Class 4-6-0'6, though the latter were hardly due for replacement after only ten years in service. P.C.) (In fact the 50 includes the 6 rebuilt to "H2" tank engines and the 5 rebuilt to "H3", and 5 of the tender locos had been withdrawn by 1942, leaving only 34 of the tender variety. Ed.)

"In the 1945/6 estimates provision is made for the renewal of only three locomotives. Only three locomotives were provided for because of the experimental nature of condenser locomotives but, as we shall not proceed with this experiment, it is now possible to think in larger numbers. I have gathered from my discussions with the Chief Engineer of the Crown Agents that the placing of such a small order is not likely to receive a very high priority of consideration with the manufacturers in present circumstances. In the best circumstances it is not likely that we shall obtain delivery of any locomotives before the end of 1947. If we do not obtain priority we might conceivably lose another year. With the present condition of our locomotives we cannot afford to risk delay, especially as the indications are that we are likely to be called upon to cope with a fairly heavy traffic during the immediate postwar years.

"I must also now take into account that it will not be an economic proposition to renew the boilers of any of the existing Baldwin locomotives as I had hoped, and indeed have provided for in the 1945/46 estimates, in that the quoted price of the new boilers as given by the Crown Agents is no less than £P. 3,400 f.o.b. (Note 2) British port, so that the provision for 10 boilers in the current year's estimates would be no more than sufficient to buy two boilers. Considering that since the year 1936 no fewer than 50 new boilers and 38 new tube plates have been put into the Baldwin locomotives - a surprisingly expensive procedure - I do not propose to spend any more money in the wholesale renewal of boilers. For this reason, therefore, it becomes more important that the renewal of our existing locomotives should not be unduly delayed.

"I consider that we should at once place an order for the full number of locomotives which I have planned to renew up to the end of 1951, that is 12 new locomotives. Provision is available for this number of locomotives in the Renewals Fund.

By placing such an order we are likely to receive favourable attention from the manufacturers and have the work put in hand without delay. We should, of course, not be called upon to pay for the locomotives until 1948. By that time I anticipate that we shall be in a position to increase the order from 12 to 24, or more, and if we can do so before the order for the first 12 locomotives has been completed, we shall be likely to obtain the second 12 locomotives at a considerably reduced price. The firm upon whom the order will be placed is not yet known and will largely depend upon the allocation of orders by the United Kingdom Authorities to the respective locomotive manufacturers. I hope, however, that it will be possible for the order to be placed with the North British Locomotive Company who manufacture the six passenger type of locomotives which are already in service on these railways and which have proved to be a sound locomotive Job. (Note 3).

"I shall be grateful for your approval to my indenting immediately for 12 mixed traffic locomotives at an estimated cost of £P16,000 each in anticipation of provision for this being made in the 1946/47 renewals estimates".

I do not have a note of the Chief Secretary's reply to this letter. As we know, the order was not executed and PR did not have any more new locomotives built for it. The 24 LMS 8F 2-8-0's bought from the Army at least helped to assuage the need and. indeed, their capabilities were probably not far removed from the new mixed traffic locos that PR had hoped to receive. It is interesting to note that the GM does not seem to have considered the possibility of acquiring diesels from the USA, even though he would have been well aware that the Americans were streets ahead of British builders in this respect - the very suggestion would have been thought treasonable! (Ed. There may also have been foreign exchange considerations in the austerity period). When this letter was written, of course, Britain did not foresee any possibility of imminent withdrawal from Palestine, hence Mr. Kirby was attempting to anticipate future long-term needs. Does anyone have more details (and an illustration perhaps) of that captured Henschel condenser locomotive ? (Note 4).

The second letter (ref. no. 33/13/44.) is dated 3 July 1947, and was addressed to D. G. Stewart, Financial Secretary of the Palestine Government:

"My re-examination of the advisability of our turning over to diesel traction has reconfirmed the decision which I made a year or so ago that, much as I should like to adopt this form of locomotion, the time is not yet opportune for us to do so. I discussed the question at some length with the Crown Agents when I was home on leave and their technical experts strongly advised me against diesel at that stage and nothing has since transpired to upset this advice. As I explained to you, we should have to do the experimenting and, quite apart from the possibility of our obtaining a locomotive which might not be suitable for our purposes (with the consequential operating losses) we should have to pay dearly for the original designing work which would have to be undertaken.

"The lowest quotation for the steam locomotives which we have on order is about £P. 25.000 each. The lowest quotation which we could obtain two years ago for a diesel locomotive likely to suit our purposes was £P. 36,000. This price would be considerably higher at present rates. (Ed.: Who was asked to quote ?

"Despite my own liking for diesel, I have reluctantly had to accept that we must continue with steam for some years to come. The principal considerations are the heavy capital cost of the diesel locomotives and the necessity to install entirely different machinery for their maintenance. There are still two minds about the Diesel - even in America. We can well afford to cover the next five years or so with steam locomotives; we shall not lose thereby and it need not hinder progressive development otherwise.

I anticipate that the first use of diesel locomotion on these railways will be for passenger rail car units for high speed work if we ever achieve double tracking of the railway."

Among other things, this letter indicates that an order for new steam locos- was placed though not completed - at least not for PR. I do not have any further information on the locos in this order; does anyone else ? Again there is no hint of any imminent British withdrawal in this letter. The last sentence of the letter is decidedly ironic given the subsequent history of Israel Railways.

Editor's Notes:

Note 1: These were the Alco 1000hp. Co-Cos of 1942-4, (and possibly the 300hp. GE Bo-Bo "switchers" of 1944), USATC nos. 8000-8056 and 8532-9 respectively). The Alco is illustrated on p. 110 of Hughes "Middle East Railways".

Note 2: F. O. B. = "Free on board" - i.e. cost includes transport to the docks and loading on board ship; the customer then pays any further transport charges.

Note 3: i.e. the "P" Class 4-6-0's.

Note 4: Henschel hod been experimenting with condensing-tenders for war locomotives (mainly 2-10-0's, I think, of BR 52), in an effort to increase the range of freight locos on the Eastern Front. Exhaust steam was transferred back to the tender and allowed to cool and condense back into water, thus reducing the need to refill the tender. The technique was applied later to some South African 4-8-4 locos. In arid countries such as parts of the Middle East the ability to reduce water consumption in this way would have been very useful. I don't know much more than this. However, after the war several experimental German locos were captured, and some taken to the USA where they gradually rusted away - including high-speed engines with revolutionary drive systems. Does anyone know anything more ?

11.17 THE TRAIN ON THE SECOND FLOOR

In July 1981 I visited the "Migdal Shalom" Tower in the centre of Tel Aviv. This is/was a multi-storey shopping, entertainment and business complex. On the second floor was an open plaza called the "Mayerland" Amusement complex, and this included a narrow-gauge railway! There was a circuit of what looked like 12" gauge track, and on it ran a train comprising a 4-4-0-type loco numbered "70.414", an open coach, (used as a tender) and three open, canopied coaches label led "Rakevet HaEmek" in Hebrew on one side, and "The Valley Choo—Choo Train" on the other. Quite tasteless, of course, but it's the only time I've found a passenger-carrying train half-way up a skyscraper! 70414 was of course the number of the loco idolised in the TV film of the last steam train from Beer Sheva, and the accompanying song.

Who built this little line, and does it still run?

11:18 **SILET EDH DHAHR TUNNEL**

By Edward Horne B. E. M. of the Palestine Police Old Comrades Association.

''In 1948 I was stationed at Jenin in Northern Samaria and was intrigued by the narrow-gauge railway line that ran south from Afule, across the Plain of Esdraelon to a run-down station in Jenin, then progressively south, winding through the hills of Samaria to divide at Massoudieh, one arm going down the valley to Tulkarm in the foothills overlooking Sharon and the other extending to Nablus. Few could remember a train actually using the line since some time just after the First World War. I was particularly entranced by the thought that one could technically get from Jenin to Ma'an in southern Trans-Jordan (as it then was) and in former times to Al Medina.

One day we heard that the Royal Engineers in Haifa proposed to run a test train to Nablus. The date and time were announced and it was hoped that progress would be facilitated along the Journey by police and army, in case of technical difficulty. One could appreciate the military interest, because the Germans were pressing into Egypt and there was a major threat of an enemy advance through Turkey, and the use of an extra railway system would be helpful. In the event, we heard a distant whistle across the plain and the entire town turned out to watch the first train for perhaps 80 years come to town. Small boys sat on the line in anticipation and had to be moved to safety.

To my eternal disappointment and possible disgrace, I cannot recall details of the locomotive. A sergeant of the Royal Engineers was the driver. Someone from the "Palestine Railways and Operated Lines", to give its full title, was with him. Three or four open trucks carrying cement and other items of military construction interest made up the train. It stopped at Jenin for about ten minutes or so and people fussed around the engine.

At this stage I should point out that the line through Samaria passes through a tunnel which cuts through a hill adjacent to the village of Silet edh Dhahr. Always known, as far as I know, as The Silet Edh Dhahr Tunnel and thought to be the only railway tunnel in the whole of Palestine before the line to Ras en Naqura and Lebanon was built. The line descended by almost dangerous curves into the tunnel, which is about half a mile in length, then climbed slightly to take in more bends to Massoudieh.

The train never arrived at Nablus and a series of anxious telephone calls from Haifa to Jenin and then Nablus tried to locate the train and discover what had happened to it. In fact, an interesting conversation is said to have taken place, whereby Royal Engineers, Haifa, asked Outy Officer, Nablus if he had seen their train ? Knowing there had not been a train for at least 80 years, the D.O. Nablus ventured to ask "What Train?" This amusing incident became widely known in 'train' circles in Palestine at the time.

Eventually it was discovered, stationary, half way out of the Silet Edh Dhahr tunnel, with driver and crew sitting at the bank side calmly awaiting rescue. Apparently there had been a brake failure, the slopes had taken control, and the train rushed through the tunnel and partly climbed the escarpment beyond, only to roll to a stop and slide back again into the tunnel. The law of inertia finally triumphed over the

laws of motion, and the train, having rolled to and fro, settled to a stop at the spot indicated.

There were a few other trains after this on that section of line, until the military crisis eased and as far as I know the line was never used again in my time in Palestine. But I do wish I had made a careful note of the engine!

(Ed. I traced most of the Nablus — Afula line in 1981, but not the tunnel. Country rambles around Jenin are <u>not</u> recommended at the present time !).

11.19 TRAVELS IN THE LEBANON

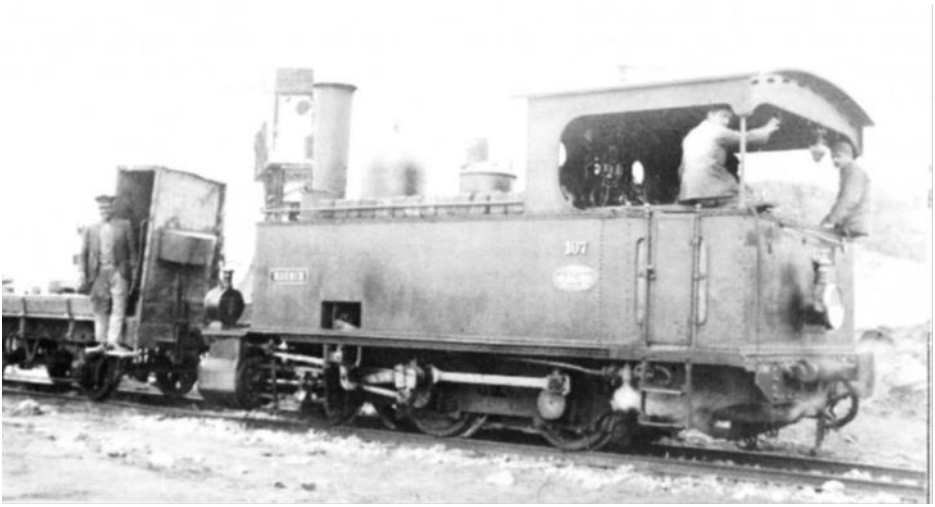
Richard Wright, of Saffron Walden, has sent me some atmospheric photos of trains in the Lebanon in 1999; He writes in his accompanying notes: ''As a newly-qualified teacher, member of the Religious Society of Friends (Quakers), I went as a young expatriate teacher to Brummana High School in the Lebanon, which was then under the management of British Quakers. Nearly all the staff were local. The school had boarding and day students who came not only from the locality but from all over the Middle East. We had Christians (of all sorts), Moslems and Jews (from Iraq). There was very little trouble despite the situation in Palestine. Happy days indeed which it is almost impossible to credit now. I think the atmosphere of the school and the thirst for education were important factors. We prepared many students for the American University in Beirut.

Every year in May we ran a long weekend bus-cum-walking trip in the Lebanon, going to places often not easily or at all reached except on foot. The railway photos were taken on the first such trip I went on (we did continue them during the war). We had bussed to the Cedars and then walked over the mountains and across the Bekaa to Baalbek, but that is another story. We took the train from Baalbek to Beirut, change at Rayak. Students are hanging out of the train windows. My diary records that the cost per party member was 25 Lebanese piastres, which was 7d in English money of the time at the then rate of exchange. The line was heavily subsidised by the French Mandatory authorities for strategic reasons. It was certainly good value for money for the amount of time one had in the train. Unfortunately I have no record of the actual time but my memory is that it took some six or seven hours.

After that I did not have the opportunity, or film, to take any more railway pictures, but was aware of the building of the Haifa-Beirut-Tripoli line of course. I did travel once by the night train (not automotrice) from Tripoli to Aleppo. The four-wheeled carriage went bink—bonk—bink—bonk over the rail joints all night; My companion slept in the rack and I on the seat.

My only other rail journey was in coming home from Palestine at the end of the war in Feb. 1946 attached as a civilian to a group of Palestine Police who were extremely nervous on the train journey from Jerusalem to Port Said.

11:20 D. H. P.(1.05m. gauge) 0-10-0T loco no. 301 on train at Beirut Harbour Station. (S.L.M. Winterthur 1924). 4th. April 1939. Photo: R. A. Wright.



11:21 D.H.P. Loco No. 107 (Société Matallurglque, Tubize, 1893) shunting at Beirut Harbour. 4th. April 1939. Photo: R. A. Wright.

11.22 "FROM THEN TILL NOW" Noted in reading, by Paul Cotterell. מאז ועד הינה "Me'Az V'Ad Henah", by Baruch Katinke; Kiryat Sepher Ltd., Jerusalem, 1964.

Some time ago, while browsing through second-hand bookshops in Tel Aviv, Uri Ben-Rehav came across a couple of copies of this book and was kind enough to buy one on my behalf. Katinke's memoirs throw much light on the idiosyncrasies of the Hedjaz Railway In WWI, and this is the first of a series of extracts from his book dealing with this topic. His professional involvement in the HR will become apparent, so I shall not repeat background details here. One or two words of the Hebrew original are obscure or open to different interpretations, and have proved difficult to translate. Where this is the case I have included the Hebrew in brackets for comparison. Another problem is with the phonetic translation of foreign names. For example, I have rendered דיקמן as Dieckmann, though the proper German spelling may be otherwise.

The first extract is the chapter entitled "Locomotives off the rails", on pp. 149—150 of Katinke's book.

"The Hedjaz Railway, from Haifa to Dera'a and from there to Medina in the Arabian Peninsula, with the branch from Dera'a to Damascus, was the only railway under the exclusive control of Turkey. All the other railways in European and Aslan Turkey belonged to foreign financial companies and their management was in the hands of foreigners.

The Hedjaz Railway was built with the donations of Moslems from all parts of the world and with the support of the Turkish government. Its main function was to transport Moslem Pilgrims on their way to Mecca. The German government, which tended to meddle (להציב רגל) in Arab lands and Turkey, helped the Kushta government (See Notes) with loans and financial support in order to complete such a difficult technical work. It was thanks only to the determination and efforts of the German engineers that two thousand kilometres of railway were inaugurated through a wilderness in which there is no water and no skilled workers.

The upper management of the HR, a department of the Turkish Admiralty, sat in Kushta. The operational headquarters were in Haifa, transferred to Damascus in 1916.

The General Manager was Dr. Dieckmann. He was a German, educated at a school for the priesthood, an aggressive and crass (נס) man who threw fear into his subordinates, dictating their moral standards, and more than once interfering in their private and family lives. He did not like Jews and only employed them on the railway because of a shortage of experts who would work for the limited wages paid by the railway management.

Once, during a conversation with him, Dieckmann said that it was known that Jews use the blood of Christians for baking their matzot (unleavened bread). I answered him that the early Christians were libelled with the same accusation by the Romans, and that as a Jew I viewed such an idea as anti—Semitic. He stood by his opinion and asserted that there are groups of religious Jews of whom I was unaware which use Christian blood for baking their matzot.

To my Joy I did not have any dealings with the cruel General Manger. The mechanical department was under the management of the engineer Kurtz who was a first-class professional, an honest and amiable man who treated his subordinates with fairness and rated them by their professional knowledge and devotion to work.

His assistant was also a German, born in the German colony at Jaffa, Lorenz his name. His mechanical knowledge was limited, and he mainly dealt with office administration.

The HR was narrow gauge, there being 105 centimetres between the rails. This was in order to economise on the financial outlay (לקמץ בהוצאות פילוט) of building the railway.

There were many varied (ערב-רב) types of locomotives, coaches and wagons in service. This was nothing unusual in Turkey where the use of *baksheesh* gained all sorts of grants, so it is no wonder that engines and coaches were not chosen on their own merit alone but on the amount of *baksheesh* that a factory offered to the Turkish functionary.

Great was the work necessary to inspect the defects in engines and to repair them. Many of the locos wsre not able to maintain line speed (40—50kph) on the narrow railway up and down the inclines, and frequently left the rails causing damage to life and property. The poor brakes on locos and rolling stock led to incessant failures as well.

Every time a train went off the rails the operating and permanent way departments asserted that the incident was caused by mechanical faults in the locos and rolling stock, while the mechanical department blamed defects in the track, so it was never easy to discover the real reason.

For my work I bought all the professional literature. In German, French and Russian, and I dedicated many hours each day to learning and progressing in ay profession. Indeed, after two years I was the mechanical expert in the department on the Hedjaz Railway.

Thanks to my expertise it was my job to check each loco after general overhaul before it entered regular service. I was assigned (נמנית) by the mechanical department to investigate each railway accident. In this capacity I came into closer contact with the General manager, Dieckmann, who was the final arbiter and judge in all railway matters. Dieckmann uprooted and destroyed with a strong hand, imposing drastic imprisonments, the plague of *baksheesh*.. In all the operating areas of the railway, while the railways were run by the French, between Damascus and Aleppo and from Jaffa to Jerusalem, *baksheesh* replaced the ticket. "

Notes: Despite his contemporary viewpoint Katinke repeats the over—simplified and misleading statement that the HR was built with donations from the faithful in order to carry pilgrims on the annual Haj. In reality less altruistic reasons prevailed.

***Kushta* is an old Jewish name — no longer current - for Constantinople**

11:23 **FRIENDLY ARCHIVES**

One of the pleasures of this hobby is the new conacts one makes, and the strange places one goes to visit in consequence. This is the first of a series of references to "Friendly Archives" - Libraries or archives which hold material of interest to historians of Middle East Railways, and how to contact them. I hope readers will add their own contributions!

1. The Imperial War Museum

Address: Lambeth Road, London SE1 6HZ. tel. 735—0922. A 15— minute walk from Waterloo Station. If you make an appointment, you are escorted from the entrance (no entrance charge!) to the library and photographic archive upstairs.' The Photographic section is a large room lined with huge, heavy albums in which are pasted prints, with reference numbers and cross-references to a- large card Index. Most albums refer specifically to one topic or one campaign, but Palestine pictures are scattered through folders Q112 — 117 and elsewhere. Allow yourself plenty of time to browse !

The staff are extremely helpful. Prints can be ordered, on the appropriate order form and quoting the negative reference number. July 1989 prices were: 8″x4", £1.50 (incl. VAT); 75″x 5″ £1.75; 8½ x 8½″ £2. Larger copies available too, and postage & packing charged separately.

2. The Palestine Exploration Fund.

Address; 2, Hinde Mews, Marylebone Lane, London W1M 5 PR. tel. 071 - 935 - 5379. The Executive Secretary (i.e. the chap who actually does a lot of the office work) is Rupert Chapman, and the fellow in charge of the Photographic archives is called Shimon. The establishment consists of an office, a Library and, downstairs in the basement, a collection of relics and a large selection of photographs, mostly stored in cardboard boxes, mostly (but not all) catalogued. There are collections from famous 19th. century explorers and archaeologists. The whole lot is hidden behind a small green door in a tiny back-alleyway off a narrow side—street in the heart of London's West end. (Nearest tube: Bond Street).

Amongst their photos are some real treasures. Whilst the bulk of the P. E. F. 's work deals with archaeology, on both sides of the Jordan, and academic research into antiquities, they have, for example a set of 12 prints sent by Dr. Conrad Schick in December 1092 showing the brand-new line from Jaffa to Jerusalem, including bits under construction, an inspection train and the opening of Jerusalem station. Other shots of archaeological digs show narrow—gauge "tubs" used for removing spoil. Their archive has some 10,000 negatives, going back to 1865, as well as many maps.

Copies of the photos may be ordered, and you would need to write to them for the appropriate Order Form, which must be completed and sent, with payment, in advance. 1990 prices are: £7.00 for a 5"x7" print, £8.60 for an 8"x1O", £9.00 for 9½"x12", £10.25 for 12"x16". These are prices from existing negatives; there's a higher charge if the copy has to come from a print only. These prices refer only to prints for private collections; there is a Reproduction Fee of £15 should pictures be published in magazines, books etc. The order Form gives full details.

The P.E.F.'s "Quarterly Statements" provide a valuable resource for the "early years", and have been extensively used in early editions of "HaRakevet". Railways are not their main interest by any means, so one has to glean a little amongst their collection to find occasional "landscape" shots or other items

11. 24. SNATCHED FROM ENEMY HANDS. By Paul Cotterell.

I have not been able to confirm this incident through a second source, but certain Curious Happenings are known to have taken place at the time so the story could well be true. It was related to me by Shimshon Klein who is now Station Foreman at Tel Aviv Merkaz. .
In the last weeks and days before their final pull-out in Mid-May 1948, rumour began to circulate that the British intended to despatch some or all of the locos stationed at Lydda (Lod) to Gaza. Perhaps this was meant to safeguard them from the escalating strife, perhaps the British wanted to hand them over to the Egyptians. Whatever the actual intention behind the plan the outcome would have been that, from the Jewish viewpoint, the engines would have been lost to the enemy. Something had to be done about it. Apparently it was Moshe Paikovitch who did the something. I do not know what position Paikovitch held under the British administration, but he was soon to become the General Manager of Israel Railways. Anyway, he seems to have given surreptitious orders to a select group of railwaymen and they quickly went to work. The endangered locomotives were spirited away - possibly under cover of darkness - to Petach Tiqva, terminus of the freight- only branch from Rosh Ha'Ayin. Once the engines (of which 10- 15 are thought to have been involved! had been sequestered away the track was cut behind them, to be replaced soon after when the danger and the British had disappeared.

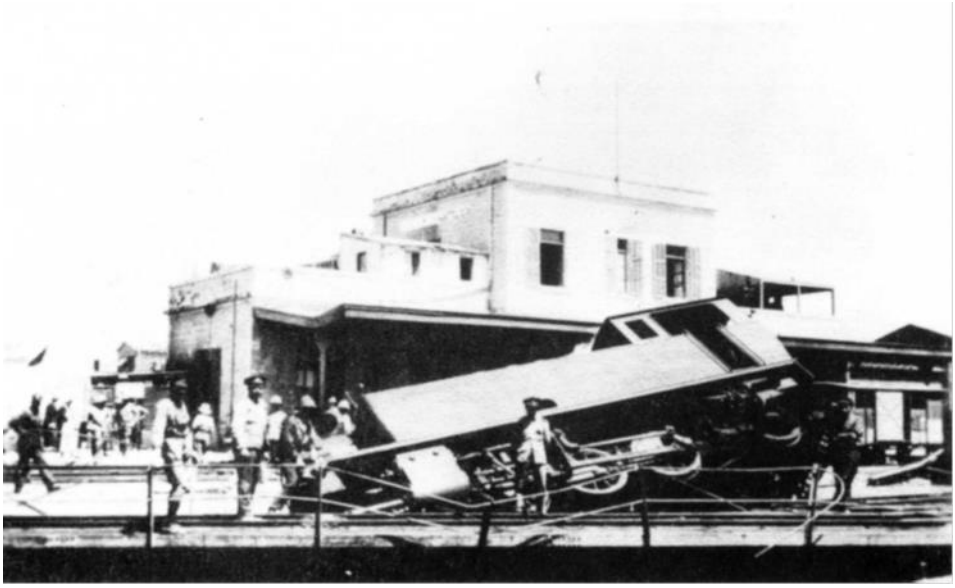
11:25 AGENTS PROVOCATEURS AT ' EGGED' By Paul Cotterell.

In the early years of the State, the old Tel Aviv Darom station was blessed with a large!—than-life, hard-drinking, Russian station master by the name of Berkovich; the sort of character around whom legends coalesce. His father had been a crossing keeper at the station and Berkovich the Younger was later to become station master at Benel Barak (then known as Tel Aviv North), and also at the first Tel Aviv Merkaz station, in addition to his duties at Tel Aviv Darom.

At the time of which I speak the number of passengers taking the trains from Tel Aviv Darom had begun to fall off, for they were deserting the railway for the dubious delights of road transport provided by the nearby 'Egged* bus station. This rankled mightily with Berkovich and, resourceful as ever, he devised a novel scheme to hit back at the hated rival. Rounding up his station staff he would send them across to mingle with the passengers at the bus station, with precise instructions of action. Then, five or ten minutes before a train was due to depart Berkovich would stride up to the engine and tell its driver to blow several long blasts on the whistle. At this signal the primed railwaymen over at 'Egged' spoke up loudly, declaring how much better it would be to travel by train instead of by rickety bus. And in this fashion several lost sheep were returned to the fold

11:26 MORE ON RANSOMES & RAPIER 6-TON HAND CRANES. By Paul Cotterell.

I included a photo (on page 21) and a diagram (on page 24) in my book showing one of these ' Goliath'-1ype 60cm. gauge cranes. Some photocopies of PR material since given to me by Steve Tish include one item that throws one more ray of light on the history of these two cranes. Article 58 of the 1934 General Instructions on the Conveyance of Merchandise notes, inter alia, that "A 6 ton hand crane is available at Jerusalem and Jaffa and may be used free of charge provided users supply their own labour." Not much to go on, I admit, but it does confirm that two of these cranes were sent out and were made use of after WWI. I infer, also, that the second crane would have been employed originally on tho6e British-built 60cm. gauge military lines in and around Jaffa during the First World War. I have no idea what eventually happened to the 'Goliath' crane at Jaffa, but that at Jerusalem station (or what was left of it) was disposed of for scrap as recently as 1982 or 83.



11. 27.
Metre-gauge 2-6—2T No. 2420 in the turntable pit at Jerusalem. (See lO: 27). Photo: Ron Garraway.

Printed by Butterworth & Pilkington Ltd, Albion St., Morley, Leeds LS27 8DU