

HARAKEVET

הרכבת

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A Quarterly Journal on the Railways of the Middle East
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19:1 JERUSALEM, October 21st 1992. Two IC3 sets stand in the platform, as another two sets approach in the distance. Meanwhile G12 No. 114 stands on Track 3 with the service train. All is ready for the Centenary Celebrations! (see page 7) Photo: Tony Travis

Issue 19 is more balanced, even if the Editor isn't. The Centenary has at last been marked; new units continue to arrive in Israel, and the Ayalon tracks have been joined. Historical material also abounds - this issue has items from the First World War, the '20's, Second World War and even the struggles of 1948. Glimpses of past Iraq and current Lebanon broaden the vision a little. Enjoy!

Rabbi Walter Rothschild.

Apologies - Page numbers were inadvertently left off Issue 18 at the printer. Also, what would have been pages 25 & 26 were transposed.



19: 4

El Arish, early 1946; the men of No. 44 Heavy Glider Servicing Unit, en route from RAF Qastina to RAF Kabrit in Egypt, form a human chain and use their cook-house dixies to refill the engine tender from the nearest water supply, after the water tanks had been sabotaged by Arab forces.

Photo: Wally Grindrod, now of Fleetwood, Lancs.

19:3

A remarkable shot, probably by J. N. N. Faraday (later an RAF Group Captain). From the archives and albums of the Palestine Police O. C. A., courtesy Ted Horne. In the Yarmuk Valley, an unidentified Hartmann 2-8-2 has just been derailed during the earthquake of Summer 1927; the stricken loco blows off

NEWS FROM THE LINE.

a). Jerusalem Refurbishment. The station has been refurbished for the centenary celebrations; woodwork of doors and windows has been repainted in a combination of turquoise, purple and dark blue. A giant IR logo has been incorporated into the paving stones at the entrance to the platform from the street, and the waiting room has been spruced up. Celebrations were planned for October 21st. - see full report elsewhere in this issue.

b). Stations. Tel Aviv Darom station has acquired a buffet and has been generally refurbished. The main building at Lod is also undergoing structural renovation.

c). Bethlehem Trams. "Kol Ha'ir", the local Jerusalem weekly newspaper, had a six-page spread on the railway centenary, and mentioned also that a tramline from Jerusalem to Bethlehem was proposed in the early days of the Mandate. Now, in fact a proposal for such was made in 1912, but thanks to Sybil Ehrlich for the following excerpt from Ronald Storrs' memoirs "Orientations" (Storrs was the Governor of Jerusalem):-

"O. E. T. A. (Occupied Enemy Territory Administration) could at least protect Jerusalem by an aesthetic, as well as a liturgical and political Status Quo, and I found a positive pleasure in replying to a request for a concession to run trams to Bethlehem and the Mount of Olives, that the first rail section would be laid over the dead body of the Military Governor. (This attitude was for years attacked as unprogressive by immigrants unaware that the motor-bus had long superseded trams in most places not committed to their retention by heavy capital outlay.)

d). Stamps. A new presentation pack was produced in addition to that portrayed in Harakevet 18: - the denomination of all four stamps is now 50 Agorot, and a silver border around the entire set included illustrations (in similar "cut off" style) of a Midland Railway coach builder's plate, ground signals and other aspects of Israeli railway history. To save future readers headaches, I can advise you that one picture of an 8F is not of an Israeli loco at all, but shows No. 8233 storming out of Bewdley on the Severn Valley Railway! (This loco was, to be fair, once briefly resident in Palestine...).

Incidentally, the reproduction of the PR timetable cover enclosing the new stamps has 1926 on the English side and 1924 on the Hebrew side!

e). More Tensions.

At about 0530 on 4/10/92 a high-tension cable fell on the main line at Zikhron Yaakov causing extensive disruption and damage to signalling equipment in the locality. There were serious delays to trains for two days, exacerbated by other minor signalling faults along the line.

f). Streaky Danish I

The fourth IC3 set arrived at Haifa on 2/10/92.
The fifth arrived in 'mid-October'.

g). Carmelit Update. According to some press reports the new Carmelit is now carrying 20,000 passengers per day, but the big test will come, in the not-too distant future, if and when the Carmelit will be joined up to the projected suburban rail network and possibly even be extended to a completely new rail system which will connect all parts of the city (though the precise nature of this alleged new system is not known ! Could it depend on Elijah returning to the Carmel ??) However, according to other reports (in "Kol Haifa") the passenger figure is 5,000 per day.

From October 1st a new joint ticket was available, providing interchange between Egged buses and the Carmelit, at a price of NIS3.50. This was advertised inter alia in a full-page ad in "Kol Haifa" 2/10/92.

h). Hedjaz Hopes and Fears. The local Council of Kiryat Tivon (south-east of Haifa) has plans to build a new neighbourhood on the trackbed of the old Hedjaz railway line from Haifa to Samakh; however the Ports and Railways Authority have refused permission for such a scheme, "so long as there is a chance for peace with Syria and Lebanon" - presumably inasmuch as there might then be good cause to reconstruct this line. Source: "Kol Bo", 11/9/92, p. 25.

i). Back to Kantara ? Yisrael Kessar, the Minister of Transport, has had meetings with the Egyptian ambassador to Israel, concerning the possible re-opening of the line from Tel Aviv to Cairo. This would strengthen political links with Egypt and also increase trade. The ambassador promised to make a positive presentation to his government at home. Source: Yediot Acharonot, Money page, 2/9/92.

j). Ayalon Progress. Construction of the railway station at Gesher Hashalom ("Peace Bridge") along the Ayalon link commenced at the beginning of September.

A radio news item on 23/10 mentioned that flood precautions were being taken along the Ayalon railway line in case the coming winter is as severe as the last. Drainage channels are being constructed to carry water from the Ayalon to the Yarkon.

The last piece of rail in the 4.5km. link was laid on 17th. November. The intermediate stations were still under construction at this date.

k). The Big If. "In about another two years we'll be able to travel by train from Kfar Saba to Tel Aviv, if the budget is allocated", said Yediot Acharonot of 1/10/92. This proposed service would go through Petach Tikvah and Rosh HaAyin, utilising present tracks.....

The piece continued (in purple journalese): "In two years' time residents of Kfar Saba will be able to board the suburban train and arrive in central Tel Aviv 30 minutes later instead

of being stuck for at least an hour in traffic jams. This was the message of Moshe Bar Kochba, Director General of Israel Railways, during the experimental ride on the old Mandate line Tel Aviv - Rosh HaAyin - Kfar Saba. For ten years the Mayor of Kfar Saba has been calling for the operation of this line. "The same line", he said, "that I recall in the '50's we used to travel on school trips to Hadera and Jerusalem. Today it is used by good trains which reach a metal factory east of Kfar Saba. the track needs renovating so that local residents can be freed of the terrible traffic problems." To fulfil this dream NIS 40 M are needed for the first stage of changing the old track. If this budget is given, the line can be operational in six months and to Kfar Saba in two years. The entire cost is NIS 120 M.

The train was driven by Pesach Japko who has driven for 34 years with IR and knows the track from when it wended 5 metres from the Jordanian border. Being used to old diesels, he laughed at the automatic transmission on the electronic control panel of this new coach. "This is not an engine, it's a game", he said. Driving along the old rusty track he was hit not only by branches of the eucalyptus trees, but also by memories...."

A nice idea - but can it really be done in six months? And where would the necessary stock come from? Alon Siton has sent an undated (November) press article from the "Mammon" ("Money") pages, stating confidently that suburban residents will be able to take the train "in two months", and showing an IC3 unit contrasted with a photo of 'P' Class No. 60.

l). Russian Roulette. On 22/10/92 a 16-year old girl, Karen Yoeli, was hit by a Tel Aviv-bound passenger train and seriously injured on a pedestrian crossing between the Baka and German Colony neighbourhoods in Jerusalem. She was thrown almost ten metres by the impact. Magen David Adom medics treated her at the site and she was then taken to the Hadassah Hospital at Ein Karem. The driver is reported as telling police "We blew our horn and called out to her not to cross, but she didn't pay attention". An eye-witness reported that she say the train hooting and a group of girls taking no notice, obviously playing Russian Roulette or "chicken".

m). Refurbished coaches. Sybil Ehrlich took a trip on the 12.00 Tel Aviv to Jerusalem train on 30/10/92 and discovered that the single coach had been extensively refurbished internally. The seats were covered in dark blue plush, and seating had been rearranged into 2+2 on each side rather than the previous 2+2 & 3+2. Each group of four seats had a table in the middle, and total seating was 80 divided into two equal saloons of 40. Ceiling and walls are painted white, the luggage racks are pale grey, and the ancient wooden shutters have been removed. The general effect was much improved. Apparently "several" coaches have been so treated (no numbers known yet).

n). Fares. The Jerusalem to Tel Aviv fare went up from NIS 6.50 to NIS 8 sometime between 16/10 & 30/10/92.

o). Navon's House. The house at 68, Jaffa Road, Jerusalem, built for Yosef Navon, the initiator of the Jaffa - Jerusalem railway, has been transformed into an "Experimental, New Age, New Wave, Underground, Unaffiliated, Non-Profit Co-Op Art Gallery" (their words !) called "HaBustan" ("The Orchard / Garden"), opening on 1/10/92.

p). BR Coaches. Two of the former British Rail coaches formerly placed in a field near Herzliyya (see 7:12 and 18:4(k)) are now used as offices in a citrus factory just north of Peleshet Junction near Yavne. Both are painted white, and one is a former Composite (presumably E7645).

q). Derailement. On 9/11/92 a freight from Ashdod derailed near Lod in the afternoon. All the evening passenger trains between Tel Aviv Darom and Ashdod had to be cancelled as a result.

r). Signal Failure. At about 0400 on 11/11/92 all signalling equipment between Haifa Bat Galim and Atlit was disabled following an unusual power failure which burnt out several relay circuits. The intermediate crossing places at Hof Carmel and Hoterim were also put out of action. The technicians were unable to carry out immediate repairs and chaos quickly ensued along the main line. Delays to passenger services built up as trains ran with Line Clear Orders. Two light engines, returning to Haifa after working earlier freights to Lod, were held at Atlit to await the early morning flood of passenger trains. Before these two locos could be released the Haifa diesel depot found itself scraping the barrel for motive power and ex-Egyptian G12 128 was taken off its normal local freight turn to head an express to Tel Aviv - it performed immaculately, making one wonder why it should be officially banned from passenger workings. Repairs to the signalling equipment were not completed until late that evening.

s). Obituary. Moshe Bar-Kochba, Israel Railways' General Manager, died of a heart attack on 19th. November. He was 62 years old. Born in Poland in 1930, he made his way to what was then Palestine in 1942. He joined the Jewish underground group known as "Etzel", and in 1947 was mobilised by the 'Haganah', which was soon to become the Israeli Army. In the War of Independence he took part in tank raids on the Egyptian and Jordanian fronts, and continued serving with the armoured corps as a professional soldier after the establishment of the State of Israel, eventually becoming a senior and veteran General in the reserves. He was active in all Israel's subsequent wars, including that in Lebanon in 1982. On finishing his service career he was appointed IR General Manager in January 1991. Among those at his funeral was the Prime Minister, Yitzhak Rabin.

19:6

MODEL RAILWAY CLUB.

From Uri Ben-Rehav comes sad news - after nearly two years (since its evacuation from premises at Tel Aviv Darom station) the Model Railway Club is still without a permanent home, despite earlier being promised a room at Arlosoroff station. One of the club's members, Moshe Rosen of Kibbutz Netzer Sereni, has made arrangements for the club to use that kibbutz's Hall every fortnight, but this, though welcome, is far from ideal. It is to be hoped that a secure home can be found soon.

CENTENARY CELEBRATIONS.

Well - at last, on October 21st. 1992, there was indeed a celebration of one hundred years of railways in Israel, with a display at Jerusalem Station. Sybil Ehrlich was invited, and sends this report:

"The invitation was a glossy card; the cover of bright turquoise with the 100th. anniversary logo and "Invitation" in gold, text in black; there was a full-colour picture of a Danish IC3 train, and the two logos of IR and the Ports & Railways Authority in blue.

The event was advertised in the 'Jerusalem Post' (and presumably also in the Hebrew papers) on October 18th. and 20th. It wasn't clear to me why they advertised the detailed programme and then stated: "By Invitation Only" !

Since I pass the station twice a day on my way to and from work I was able to see the renovation work in progress. The day before the ceremony I saw a grandstand and piles of white plastic chairs on the far side of the tracks. The morning of October 21st. revealed a "100 Years of Israel Railways" sign across the station entrance, and "Railway Station" above a repainted "Jerusalem" sign on the centre of the building, both on the street side.

On the great day I arrived at the station at about 4.30pm. to get photos before it was too dark. Police barriers had been erected outside the station, and security guards were checking invitations and bags. Inside the station the waiting room had been transformed into a "VIP Room"; There are new signs in English, Hebrew and Arabic outside each of the rooms; these are, in order from the north end:

Buffet	סונון
WC Men	שרותי גברים
WC Women	שרותי נשים
Cash and Information	קופות ומודיעין
Waiting Room and Cash	אולם המתנה וקופות
Station Manager	מנהל התחנה
Information	מודיעין

Seven of Jeffrey Allon's railway paintings (See 14:26, 14:30) were displayed on the wall next to the bay platform at the south end.

Refreshments were laid on, but I was more interested in taking photos while the light permitted !

An ordinary train was parked on the third track from the platform, for reasons which later became apparent.

The "Special Train from Haifa" turned out to be four IC3 units travelling in convoy - they must have been an astonishing sight to motorists held up at the level crossings! It seems from various reports that they uncoupled outside the station, to enter separately. They arrived at Jerusalem station at 16.37, having travelled from Tel Aviv via Rosh HaAyin and Lod. I saw two distinct trains entering the station - the first comprised three coaches, and the rest too far away to count. When the passengers had disembarked I climbed aboard to have a look. Very impressive ! The black surround on the front is of course a rubber seal.

Inside the station entrance stewardesses were handing out fancy plastic folders marked with the IR, Ports & Railways and 100th Anniversary logos in white lettering on blue. Unfortunately this could be obtained only by having the corner of the invitation clipped so I couldn't get an extra one ! The folder contained a very nice 40-page souvenir brochure in full colour with historic photos and the like, and a great deal of text, a Souvenir Leaf from the Israel Postal Authority with the logos and route in gold, the large "stamp" in full colour, and two vertical turquoise stripes on a pale grey background.

Piped background music included the song "Freight train, Freight train, going so fast", with Hebrew words (!), and the audience began to take their seats across the tracks, facing the station building. There was no special Press seating so I don't know whether there were any other reporters present. Luckily I had had the foresight to take a torch as otherwise I wouldn't have been able to take notes at all. Things finally got started at 17.35, with the arrival of President Herzog and the singing of Hatikva. By this time it was completely dark, and a laser projection of the Israeli flag appeared on the gable of the station building. ,

Introductory remarks by various officials noted that it was 100 years since the first train ran from Jaffa to Jerusalem and the opening ceremony was held in Turkish ! Each speaker was projected on a film screen to left of centre in front of the station building.

The IDF Orchestra played a piece called "Emek" by the Israeli composer Mark Lavry, full of "trainy" rhythms and "woo-woo" sounds. Then the Israel Railway Workers' Choir sang a song written especially for the occasion and performed, for the first time, called "100 Years of the Railway".

President Herzog opened his remarks with a general review of the railways and their contribution to development, security and strengthening of the Yishuv. He recalled travelling by train, as a boy, from Rehovot through Sinai to Zugazig in the Nile Delta on his way to Alexandria, when Bedouin would get on the train with their goats. He stated that it had been a mistake to dismantle this line. He had dreamed of driving a steam train, but it was not until he became President that he finally drove a train, and then it was only a diesel! He went on to say that the railways were even more necessary today than they were in the past, and a railway to Eilat could reduce the terrible toll of traffic accidents.

Transport Minister Yisrael Kessar then spoke briefly about the history and projections for the future. He noted that the railways have been through a lot, having been initiated by the French, built by the Turks, maintained by the British and neglected by the Israelis ! He also stated that a line to Eilat was of prime importance as it would provide a gateway to the Far East.

After speeches by various Ports & railways officials, the Railway Workers' Choir and the Aviv Choir of Tel Aviv treated us to a musical interlude, again of songs on a railway theme. Throughout the entertainment programme, laser displays of locos and logos were projected on the station building.

Then the film show began. It started with pictures from the 1892 opening and scenes from the Lumière Brothers' 1896 film and progressed forwards, with a general history of the development of railways in the country, including Rakevet HaEmek and the usual legends associated with it, up to Mandate times. There was then an interval while the choir entertained us again, and we returned to the film. When we reached the IZL performing its depredations, there were live sound effects from the ordinary train with firecrackers and smoke, which must have startled the neighbours ! People dressed as Arabs were "blowing up" the train !

Throughout the evening, laser displays were projected on the station building, which was illuminated by pink and green background lighting.

Then from left appeared ageing pop singer Arik Lavi, riding on a yellow track maintenance trolley, to the strains of the song "70414".

To conclude the programme, at 19.00 prompt, the leading IC3 glided across the "stage" as Finale.


All in all, it was an impressive and delightful production designed to appeal to a wide audience with no particular "inside" knowledge of railways.

TV coverage was most disappointing - a brief mention of the ceremony followed by 90 seconds of footage shot in advance, mainly of people riding up and down the escalators at Tel Aviv Merkaz, a brief glimpse of an IC3 and another one of track-laying. A pity, as the sound-and-light effects would have made marvellous TV. None of the Hebrew papers had a word about the event, so the Post got an exclusive !

By Saturday evening (October 24th.) the "100 years of Israel Railways" sign over the station had been removed."

Jerusalem Post
18 & 20 October

Ports and Railways Authority Israel Railways	Min. of Transport	Information Center
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100TH ANNIVERSARY OF RAILWAYS IN ERETZ YISRAEL

A Gala Celebration of the 100th Anniversary of Eretz Yisrael Railways will be held at the Jerusalem Railway Station on Wednesday, October 21, 1992, at 5:00 p.m.
In the presence of the President and the Minister of Transport

Program: * Audio-visual Presentation * Laser Display * Choirs
* IDF Band * Arik Levi

A special train with modern carriages will leave from Haifa Central Railway Station at 12:54, calling at Haifa Bat Galim, 13:00; Binyamina, 13:28; Hadera 13:39; Netanya, 13:49; Tel Aviv Central (Savidor), 14:15; arriving at Jerusalem at 16:16.

Seats on this train and attendance at the Celebration, by invitation only.

After the Celebration the train will return to Haifa, stopping at the same stations.

The invitation is also a vehicle parking permit.

42 46781

The first of the Danish-built dmu sets was unloaded at Qishon harbour on 14/6/92. By the evening of the next day it had made its way to the Haifa East diesel depot where it was stabled, rather incongruously, in the old British-built corrugated-iron steam loco shed and alongside the grounded body of a Hedjaz Railway freight van. The railcars were without running numbers. Works plates are carried on each side of the outer bogies of the set, and read ABB SCANDIA, 1992, RANDERS, DENMARK. Number freaks are likely to have a satisfyingly difficult time with these multiple units. Examination of the first set showed it to have different maker's numbers in each of the four works plates ! These are 31299 and 31319 (on one outer bogie) and 31298 and 31318 (on the outer outer bogie). On 16/6 this first set of railcars was being worked on by a group of earnest and solemn young Danes who were intent on getting it into running order.

The railcars made their first foray along the main line to Tel Aviv in mid-morning on 18/6, returning to Haifa in mid-afternoon. This trip was to check platform clearances, but also served to highlight two characteristics of the dmu's. One is their exceptionally quiet running as heard from the lineside; second is their air horn, which emits an effeminate and querulous squeak ! Swedish-built T44's VW-type beep and now the Danish-built railcar's high-pitched squeal would seem to indicate a Scandinavian indifference to aural aesthetics, with the Americans alone providing a suitably sonorous sounding air horn.

On 21/6 the railcars again made a special journey to Tel Aviv, this time with the media fully informed and partially present. The dmu's were on display at Bat Galim for 90 minutes; among those in attendance as the ubiquitous Minister of Transport - the General Elections being but two days away - and the General Managers of the Ports and Railways Authority and Israel Railways. Speeches were made and the railcars then headed off for Tel Aviv at 14.33, somewhat delaying Train 57 which was due to leave Bat Galim at 14.30 - nor was this the only service train to be delayed along the way as priority was given to the dmu's. (Incidentally, this little ceremony at Bat Galim caused a minor political storm. That morning's edition of 'Maariv' contained an article saying that the opposition Labour Party had formally complained, since the Prime Minister was also due to attend and Labour considered that this function would overstep the electioneering guidelines set down. In the event, the PM did not make an appearance. Cause and effect ?)

We called the American 2-8-2's "Yankee Baldwins"; this is the tale of one of these locos which was written off through carelessness.

The train was going towards Kantara and stopped at a station awaiting a train from Kantara. The fireman and driver went into the station and chatted with the station staff. The loco (an oil burner) was on a low fire, plenty of water and all looked safe, but the flame went out unseen and the oil was still running into the firebox - which was hot.

The oil ran into the Ash Pan and onto the floor between the sleepers and sand. Typical of hot oil, it ignited and almost instantly the loco was enveloped in flame.

Now the heat was so intense that the flexible pipe from the oil tank to the burner melted, and so you could see 2,000 gallons of hot oil running free into the fire. It was too late to do anything and the train crew had to sit and wait.

I saw this loco about a week later, and it looked funny because the boiler had melted and had dropped down between the frame of the loco, so it looked as though she had broken her back. A complete wreck !

ANOTHER LOOK AT THE SUEZ CANAL LIGHT RAILWAYS OF WORLD WAR I.

By Paul Cotterell.

The following notes and accompanying map are an attempt to collate and relate the few details known about these short-lived lines. Stimulus was provided by Hugh Hughes' extracts from the relevant war diaries published in 15:24, as well as further information and a map, kindly sent to me several years ago by Ray Ellis, which throw some light on the Australian participation in this sector of operations. It must be emphasised at the outset that my notes and map are in no way meant to be conclusive, but I hope they may provide a reasonably accurate overview of what is presently known, and serve also as a springboard for further research. I shall look forward to hearing from anyone who can correct or add information to this article.

For ease of reference it will be best to deal with each of these light railways individually. They are so listed below, from north to south, with notes on each.

1. Port Fuad - Mahendiya/Mohamedieh. Gauge 2ft. 6in. Length ca. 30 kms. Built 31 January 1916 - 12 February (?) 1916, by R.E. Companies. Line liable to damage by sea. Date of closure/lifting unknown, probably soon after battle of Romani on 4 August 1916.

Motive Power: Hawthorn Leslie 55hp. petrol locos, ROD Nos. 61-83 (works nos. 3107-29), built 1915. Did all 23 of these locos work on this line or were some used elsewhere? (A photo in the collection of the Australian War Memorial in Canberra shows a Hawthorn Leslie loco standing at an unknown location alongside an 0-4-0WT, possibly a 60cm. gauge Orenstein & Koppel.)

2. Kantara - Romani. Metre gauge. Length ca. 40 kms. Built winter 1915-16 (?), with material from the Maryut Railway in Egypt. Metre gauge line later (spring 1916) paralleled by standard gauge tracks to Romani (thence into Palestine). On the accompanying map the metre gauge is shown laid to the north of the standard gauge - this is for the purposes of indication only as the precise relationship is not known. Also short metre gauge branch to oasis (at Dueidar?). Metre gauge line still in use in July 1916. Disused from August 1916 (?). Lifting began on 31 August 1917.

Motive power: 3 0-6-0's from Maryut Railway, Nos. 1-3. Builder's details unknown. (See Hughes, p. 30 & 45).

3. El Balah. Gauge 2ft. 6in. Length ca. 10 km. Built by contractor in January 1916. Disused after August 1916 (?). Lifted sometime after October 1917 (?). Motive power: Petrol locos (?), possibly Hawthorn Leslie (see No. 1 above).

Gauge 60 cm. System length 40 ca. kms. Built to first line of trenches (?) and/or to supplement the 2' ft. 6 in. gauge line. Did 60 cm., and 2' 6" gauges exist at same time or did one supersede the other?

Motive power: 0-4-0 steam locos (?), possibly O&K. These from sugar plantations in Egypt. (?)

4. El Ferdan. Gauge 2 ft. 6 in. Length ca. 12 km. Built by contractor in January 1916. Disused after August 1916 (?). Lifted sometime after October 1917 (?).

Motive power: Petrol locos (?), possibly Hawthorn Leslie (see 1 & 3 above).

Gauge 60 cm. See notes in 3 above.

5. Ismailia Ferry Post. Gauge 2 ft. 6 in. Length ca. 15 kms. Built by contractor in January-February (?) 1916. Disused after August 1916 (?). Lifted sometime after October 1917 (?).

Motive power: Petrol locos (?). A photo in the Australian War Memorial collection (ref. G1460) shows an 0-4-0WT, possibly by O&K. The photo is captioned "The end of the Decauville Railways east of Ferry Post". The loco is thought to be from an Egyptian sugar mill.

6. Serapeum. Gauge 2 ft. 6 in. Length ca. 12 kms. Built by contractor January-February (?) 1916. Disused after August 1916 (?). Lifted sometime after October 1917 (?).

Motive power: Petrol locos (?). Another photo (ref. C 4764) in the AWM collection shows a different 0-4-0WT (O&K ?), also possibly from an Egyptian sugar mill. The photo is captioned "A decauville train at the railhead at Serapeum. April 1916."

7. Mystery Line. Situated between Great and Little Bitter Lakes. Does not appear in list of lines in Harakevet 15:24. Nevertheless, this supposed line is not a figment of my imagination. It is shown on a sketch map in a book - the title of which I can no longer recall - that I studied in the library of the Imperial War Museum. However, the lack of any reference to this line in the war diaries casts considerable doubt on its existence.

8. El Shallufa. Gauge 2 ft. 6 in. Length ca. 10 kms. Built by contractor, January 1916. Disused after August 1916 (?). Lifting begun on or just after 25 October 1917.

Motive power: petrol locos.

9. El Kubri. Gauge 2 ft. 6 in. Length ca. 8 kms. Built by contractor, January 1916. Disused after August 1916 (?). Lifting begun after 25 October 1917.

10. El Shatt. Gauge 2 ft. 6 in. Total length ca. 20 kms. Built by contractor, January - February (?) 1916. Apparently the southern branch to Ain Musa (?) was removed in July (?) 1916 and relaid as the northerly extension from Quarantine Post. Disused after August 1916 (?). Lifting begun after 25 October 1917. (For more on Ain Musa - the Well, or Spring, of Moses - see Exodus 2:15-22.)

Motive power: Petrol locos.

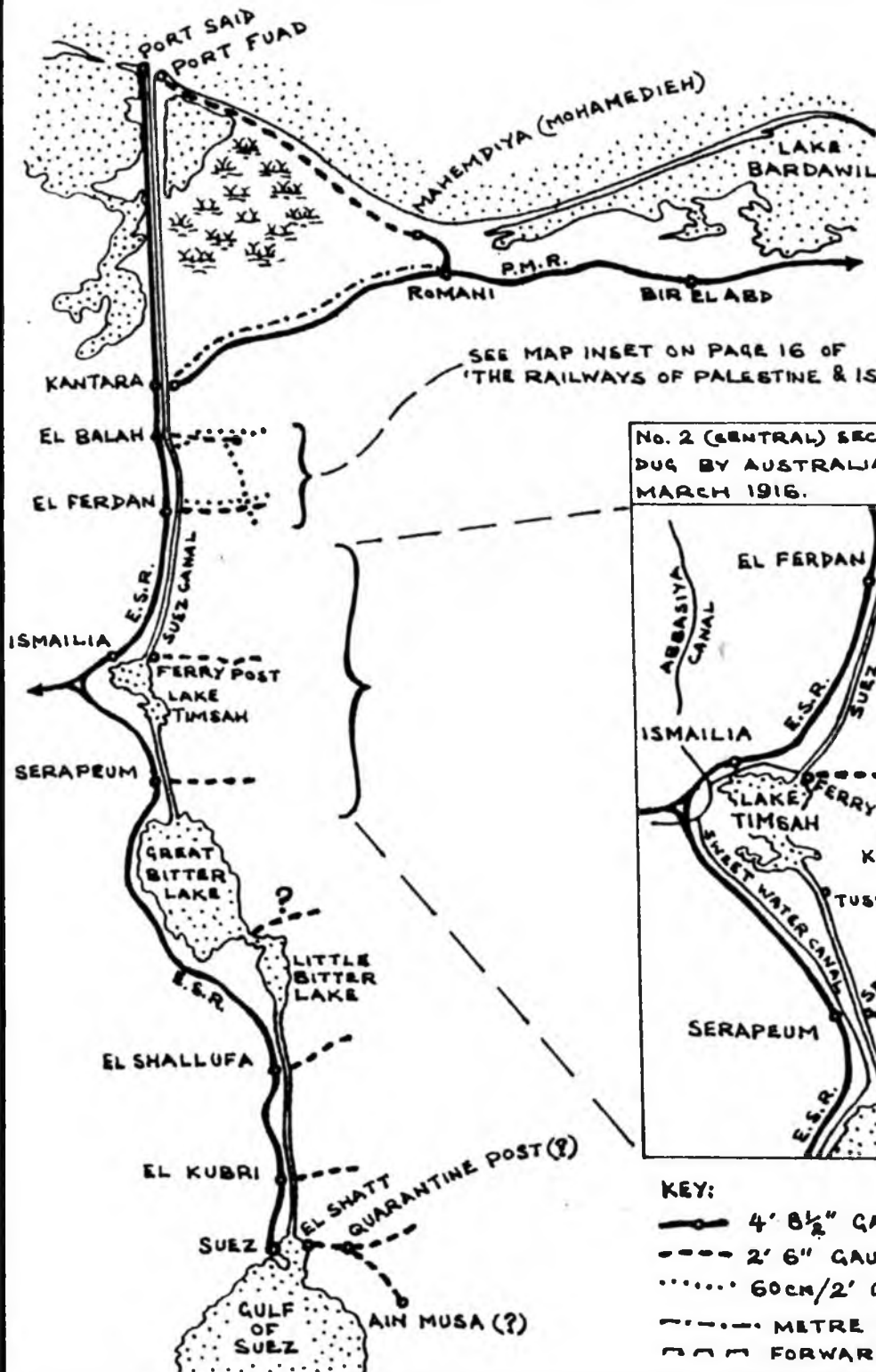
Notes: -

a). The writer of the war diaries twice makes mention of the "Decauville" when referring to lines 8, 9 and 10 above. This term is usually taken to mean a 60 cm. gauge portable light railway. Could these references to a Decauville mean that 60 cm. gauge tracks preceded the 2' 6" gauge lines at

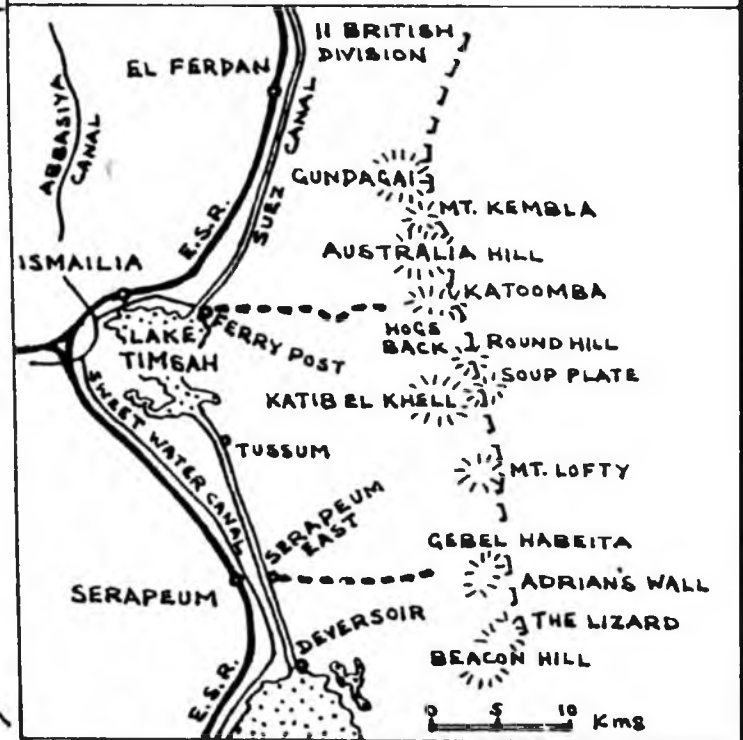
LIGHT RAILWAYS ALONG SUEZ CANAL IN THE FIRST WORLD WAR.

NOT TO SCALE

1/1992.



No. 2 (CENTRAL) SECTION OF SUEZ CANAL DEFENCES DUG BY AUSTRALIAN DIVISIONS, JANUARY-MARCH 1916.



KEY:

- 4' 8 1/2" GAUGE.
- - - 2' 6" GAUGE.
- 60cm/2' GAUGE.
- · - · - METRE GAUGE.
- ☀ FORWARD DEFENCES.

these locations or was the writer using the term indiscriminately? (See also motive power notes on lines 5 and 6 where the word Decauville is again used).

b). In addition to the 123 Hawthorn Leslie petrol locos there were also 10 2' 6" gauge Avonside petrol 'tractors', ROD Nos. 31-42 (works nos. 1703-14, built 1915), used in the Palestine campaign. It is thought that at least some of these found employment on the Suez Canal light railways.

In conclusion, I have little doubt that much more information on these railways is hidden away in various archives around the world. Two particular sources for further research are the Imperial War Museum in London, and the Australian War Memorial in Canberra. Other museums, especially those dealing with military matters, should also provide material for the researcher. In all cases it would be necessary to visit the archives in order to discover exactly what they hold. A written query is next to useless as museum staff rarely have the time to carry out an investigation on behalf of someone else.

Additional Notes - by W. L. Rothschild.

The "Railway Gazette" for Sept. 21 1920, p. 119, has an account of the railway works required in the initial stages of the British campaign. This includes:

"The Egyptian State Railways also undertook to lay eight short 2 ft. 6 in. gauge lines on the east bank of the canal, all of which... had to be finished by the middle of January 1916. For the light lines the State Railways provided 40 km., which had been pulled up, the balance coming from a stock of 2 ft. 6 in. gauge railway material which had been sent to Alexandria for use at Gallipoli, but not wanted there. Most of the labour for these works was provided by the State Railways, but valuable assistance was received from two K. E. construction companies, although the men from military sources numbered only about 500 out of a total of 18,000 employed by the railway on all works for the Army.

The railway administration then proceeded to lay 2 ft. 6 in. gauge lines towards the oasis of Baharia and from the Nile to Kharga oasis, the distances amounting to about 170 km., the material being provided by pulling up existing 2 ft. 6 in., gauge lines belonging to private companies, as the State Railway had no more."

Some of this text appears to be copied, word for word, from "Modern Transport" for October 18, 1919, No. VII "Railways in the Palestine Campaign" of a series "Transportation and the War".

"The Journal of the Permanent Way Institution", 1931, p. 110-125, has an article by Ian R. Frazer - actually a paper read by him to the Scottish Section of the P.W.I. in December 1930 - concerning his time as District Engineer on the Sinai Military Railway, and the vehicles - sail trolley, motor-cycle trolley - he created in order to get around. Alas, he writes (pp. 122f) "Time does not permit of an account being given of the numerous smaller gauge lines constructed prior to and also as forward area feeders to the standard gauge main line. These railways were of 2 feet, 2 feet 6 inch and metre gauge lines and some were about 20 miles long." Allan Garraway, in "A Tale of Two Garraways" in "Locomotives Large and Small", No. 3, May 1980, mentions of his father's experiences at Kantara: "There were also 2 ft. gauge systems for which there were both Baldwin and Hunslet 4-6-0 tanks".

Something to make Paul salivate ! These two photos arrived from the National Tank Museum at Bovington Camp, Wareham, Dorset, between receiving his article and going to press. They are copied from small, faded prints and are a bit unclear; both are from an album, Accession No. 6788-1, one captioned "Turkish prisoners and guard from Romani, August 1916"; the other "Light Railway at Oveidar, August 1916."

The line is laid lightly on sand, between the palm trees; the locomotive appears to be an 0-6-0 Tram, of general Belgian or French outline, double-ended, with side plates removed, hauling a four-wheeled 3-plank wagon.

(It may be noted that Hughes (p.28) lists the motive power of the Basse-Egypte Railway as including several metre-gauge 0-6-0Tram locos from Tubize, Haine St. Pierre and La Croyère built between 1896 and 1914. It would make sense to assume that some stock was taken over from this line. Ed.)



Bill Neal (ex. No. 1434291 Craftsman R.E.M.E.), now of Fareham, has sent some memories of Iraq in 1943 when he was a humble member of PAIFORCE (Persia and Iraq Force): -

"I arrived in Iraq at the end of December 1942 and landed at Basra; we were loaded into lorries and taken to a Transit Camp at Zubair in the desert area. After a couple of weeks there we entrained at Basra and headed north, eventually arriving at Musayib near Baghdad, where we detrained and spent a further two weeks in a Reinforcement Camp. At the end of that time we entrained again and returned south, eventually ending up at the No. 1 Base Workshops at Shaibah, out in the desert and very near to our original camp at Zubair. I stayed there for about 12 months, and was then posted to 4th. Echelon Workshops in Baghdad itself, where I stayed a further year.

The Basra - Baghdad line was metre gauge and single track, with passing loops. From memory it used to take about 20 hours to complete the journey. I recall one night standing in a loop surrounded by a terrible noise - it was the bullfrogs in the nearby marshes !

The rolling stock was basic to say the least, with hard wooden slatted seats; the seat part tipped up on hinges to display rifle racks underneath, and all rifles had to be kept here en route.

When the Basra - Baghdad train stopped (as it sometimes did) in the wide open desert, troops and civilians alike would alight, for two purposes - either to "spend a penny" on the sand or to head for the engine and scrounge water to brew up tea. Eventually it came out on Company Orders that this practice must stop, as apparently one train had run out of water !

The Arab has a reputation of being a "sharp customer"; the average British soldier was able to hold his own in this respect. At station stops soldiers and Arabs would barter; perhaps over a blanket. The deal would not be clinched until the train started to move, when a folded blanket would hurriedly change hands. Only - it would be half a blanket, the other half being sold at the next stop ! Likewise little bags of sugar or tea would be sold - with a layer of sugar on top of sand, or used tea leaves covered with a layer of good ones.

Our task at the workshops was to uncrate American-built trucks and get them roadworthy; they were then taken to Teheran where the Russians collected them.

I went once to Beirut to a convalescent camp, travelling in one of the Nairn coaches across the desert. (This was an air-conditioned coach service set up by the Nairn brothers after World War 1, from Baghdad via Habbaniyah and Rutbah Wells and Damascus to Beirut). Individual drivers picked their own route over the sandy wastes, only marked here and there with a tar barrel. Each coach had food and fruit board and periodic 'comfort stops' were made, plus a brew-up. Each vehicle also carried a comprehensive set of spares. Another time I travelled in the back of a 3-ton truck along a new road built by British Royal Engineers from Baghdad, Habbaniyah, Rutbah Wells, and the oil pumping stations H1, H2 etc. to

Mafraq in Transjordan where we camped the night and then travelled on via Damascus to Haifa. I well remember on that trip we could look back along the road which stretched like a black ribbon as far as the eye could see.

After two years in Iraq I was posted to Tel-el-Kebeir in Egypt, and then back again via the railway across the Sinai to Haifa, where I spent another two years, in a camp on the slopes of Mount Carmel. I came home once on a one-month leave, and on my return to Egypt was delayed for a while as terrorists had blown up the line across the Sinai desert...."

19:12

MYSTERY LOCOS OF 1948. Walter Rothschild.

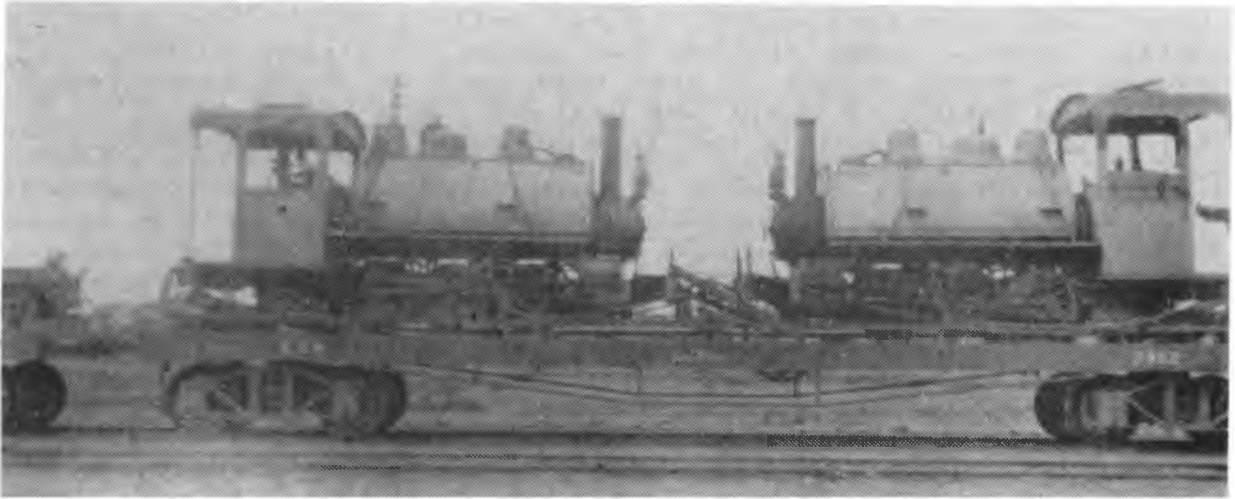
The first thing you learn in this subject is that you never find out everything.... I recently interviewed Peter Hartley of Leeds, a former member of 169 Rly. Workshops Coy. in Egypt. One of his memories is of being sent, with a Sapper Short of the R. E., from Suez to Rafah shortly after the partition of May 1948. They travelled by ESR passenger train to the border, where they had to inspect several - at least eight - large tender engines, possibly 4-8-2's, to see whether they could be brought back for further use. Unofficially, his Commanding Officer told him that they didn't want the job, and he should submit a report highlighting the difficulties of transporting these locos across Sinai !

On arrival they found that the engines were in poor condition; the boiler seams were not tight; none were fit to be put in steam. They were of American outline, but were not the well-known Mikados, and had no buffers but only central combined couplings/drawgear, so it would also be impossible to transport these as hauled stock, since there was no match-wagon and chains wouldn't be strong enough to haul them. The locos were marked with WD markings and numbers, though he can't recall the details. However, they made out a report that the locos couldn't be moved, and returned by another ESR passenger train, in the company of several Jewish POW's in handcuffs, as far as Kantara East.

They returned to Suez, but on presentation of their official Movement Order to the RTO (a Royal Artillery Warrant Officer) he laughed and said, "You can't go to Palestine". "We're on our way back !", was the reply. He telephoned the adjutant for confirmation, and then asked where their arms were; they explained that they had been sent to this war zone unarmed, with orders to keep their heads down !

Now - what were these locos ? Peter's memory is quite good on a lot of other matters, and he is certain that this incident occurred. Hughes and Turret do not, so far as I can tell, refer to such standard-gauge locos - though there were ten 3' 6" 4-6-2 locos stored at Azzib and Suez for a while which would otherwise match most of these details, and were taken to Sudan in 1946/7. PR in the last months of the Mandate was desperately trying to get ESR and WD locos and stock shifted to Rafah, and the Kantara - Rafah line was handed over to ESR from 1st. April 1948, in a brief ceremony at Kantara. Peter had spent years working on 8F's, Mikados and diesels, so he can tell a USA tank from a camel. Can any reader add information ?

19:13 Spoils of War. Two Turkish narrow-gauge locos captured in Allenby's November 1917 Push. Too late for the lines east of the Suez Canal ! Apparently 60 cm. gauge 0-6-0ST's, carried on ESR bogie flat No.7982.
Photo: Trooper D.M.Wilson (28th. (Camel) Machine Gun Squadron);
Courtesy of National Tank Museum, Bovington Camp, Dorset. Accn. 6788-3.



19:14 BEFORE AND AFTER AT NAHARIYYA. By Paul Cotterell.

There is a certain grim satisfaction about photos taken from the same spot but years apart. With railways these days it is too often the case that a scene of dereliction will have replaced a once vibrant, active view of trains and men busily engaged in commerce. Sometimes the present-day photo will show the railway to have utterly disappeared, as though it had never existed. At least the two views shown here still feature trains, but in all other respects the changes apparent have been sweeping.

The first shot, from my collection, shows Nahariyya station when it was no more than a dirt platform with a small wooden shelter. The town is out of picture at the right. Bicycles are much in evidence among the onlookers milling about on Sderot Ga'aton. I am unable to date the photo precisely, but I should guess it to be 1956, shortly after the Esslingen railcars had entered service. A train of these railcars has just arrived under a welcome arch of intertwined fir tree branches (with the legend "Baruchim HaBa'im"), so perhaps this was the first trip of these diesel multiple units to Nahariyya and the locals had been invited along to have a look.

I took the second photo from practically the same spot on 26th. December 1990, with G12 126 running round Train 52/417 (the 0600 from Tel Aviv) before heading south again with Train 402/27 (0912 ex-Nahariyya). Work on building the shopping centre at right began in 1978 and was completed some two years later. It includes a booking office to buy tickets for the train. The station now sports an asphalt platform (laid at the same time as the shopping centre went up), and a rather more substantial waiting shelter hidden behind 126. The eucalyptus trees provide pleasant shade from the summer sun. Sderot Ga'aton now has central flower beds between the carriageways, but few people still ride round town on a bicycle. In the right foreground the line carries on to Betzet, just below the Lebanese border and northern limit of IR's operations over the former Haifa-Beirut-Tripoli railway; a daily freight service still works up to Betzet.



For a number of years I have had a particular interest in the passenger rolling stock of the PR (Ray has written a long article on this interesting subject which we hope to be able to publish shortly - Ed). Rolling stock is an often neglected aspect of railway enthusiasm and one with such interests has to be satisfied with partial views, glimpses in the background and other such mouth watering delights, when that smoky smelly thing called a steam loco gets all the limelight in the photo (and probably quite rightly too!). As a result us 'carriage freaks' become adept at looking at the 'other' parts of photos for interesting titbits and one can therefore imagine my delight when the photo on page 13 (!) of issue 15 of HARAKEVET appeared!

If you care to refer back to this issue you will see in the background on the left a most interesting carriage. A quick 'blow up' on the photocopier confirmed my immediate suspicions that this vehicle was of obvious Indian origin and of great interest (as will become clearer as we progress). It appeared to be a Brake 3rd or something similar, and certainly had a long brake section.

Those of you who have read Paul Cotterell's excellent book on the railways in Palestine & Israel will have noted from the carriage list therein that the PR did in fact own some carriages of Indian origin but all of these were listed as full passenger carriages (no brake section). There were four of them, all Thirds, which the British Army brought to Palestine from the Great Indian Peninsula Rly. - they had been built for the GIPR by Cammell Laird in 1923. The Army converted them from broad to standard gauge at their Jaffa shops and they went into service in late 1943/early 1944 with the PR, eventually getting numbers 343-346. They appear to have operated mainly on the Haifa-Beirut-Tripoli line. Although numbered in PR stock, it is not totally clear whether the PR owned or leased them from the WD although their inclusion in official lists as PR units and not in the sections which lists WD stock leased or loaned to the PR suggests they were in fact owned by the PR.

I therefore had a dilemma! What was this brake vehicle^{of} obvious Indian origin doing at Azzib in the 1946-48 period? The design which this and the other ex Indian Thirds mentioned above followed was a more or less standard one which was employed on a number of Indian railways. The first question was: had one of the ex Indian 3rds been converted to a brake vehicle? This seemed a bit unlikely for whilst PR records are a bit 'hairy' in places something as important as the provision of a brake section was unlikely to have been overlooked. Anyway stock figures in a number of official sources seemed to balance each other in this regard. One did a certain amount of head scratching and searching of the records but no solution was immediately available. Thankfully Hugh Hughes was able to offer some further information from his notes gleaned from his perusal of the WWII Middle East GHQ War Diaries.

On 31st March 1945 it was noted that four passenger coaches, Indian, 3rd Class, were stabled at Azzib on the HBT line thus confirming they were mainly used on that line. These of course must be 343-346 mentioned above. The fact they are mentioned in the Diaries suggests the WD still had a more than passing interest them. In April 1945 it was reported that eight coaches and one Bl.TB (bogie luggage third brake) were being transferred from Iraq to the Middle East and their date of despatch was later noted as being 9th. May 1945. They were sent to the Middle East instead of being returned to India (presumably their original intended destination) and they arrived at Azzib on the HBT line later in May 1945. In August 1945 it was noted that four ex ISR (Indian State Rlys) coaches were being altered by the ESR (Egyptian State Rlys) for use on the Western Desert Railway and were handed over by the ESR in October 1945.

This confirmed the presence of nine more ex Indian carriages in Azzib on the HBT line and allowed identification of the vehicle in the HARAKEVET

to be the Brake 3rd mentioned. None of the eight carriages appear in the photo; maybe they were 'out on the road' at the time. The presence at Azzib would appear to confirm ownership of all nine remained with the WD and that seems to be confirmed by them not being mentioned in any PR lists or statistics, so we do not know their running numbers unfortunately. It is possible that these cars also originated on the Great Indian Peninsula Rly and were from the same builder as PR batch although this is not certain or confirmed. Unlike their PR counterparts, these nine vehicles would have arrived already standard gauged after service in Iraq so they could have theoretically entered traffic almost immediately. It would seem likely they were brought to the Middle East instead of returning to India to fill a need for extra passenger cars on the HBT line, thus releasing 'borrowed' PR and ESR coaches which had been used up to that time. These ex Indian coaches appear in a number of photos taken on the HBT line and I have always assumed these were from the PR batch, but certainly photos taken after May 1945 suggest that some maybe ex Iraq vehicles.

The diaries note that at least four of these ended up in Egypt, and there may have been more. In addition photos confirm the presence of at least three ex Indian coaches on the military railway at Suez. What happened to all these vehicles after the WD operations were wound down is, at this stage somewhat of a mystery. At least one vehicle, most likely from the PR batch, ended up in service use on the PR and there may have been others. It is almost certain that none returned to India, and like many of the WD locos after the war, were probably divided up between the PR and the ESR excepting those which remained in WD service in the Suez area.

Well at least we have been able to identify what this 'mysterious' vehicle was and its immediate origin, but there still remains much to be answered about the whole family of ex Indian carriages in use in Palestine during WWII. So, if anybody has any further information the author and editor would be more than pleased to hear from you!!

19:16

FROM "PALESTINE RECLAIMED", ("Letters From a Jewish Officer in Palestine"). by Redcliffe N. Salaman, M. D., (Temporary Captain R. A. M. C.), pub. George Routledge & Sons Ltd., London. (No date)

from pp.32f. Letter of 28th. July 1918, referring to a journey of 21st. July:

"We left Cairo by the 6.15 pm. train on Monday... We travelled up to Benhar... From thence to Kantara on the Canal, which is now the port of Palestine and a vast camp and store. There we were bundled with our luggage into lorries and crossed the canal and got into the train for Ludd. This was about 11.30 pm., and we had sleeping berths in the Ludd train. This part of the journey is across the Sinai peninsula and is the new double line laid by the army across the desert, and is perfect. One did not see much of the desert, but on the return journey I got up early and saw more. It is an endless roll of sand, sparsely covered with a harsh pale green scrub. Near Ludd one enters into the fertile lands south of Judaea... At Ludd we had a nice breakfast, then changed trains and started for Jerusalem. This part of the journey ought to take about three hours, but we were five over it; still I did not mind a bit, although we were crowded - about forty officers in a kind of covered-in luggage truck..... At last we steamed into the station, and a rare confusion there was, as it is very small and the military traffic is great....."

from pp. 45f. "In the Field; Surafend. 10th. August 1918. Our journey across the desert to this sandy spot was rather an experience. We left [Kantaral] in the morning, our train consisting of nothing but goods trucks, sides eighteen inches high and covered over with a light wooden shelter. The adjutant, in excess of zeal, picked out the nearest available truck to the engine for our head-quarters - our party consisted of the Colonel, Adjutant, Quartermaster and self, with a cook and batmen. We had not been long before the joys of travelling *à la mode* made itself felt; our engine seemed to have a severe cold and sneezed red-hot cinders over us for twenty-four solid hours. At night we unrolled our valises but sleep was impossible. I spent most of the night extinguishing the flames on the valise and myself. Next morning we were a sight for the gods - notwithstanding we did ourselves very well in the way of food."

p. 203. "Surafend, 9th. March 1919. Today I returned from Rafa, where Colonel Patterson and the 38th. are, and to show you that these jaunts require some energy, I will just detail this one. Awakened at 4.30 am., on horse 5.15, station 5.30, and off 5.45 in a cold empty officers' truck, the hard seats down either side of the entire wagon and one in the middle, no glass to any windows. I was lucky to get this, as it was not a passenger but a goods train, and I had originally ensconced myself in an open truck. Ate two eggs and cheese sandwich and two oranges *en route*; arrived Rafa 10.30, horse to meet, fifteen minutes' ride to camp. There met Patterson.....

Got up 2.50, out at 3 a.m., twenty minutes walk to station, ate two eggs and cheese whilst waiting, caught the *poche* train at 4 a.m. (*poche* is a slang much used synonym for "swell"; one speaks of *poche* clothes, and always of a *poche* train when one means a more or less real passenger train). Arrived Ludd 6.30, horse to meet, in camp 7 a.m., head-wash and all over in hot water...."

[Note: The author clearly feels the need to explain the word "poche"; in fact the normal explanation of this word is that it is derived from the abbreviations for "Port Out, Starboard Home", the north-facing (hence cooler), more expensive and therefore exclusive cabins on the P&O liners from England to India. Ed.]

As a committed Zionist, Salaman was disturbed by what he saw as anti-Jewish actions taken by the early officers of the O.E.T.A. (Occupied Enemy Territory Administration). He gives several examples in his letters - here is one (p.196) relevant to 'Harakevet':

"I was told that the O.E.T.A., in answer to an inquiry as to whether they had any vacancies for our men on the railways, sent in answer a document headed, "Admission of Men from the Jewish Battalions", etc., and it stated that:

"(a) *There are no vacancies in the first grade of railway workers, only in the lower grade; (b) that men wishing to come must understand that as regards pay, food, and housing, they would be granted such conditions only as the natives of the country were used to.*" That is, our European Jews were to be treated as Gypo natives. I spoke to Margolin and explained what it meant, and his answer is: "No man of ours will work under such conditions." But that is the O.E.T.A. every time...."

From Frank McCarthy, now of Ledbury, I have received some memoirs of his time in 1944 as a Palestine Policeman in the Haifa Port & Railway Control Section. Control of passengers on the Cairo - Haifa trains was a small part of the duties there. Here are some brief extracts from the memoir:

"Every evening one British Constable, who always wore plain clothes, and an Arab Frontier Control Constable in uniform would meet the train from the Lebanon at Haifa and travel with it to Kantara.

The duty of the train personnel was to carry out passport control, customs work and C.I.D. duties. At times it could be quite exciting and at others very dull. Once a week I would make an inspection journey and do the duty of the British Constable - this would be a rest for me. We had a First Class compartment to ourselves. The Arab constable would go through the train and collect the passports of everyone travelling to Egypt and bring them to me. These were then checked against the Special List for suspects and then stamped. I would then go through the train in company with an Army Sergeant Major who did similar duties on the military side.

There were strict currency controls and everything above a certain amount had to be impounded against receipt and deposited in Barclays Bank in Haifa. The owner then took his receipt to Barclays Bank in Cairo upon his return to reclaim it. This applied to both entry and exit passengers and involved a lot of extra work.

On one occasion I asked a prosperous-looking Egyptian upon entering Palestine to declare his currency and he said £10 which was the legal amount allowed, but as he placed his passport in his wallet I noticed that the wallet was rather thick and asked to see his money. He handed me the wallet and in the back was another £200. I then asked him why he didn't declare it and he replied, "Why should I, it's my own money". I said that I quite believed him but that he was breaking the law and I would have to impound it, and gently hinted that he had also broken a reciprocal law of his own country by taking it out from there illegally. He then asked me how he could live in Palestine during his stay on £10 and I told him that he should have transferred a draft from his bank to one here, and that he could do so now by phone.

Upon arrival at Haifa station there was a band to welcome this Egyptian and I noticed several doctors and nurses among those present on the platform. I saw Doctor Hallaby talking to the Egyptian and looking in my direction. I knew the doctor well as he had given me a series of lectures in First Aid, so I nodded to him and asked if I could help him. He then said, "Oh, Mr. McCarthy, what has happened? This is Dr. Nadib the famous Egyptian surgeon whom we have invited to Haifa as our guest." I then briefly explained what had happened and added that I would not want a guest of his embarrassed and immediately offered the impounded money back. Doctor Nadib then accepted the money back and apologised for what had happened, shook hands and thanked me for my tact in handling the affair.

On another occasion I was going through the train with Sergeant-Major Dickinson and in the First Class military carriage were a number of high-ranking British Officers and a Turkish Naval Officer. After Dickinson had checked all the Movement Orders I politely asked the Turkish officer for his passport whereupon he handed me a Movement Order. When I explained that he must have a passport for travelling through Palestine, he reluctantly produced it. He explained that he was proceeding to Alexandria with despatches in connection with the Lease and Lend Agreement between Britain and Turkey. I then asked to see his luggage and a Colonel sitting beside him said, "Must you really search his effects?" I replied that all persons passing through Palestine had to be searched but tried not to inconvenience them more than necessary. The briefcase he carried was full of secret papers on the Lease Lend Agreement giving the names of vessels from England and approximate dates of arrival in the Middle East, and underneath each vessel a long coded list of items the vessels would be carrying.

I explained to the Turkish officer that under no circumstances could I permit such documents to enter Egypt, for as soon as he crossed into that country he would be treated as a civilian and the papers confiscated and where they would finish up then was anyone's guess. These papers should have been sent to the British Naval authorities in Alexandria in sealed diplomatic mail. He looked at me in despair and said he might just as well go back to Turkey as to go to Alex. without them. Again I explained that there was a terrible risk in carrying such documents as these, giving as they did the names of vessels and the dates of arrival and needed no imagination as to what would happen if they fell into enemy hands. I then gave him a receipt for so many packets which were sealed before him for despatch by hand to C.I.D. Headquarters from whence they would be forwarded to the Navy in diplomatic mail.

"Smuggling of all sorts took place on these trains almost daily, the drivers and stokers being among the chief offenders. Gold, currency notes, hashish, opium, illicit mail and propaganda material were always being brought to light. On one occasion the Sergeant-Major told me he heard some coins drop in the toilet of one coach and although the door was locked on the inside no-one would answer to his enquiries.

I suggested letting my guard watch the toilet until the person came out, when we would question him, but that it would be best if we let the train enter Sinai before taking any action as, if it were a case of smuggling currency, the reward for catching them was at least four times higher in Egypt than in Palestine !

Sometime after crossing the border the occupant came out and was grabbed by my guard who brought him along to my compartment. There before the C.S.M. we searched him and found 160 gold majidies on his person. The Sgt. Major and my guard got nearly £100 each reward and had a free day in Port Said when the case was tried.

The coaches of these trains were always mixed up, military, civilian third, civilian first, military first, civilian and again military, with one sleeping coach somewhere among them. We had a key which enabled us to pass from one carriage to another for control purposes. Sometimes soldiers piled their kit bags against the communicating door and slept on them. If this happened it meant that part of the train could not be controlled until the train stopped and there were only four very brief stops between Haifa and Kantara.

When such blockages occurred I got around them by going outside the train on to the running board below the carriage door and, holding on to the iron ladder which gave access to the roof, reach across to the running board and ladder of the other carriage, and heave myself across the gap and enter by the door.

We always started to control the train around El Arish and by then it was dark and it so happened on several occasions when I did my stretch across from carriage to carriage as the train was hurtling along through the desert in the inky blackness, that a soldier would be at the door looking through the window as my head came suddenly up before him. The shock was always great as, wide-eyed and open-mouthed they would stagger backwards. Arthur Lancaster and I were the only ones who did this but it was the only way of effectively controlling the train when the communicating doors were blocked because if one waited until the train reached Kantara there would be no hopes of checking passengers etc. as the train did not stop long enough to do so before proceeding on to Cairo.

At Kantara we had our Frontier Control in charge of a Mr. Perry, a Grade M officer. The train arrived at 1 am. when the Special List [of wanted suspects. Ed.] revolver and any impounded mail or currency were handed in to Control. I would then walk the half mile to our billet on the bank of the canal. Sometimes a heavy mist made this a precarious business as there was no made road and the billet was usually in darkness. After breakfast one could either sun-bathe on the canal bank or cross over the railway bridge and catch a train into Port Said 30 miles away, and go shopping. I always preferred to go there and sit in the shade of the flamboyant trees outside Gionoli's and eat the delicious ice-cream they always served. Then I would catch the train back in time to meet the Cairo - Beyrout train at 3 pm. when we controlled it back through Palestine."

(Apparently Sgt. Major Dickinson, on at least one occasion, pursued a suspect across the carriage roofs, in true Hollywood style !)

[Earlier, when based at Lydda]: "I started to learn French and German at the Berlitz School of Languages in Tel Aviv. The lessons which were consecutive started at 8 pm. and finished at 10 pm. There was no train back to Lydda until the milk train at 12.30 am. and at the end there was a three mile walk back to the airport. After a month and eight such journeys I felt I had had enough and was obliged to pack in the lessons.

...Bill Dunkin sometimes spent an evening with me when we would walk through the orange groves and listen to the night sounds. Bill didn't have to see a bird to know what it was; its notes were sufficient for him to name it. He knew the songs, warning notes, mating calls etc. of most species. The commonest night bird hereabouts was the Nightjar. Sometimes we would watch the Lancaster bombers take off for the oil fields in Rumania. They would roar down the runway and would lift only feet away from the ploughed fields. We once watched a Dakota whose undercarriage would not come down; they seemed to circle round for hours using up petrol before making a belly landing on ploughed land. A safe landing from which about 100 troops disembarked...."

A brief insight into travel in Transjordan: -

"In April 1944 I was granted leave to visit Petra again. This time I was not alone as Charles Evans and Checkly Keene of my headquarters had expressed a wish to go there and Bill Dunkin also managed to get leave. Charlie Evans wanted to go mid-week and was adamant that there was a train on the Wednesday down to Maan although I was sure that the one train a week left on a Monday. However he phoned me and said that he had confirmed the Wednesday departure.

So we arrived at Amman on the Tuesday and learned that no train ever ran mid-week. Then I thought of Mr. Shibley who was, I believe, working for British Intelligence. He had always told me to contact him if ever I was in difficulty in Transjordan. Well, he invited us round to his house on the outskirts of Maan to discuss ways and means of getting to Maan, otherwise our holiday would be wasted. The special trolley which was at times used by government officials was already in use but he thought he could arrange for a fish lorry to leave a day early and take us there.....

So we were off early the next morning for the long drive to Maan. We rode in the back of the lorry which reeked of stale fish... We stopped at a number of *kellas* or forts which stand alone, as it were, in the immensity of the desert. They are not built at distances of maps, but according to the opportunity of water. The only green vegetation to be seen is around these outposts. Camel thorn and acacia bushes are the only shrubs between the stages and it is incredible to think that the herds of camels we frequently passed subsist solely on these.

We were thankful to reach Maan for the weather was very hot and only the fact that the bench seats were also the ice containers for the fish to be brought from Akaba made the journey bearable. We booked into the Maan Hotel for the night. There are no private rooms here, only one enormous dormitory on the first floor....."

19:18 STOP PRESS: I Have just heard from J.H.Price that an Israeli group has offered to purchase the redundant half-mile long funicular railway from the Ebbw Vale Garden Festival site, to relocate it to improve tourist access to the Mount of Olives in Jerusalem. Does anyone know any more ?

Noted in reading by Paul Cotterell, from Baruch Katinke's book "Me'az V'Ad Henah" (see 11:22, 13:17 & 16:15). This is the chapter entitled "Three Clocks - Forward", on pp. 157 - 160 of that book.

"Because of the fear that enemy ships would shell Haifa and even land an army, Kushta (Constantinople) decided at the beginning of 1915 to move the main railway management to Damascus. Together with this the railway was divided into three separate divisions under the control of the railway management. As chief technical inspector of the first division, from Dera'a in the Hauran to Medina in the Arabian Peninsula, the German engineer Kaufer (? - 1917) was appointed. Mouchly was appointed chief technical inspector of the second division, from Tzemach (on the Kinneret) to Damascus via Dera'a and the north. I was appointed chief technical inspector of the third authority, from Tzemach station to Haifa and from Affula to the end of the branch to the Suez Canal, and the Jerusalem line; that is to say, for all the railway passing through the Land of Israel.

Kaufer was a veteran engineer, very experienced, and was therefore appointed to his post without delay. Mouchly and I had to pass the engine driving examination, and until then our new posts were temporary.

Our training as loco fireman and driver had to be carried out without, of course, neglecting the other technical duties which had been imposed upon us. Usually the training of a fireman took a year at least, and that of a driver required another two years. We were required to learn all this work in six months.

Eight hours a day I worked in the technical office, and for another eight hours I learnt how to fire and drive a locomotive.

One day, at the end of 1915, I was told that the examining committee would arrive at Tzemach on a certain day. I had to meet the examiners there and prepare an engine to take them to Beer Sheba. I chose the best loco available and a fireman and his helper, both experts in their profession. But one of the examiners who got on the loco with me ordered the fireman and his helper to get off, and in their place he put two Arab fellahin who had never fired an engine before. In addition to driving I had to teach and supervise them in firing. Thus the examiner unintentionally caused the water gauge glasses, which show the driver the level of water in the boiler, to break. In their place I had need of the four small taps, one above the other, which are meant to check the boiler water level in case it is impossible to use the gauge glasses.

The absence of an expert fireman and the necessity to use the water level taps made the examination exceptionally difficult and responsible. Any neglect in the firing threatened to lead to cooling of the boiler and loss of steam to the engine, and any carelessness in maintaining water level could cause the boiler to explode.

We departed about midday from Tzemach. The train had ten freight wagons, three passenger coaches, a special sleeping car for the examiners, an ordinary sleeping car for the

accompanying secretaries and workers' representatives (0'711977 711), and a splendid coach which was elegantly furnished for use as a dining and recreation car for honoured guests.

Before our departure I was presented to the examiners. Among them were the General Manager of the railway, Dieckmann, and several senior army officers who were taking this opportunity to visit military bases in the country.

We stopped at different stations to give the crew of examiners time to visit local places, army camps, or German colonies in the country. I had to be ready to continue the journey at a moment's notice. A number of times I was made to return to stations which we had already passed. Thus we journeyed and returned and journeyed on again all that day and all that night, and on the next day into the evening.

The crew members (i.e. examiners) spent their time enjoyably, of course. In their spacious coaches they ate and drank like monarchs. I, on the other hand, had to stay on the loco all the time and to eat whatever I could find at stations along the way.

At my call was one of the Arab fellahin who served as fireman, a clever fellow who learned to fire and look after the boiler water level.

Just as I was about to break completely we arrived towards evening of the second day, and for the second time, at Wadi Surar station. There the honoured guests got into an automobile and went to visit the German colony at Wilhelma. Before leaving they ordered me to keep the loco ready for travel. They did not tell me when they would return to the train.

Thus I remained all that second night, without rest and almost without a nap. My honoured guests and examiners only returned after midnight and informed me that their coaches were to be coupled to a regular train leaving for Beer Sheba, and that I was to continue driving this train with my engine to Beer Sheba.

At two o'clock after midnight I departed for Beer Sheba. Only with difficulty did I overcome my tiredness and with difficulty avoided falling asleep standing up while driving the loco.

The train I was now driving was a regular train and had to arrive at Beer Sheba at six o'clock in the morning. The rule was that the train had to adhere to the timetable, not to arrive late nor early. The driver would be brought to account for lateness, and if the reason for lateness was not accepted (engine failure, layer of dew on the rails) he would be fined a pretty sum; And if the driver brought his train into a station before the advertised time the punishment was even worse, and more than once a driver was dismissed for this. A train which arrived before its appointed time threatened to cause a collision with another train or with coaches which had not cleared the line. [Proper signalling was evidently an unheard-of luxury on the Turkish military lines - P.C.]

I was very tired and wanted to get to Beer Sheba as quickly as possible so that I could rest. The track was new and speed was restricted to 40 kph. Because of my tiredness I did not pay attention to the speed and exceeded the limit. The guests slept and felt nothing.

Time passed and I felt sleep coming upon me as I stood. I asked the fireman to stand close to me, to keep a lookout on the track, and to wake me if I nodded off.

Despite this I fell asleep. Suddenly I awoke to the drumming of the wheels on the rails passing beneath us. I asked the fireman where we were. He replied that we had just that moment passed Beer Sheba station.

Dawn broke. I stopped the train silently without any warning whistle (which would have brought strict punishment), and reversed into Beer Sheba station a quarter of an hour before the proper time. Both the station master and the army officer there were friends of mine. They asked me what had happened to this train which arrived so early, passed through the station and then returned to it. I told them that I was the driver and that it was now two days since I'd closed my eyes.

The three of us were afraid that someone aboard the train would wake up and discover our mishap, so we three took out our pocket watches and brought them forward by ten minutes, and we did likewise with the station clock. We stood tensely. The minutes dragged by until, at last, it was three minutes to six, our proper time of arrival. Once again we wound our watches until they showed three minutes after six o'clock. Just then the General Manager appeared.

He was dressed in a long morning coat and strode forward to me on the engine. He enquired why the train had arrived early. I said that we had drawn into the station just a few minutes before, at the exact time of arrival. He said that my watch was apparently some five or six minutes fast. I said that the station clock showed the same time as my watch. The station master and army officer hastened to my aid and asserted that their watches, like mine, showed five minutes past six. The Manager said that all our watches were fast and that we should match them to the time shown by his watch. We did as he demanded. As we did so he told me that the train would wait in Beer Sheba for about two hours and that I would then have to drive it back to Tzemach. I explained that it was now two days that I'd not closed my eyes nor got down from the engine, and that I couldn't be responsible for the train in that state of tiredness. Only then did he tell me to find a good relief engine driver, and I was invited to rest in the guest coach (הקרון הפקרתי) for the return to Tzemach.

Thus my driving examination concluded, and to the satisfaction of my examiners. I received a certificate allowing me to drive and fire any type of train (including expresses). (The exact translation is "fast passenger trains". Either way it is all relative, for neither expresses nor fast passenger trains were much in evidence on the Turkish lines. P. C. J)

During my service on the Hedjaz Railway in 1915 I stayed in the Syrian village of Cadem (meaning קדמ : step/pace), which is about six kilometres from Damascus. According to Moslem tradition the prophet Mohammed travelled to Damascus but refused to enter because it was a sinful city, so he remained in a small village close by which became known as Cadem because of the step or pace he took in the village.

In Cadem was the largest workshop on the Hedjaz Railway

for the repair of machines, and about 550 employees worked there. The locomotives under my charge required many repairs, and in order to gauge the repairs and to check each engine after overhaul I moved to Cadem.

In the summer of 1915 I received from the workshops a loco which had just undergone a heavy general repair. I coupled the engine to thirty loaded freight wagons. I took an expert driver and a good fireman and left on a trial trip.

The road between Damascus and Dera'a is mostly flat and no special effort is required of the engine. At Dera'a I took water and decided to take the train down to Tzemach through the Wadi Yarmuk, in order to test the loco's strength on the climb from Tzemach to Dera'a.

The train began its descent from Dera'a in the dusk. The first part of the journey passed without incident, but suddenly I felt that the train's speed was increasing despite use of the brakes, and I instructed the driver to whistle to the brakemen on the wagons to apply their brakes. I realised that we were travelling at high speed on a dangerous and twisting road. I was particularly afraid of the passage through El Makarem station, the first in the Wadi Yarmuk. Fortunately the station master was an intelligent fellow and when he heard the whistling from afar he cleared the road through the station and contacted the next two stations down the line. He instructed them to clear the line for us. So we rolled along until not far from Tzemach where the road is flat or slightly rising, and there we managed to stop.

Drenched with the sweat of fear we got down from the train to see what was the devil that had swept us down that terrible slope. We saw that all the track was teeming with locusts to a depth of several centimetres. With the crushing of their bodies under the wheels the swarming insects had greased the rails, and the train slid along unable to stop. The next day I remained in Tzemach. No other train passed along that stretch of track until the locust swarm had moved on to Damascus."

19:20

MORE ON THE FLYING ZEPPELIN.

Further information has come to light on the remarkable trolley pictured in 18:19. In a new book "Looking Twice at the Land of Israel" by B. Z. Kedar, containing and contrasting a series of photographs from 1917-8 and 1987-91, this picture is included on p.211. It is there stated that the first person from the left on the trolley (i.e. behind the fuel tank frame) is Baruch Katinka himself (hero of "From Then Till Now"); He claimed to have constructed the trolley himself, by order of the Turkish commander !

The book is highly recommended.

19:21

LEBANON SERVICES.

News from Lebanon, via Samuel Rachdi and Alon Siton:

The Beirut - Jbeil line is back in service with three trains daily in each direction. Coaches used are two of the former DB railbuses that have suffered only minor war damage (i.e. broken windows and lots of scratches), hauled by a Polish Cegielsky diesel loco. The Station Master at Jbeil is currently also the CEL Manager. Each train normally carries between 30 to 80 passengers at an average speed of 30 kph.

RAILWAY SURVEYS OF WORLD WAR 2.

I have received some fascinating memoirs from Douglas Helsham of Turramurra, New South Wales, regarding his time in the Middle East in the 1940's. What follows is largely in his words:

"I enlisted as a surveyor in the 1st. Survey Company of the Railway Construction and Maintenance Group, Royal Australian Engineers, Australian Imperial Forces, to give the unit its full name. It was commonly known as the Railway unit, RAE, AIF. I was then 19 years old and the date was 13th. April 1940. At 19 I was by far the youngest soldier in the survey company, most of the members being fairly old railway employees such as surveyors, draughtsmen, labourers and so on. A dozen or so of the group were WW1 veterans, I suppose about 45 years old, which seems very ancient when you are 19.

We boarded ship in late April and set sail for the UK where presumably we were to build light railways, serving the front line troops, as in World War 1. I think some of the old Generals hadn't realised that tactics and equipment had changed. Shortly after we left Sydney, Italy entered the war and their navy had a strong hold in the Mediterranean. After a short stay ashore in Perth, we re-embarked and arrived at Suez somewhere about July '40. We proceeded up the Canal and disembarked at Kantara.

We were taken by train to Haifa where we went into camp for a short time and it was here that we separated from the main construction group and worked separately from them for some time. We were then taken by bus (the Arab drivers did not inspire us with much confidence) to Nablus. Our task here was to investigate the viability of repairing and upgrading the narrow gauge railway which ran from Haifa to Nablus and which had been damaged in earlier fighting. We also surveyed a route on to Jerusalem. This work did not proceed; as far as I know it was probably not considered worthwhile. I think we were at Nablus for about three months.

Our next move was to Rosh Pinna some 10 miles north of Capernaum on the Sea of Galilee. This area is rich in Biblical interest. I read more of the Christian Bible here than ever before or since. Our task here was to do a preliminary survey as to a practical route for a railway from the Gulf of Aqaba to Istanbul in Turkey. Field Marshal Rommel was becoming very troublesome in his drive down North Africa towards the Canal. It was feared that he might take the Canal and cut off supplies to the Middle East countries.

This was difficult country rising from sea level out of the rift valley area. A good railway over this route would have involved massive earth-works and many tunnels. It was considered that it would take many years to construct such a railway line which, if the Canal had been taken, would have been too late anyway. So after about three months we were pulled out.

Then came the big surprise. In great secrecy we were taken by bus to Cairo and billeted at the British barracks of Abassia where we got to know the permanent staff pretty well over three or four weeks. Nobody seemed to know why we were there. One morning we were trundled off to a secret location which happened to be a Men's Outfitting shop in Cairo. The doors were closed, we were relieved of any military identification and completely outfitted with civilian clothes. We were then taken back to the Barracks to be greeted with "You must be the crowd who are going to Turkey to build aerodromes !" We had a great time wandering around Cairo as civvies not being hassled by Military Police or the like when we wandered into "Out of Bounds to Other Ranks" areas (I was a Corporal). But on a pay allowance of 2/- a day (the rest of my army pay of 10/- a day was being allocated home as my parents were pretty hard up) we could not get up to much mischief.

Sure enough, about a week later we were taken to Suez, where we boarded a steamer. Two hours later we were off-loaded. The ship sailed, was torpedoed, and went aground on the mud flats which surround the dredged channel from Suez to the open sea. We were relieved of our civilian clothes and were soldiers once again.

Following this adventure we moved to Kabrit on the Bitter Lakes of the Canal. Here we surveyed a railway line through the desert on the eastern side of the Canal from Port Said to Suez, presumably to provide an alternative route for supply and I suppose to take some of the load off the Egyptian side. This was subsequently built. A bridge over the Canal at Kantara was also constructed and then damaged by a ship on transit through the Canal which ran into the bridge. This was pretty exciting as there were many bombing raids and each morning the waterways had to be cleared of acoustic and magnetic mines dropped during the night. Barges were moored along the Bitter Lakes and manned each night by Arabs to spot the locations of the mines. Our section had a steam tug which we manned in the morning and evening after our surveying to take the spotters out to the barges. These mines were exploded by Wellington bombers fitted with great magnetic rings or by "thumper" vessels which exploded the acoustic mines.

About March 1942 it was back to Jordan again to a town called Maan which is about 150 miles south of Amman, the capital. Again we were to investigate yet another railway route from the Gulf of Aqaba to Maan where it would link with the Hedjaz line. The section from Maan to Amman had to be upgraded as it had fallen into disrepair and was unused.

We moved across from Egypt in Leyland Seven Ton diesel trucks, the first diesels I had ever seen. The road traversed some pretty rugged country and indeed roads too until we arrived at the head of the Gulf of Aqaba where the foreshores were soft sand. The vehicles sank in and could not progress until dug out. I remember the four trucks travelled five miles all that day being dug out and pulled by hand; there were about 50 troops.

Again we had to ascend the escarpment out of the Rift valley to a place called Naqb Ashtar, an area where Lawrence of Arabia sought and obtained the support of the Arabs during WW I. The road up the escarpment was so steep each vehicle had to be helped by about thirty soldiers pulling on ropes.

I think it was at this point that our commanding officer, Capt. Charles Young, decided, as before, that any railway up that route would involve massive earthworks and would be slow to construct. This was confirmed by a trial survey we conducted later on.

We were camped at Maan for about three months during which time we surveyed a railway from Maan to Naqb Ashtar. It was desolate country with little or no firewood available to the Arabs for cooking. Thus it was that we had a continual problem because each night the Arabs would steal all the wooden survey pegs. Finally we had to use steel pegs. This problem continued on the coast when we moved down to Beirut.

Probably because of the potential problems in both rail and road construction and the port requirements at the head of the Gulf, this project was never proceeded with.

The unit then moved on to Beirut where we were camped for about 10 months. Our task here was to upgrade the existing standard-gauge line from Haifa to Beirut and to extend it to Turkey. At this stage we were reunited with the construction companies to attend their survey needs and to design the line as it moved north. The railway line was extended to Tripoli very quickly using many hundreds of Arabs as labourers.

Our survey company then moved up to Baalbek where we started to survey and design the next section of track northwards. It was disappointing not to be able to witness the construction of this section as about May/June we were recalled to Australia to stem the threat to our country by the Japanese. I do not know if this section in Syria or any further sections were ever built."

19:23

JACOB ISRAEL DE HAAN.

This famous Jewish/Zionist poet is the subject of a biography by Eddy-Lex Israël, published by Heijnis NV, Amsterdam, 1962. On p.87: Shortly after the end of World War I:

"Eindelijk maakte Jacob Israël zijn 'Uittocht uit Egypte'. Per trein van Caïro naar de Stad.

De aankomst viel hem erg tegen. maar dat lag ook aan het provinciale station van de Heilige Stad. Het heeft geen tunnel en zelfs geen tunnel nodig: er loopt maar één spoorlijn langs."

"At last Jacob Israel made his 'Exodus from Egypt'; by train from Cairo to the City. The arrival there disappointed him, but that was also due to the tiny station that served the Holy City. It had no subway, and frankly didn't even need a subway - there was only one track !".

Just Fifty Years Ago !

19:24

A BAD CHRISTMAS. By Wynford Fear. (Edited W. L. Rothschild).

El Daba, Western Desert, 25/12/42.

On Christmas Day in the British Army the Officers act as Waiters and Christmas Day 1942 started as such. At 7.00 am. an Officer came into our tent with Coffee Royal (coffee laced with rum), each man getting his pint mug filled. Then Breakfast, where the Officers would serve each man his breakfast. Yes, that took place on Christmas Day 1942 ! The cooks had worked hard cooking a beautiful dinner with Christmas Pudding to follow and second bottles of beer. Dinner would start at 1.00 pm.

I had looked at the Duty Board and I was next for duty, but I assumed that on Christmas Day there would be no train till after dinner - but I did not realise what callous officers we had ! At 10.10 am. it started, and I suffered the most disappointing Christmas I have known.

The Company runner found me on the toilet ("Thunder Box"). Yes - "You're out - Sign the book". 10.15 am. - change to overalls, wait for the Fireman and Guard, three men fed up with the army, the railway and everything about Life.

On the way to the Loco Shed we met Loco Foreman Sergeant Gifford; he did not know there was any traffic until the afternoon - but we had to take No. 326, Black 8F 2-8-0.

I got onto the Loco and looked in the firebox and found it full of clinker, hardly any fire, and almost cold.

First, clean the fire and try to get steam. I helped the Fireman to get the fire clean and spread the fire, it's a coal-burner but the coal has plenty of sand in it so a rough trip is indicated.

We oil up and the oil is thick and cold; it took a long time to oil round.

11.45 am. Whistled for the signal to come off the Loco; the signal man was in a hurry to get rid of us so that he could go to camp for his Christmas dinner.

12 noon; Locked onto the train, received the ticket (staff), and we were ready to pull out of the marshalling yard. The train consisted of 46 axles. Because the loco was cold at the foundation ring I move off gently then, when the whole train is moving, push the regulator open for one minute to liven up the fire. We started climbing the hill to the first station. The fireman has worked hard, so we change over, he drives and I fire - but I am still feeling fed up. The station staff are all our men, and we hurl abuse at each other. The loco is steaming better, getting up to 45 mph. At each station we change the ticket 'on the run'. I read the ticket, and each time it reads "Merry Christmas, who did you upset ?"

We ran non-stop for 95 miles; at the station of El Ghowla, manned by our men, we get a red flag and stop. The next station is Simlar, which is manned by New Zealand staff. The British signalman says "I can't get an answer from Simlar". By now the time was 2.30 pm., and he let us through on a '3-5-5' ("Section clear but Station or Junction Blocked"); We went on to Simlar and stopped at their Home signal. No sign of life. Went up to the Block Post (i.e. Signal Box) and found it locked. There was nothing we could do but wait. It was now 3.00 pm. At 5.30 pm. a signal man whistled, and waved a green flag, so we pulled into the station. The loco had become cold again although I had cleaned the fire. We had about 20 miles to go to Mersa Matruh. We arrived there at 6.20 pm., took the loco to the sheds, filled the boiler and left it. No-one was about. Eventually we arrived at a

Billet (a house used for the engine crews). Everyone was asleep ! The kitchen was cold, there was no food available, nothing... I found the cook drunk; the Officer had the key to the food store, but there was no officer !

Remembering I had seen an R.A.F. camp some miles beyond Mersa Matrui I took the Army truck, my fireman and guard, and we drove out to this R.A.F. camp. Upon arrival their military guard took me to their Orderly Officer who, when I explained what had happened to us and that we needed food, opened their cookhouse, called a cook who cooked eggs, bacon and beans for us, and gave us two bottles of beer each.

We each signed for the meal served, giving our Company and all details, which action had big repercussions later.

It would be about 11.00 pm. when we arrived back at our Billet, and we gladly went to sleep. Next morning, after breakfast I walked up to the station and there was the train which we had brought in, not even touched !

Now I went looking for the Officer in charge of the detachment, and eventually found him. The conversation went like this:

"Sir, Complaint !". "Yes, Fear". "I had no Christmas Dinner, and I heard General Montgomery say every man would have his Christmas Dinner. I thought I could trust a General's word."

Reply: "There must be some misunderstanding, because we did not know you were on the way." "Sir, I knew I was on the way on Christmas Day, and an Officer should know."

"Ah well, Fear, we shall just look forward to next Christmas, and perhaps we shall all be home."

"Sir, because I failed to get food last night at 8.00 pm after getting nothing all day, I took the liberty of taking the fireman and guard to the R.A.F. camp and they provided a meal for each of us, which we signed for."

Instantly everything changed. The Lieutenant grabbed the phone and asked for the C.O. I walked out, checked and I would be on duty about 6.00 pm. The train we had brought in on Christmas Day was still standing untouched where we had left it.

An uneventful trip back to El Daba, but very slow because there were ten trains going up so they took preference whilst we had to go into the loop lines. Back in El Daba at 2.00 am. A shower and bed.

Next morning at 9.00 am a Runner came: "You're wanted, Company Office". I took my time and arrived at 10 am. The Sergeant Major said: "Ah Fear, we are sorry that through misunderstandings you got no Christmas Dinner, I rang Lieut. - and told him to look after you but...."

My reply: "Sir, I am 28 years old and through incompetence I had the most miserable Christmas of my life. the train we had to rush had not been touched at 6. pm. yesterday so, could someone please explain what and why." As he failed to give an explanation, I just laughed at him and asked to be excused.

Four weeks later that R.S.M. had lost his command and was the R.T.O. of El Kirsh near Ismailia. The C.O. (Major Rudd) was last seen on his way to India. I am still convinced that this sort of incident describes so many officers.

Some three months later, whilst talking to a senior N.C.O. of the New Zealanders, I discovered that the N.Z. Commanding Officer had wanted to close the Railway for Christmas Day, but Major Rudd had objected - hence the reason we three had such a terrible Christmas.

19:25 THE BALDWIN 2-6-0'S OF THE JAFFA JERUSALEM RAILWAY.

From Kenneth Thamm of Rensselaer, Indiana, I have received a copy of a print from the glass-plate negative works photo the Baldwin Locomotive Works made of their 2-6-0 No. 3 "Ramle". A copy of this appears as Plate 4 in Paul's book, with a note on p. 6, but I reproduce it here nonetheless - it's a fine photo.

The number plates on the cab and tender sides read:

"CHEMIN DE FER OTTOMAN DE JAFFA A JERUSALEM ET PROLONG"

(plate perimeter);

"BALDWIN LOCOMOTIVE WORKS NO. 11013". (above Plate Centre).

"PHILADELPHIA U. S. A. 1890" (below plate centre).

"No. 3". (Centre of plate).

The name plates on the boiler sides read "RAMLE".

A similar oval plate to that on the cab can be seen in the middle of the tender.

An excerpt from the book "History of the Baldwin Locomotive Works 1831-1923", published and printed by Baldwins, 1923), p. 83, includes the following:

"Three Mogul locomotives, of one metre gauge, 15 by 18-inch cylinders, driving wheels 42 inches diameter, were completed and shipped in July, 1890, for working the Jaffa and Jerusalem Railway in Palestine; and two additional locomotives for the same line were constructed in 1892."

I have to add that, for me, it remains a major question why this French-owned company obtained locos from America, when French bulders were capable of supplying quite adequate metre-gauge locos for light track !

