

HARAKEVET

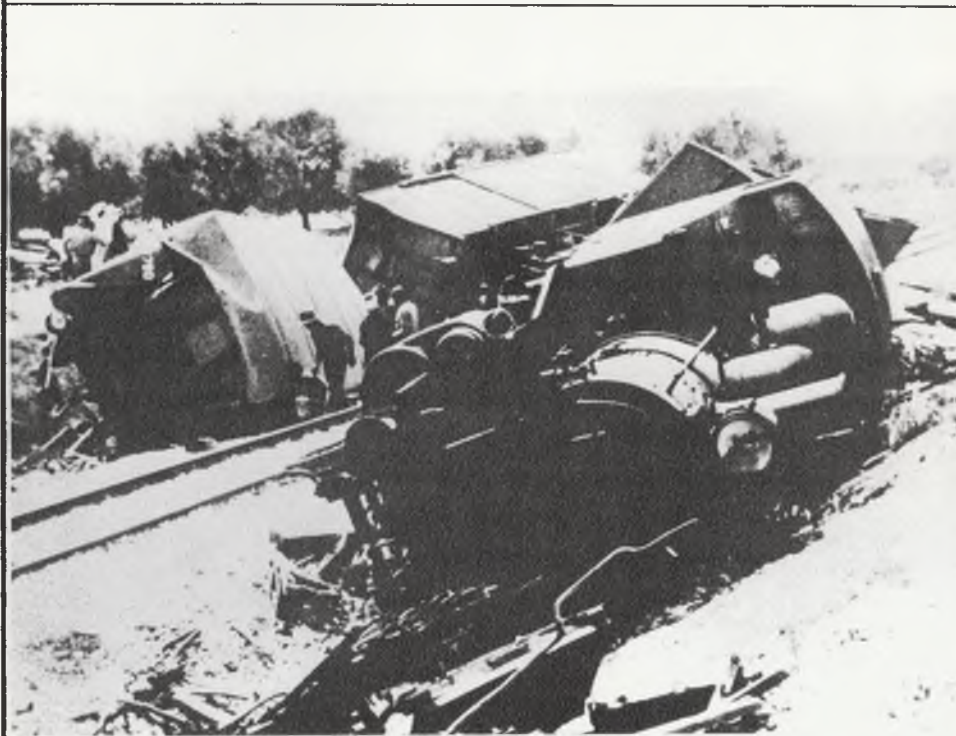
הרכבת

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Edited and Published by Rabbi Walter Rothschild,
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Opps! A PR Baldwin 4-6-2T and several steel vans after a sabotage incident during the late 1930s, exact date and location unknown. (Photo: Paul Cotterell collection).

22:2.

EDITORIAL.

There is so much going on at present, that it is hard to keep up. Most of this issue was prepared before I went on a brief summer holiday; on my return there was a mountain of news and photos, and the whole Middle East political situation had been transformed through talks between Israeli and Palestinian representatives. It's probably a little early to consider reopening of the Haifa - Damascus line, though, or through trains to Gaza..... However, "News from the Line" seems to get longer by the day. Thanks to all those who keep sending me cuttings and notes.

The work of investment in the Israel railway system goes on apace, matched only by further examples of apparent mismanagement of the suburban services and dreamery regarding Light Rapid Transit systems. However, despite the welter of current news I have attempted to maintain a reasonable balance of regular features, historical notes and continuity of 'serial items' in this issue.

Enjoy !



22:3. Esslingen 0-6-0D No. 223 "plinthed" at Kfar Saba.
(Photo: Sybil Ehrlich).

22:4.

NEWS FROM THE LINE.

1. Ashdod Timetable Chaos. From Sybil Ehrlich I have received several reports concerning the rather disorganised situation on the Tel Aviv - Rehovot - Ashdod railway service. On 15/6/93 the 'Jerusalem Post' carried a story that from the following Sunday the number of trains from Rehovot to Ashdod would be doubled 'due to popular demand' to six each way, but that none would serve the line further on to Ashdod due to poor loadings. Two days later the Railways backed down, following complaints from the municipalities of Yavne and Ashdod, to the extent of allowing a single train to continue serving Ashdod ! On 21/6 Jacob Shen-Tzur, the new General Manager, announced that the matter would be discussed at the next meeting of the Ports and Railways Authority, within the next fortnight.

The current timetable is a so-called "Summer Timetable" which claims to be valid from 19/6/93 to 10/9/93; there are, of course, none available for passengers to use, but on 22/6 one appeared on the wall of Jerusalem station. It was printed without Ashdod, which entry was added later by hand (there being no room either for intermediate stations between Rehovot and Ashdod !); IC3 trains are shown in blue - here in bold:

HAIFA - TEL AVIV - REHOVOT. (Sun. - Thurs.)							I (Fridays)
Haifa Merkaz	-	0614	1324	1424	1525		I 1124.
Bat Galim	-	0620	1330	1430	1530		I 1130.
T.A. Merkaz	-	0750	1435	1555	1635		I 1250.
(dep.)	0640	0800	1440	1600	1720		I 1255.
Kfar Habad	0652	0812	1452	1612	1732		I 1307.
Lod	0659	0819	1459	1619	1739		I 1314.
Be'er Ya'akov	0705	0825	1505	1625	1745		I 1320.
Rehovot	0710	0830	1510	1630	1750		I 1325.
(Ashdod)	-	-	-	-	1815		I 1350.)
REHOVOT - TEL AVIV - HAIFA. (Sun. - Thurs.)							I (Fridays)
(Ashdod)	-	0625	-	-	-		I 0655.
Rehovot	0600	0650	0720	0840	1520	1640	I 0720.
Be'er Ya'akov	0604	0654	0724	0844	1524	1644	I 0724.
Lod	0610	0700	0730	0850	1530	1650	I 0730.
Kfar Habad	0617	0707	0737	0857	1537	1657	I 0737.
T.A.Merkaz	0630	0722	0750	0910	1550	1710	I 0752.
dep.	0718	-	0800	-	1600	1800	I 0800.
Haifa B.Galim	0823	-	0923	-	1723	1910	I 0905.
Haifa Merkaz	0829	-	0929	-	1733	1915	I 0911.

An initial analysis shows that Ashdod now has one 'peak' commuter service to Tel Aviv in the morning and one back in the afternoon, this latter a luxury IC3; the 0710 arrival at Rehovot forms the 0720 departure, (a ten-minute turnround seems standard) but at least two empty trains have had to travel south to form the first two northbound services. It remains to be seen whether this "service" attracts much further custom. For other changes on this line, see below:

2. Ramle West Station - (Zichrono Livrachah).

On 11/6/93 Sybil found the shortlived Ramle West station totally demolished - the wooden platform disappeared and only

a heap of twisted metal and two wooden benches left.

At Be'er Ya'akov the old Mandate-period station, including platform, British-style building (similar to that at Na'an, Hadera East etc.) about 100 metres west of the present station, on the north side of the track (the present station is on the south side).

Rehovot's dark-blue paintwork has been replaced by a rather unsightly purple.

At B'nei Darom there are further relics of a former loop line and buildings, though no platform (this is presumably the former Sukreir station).

On the B'nei Darom - Jerusalem road the level crossing over the Na'an - Beersheba line has had large traffic lights fitted (still covered with black polythene on 11/6, in use by 25/6) implying some upgrading and an expectation of more traffic; the level crossing over the Lod - Jerusalem line has not been so upgraded.

3. Automatic Tickets. (See 21:4:15). An advert in the 'Jerusalem Post' announces that "Israel Railways Proudly presents the Cartimat Automatic Train Ticket Vendor", initially installed at Bat Galim. "Furthermore, as Israel Railways enters the age of suburban services, entrances to platforms and trains have been improved to facilitate easy access"; the somewhat hyperbolic text (but then - why not sound positive for once ?) concludes: "Travel by rail, it's relaxed and safe". The accompanying picture shows a computer screen over an array of push-buttons and a coin slot.

4. Only an Exercise. On 1/6/93 a joint exercise was held by IR, IDF, Police and Magen David Adom whereby a train was supposedly wrecked by a terrorist bomb near Bittir, and casualties had to be treated and evacuated. One can only hope it didn't give the locals too many ideas - but then, the inhabitants of Bittir have been attacking trains since 1892.

5. Jumbo Wanderings. In mid-May a 'Jumbo' Co-Co (number unknown) worked a special passenger train from Herzliyya to Jerusalem and return. Is this only the second appearance of a 'Jumbo' on the Jerusalem line ? (See 15:8:h).

6. Pop-Pickers Specials. A Blues Festival was held in Haifa from 20-23 June featuring, among others, Bob Dylan and Nick Cave. Special trains were run to Tel Aviv leaving Haifa in the small hours for the benefit of festival-goers; apparently three were planned each night, but only one actually ran.

7. Mobile Sauna. A high-level Danish delegation was in Israel during June. On the 23rd. they attended a convention in Nahariyya and, as they naturally wished to travel by the Danish IC3 units, three of these were substituted for the regular loco-hauled 1500 departure from Tel Aviv. (The IC3s do not normally work to Nahariyya because of difficulties with exchanging single-line tokens.) Shortly after passing Hadera a fuse blew in one of the units, bringing the train to a standstill and knocking out the air-conditioning in two of the sets. Nearly half an hour was lost before the train was able to proceed. It was a stiflingly hot day and passengers sweated

profusely. Even after the fault had been rectified full air conditioning was not restored. Worse still, perhaps, only the centre unit had engine power for the remainder of the journey and had to cope with the dead weight of the units in front and back. It was overloading of this sort which led to the downfall of the Esslingen-built railcars of the 1950's.

There were further problems in early July; one day an afternoon express for Tel Aviv broke down at Bat Galim with an unspecified technical fault, and repairs took 50 minutes; a couple of days later another train formed of IC3 cars failed near Herzliyya, but was able to resume its journey to Haifa after about 25 minutes. At least the air-conditioning continued working during both these incidents !

8. "Rakevet HaEmek" to Return ? According to a note in 'Yediot Acharonot' 27/6/93, Yisrael Kessar announced to a meeting of the District Councils of the Jordan Valley that the railway through the Jezreel (or at least a section near Samakh) would be restored as a tourist attraction within two years, at a cost of ten million dollars !

9. Sabbath Ructions. The 'Jerusalem Post' on 2/7/93 reported that the Deputy Religious Affairs Minister, Raphael Pinhasi, of the 'Shas' party, was threatening a coalition crisis and no-confidence motions from the religious parties should work on doubling the tracks over certain level crossings near Netanya over the Friday evening and Saturday, when no trains run. Although a spokesman for the Ports and Railways Authority was at pains to point out that this was done to avoid disruptions to traffic, and that the authority has special Sabbath work permits, it is understood that no work was in fact done. Transport Minister Kessar cancelled the work !

10. Of Hasidim and Fleas. Sybil Ehrlich notes that by 25/6 Kfar Habad has a new wooden shelter, pale grey, with purple railings. Returning to Jerusalem by bus about 2pm. that Friday afternoon, she noted a large flea market taking place at Tel Aviv Darom station - whether as a 'one-off' or a regular event is not known.

11. Jerusalem Retimings. The afternoon train to and from Jerusalem now leaves 30 minutes later - publicity was of course non-existent.

12. Double Vision. The second stretch of double track along the main line, between Bet Yehoshua and Shefayim, was opened to traffic on 15/7.

13. Esslingen Loco Movements. Steve Tish reports that by 28/6/93 Esslingen 0-6-0D's nos. 211, 214, 218, 219 and 226 had been moved from the area around Haifa diesel sheds, where they had been lying out of use for some time, to join nos. 213, 215, 216, 220 and 224 at Kishon. In addition Nos. 217, 222 and 228 are out of service, and unlikely to return; this leaves only 221, 225 and 227 in regular service.

14. Livery Update. No. 127 was repainted in the new livery at Kishon during March '93, after years of external neglect, and

now looks very elegant in its new colours. However, as it spends most of its time working the Haifa Chemicals/ Deshanim/ Nesher freights, its bright new appearance may not last too long.

No. 115 was repainted at Kishon in May. Bo-Bo No. 251 received an overhaul and repaint in the now standard new livery at Kishon during June; it was observed receiving attention at Haifa diesel depot on 2/7. No. 610 was also repainted at Kishon in June, and was also observed working in Haifa yard on 2/7.

15. Tramway Dreams. The Minister of Transport's visit to Britain (see 21:4:1) appears to be paying quick dividends. The 'Haaretz' Shabbat Supplement for 9/7/93 contained a two-page article devoted to the schemes by 'Dotan' to introduce a modern tramway system to Tel Aviv, with some impressive coloured artist's impressions of routes with central or side platforms and a map of the projected system.

'Ma'ariv' of 21/7/93 reported that work is due to begin on the building of a light railway system around Metropolitan Tel Aviv. Here it was stated that four lines were to be built:

- a). Rishon LeZion - Bat Yam - Jaffa - Tel Aviv Central Railway Station - Rothschild Avenue.
- b). Petah Tiqva - Tel Aviv Central (Savidor) Railway Station.
- c). Tel Hashomer - Reading (near mouth of River Yarkon).
- d). Holon - Central Bus Station - Reading.

They are to be operated by a co-operative of the Dan and Egged bus companies in conjunction with Tel Aviv Municipality. Tickets are not to be subsidised. The government is said to be investing 600 million dollars in this project. The light railway/tramway is to be laid along numerous main streets in the city.

This report in 'Ma'ariv' was something of an initial notice, leaving many questions unanswered for now. It will be noted, however, that two of the planned lines will be providing a direct link with Israel Railways.

16. What The Katy Did Next. The recent fighting in southern Lebanon with Hizbullah saw a Katyusha rocket fall just a metre or two from the freight only line north of Nahariyya, leaving a neat crater by the trackside but causing no direct damage. The daily freight to Betzet narrowly missed being hit; it was less than a hundred metres away when the Katyusha exploded.

17. More Double Vision. The double track section between Binyamina and Hadera was brought into use on 1st. August. Included in the work was the remodelling of Remez Junction which provides access for the daily trip freight to the grain silo at Hadera East, this being the northern remnant of the old British-built main line to Rosh Ha'ayin that is still in operation.

18. Tel Aviv Public Transport. Further to comments above, the Tel Aviv Central Bus Station is due to open 18th. August, after a gestation period of over thirty years. However, the nearest IR station on the Ayalon link - 'HaHaganah' - is by no means ready, nor does there appear to be any haste to complete it and provide some sort of easy pedestrian access for interchange purposes. Big signs near Hashalom Station indicate that it is due to be opened only by 31/12/94, three years later than original plans! The grounds for this delay in finishing platforms and buildings are unclear.

Incidentally (and thanks to Zvi Rechnitz for this) the last lingering link to Ashdod was retained only after Alex Goldfarb M.K. complained direct to Prime Minister Rabin; however, Egged has deleted its bus services to Ashdod Ad Halom Station, so it is clearly only a matter of time before the service ends....

[In 'Haaretz' 14/7/93 appeared a report that the line had in fact closed.]

19. Railcar Rebuilt. The Esslingen former railcar trailer No. 111Bet was back in service in mid-August following repairs to damage caused by the Shefayim collision. (See 21:4:7).

20. A Future for T44 ? T44 has been repatriated. Steve Tish reports that it was shipped from Kishon Port on the M.V. "Vikingland" on 15th. August for investigation into the possibility of repair and return to service on I.R. It had been officially "written off" by I.R. after its accident; however, the insurance company is delaying payment of compensation until the loco is fully checked for any possible rehabilitation, and it has therefore been returned to Kalmar.

21. More Locos. In the 'Jerusalem Post' 29/7/93 appeared an Invitation to Tender for four diesel-electric locomotives, of unspecified horsepower or type, for delivery in 1994. Presumably the idea is to add some more 'Jumbos'.



22:5.

Locos for Iraq, in Hamburg Harbour, 1983. Photo by Benno Wiesmuller.

NOTES AND CORRECTIONS.

1. Re. the caption to 21:1 - the Hartmann loco is of course an 0-4-4-2T ! Thanks to several readers for pointing this out - the mistake was made at the printing stage.

2. 21:10. WD 70245 is mentioned both here and in 21:9; alas, somewhere along the way it gained a wheel, though not an axle, and became an 0-5-OST ! It should be listed as 0-4-OST.

3. Re: 21:4:11 - Paul Cotterell writes that on two recent trips the trains appeared well patronised as far as Rehovot, albeit only a relative handful continued to Ashdod.

4. Several Wehrmacht diesel locos were captured by the British (as well as the Italian Badoni 4-wheel tractors mentioned in 5:6, 6:6, 8:10 & 14:23). The question is - how did these locos get to North Africa ? The main standard-gauge line in 1940 extended as far as Mersa Matruh; then the Western Desert Extension Railway was opened as far as Tobruk, then part of this line - as far as El Alamein - fell into German hands. On withdrawal the British managed to evacuate all locos bar one Egyptian 2-6-0, which was blown up and not repaired, falling back into British hands later in the same position as they had left it. So - did the German Army send over these locos specifically to work 'their' section of the WDER ? Do any records survive ? Records of the design and construction of these engines do exist - but when did Rommel have them shipped over, did any rolling stock accompany them, etc. ?

5. Further to 21:12, the extracts from Kisch's diary, Frank Adam has sent some notes from "The Position In Palestine" by Chaim Weizmann, issued by the Jewish Agency in 1930, British [Museum] Library pressmark WP8259/2: (His brackets):

p.17. The Jewish Agency budget was £750,000 for 160,000 Jewish inhabitants - [i.e. £4½ per capita]; the Palestine Government budget was £2,500,000 for population of 900,000, [i.e. £2½ per capita].

p.20: Palestine paid off its share of the Ottoman Debt, £648,000, & OETA (military government) debt of £206,541 by 1928. Neither Syria nor Iraq could satisfy their Ottoman debt.

Finally, while Palestine paid London one million sterling for its military railway, Iraq got the Mesopotamian British military railway [and presumably the associated Basra dock facilities] as a free write-off from H.M. Treasury as Iraq could not [or would not ?] pay.

6. Theo Pelz has added information on the 'Haifa Enclave' mentioned in 21:6. British troops remained in the coastal area north of Tel Aviv, but including Haifa, until 30th. June 1948. This "occupation" included the Haifa Merkaz Railway Station, and the harbour. Trains to Qiryat Motzkin thus ran from Haifa East. Theo travelled on one to Qiryat Motzkin and back, and on his return went to the port where Ben Gurion was just "taking over" personally (he came by car). The next morning Haifa Merkaz station was first searched for booby-traps; the British troops had stored oil drums in the W.C., thus causing the floor to sink !

7. On 21:7: Theo says that the Balad-esh-Sheikh triangle was not retained after WW 1. However, that does not mean it wasn't available to the flyers.

8. On 21:10. Theo Pelz writes: "I am in possession of a postcard issued by Messrs. Palphot of Herzlia. The number of the negative is 3070, the inscription being 'Haifa Harbour Quarter'. The date of the photograph is somewhere around 1953/4, judging from the ships in port. It shows, inter alia, the loco shed with all the engines left by the British Army, but also three Kitsons and two Manning-Wardles, possibly Nos. 27 and 28. These must therefore have been cut up in 1955/6. Not cut up, however, was at least one of the Wehrmacht 0-6-0 DH. I remember strolling around the loco shed and being asked by the then Diesel "boss", Moshe Ravid (alias Kupferwasser) whether he could use the oil cooler of this engine for the ex-ESR No. 4239, so this must have been after 1956. (The negative is no-longer available, I am informed)."

9. On 21:13. The photo of Kantara East in WW1 differs greatly from what Theo Pelz remembers of it in the years 1943-6; he recalls a closed and covered terminal 'Train Shed' adjacent to the Canal, with the El Ferdan line branching off to the south beforehand.

10. On 21:14. Dr. Biram was not the first Yekke in Haifa; this honour probably belongs to Dr. Elias Auerbach who founded the first hospital in Haifa in 1907. He returned to Germany during W.W. 1, coming back to Haifa after 1933. To him is ascribed the saying "Palestine is the land of unlimited possibilities".

11. On 21:15. Theo recalls seeing light portable railways at the orange plantation of Kvutzat Schiller in 1934 (the so-called "Terezina"), also at the site of the Jericho excavations in 1967. (NB: Decauville stock at this latter site was being advertised in the 'Palestine Gazette' in May 1948 !)

12. On 21:4:8. Sybil Ehrlich was looking out of the window of a bus when she saw three railway coaches on the west side of the Jericho-Beth Shean road, about 5 or 6 km, north of Adam Junction. Since these are 200 metres below sea level, they could well be the lowest railway carriages in the world ! A phone call from Moshav Argaman elicited the facts that these coaches had come from England some seven years ago, as a home for a cafeteria in Tel Aviv. This didn't work out after some sort of licensing problem, so after several attempts to use them in different places as restaurants they landed up in Moshav Argaman, where they are to become a roadside refreshment stop.

1. Hedjaz Railway Update.

From the "Continental Railway Journal" No. 94 (Summer 1993), p.377, referring to a visit in January 1993:

Every week two or three freight trains were run from Damascus to Dera'a according to demand, hauled by Hartmann 2-8-2's Nos. 260 or 263. On 19/1/93, 260 departed the Hejaz station in Damascus at 07.30, arriving Dera'a at 12.40. It was scheduled to return the next day. The weekly international train to Amman (Jordan), southbound on Saturday, northbound on Monday, was diesel-hauled.

At Cadem (5km. south of the terminus, and now the junction for the new standard-gauge line to the north) the only steam locos in good condition were Nos. 260, 263 and 2-6-2T 130-755, though there were many other locos out of use.

At Dera'a 2-6-OT+T 66 and 2-8-0 161 were dumped in the yard; also present was a spare tender numbered '201 CFH'. Trains on the Bosra line appeared to run only when an event was being staged at the ancient theatre at Bosra."

From TEFS Newsletter 6/93 of June 1993:

"News from Jordan: HSP 2-8-2 No. 71 has joined Jung 2-8-2 No. 51 on the active list, and work has begun on repairing further steam locomotives."

2. Various Expansion Plans.

From "Fahrplancenter News" No. 5, April 1993. (This fascinating quarterly, a fund of information from the most obscure places, can be obtained from Tellstrasse 45, 8400 Winterthur, Switzerland); No. 5 is devoted to rail expansion and refurbishment plans around the world:

Translation is mine:

p.12: Israel: Latest figures for the costs of the 180km Eilat line would involve provision of a further 24 diesel locos, 20 to 30 passenger coaches and 400 wagons, and the total would cost between US\$ 180M to US\$ 500M.

Syria: By the end of the 1990's it is planned to build the following standard-gauge lines: Palmyra to Deir Ez Zor, 203km., with 50kg/m rails; Damascus - Dera'a, 101km., replacing the 105cm. gauge line, with a branch from Sheikh Miskin to Suweida, to be built to a standard enabling speeds of 160km/h.

p.13. Saudi Arabia. The Gulf War led to delays in several projects; however, first priority now is being given to the 100km. line from Damman to Jubail, to serve the steelworks at Jubail; opening is hoped for 1996, and passenger services will also be offered.

The government seems now less interested in the construction of a line from the capital, Riyadh, to the port of Jedda; also unlikely appears to be further work for present on reconstruction of the old Hedjaz line within Saudi Arabia, at least until there is similar interest in Jordan.

Iran. In the current 5-Year Plan for the Iranian Railways US\$ 6.8 billion is planned for network expansion. The 630km. line from Bafq to Bandar Abbas on the Persian Gulf is almost complete; a further important line (that would eventually form part of an overland link between Europe and the Indian sub-continent, the dream of the Victorians) will be

that from Kerman to Zahedan; at Zahedan there would be an interchange station with the line built to the 1675mm. gauge line onwards into Pakistan, and apparently international agreements between Iran and Pakistan for the use of this line have already been drawn up. The line from Bandar Abbas would have a further northwards extension to Mashad and on to Sarakhs, this being close to the Iran/Turkmenistan/Afghanistan borders, a total of 800 km., from Bafq. Finally there would be a link of 175km. from Mashad to Dushak in Turkmenistan.

Iraq has plans for an international link between Baghdad and Amman in Jordan, and from Mosul in the North via a border station at Zakho to Turkey. A further scheme is for a line from Khanikhin in the east of Iraq to Kermanshah and Arak in Iran ! However, whilst the line north of Baghdad is once more in use, the line south of Baghdad has not yet been fully restored after war damage in the Gulf War, and most of these plans seem rather unrealistic in present circumstances !

p.10 Egypt. The lengthy entry includes notes on the recent restoration of service on the Qena - Bur Safaga line (originally built by the British military in 1941) and plans for restoration of the Sinai Railway from the Suez Canal towards Israel and a recent agreement made with Libya (a country currently without any railway at all) to rebuild the Western Desert Extension Railway from Sollum (in Egypt) to Tobruk in Libya - another British military line.

From 'Fahrplancenter News' No. 7, July 1993:

Iran. The line between Teheran and Isfahan, which has been allowed to decline, is to be reactivated for passenger traffic and improved. Those responsible for the project have received offers from Germany, France and Japan, which could lead either to the renewal of the existing 548 km. line or the construction of a brand-new High-Speed alignment. At the moment it is not known which will be chosen.

Syria. The latest Syrian timetable shows further changes on the Hedjaz line. The International Train from Damascus (Dimashq) to Amman now runs on Saturdays, leaving 07.30, arriving Amman after 14.00. The return train runs on Mondays, depart 08.00, arr. Dimashq around 14.30.

Between Dimashq and Deraa there is a daily return working by Ganz railcars, 08.00 from Dimashq, in Deraa from 11.20 to 14.25, return to Dimashq 18.11. Twice a week there is an additional service, also worked by railcars, Thursdays and Fridays dep. Dimashq. 14.40, arr. Deraa 18.00, returning from Deraa Fridays and Saturdays 06.00, arr. Dimashq. before 10.00.

The Fridays return railcar to Fijeh no longer appears in the timetable, and all references to weekend trips to Serghaya on the Beirut line have been dropped.

[Note: the timings of these twice-weekly extras show that a separate railcar set is in use, crossing the daily service somewhere en route.]

Iraq. The line Baghdad - Husaibah appears to be operational once more, and according to official statements trains are running again to Kirkuk, an important town in the Kurdish province. The Baghdad - Al Basra line remains out of service.

22.8. A TRIP TO THE CENTENARY. By Robert Owen.

A little belatedly, I have received a further personal account of the Grand Centenary Celebrations at Jerusalem on October 21st. 1992: (See 19:7 for Sybil Ehrlich's report):

"I saw the advert in the Jerusalem Post, and thought it would be nice to attend the 100th. anniversary celebrations. However I was told by the Tourist office in Jerusalem that invitations were only sent to railway workers and VIP's (which made me wonder why they placed the advert !)

I happened to be in Pardess Hanna on the day in question and thought I would go to Binyamina station and see if I could get on the special train. The station master initially denied that any such train existed so I showed him the advert ! He eventually said that I was not supposed to get on the train but he wouldn't stop me ! The train arrived about 15 minutes late - the first of the brand-new Danish rolling stock. I sat opposite an engineer who worked at Haifa. The air-conditioning was so efficient I nearly froze to death ! The journey to Jerusalem took forever as we went down to Tel Aviv Central then back and up and round the loop which I understand is not currently used for passenger traffic, although I recall an earlier trip from Lod to Haifa.

We finally arrived in Jerusalem at 5pm. and a meat buffet was laid out on tables on the platform. You can imagine what happened ! The full train emptied and the food disappeared in about 5 minutes! We were then asked to cross the tracks and sit in stands which had been specially erected. Further guests (with tickets) were admitted into the station.

At about 6pm. the ceremony began with the arrival of the President. The Israel Railways Choir sang a specially-composed song which would have been an ideal entry for the Eurovision Song Contest. There were several speakers, but amazingly none lasted more than 5 minutes ! The highlight was a video history of the railways in Palestine. At one point they were describing events in 1948 and a diesel engine came along the track in front and a man wearing Arab head-dress jumped off and shots were fired. The presentation ended with the Danish train being driven into the station in front of us."

22.9. Armoured Trolleys for Rail Escort Duties.



Two Marmon-Herrington armoured cars set on rail wheels, as used by the 17/21st. Lancers in Palestine in the 1945-8 period. The contraption slung between them was a sort of armoured compartment for infantry, and whenever troops were aboard the drivers would reputedly drive extra fast to scare the wits out of them !

The Marmon-Herringtons had normal gearboxes with four forward speeds and one reverse - hence the need to run them back-to-back.



A Daimler Dingo armoured car set on rail wheels - used by the same unit. When on patrol a bogie, laden with stones, was pushed ahead of the trolley; uncoupled, it would be given a good 'shove' to coast ahead and detect any mines, after which the Dingo would catch it up and repeat the process.

The Dingo was ideal for rail operations because it had a pre-selector, 5-speed each-way gearbox, and could therefore travel backwards and forwards with equal facility.

(Photos from David Fletcher of National Tank Museum, Wool).

22.10.

TICKETS:(3). By Paul Cotterell.

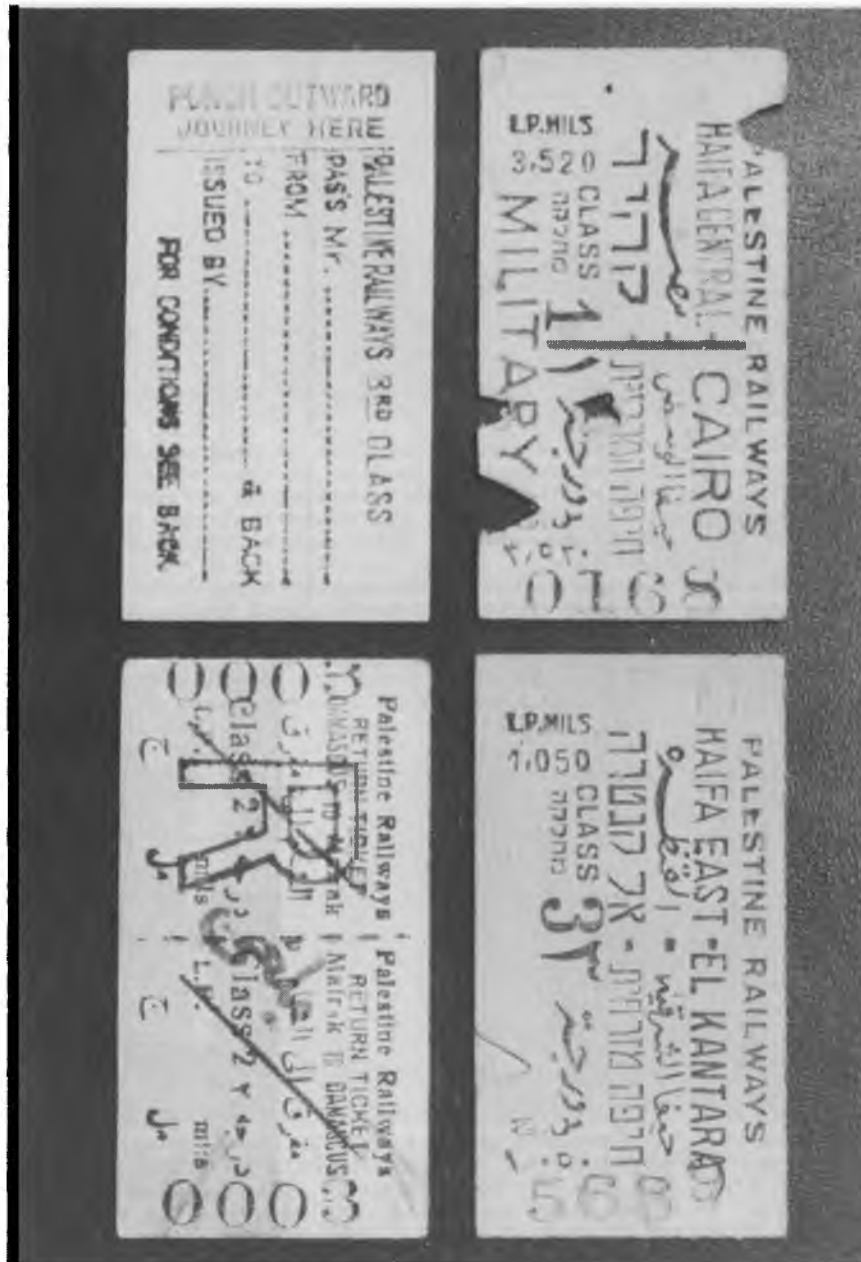
While by no means abundant, tickets from Palestine Railways are not impossible to find, though they can command quite a high price amongst collectors. It will be noted that two of these tickets are tri-lingual (English, Hebrew, Arabic), a third is in English and Arabic, whilst the fourth is in English only. This last ticket, though, is not what it purports to be.

Top Left: 1st. class military return from Haifa Central to Cairo. Colour is buff with the word MILITARY overprinted in red, other lettering being in black. Price £P 3.520 mills. Although the ticket has been punched in four places no date can be made out. Nevertheless it may fairly be assumed that the ticket was issued some time after August 1942 when the bridge over the Suez Canal had been completed. Before this date it would not have been possible to make a through journey between Haifa and Cairo without crossing the Canal by ferry, and I presume that passengers would have needed to rebook tickets at Kantara East or West to make this trip before the building of the bridge at El Ferdan.

Top Right. 3rd. class single from Haifa East to El Kantara. Colour is green. Price £P 1.050 mills. Dated 6/1/41.

Bottom Right: 2nd. class return from Damascus to Mafrak. Colour is white (at top) and grey (bottom half). Overprinting is in red (R) and blue. No price or date is shown on the ticket. Mafrak is in Jordan, between Dera'a and Amman. I am rather surprised that the ticket is in English and Arabic. Since it appears to have been issued in Damascus I would have expected it to be printed in French and Arabic.

Bottom Left: Not what it seems, this one. The reverse shows it to be an admission ticket to the Haifa East Railway Museum, but I do not know if a large redundant stock of this particular PR ticket was utilised for museum purposes or whether it was decided to reproduce specially the PR style as an added bonus on the admission ticket. Colour of side shown here is light green with pink central stripe. Certainly the ticket appears kosher, and it is only when you turn it over to reveal the printing for the museum that you begin to wonder about its genuineness.



22.11.

Friendly Archives. 8. The Thomas Cook Travel Archive,
London.

The main office of Thomas Cook, the world-famous travel agents and tour operators, is at 45 Berkeley Street, off Piccadilly (5 minutes walk from Green Park station, Victoria Line). As well as a Travel Shop and various other departments, tucked into a quite-spacious corner and open to the public is the Thomas Cook Travel Archive. Laid out in a semi-library format, with a wax dummy of a Victorian clerk perched over a desk of the period, there are also desks for several readers at once, several sets of shelves of travel brochures, guides, diaries etc. spanning over 150 years, and racks of albums of original materials dating back to the 1860's. These latter include brochures for tours, ancient whole-plate photos, newspaper clippings and the like.

Some of the Albums bear titles such as "Middle East / Egypt: Black & White Photos" or "The Holy Land" - whilst fascinating in themselves, the contents appear to have little railway interest. However, a lot can be learned from poring through some of the brochures.

The staff are very helpful; the archive is open Mondays to Fridays 11am. to 3pm. Full address is: 45, Berkeley Street, London W1A 1EB (the public entrance is actually through 41 Berkeley Street); phone number 071-408-4175, fax 071-408-4299. Admission is free - it helps to telephone first, as sometimes the place is full with booked school parties; photocopies can be made on the spot at 15p per A3 sheet, and photographs can be copied, given time.

22.12.

BEER BOTTLES.

From "Eretz" Magazine, Summer 1993, p.19:

"During World War 1, the British displayed a remarkable aptitude for organising masses of workers and fighters, and their mark is stamped on the western Negev to this day. Sharp-eyed visitors will be able to discern a small dirt embankment north of Tel el Far'a - it is the route of the railroad track laid during World War 1 and meant to circumvent the combat zone near the spring of Ein Habesor. The British forces worked at night and camouflaged the track with branches and sacks during the day. The track was laid simultaneously in a number of segments, but the British conquest of Beersheba on October 31st. 1917 eliminated the need to complete it.

Dan Gazit reports: "The labourers worked down in the wadi and the engineers sat above. I asked myself where the engineers could have sat and watched the work at night. I located a hill, climbed it, and found a box of empty beer bottles from the time of World War 1."

22.13.

FROM THE THOMAS COOK ARCHIVES.

It is a cliché, but it bears repeating, that the growth of tourism did more to change the face of the Middle East in half a century than anything in the previous four centuries. From the 1860's a provincial English entrepreneur built up a world-wide business providing facilities for wealthy and not-quite-so-wealthy Europeans and Americans to visit parts of the world where even the very wealthy and well-protected had previously feared to go. Having paid a deposit and followed advice on what to pack, groups of people would meet at certain London termini and set off for the English Channel and the dreaded 'Foreign Parts' that lay beyond them. Comforting familiarity was assured by the presence of tour guides, representatives in all major stations and ports, boatmen on the Sea of Galilee or at Jaffa harbour wearing 'Thomas Cook' sweaters, comfortable dining and sleeping tents marked with the same logo, and detailed itineraries were followed with dogged determination. Decent food and decent plumbing - the main concerns of Victorians - had of necessity to be brought to remote countries.... The brochures give a clear insight into the conditions of the time.

The following are the result of a single rushed one-hour visit:

1. 1890. A brochure for a tour to "Egypt and Palestine". This includes a detailed itinerary for two parallel tours, a fortnight apart, and includes:

"Leave Port Said by Austrian Lloyd's steamer for Jaffa.

Mon. Oct. 13th. & 27th. Arrive Jaffa.

Tues. Oct. 14th. & 28th. The party will proceed by carriages to Jerusalem. Carriages go through in a day.

Wed. Oct. 15th. & 29th. Go by the Valley of Jehoshaphat, and the reputed site of the Garden of Gethsemane, over the Mount of Olives and by Bethany to Jericho, where we find comfortable accommodation at the New Jordan Hotel. Camp will be provided for four persons and upwards, if preferred.

Thurs. Oct. 16th. & 30th. Make an easy excursion to the Dead Sea and Jordan, where ample time will be allowed for bathing, and return to Jericho for the night, taking lunch on the banks of the Jordan.

Fri. Oct. 17th. & 31st. Return to Jerusalem by the supposed site of ancient Jericho, the Fountain of Elisha, seeing the Mount of Temptation on our right, and enter the Holy City by the old road from Bethany, which doubtless our Saviour trod. It is preferable to go and return via Jericho, owing to the very long and rugged road via Mar Saba, which route is becoming less frequented every year by tourists.

Sat. Oct. 18th. to Tues, 21st. (& Nov. 1st. - 4th.) To be spent in and about Jerusalem, making excursions to Bethlehem, Hebron, Tomb of Rachel, Pools of Solomon &c.

Wed. Oct. 22nd. & Nov. 5th. Return by carriage to Jaffa.

Thurs. Travel by Khedive Steamer to Alexandria",.... etc.

This tour cost £166.0s.0d. Sterling, from and back to London, all-inclusive apart from gratuities to the stewards on the Mediterranean steamers.

2. 1892. An "Autumnal Tour to Palestine", lasting 40 days, including 11 days in Palestine and 12 days in Egypt, also involved travel "by carriage" between Jaffa and Jerusalem and return.

3. By 1908 the railways had made an impact - of sorts. That year's brochure "Camping Tours in Palestine" contains, on p. 12, the following rather sniffy "Notes on Petra" :-

"Besides the Camping Tours shown on the previous page, Petra may now be reached from Damascus by the aid of the Hedjaz Railway to Maan (a journey of a day and a night), from which station it is distant seven hours on horseback. Only third-class carriages, however, which are not sufficiently comfortable for such a journey, are available, and a first-class carriage can only be obtained by special order and payment of ten first-class fares. The necessary camp equipment for the journey from Maan to Petra and back has also to be conveyed by rail.

In visiting Petra from Jerusalem by the aid of the railway, the traveller must ride and camp to the station at Ammon (three days), whence it is one night's journey by rail to Maan where fresh animals have to be hired for the ride thence to Petra, as stated above. But the expense of retaining the other animals at Ammon for the return to Jerusalem would be considerable, and except, perhaps, on the tour from Damascus, the railway is not likely to be of much utility to the traveller to Petra."

4. Also in 1908 a brochure was issued entitled "Palestine, Syria and Egypt; Beyrout to Mezerib by railway, thence by Camp to Jerusalem". This is one of the few known references to anyone ever travelling on the short-lived and ill-fated Damascus to Muzeirib line. From p.6:

"Sat. Oct. 24th. Leave Damascus at 6.10am. by the Hauran Railway for Mezerib, where the Camping Section of the Tour to Jerusalem begins. After lunch, horses will be taken for a ride of about 4½ hours through the level and fertile Hauran to Beit Ras."

5. From 1908 brochure "Tours to the Orient" for the 1908/1909 season, published by the Thos. Cook & Son New York Office: p.67: "Daily Itinerary of the Tour in Palestine from Jaffa to Beyrout. (Subject to change if circumstances require). First Day: Arrive at Jaffa, now, as in old time, the principal seaport of Palestine. The place is full of Bible associations.....

If possible visit Simon's House, and other historical spots, and proceed by rail to Jerusalem. The route is by luxurious gardens and orange and lemon groves, and every mile is associated with events in the early life of the Jewish nation. The train crosses the famous Plain of Sharon, whose fields are radiant with wild flowers, and traverses the dark gorges of the mountains.....

p.76f: Sixteenth Day. Will be spent on the journey from Damascus to Baalbec. The railway line from Damascus to Beyrout traverses beautiful scenery, crossing two ranges of mountains in the Lebanon and Anti-Lebanon, and rises to a height of

5,000 feet. After leaving Damascus the train follows the river Abana, and passes the ruins of an old Temple, and the beautiful Fountain Fejeh. At Reyak, the junction for the line running north to Baalbec, a halt is made for luncheon and change of cars. From El Mrejat the rack-and-pinion system is employed, and at Baidar (4,880 feet) the highest point in the Lebanon is reached. The descent from this point is through a barren region, but the vegetation increases as we proceed. The rack-and-pinion portion of the line ends at El Hadeth, and pleasing views of the coast and country are obtained all the way to Beyrout.

Seventeenth Day: Will be spent at Baalbec...

Eighteenth Day: Leave Baalbec by morning train for Reyak, where lunch is taken, and a change made to the train which runs from Damascus to Beyrout. After a pleasant journey of about five hours on this beautiful mountain railway, Beyrout is reached in the evening....."

6. By 1926 the brochure for "Tours in Palestine and Syria" has a map showing a more complex railway network. p.3 includes the following notes:

"Routes. Now that Palestine is connected with Egypt by comfortable trains with dining and sleeping cars, it is no longer necessary to enter the country by sea. Egypt may be reached from London, Liverpool and Southampton the whole way by sea, or by one of the trans-continental routes via Marseille, Toulon, Genoa, Naples, Venice, Trieste or Brindisi. The journey by the all-sea route from England occupies from twelve to fourteen days; by the trans-continental routes the sea passage varies from two to five days.

There are regular and frequent sailings by numerous lines of steamers from English, Continental and Egyptian ports to Jaffa, Haifa and Beirut for those who wish to enter Palestine and Syria by sea.

Methods of Travel. Travel in Palestine has been facilitated enormously since the War by the development of railways and the building of proper high roads, so that motoring is now practicable almost on an equality with European States.

Private Dragomans. It is still practically impossible to travel in Palestine independently in the strict sense of that word, and a dragoman is most essential. The Independent Tours with a private dragoman shown in this booklet have been found to meet the requirements of the majority of travellers, but any other tours can be arranged."

Bob Marshal was known in the Palestine Police as Bob Le Marechal. He joined the Army to escape a boring job in a law office, then joined the Palestine Police in 1929, at the age of 23, and served until the end in 1948. The following memoir is from a MS lent to the editor in June 1993; see 21:6 for an earlier reference:

"My written orders from Jerusalem were explicit and sounded awfully important. Briefly they were:-

"Go to Lydda Railway Junction; enlist, train, administer and tactically command a company of Arabs to protect the railway from Lydda to Rafah on the Egyptian border; man the pill-boxes set up at all bridges and establish posts at Lydda, Rehovot and Gaza stations. You will mess and be accommodated with the officers of a Railway Company of Royal Engineers within their compound and your men will be accommodated in hutments within that compound. Your office accommodation and staff have been arranged. You will be provided with personal road transport and a driver and you will have a pick-up that has been adapted to travel on the railway lines."

This was totally different to my previous work in the Force which until then had been: Depot, Hebron, Jaffa, Tel Aviv, C.I.D. H.Q., Petach Tiqva, Ramat Gan, Hebron again, and Jewish Settlement Defence, in that order. It appealed to me - I like getting in at the basement of a job.

Most of my men came from the Qalqilya - Nablus area. They were young and wanted the work and the money. I swore them in in batches, dispensing with medical formality, relying on my own judgement of their potential.

My new unit also came under the general command of Michael O'Rourke, and in that I considered myself fortunate. Michael had a penchant for drawing the best out of individuals and formations, and he had many irons in the fire.

On completion of training, suitable types were promoted to Sergeant (Shawish) and Corporal (Onbashi) rank and posted with their men to selected stations and pill boxes. Their marching and arms drill were excellent and their discipline and turnout good, but their musketry left much to be desired (and this failing was for obvious reasons allowed to continue, as they might well have been shooting at us in the near future !)

For those stationed at Lydda Junction I arranged games such as football, donkey racing and donkey polo, much to the amusement of the Royal Engineers who used to wonder why the Outside Right or Outside Left, as the case might be, saluted as they ran past me with the ball. I convinced the players that this was not expected from them on the sports field and that their good play was noticeable to me without it.

Life in the R.E. Officers Mess was routine. I would visit other units in Sarafand with them and sometimes we went to Tel Aviv together. Occasionally, after dinner we would drop in to the Sergeants' Mess for a drink and a chat. We usually ended up playing "Tip-It", with the loser having to sing a song, tell a story or buy the drinks. All good fun.

A Mess member owned a Bull terrier - a savage-looking thing. One afternoon the Mess cook and the Mess waiter, both

R.E. ratings, staged for their entertainment a fight between Goldie and the bull terrier. I came on the scene soon after the fight began. I grasped the Bull Terrier by the tail and began to swing it round in a circle at arm's length. Goldie made off uninjured, but I knew the bull terrier would attack me as soon as I let it go, so before dropping it I banged it fairly solidly against the mess wall. It then got up and ran away. I was rather fortunate that it did because its owner took it to a Vet where it was found to have rabies, and that could have been serious for me had it bitten me. Goldie was found to be clear.

It came to my knowledge from Messrs. Taylor (Manager, Palestine Railways) and Sargent (Traffic Superintendent), both living with their families in the junction area, that there was a lot of challenging going on at night by the prowler patrols. I told them that security was the object of their duty, but I enquired into the matter and found that my dog Goldie, a Pointer, was the culprit. It had the run of the inside and outside of the compound day and night, and whenever a patrol saw the dog it was thought that I also would be about and they didn't want to be caught napping - so they challenged everyone, and Goldie was worth its weight in gold !

It was wartime and the current gen was that Jerry would drop paratroops wheresoever in whatever uniform or other garb. At that time I heard from Military sources that my patrols never checked anybody unknown to them in British uniform. It was about that time that it was even said in my presence in the mess that my patrols were taking for granted the bona fides of anybody dressed in British uniform, whether they knew them or not. I decided to make sure that this was not the case.

Harry Mansfield, O.C. Ramle Division, let me have for one hour a powerful chap, wearing battledress and capable of disarming a man not alert to his intention. I told the man to enter the R.E. compound and if challenged to identify himself and go on his way, but if left to enter unchallenged he was to disarm the sentry. Unknown to the sentry I was nearby and in full view of the scene. I knew the sentry to be a good man and he was in line for promotion to Corporal, nevertheless he let the man through unchallenged and got himself disarmed. During the struggle the sentry began and kept loudly calling for me by name. When I went up to him he realised the position and said "I won't get promotion now, will I ?" I sent for him next morning and when he marched in he thought he was on a charge, but instead I handed him two stripes and told him to get them sewn on; you see, in his moment of 'danger' he showed loyalty, and I prize that sort of thing.

The event served as a lesson to the rest of the Company and improved their alertness and awareness on duty.

I say that I prize loyalty, but the acceptance of loyalty had to be tempered by the prevailing ethnic war going on among the local peoples of Palestine, who were prone to use arms to obtain their ends. Ergo, when I inspected I always checked arms and ammunition, including reserves. This procedure paid off. On one inspection I found that the reserve ammunition had all been changed for old ammunition, most likely from the 1914-18 war. This was quite serious. I ordered the Sergeant

and his men back into Lydda for enquiry, and replaced them with an N.C.O. and men from Lydda. I had hardly begun my enquiry when my headquarters N.C.O.'s asked to see me. They had already seen the Sergeant and men from this station (probably Rahovot, though memory is vague), and assured me that the reserve ammunition would be back in place by the following morning, and it was. I had wondered what caused the unusual noise coming from a barrack room adjoining my office and stores. The man responsible for changing the ammunition was suitably dealt with, and the Sergeant transferred to Gaza. It was all a product of the general situation. Perhaps one could call it a case of divided loyalties, with the good name of the unit getting the best of it on this occasion.

One of Michael's many other activities included responsibility for the coastal watch stations along the Mediterranean coast to give early warning if possible of enemy warships. I once went with him to inspect the station sited some miles west of Rishon-Le-Zion. We obtained horses from the Police Station and began our ride to the sea. He was a superb horseman and I was not - I hadn't ridden since I was very young. We soon got into a gallop; I didn't feel safe so slowed to a comfortable canter. Michael understood, smiled and told me to come on at my own time. On our way back he asked me to keep an eye on that station in the future. That meant more riding for me, but it helped me immensely later when it came to my passing the Riding and Horsemanship part of the Officer's Examinations.

I was proud of my men and the way they performed their duties, but essentially I was a policeman and therefore glad when about two years later an order came for me to hand over the Company to 'Dinger' Ring and take over another newly-created post. British officers were placed in charge of District C.I.D.'s and I was posted to Nazareth District, consisting of Nazareth, Tiberias, Safed and Acre Divisions. I was extremely pleased when, before I left them, the Company presented me with a fine canteen of cutlery. The late Paddy Craig was of great assistance to me during my command of this company."



How not to run an 8F 2-8-0. This loco was returned to the British 169 Rly. Workshops Coy. at Suez by its Russian operators in Persia, with a request for another one, please, as this one was broken and wouldn't go!
(Photo: K. R. M. Cameron, via National Museum of Army Transport, Beverley).

22:16.

From: "Palestine Diary" by Lt.-Col. F.H. Kisch C.B.E., D.S.O.: Part 2.

Further biographical notes: (From an article by Meir Ronnen, Jerusalem Post, 22/5/93).

Frederick Kisch was born in Darjeeling in 1888, his father being chief administrator of the Post Office in Bengal. He trained at Woolwich and Chatham in the Royal Engineers, and served in the Indian Army. In 1914 he served in Flanders, being promoted to Captain, and was wounded twice, convalescing in England; he then served in Mesopotamia, being wounded again by the Turks, and in 1916 was seconded to the War Office as unfit for further Active Service. There he headed Military Intelligence (Russia) as a Lieutenant-Colonel; he spoke various Indian dialects, Persian, Arabic, Russian and French. After his work at the 1919-1921 Peace Conference he was awarded the CBE and decorated by the French. However he was turned down by Camberley Staff Training College, and joined the Jewish Agency Executive, serving it from 1923 to 1931, settling in Palestine.

In World War 2 he asked to serve again and was given a Royal Engineers command at Alexandria; he was promoted to Colonel and became Chief Engineer of the Western Desert Force; his techniques in, amongst other things, laying and clearing minefields under fire made a big contribution to the fight against the Afrika Corps. He became a Brigadier. He was killed by a mine on April 14th. 1943 at Wadi Akarit, Tunisia, and was buried there.

Further Excerpts from the Diary:

p.325-6. August 5th., 1930. Received the Executive Committee of the Histadruth to hear particulars of the position as regards Jewish labour on Government works which I wish to take up with the Director of Public Works. Apart from the security roads in the Emek, for which we have provided the bulk of the funds, there are only seventy-three Jews working for the P.W.D. as compared with 1,290 Arabs. On the harbour works the position is as follows: Atlit Quarries: Jews 100, Arabs 400; Haifa Breakwater: Jews 2, Arabs 200.

p.344. Sept. 21. By car from Haifa to Beyrouth and thence to Baalbek. I had hoped to go on to Aleppo, but the French Military Authorities were stopping all cars. They offered to provide me with an escort in case I had urgent public duties to perform, but I did not feel justified in availing myself of the offer.

p.343. Oct. 4th. In the morning I met with Dr. Shiels at the station. [Dr. T. Drummond Shiels M.P., Under-Secretary for the Colonies], where he arrived together with the Parliamentary Private Secretary, Mr. Mathers M.P., and Mr. Dawe, a permanent official of the Colonial Office. The arrival was quite informal, the Government being represented by the Chief Secretary and the District Commissioner. The public are puzzled about this, not understanding the British practice

throughout the East of not giving public receptions to members of the Home Government, such as might show the people that there is a higher personal authority than the High Commissioner.

p.352. Oct. 12th. At Dr. Shiels' invitation I joined his party which was proceeding by special train to points where the P.I.C.A. has been working. From the train Dr. Shiels was shown the Atlit Salt Works and the Kabara drainage. We detrained at Pardess Hanna, proceeded by car to Benjamina and Zikhron Ya'akov, where there was a large open-air gathering for tea....

p.365. December 15th, 1930. In the evening, when dining with the American Consul-General, I met the Treasurer and discussed the increased Egyptian tariff on Palestinian fruit. Davis recognizes that Palestine is handicapped as a Mandated country by being debarred from indulging in customs reprisals against any individual state. He has tried to tempt the Egyptians to a more favourable decision by offering them concessions in regard to certain of their exports, but without success. [Ed.: This is relevant inasmuch as the PR Annual Reports make frequent references to fluctuations in rail freight traffic to Egypt in consequence of customs tariff changes.]

p.375. Jan. 15th. 1931. A long interview with Pudsey, Director of Public Works, concerning the various roads etc. which I have discussed with the High Commissioner with a view to the employment of Jewish labour. Pudsey appeared disposed to be helpful, giving me the impression that he had received favourable instructions from H.E.

p.386f. Feb. 19th. 1931. Left for Trans-Jordan together with David Yellin. I had been meaning to pay my respects to King Hussein since his return from exile in Cyprus, remembering his very friendly and helpful reception when I headed a Jewish delegation to visit him at Amman in January 1924, when he was still the ruler of the Hedjaz..... We arrived at Amman at dusk, staying the night at the Philadelphia Hotel, the proprietor of which, a Christian Arab, told me that he had seen the population of Amman rise from 10,000 to 22,000 since the war, during which time the Christian population increased from five families to some 500 souls.

p.399. April 5th. 1931. Figures for Jewish and Arab labour on the Haifa Harbour construction revised to March 25, covering work both at the quarries and at the port, are as follows: Arabs 1051, Jews 209, i.e. Jews are 16% of the total of 1,260 men employed. Even now this is less than the Jewish proportion of the population, and far less than the much higher proportion of the Government revenues derived from Jewish sources.

p.405. April 23rd. 1931. Today I heard from the Director of Public Works that the High Commissioner has confirmed that a contract for a section of the Dead Sea Road be placed with the Jewish Federation of Labour at P.W.D. rates. When I intervened

last week with the High Commissioner it had been intended to give this section to an Arab contractor at twenty-six per cent below P.W.D. rates, as had been done with other sections. The decision is therefore a definite step forward and an actual application of the principle laid down in the Prime Minister's letter that Jews are not to be excluded from the possibility of a fair share of employment on public works at a fair wage. The logical result will be gradually to raise the standard of Arab life, which will be an excellent thing for the country.

p.423. June 5th. 1931. Meeting of the Executive together with labour representatives on the unemployment situation which is exceedingly bad, with three thousand Jewish unemployed....we have no means of improving matters except through persuading the Government to employ more Jews on public works and on the Haifa harbour construction. Afterwards I saw the Chief Secretary on the subject and asked for his help with regard to the Haifa Harbour on which only thirty-eight Jews are now employed as against 398 Arabs, in spite of repeated assurances from the Government that the number would be substantially increased with the beginning of the concrete work....

AT THE BOTTOM OF THE SEA.

22:17.

Andy Wilson of Cairo has sent me an excerpt from the British Community Association Newsletter of that city. In the report of the British Sub-Aqua Club for June 1993 is included (p.17) the following:

"We arrived (from Sharm El Sheikh) at the wreck of the "Dunraven", which is approximately 10 miles north-west of Ras Mohammed and in the Gulf of Suez....We then continued in a north-westerly direction for 2 hours until we reached the site of the "S.S. Thistlegorm" wreck, off the submerged reef known as Sha'b Ali. Everyone was more than a little excited to dive this wreck, especially after reading the write-up in the May '93 edition of the Diver Magazine. The S.S. Thistlegorm was built in 1940 in Sunderland, England. On 6th. October 1941, this 415 foot long ship was awaiting orders to move up through the Suez Canal after travelling from Glasgow via the Cape was bombed by two German warplanes from Crete at 1.30am with the loss of 9 lives.

.... We managed to dive the S.S. Thistlegorm three times and in those three dives we saw two locomotives (one on either side of the wreck), thousands of pairs of Waders (wellington boots), BSA motorbikes, Army trucks, 2 Anti-Aircraft guns, Rifles, opened boxes of 4" shells, Trailers, the list just goes on and on....."

What locos are these ? According to J.W.P. Rowledge ("Heavy Goods Engines of the War Department", Vol. 1, ROD 2-8-0, p.58) two of the ROD (LNER '04' Class) locos, Nos. 739 and 740, were lost at sea in transit to the Middle East in October 1941, but they were shipped from Birkenhead. They were (p.69, Table A9): LNER 6202, built Kitson 4910/12, and LNER 6335. Vol. 2 (Stanier 8F 2-8-0) p.53 lists several as lost at sea - but see Harakevet 16:8 (c), which refers to the two ROD's lost in October 1941 on an un-named ship. It looks pretty certain that it is this ship which is now identified as the S.S. Thistlegorm. Now - who will be the first to raise these relics ?

Pursuing this whimsical topic (see 17:11 and 21:21 for earlier entries on this topic), Samuel Rachdi of 'Fahrplancenter' in Winterthur has sent me notes of other places in South America which share this or another distinctive name: They include:

- a). Mexico: "Jordan" - between Ixtepec and Salina Cruz; standard-gauge, both goods and passenger services.
 "Nueva Palestina" (New Palestine), between Allende and Ciudad Acuna (near the US border); standard gauge, goods and passenger service. Both the above operated by the FNM - Ferrocarriles Nacionales de Mexico.
- b). Guatemala. "Palestina"; 105km., from Guatemala City (Pacific line - to Ocos); 422.8 km. from Puerto Barrios; goods and passenger services; operated by FEGUA (Ferrocarriles de Guatemala). 0.914m. gauge.
- c). Colombia. "Puerto Isaacs" ('Isaac's Port') - between Cali and Buenaventura (Pacific Port), metre gauge, goods trains only. Operated by FNC - Ferrocarriles Nacionales de Colombia.
- d). Chile. Further to 21:21, "Palestina" is a crossing station between EFE's North-South and FCAB's West-East lines. (All metre gauge). Passenger services ceased in 1981, though a pair of special passenger trains traversed the lines in April 1993 from Iquique via Palestina to Socampa and Salta (Argentina) and to Santos (Brazil) and back. Goods services still exist. (EFE = Chilean State Rly; FCAB = Antofagasta - Bolivia Rly, now also operating the Antofagasta - Socampa line.)
- e). Brazil. "Palestina" - between Ribeirao Preto and Araguari, 680 km. from Sao Paulo on the metre-gauge FEPASA line, with both passenger and goods services.
 "Belem" (the Portuguese name for Bethlehem). On the metre-gauge RFFSA line Belem - Braganca; this line closed ca. 1960.
 "Jafa" (= Jaffa); 476km. from Sao Paulo on the line to Panorama (1600mm gauge). Passenger and goods services; FEPASA.
 "Canaa" (= Canaan). Between Campinas and Ribeirao Preto, 351km. from Sao Paulo, metre gauge FEPASA line, both passenger and goods services.
 "Maquinista Isaac" (= Isaac the Locomotive Driver"; 555km. from Porto Alegre on the RFFSA metre-gauge line, goods services only.
 "Jordao" (= Jordan); station on the metre-gauge RFFSA line Souza - Mossoro (141km. from Souza) in the North-east of Brazil; goods services only.
 "Aarao Reis" (= King Aaron); 35km. from Teresina on the metre-gauge RFFSA line to Sao Luis, goods trains only. (RFFSA = Rede Ferroviaria Federal S.A.; FEPASA = Ferrovias Paulista S.A.)

I'm sure there are more ! On another tack, there is a SBB halt called 'Paradiso' in Lugano, Switzerland, and in Norway the junction for the Trondheim - Storlien and Bøddø lines is at Hell - a station where your editor once got sunburned in midsummer whilst photographing the freight shunting, thus allowing him truly to say he has "burned in Hell".....

From: p. 52, Ch. VII : "The Beersheba Victory".

"The XXth. Corps began its movement on the night of 20-21st. October [1917]. The whole Corps was not on the march, but a sufficient force was sent forward to form supply dumps and to store water at Esani for troops covering Desert Mounted Corps engineers engaged on the development of water at Khalasa and Asluj. Some of the Australian and New Zealand troops engaged on this work had previously been at these places.

In the early summer it was thought desirable to destroy the Turkish railway which ran from Beersheba to Asluj and on to Kosseima, in order to prevent an enemy raid on our communications between El Arish and Rafa, and the mounted troops with the Imperial Camel Corps had had a most successful day in destroying many miles of line and several bridges. The Turks were badly in need of rails for the line they were then constructing down to Deir Sineid, and they had lifted some of the rails between Asluj and Kosseima, but during our raid we broke every rail over some fifteen miles of track. Khalasa and Asluj being water centres became the points of concentration for two mounted divisions, and the splendid Colonials in the engineers sections worked at the wells as if the success of the whole enterprise depended upon their efforts, as, indeed, to a very large extent it did. Theirs was not an eight hours day. They worked under many difficulties, often thigh deep in water and mud, cleaning out and deepening wells and installing power pumps, putting up large canvas tanks for stores, and making water troughs.....

The principal work carried out by the XXth. Corps during the period of concentration consisted in laying the standard gauge line to Imara and opening the station at that place on October 28; prolonging the railway line to a point three-quarters of a mile north-north-east of Karm, where the station was opened on November 3; completing by October 30 the light railway from the east bank of the wadi Ghuzze at Gamli via Kark to Khasif; and developing water at Esani, Malaga and Abu Ghalyum for the use first by cavalry detachments and then by the 60th. Division. Cisterns in the Khasif and Imsiri area were stocked with 60,000 gallons of water to be used by the 53rd. and 74th. Divisions, and this supply was to be supplemented by camel convoys.....

At four o' clock in the morning [Oct. 27] the [post at El Buggar] was fired on by a Turkish cavalry patrol, and an hour later it was evident that the enemy intended to drive us off the ridge, his occupation of which would have given him the power to harass railway construction parties by shell-fire, even if it did not entirely stop the work...."

p.64f. "All through the many centuries since Abraham and his people led a pastoral life near the wells, Beersheba had been a meanly appointed place...the inhabitants were content to live the rude, simple lives of their forefathers. But the enterprising German arrived, and you could tell by his work how he intended to compel a change in the unchanging character of the people. He built a handsome Mosque - but before he was driven out he wired and mined it for destruction. He built a

seat of government, a hospital, and a barracks, all of them pretentious buildings for such a town, well designed, constructed of stone with red-tiled roofs, and the gardens were nicely laid out. There was a railway station and storehouses on a scale which would not yield a return on capital expenditure for many years, and the water tower and engine sheds were built to last longer than merely military necessities demanded. They were fashioned by European craftsmen, and the solidity of the structures offered strange contrast to the rough-and-ready native houses. The primary object of the Hun scheme was, doubtless, to make Beersheba a suitable base for an attack on the Suez Canal, and the manner of improving the Hebron road, of setting road engineers to construct zigzags up hills so that lorries could move over the road, was part of the plan of men whose vision was centred on cutting the Suez Canal artery of the British Empire's body.

.... When I entered Beersheba our troops held a line of outposts sufficiently far north of the town to prevent the Turks shelling it, and the place was secure except from aircraft bombs, of which a number fell into the town without damaging anything of much consequence. Some of the troops fell victims to booby traps. Apparently harmless whisky bottles exploded when attempts were made to draw the corks, and several small mines went up. Besides the mines in the Mosque there was a good deal of wiring about the railway station, and some rolling stock was made ready for destruction the instant a door was opened. The ruse was expected; some Australian engineers drew the charges, and the coaches were afterwards of considerable service to the supply branch."

from p.84: The enemy's positions ran from his Jerusalem-Beersheba railway about five miles south-east of Hareira, across the Gaza-Beersheba road to the wadi Sheria, on the northern bank of which was an exceedingly strong redoubt covering Hareira. The eastern portion of this line was known as the Kauwukah system, and between it and Hareira was the Rusdi system, all being connected by long communication and support trenches, while a light railway ran from the Rusdi line to dumps south of Sheria....."

["The 74th.] Division disposed from right to left the 231st. Brigade, the 229th. Brigade, and 230th. Brigade, who were to march from the south-east to the north-west to attack the right of the Kauwukah system of entrenchments on the railway....."

(p.85): At daybreak the troops advanced to the attack. The first part of the line in front of the 231st. Brigade was a serious obstacle. Two or three small outlying rifle pits had to be taken before the Division could proceed with its effort to drive the enemy out of Sheria and protect the flank of the 60th. Division, which had to cross the railway where a double line of trenches was to be tackled, the rear line above the other with the flank well thrown back and protected by small advanced pits to hold a few men and machine guns. the Turks held on very obstinately to their ground east of the railway, and kept the 74th. Division at bay till one o'clock in the afternoon, but the artillery of that Division had for some time been assisting in the wire-cutting in front of the trenches to be assaulted by the 60th. Division, and the latter

went ahead soon after noon, and with the assistance of one brigade of the 10th. Division, had won about 4000 yards of the complicated trench system and most of the Rusdi system by half-past two. The Londoners then swung to the north and occupied the station at Sheria, while the dismounted yeomanry worked round farther east....."

From Ch. X. 'Through Gaza into the Open', p.96ff.

"On the Gaza section of the front the XX1st Corps had been busily occupied with the preparations for a powerful thrust through the remainder of the defences on the enemy's right when the XXth, Corps should have succeeded in turning the main positions on the left.....It is very doubtful whether the Turkish General Staff gave the cavalry credit for being able to move across the Plain in the middle of November when the wadis are absolutely dry and the water-level in the wells is lower than at any other period of the year. Nor did they imagine that the transport difficulties for infantry divisions fed as ours were could be surmounted....."

Whatever they may have been, the Turkish calculations were completely upset. the cavalry's water troubles remained and no human foresight could have smoothed them away, but the transport problem was solved in this way. During the attack on Beersheba XX1st. Corps came to the aid of XXth. Corps by handing over to it the greater part of its camel convoys and lorries, so much transport, indeed, that a vast amount of work in the Gaza sector fell to be done by a greatly depleted supply staff. When Beersheba had been won and the enemy's left flank had been smashed and thrown back, the XXth. Corps repaid the XX1st. Corps, not only by returning what it had borrowed, but by marching back into the region of the railhead at Karm, where it could live with a minimum of transport and send all its surplus to work in the coastal sector. The switching over of this transport was a fine piece of organisation. On the allotted day many thousands of camels were seen drawn out in huge lines all over the country intersected by the wadi Ghuzze, slowly converging on the spots at which they would be barracked and rested before loading for the advance.

The lorries took other paths. there was no repose for their drivers. They worked till the last moment in the east, and then, caked with the accumulated dust of a week's weary labour in sand and powdered earth, turned westward to arrive just in time to load up and be off again in pursuit of infantry, some making the mistake of travelling between the West and East Towns of Gaza, while others took the longer and sounder but still treacherous route east of Ali Muntar and through the old positions of the Turks. These lorry drivers were wonderful fellows who laughed at their trials, but in the days and nights when they bumped over the uneven tracks and negotiated earth rents that threatened to swallow their vehicles, they put their faith in the promise of the railway constructors to open the station at Gaza at an early date. Even Gaza, though it saved them so many toilsome miles, did not help them greatly because of a terrible piece of road north-east of the station, but Beit Hanun was comfortable and for the relief brought by the railway's arrival at Deir Sineid they were profoundly grateful.



22.20. THE BRIDGE AT OFAKIM. By Sybil Ehrlich.

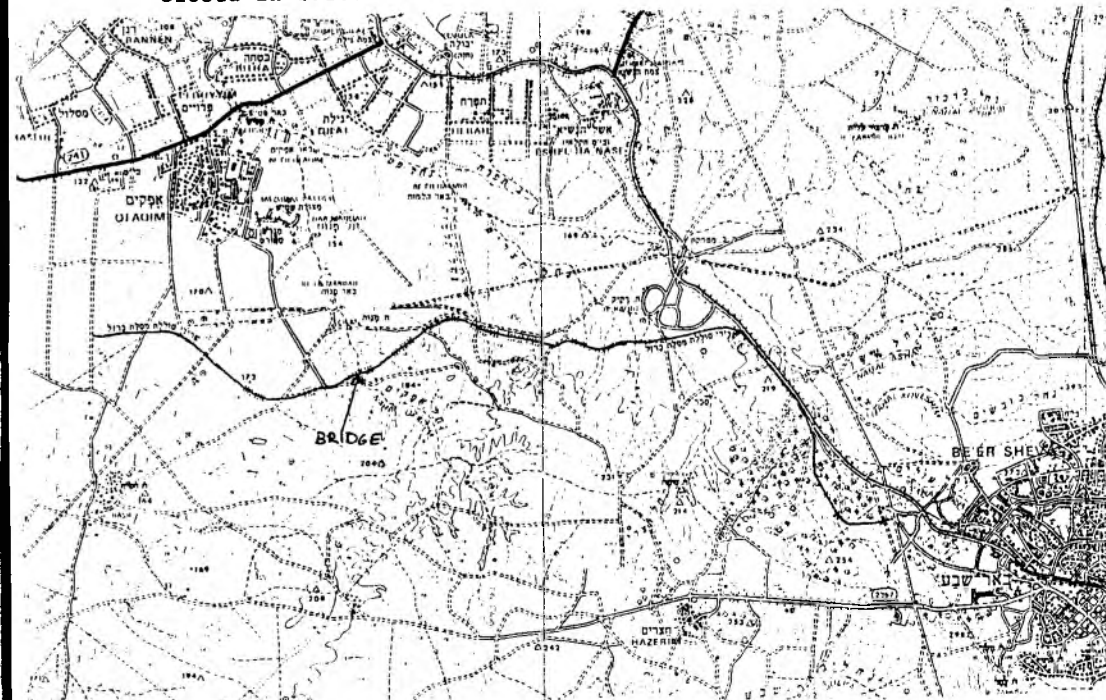
Sybil has sent several photos of a spectacular dinosaur-like relic in the Negev, near Ofakim, of whose existence she had been made aware by Yossi Feldman of the Council for the Preservation of Historic Buildings and Sites (see Harakevet 21:4:4), with help as to the location from Dan Gazit of Kibbutz Gvulot. She writes:

"I set out from Ofakim (frequent buses from Beersheba), walking along a metalled road, and just when I wondered whether I would ever reach the site I saw a sign pointing left to "Park Sayeret Shaked" (an army memorial - Dan had said there was a memorial there). I continued on a dirt road for about 10 minutes, and there it was ! It is in good condition, and only marginally graffitied.

The bridge is supported by seven pairs of huge cylindrical iron pillars, approx. circumference 155 inches. Supports for a standard-gauge track are still in place (distance between centre of each, approx 63 inches). There was nobody about, and I sat beneath the bridge eating my lunch, watching the birds, and listening to the wind whistling through the girders, giving the bridge a 'haunted' feeling.

The road from Beersheba to Ofakim is being widened at the point where the railway embankment runs parallel to it, and the embankment is rapidly ceasing to exist.

Notes: This bridge is clearly on the Rafah - Beersheba line, closed in 1928.



A CLOSER LOOK AT THE HEDJAZ BRANCH TO HAIFA.

By Paul Cotterell.

I am not too familiar with the old HR line from Haifa - the one colloquially known as The Valley Railway, "Rakevet HaEmek". I've walked the track (still there, in use, but now standard gauge) out as far as Nesher, and up the tremendously steep formation of the long-closed Wadi Rushmiyeh quarry branch. I've even got shots of a train working the 'Shemen' factory branch - this was dual gauge, then standard gauge; and I took photos of the Esslingen trip loco just before the branch closed (the track is still there). But apart from the immediate Haifa area my first-hand knowledge of the HR line is very patchy. Readers are, therefore, asked not to expect too much from the accompanying map and notes. Funnily enough, and despite my relative knowledge of the Haifa area, there should be few problems with the map details east of Nesher, for the stations and halts between here and El Hamme are easy enough to pinpoint. The real problems occur with identification of sites between Haifa and Nesher, as will be seen. The idea of this article is to give an outline guide to the stations and halts along the Haifa branch in Palestine/Israel. As ever, comments and corrections will be welcome.

I have referred to the following sources for my own guidance:

1. 'Hedjaz Railway' by R. Tourret.
2. 'Rakevet HaEmek' by David Tirosh. An excellent little Hebrew publication which gives much pertinent detail.
3. Public and Working timetables of PR (incomplete set).

Space has prevented a more detailed map of the complex Haifa area, but more can be gleaned from the sketch in Harakevet 2:3. My present map cannot be given any precise date as it contains features which did not all exist together at the same time. No doubt there will be the usual irritations caused by the spelling of place names: unavoidable, I fear.

It should be borne in mind that certain halts appear and disappear in the various timetables with often bewildering frequency. Sometimes this is due to a change of name, sometimes because trains simply stopped calling there. All very frustrating - hence this attempt to show how things once were.

[NB: Additional Notes added by Editor, from various sources including 1943 Intelligence Handbook and observations in 1982.].

Listing of Stations and Halts.

Haifa (East): Km. 0. Built 1905. Main hall and east wing blown up on 20 September 1946 by 'Etsel' group under command of Yoel Kimche (later responsible for the notorious hanging of two British army sergeants).

Kilo 2/Akko Junction/ Gesher Paz etc.: Unmarked halt for workmen.

Zur: Km.4.4. Unmarked halt. (Possible later named substitute for Km. 4.500 ?) Siding to quarry.

Km. 4.500: Unmarked (?) halt, possibly for nearby British military base. Remains of small building suggest

rudimentary station.

Beled esh Sheikh: Thought built about 1913 for opening of Akko line. Possible confusion with Km. 4.500 above (note on small building may refer to original Turkish station).

Tel Hanan: Unmarked halt.

Nesher: Unmarked Halt. Sidings to Cement works.

Yajur/Yagur: Km. 10.2. Built in Mandate period. 3-room stone-built station.

Alroy/ El Roy: Km.15. Built in Mandate. Small brick-built station/halt.

Kiryat Haroshet: Km.17. Built in Mandate. Small brick-built station/halt. In late 1930's became outer terminus for short-lived shuttle service (with Sentinel railcars ?) from Haifa East. Had Goods Platform.

Tel-e-Shemam/Kfar Yehoshua: Km. 21.8. Built 1905 (?). 2-storey stone-built station, plus seven outbuildings, believed still in existence. (At least two main buildings were being renovated in summer 1987). (In 1943, had 2 passing loops and water tower).

Kfar Baruch: Km.26.7. Built after 1926. Halt with small wooden shelter, not untypical of such halts once to be found on country branch lines in Britain. Nothing now remains. (As with those in UK).

Afula: Km.36.4. Built 1905. Later (1912) triangular junction added for line to Massoudieh. 2-storey stone-built station still exists, in use as town library. Four other railway buildings, including water tower, remain. Afula station was bombed by British air force on 19 September 1918 (see photo of air raid on p.199 of the Hebrew book 'Looking Twice at the Land of Israel', reviewed in 21:). On 1 November 1945 track in the station area was blown up by three men of the 'Palmach'.

Ain Harod, later Geva/Kfar Yehezkel: Km.45.7. Built 1922. Originally wooden building. This burned down and replaced with stone and brick structures, these still in existence. Station at sea level and there were signs advertising this fact along trackside nearby. 1 siding.

Tel Yosef: Km.48.7. Built late 1920's (?). Halt with small wooden shelter.

Shatta/Bet Hashitta: Km. 51. Single stone station building of 2-storey height. This is now part of Shatta prison and used as a carpentry shop. Formerly had a loop, siding, goods shed and platform.

Hassadeh: Km.5.7. Halt dating from 1937. Signpost only.

Beisan/Bet She'an: Km.59.2. Built 1905. Sultan Abdul Hamid wanted to encourage local agricultural development on surrounding marshland that he owned, so a large station was provided. Six stone buildings and water tower still standing. Formerly had 2 sidings, also a siding to a quarry.

Km.61.5. Former siding to PWD Quarry.

Bet Yosef: Km.69.8. Presumably signposted halt only. No remains today. Formerly had Goods platform & shed.

Jisr el Mejamie/Gesher Nahalim/Gesher Naharayim: Km.67.5. Built 1905 (?). Lowest railway station in the world

(-246 metres). Station destroyed by Israeli army (date ?) to prevent its use as hideout for terrorists. Remains of buildings, track and HR wagons still to be seen. (Adjacent to Former Police Tegar Fort at Gesher). 2 loops.

Km. 78.0.: Sidings to Palestine Electric Corporation.

Naharayim: Km. 79.0. Built 1937 following construction of the Rutenberg Power Station (1932). Concrete building in period style - remarkable resemblance to roadside gas /petrol stations of the time in Britain: "rounded corner" style of architecture then favoured also by the Southern Railway in Britain. Station still extant, very close to Jordanian border. (NB: Power station destroyed by Iraqi Army in 1948).

Delhamiya/Ashdot Ya'akov: Km.81.7. Dates from after 1935.

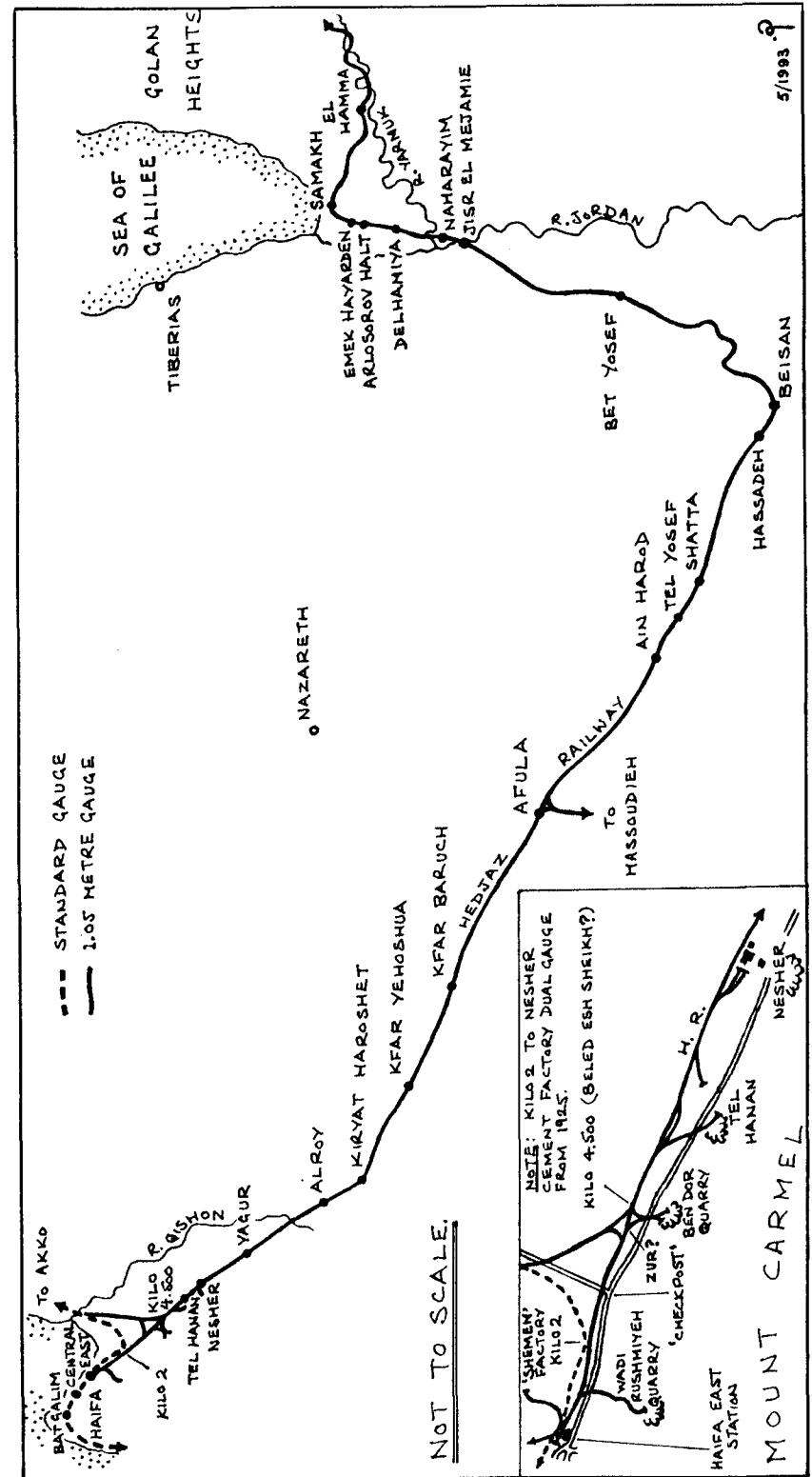
Signposted halt only. Quarry siding.

Arlosorov Halt: Km.84.2. Dated 1937. Corrugated-iron shelter. Nothing now remains.

Emek Hayarden: Km.85. Dated 1936. Temporary halt replaced by Arlosorov Halt (see above); Emek Hayarden had only a signpost, but boasted at least one siding and was of some local importance for freight traffic.

Samakh/Tzemakh: Km.87. Built 1905. 2-storey stone station, freight depot, engine shed, turntable and water tower etc. Main station between Haifa and Dera'a. Loco exchange point. Nearby jetty on Sea of Galilee had rails laid along it but no known evidence that these connected with the HR. Battle between Australian cavalry and Turkish forces fought in and around station on 25 September 1918. (See Harakevet 6:10). Ruined station building (for many years part of Israeli army camp) still stands. Had 4 loops.

El Hamme/Hamat Gader: Km. 95.3. Built 1905. 2-storey stone building still in existence. This was the last station before leaving Palestine, and border and customs facilities were provided.





22.22.

"Junction Station" - later Wadi Surar. Two engines and 45 trucks were captured here by British forces on 14/11/17 - here is a 2-6-2T of the 2419-2421 series with auxiliary water-tanks on a bogie flat, together with an HR van, several 4-wheel DHP open wagons and HR bogie flats, and what looks like a strange 4-wheel composite wagon - perhaps a Brake Van ?

(Photo: Imperial War Museum, Ref. Q 12711.)