

HARAKEVET

הרכבת

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A Quarterly Journal on the Railways of the Middle East
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24:1. Israel Railways General Motors "G12" Bo-Bo No. 116 on train 501, halted at Bar Giyyora on the Jerusalem line, 20/10/93.
(Photo Tal Dekel)

With issue 24 the sixth 'Series' of 'Harakevet' is completed; subscribers will find with this issue subscription forms for the next series. As costs have stabilised (thanks partly to the sale of back numbers) the price is being kept to the same level. My thanks to those who have subscribed so far - a fairly high proportion of copies are sent free of charge to appropriate archives and libraries, so subscriptions help to subsidise the dissemination of this current and historical information to places where students in future years may be able to find and use it.

Production has also settled down for now - at least, until I ever upgrade my word-processor ! Material continues to flow in, supplemented by my own researches, and it must be our hope that the increasing investment in the railways of Israel, combined with hopes of increased international co-operation and friendlier relations in the Middle East, may yet lead to a greater awareness of the potential importance of rail travel in the region. Another packed issue - Enjoy !



24:3. Hedjaz Railway 2-8-2 No. 256 (Hartmann 4025, built 1918) at Afule, March 1943. Class 1.H. (Photo: Len Redshaw).

1. DROPPING THE SAND. On 14/2 the 14.55 Tel Aviv - Jerusalem was bucketing along at a high rate of knots approaching Kfar Habbad Halt when dust and ballast suddenly blew up beneath the train and the driver made an emergency brake application. A sandbox had dropped off G12 115 and become caught in the rear bogie. After several attempts to move the sandbox clear by hand the driver tried running the train backwards and forwards in a further attempt to cut holding wires. When this proved unsuccessful a resort was again made to the toolbox and the offending sandbox was eventually cut away. Twenty-five minutes had been lost. At Lod 115 was replaced by 116, and a delayed IC3 set from Rehovot was able to get away for Tel Aviv. The 14.55 lost another ten minutes due to the loco changing at Lod. The 14.55 was due to cross an afternoon train from Jerusalem at Bet Shemesh but this had to make a connection at Tel Aviv with a working to Haifa and Nahariyya, so was allowed forward to Na'an Junction. The 14.55 lost a further 15 minutes waiting at Na'an for its opposite number to clear the section.

2. NO OIL PAINTING ?

A new TV commercial for Tambour Paints features a grounded driving unit from the old Esslingen railcar sets being painted a striking deep blue colour. The location cannot be made out, but it appears to be out in the country somewhere.

3. DERAILMENT. Some 4½ kms. of track near Be'er Ya'akov were severely damaged when part of a freight train derailed on 21/2, a wagon being dragged along the sleepers before the train was brought to a halt. The line from Lod through Rehovot was closed completely for two days until basic emergency repairs were carried out. Thereafter passenger trains only were run until 2/3 when freights began operating again. A drastic speed restriction is in force over the affected section, leading to extensive delays to the passenger trains.

4. MORE DOUBLE TRACK. Double track working north of Haifa was implemented between Kilo 2 and Qishon on and from 22/2.

5. WAGON OVERHAULS. An article in 'Maariv' stated that a new works at Beer Sheba had been invited by Israel Chemicals to refurbish 500 wagons; the Ports and Railways Authority have already ordered the refurbishment of 82 flat wagons.

6. SQUARING THE CIRCLE. An article in "BeKibbutz" 16/2/94 informs that archaeologists have begun excavating the pit of the former turntable at Tzemach station. An illustration shows several pits already dug, and the caption expresses the hope that, with greater Peace in the Middle East, Syria might consider donating a former HR loco.

a). Re: 23:5. Zvi Rechnitz has pointed out something I hadn't noticed about the new timetable - Haifa Mizrach has been omitted once again !

b). re: 23:9, the Bet Yehoshua Accident; Hans Kohut has sent a few cuttings of the period, from which it is clear that (ironically) one of the trains contained a large party of journalists on their way to a Press Conference with Menachem Savidor, the then IR General Manager, concerning railway safety and the need for a line to Eilat.

c). Re: 23:10. Paul Cotterell thinks that the coach featured in this incident would be more likely to be the ex-LSWR Pay Coach, PR No. 77, than that shown in 20:24.

d). Re: 23:11. Donald Silk of Oxford writes that, by the time he reached Egypt in 1947, the vendors' cry had changed to "Eggs a' bread and Egyptian Mail" !

e). Re: 23:14. A Sinai Mineral Railway. The Sinai Mining Co. was a British-owned firm established in 1913, and it operated two lines in the Sinai Desert, both being on the Gulf of Suez. The first, of 2ft/60cm. gauge, ran from Ras Mala'ab port to a gypsum mine about two kilometres to the north. The second line was of 2' 6" gauge; it ran from the port of Abu Zneime for about 16 kms., and then linked up with an overhead cableway to manganese mines at Umm Bugma. The Sinai Mining Co. was nationalised by the Egyptians in 1956 as the Sinai Manganese Co. All rail operations are believed to have ceased no later than 1980.

The Sinai Mining Co. roster was certainly much more extensive than that given in 'The Railways of Palestine and Israel'.

[NB: 1995 should read 1955 in the article ! Apologies. Ed.]

f). Re: 23:17. Despite the caption being faithfully reproduced from the source book, this photo in fact shows the north quarry of the Haifa Harbour Works at Atlit about 1931.

g). Re: 23:20. Yaakov Wahrman of Jerusalem, an expert on the history of Eretz Yisrael, has sent a note to point out that the author of '1000 Gourds to Beersheba' was in fact Joseph Yekutieli (1897 - 1982); he was active in sports, initiated the Maccabiah Games, edited the 'HaMaccabi' journal (a periodical for physical education), etc. In 1923 he organised sports activities for Jews, Arabs and English; in 1979 he received the Israel Prize for his life's work. A biography appears on pp. 1157f of Vol. 3 of D. Tidhar's 1958 "Encyclopaedia".

This means that the young officer with the heavy responsibility was only about 18 years old in 1915 !

h). Re: 23:21: "A Turkish Light Railway Rediscovered". Unfortunately the last few sentences of this article were omitted at the printing stage. The missing section reads:

"It was also the fourth and last of the Turkish railways that helped to hold the front against British pressure. These four vital lines were the ones that led to Beit Hanun and Huj (in the west), the 16th. Division, and Beer Sheba itself (in the east).

Note: Pick included here a footnote referring again to Kress, p. 220, adding that "The 16th. Division line is not shown on any map, Turkish (German) or British. However, the area held by the 16th. Division, and Abu Hareira redoubt, are shown by practically all relevant maps."

In fact the existence of the Abu Hareira branch is confirmed by a WWI aerial photo reproduced in B.Z. Kedar's book "Looking Twice at the Land of Israel" (p.48) where the light railway formation clearly shows up."



24:6. Hunslet 60 cm. gauge 4-6-0T (HE 1255/1917) as H1 of the Palestine Electric Corporation during building of the Rutenberg hydro-electric power station at Naharayim about 1930. It is lettered with the Hebrew initials of the PEC.

Photo: Israel Electric Corporation (Paul Cotterell Collection).

Andrew has just completed a professional assignment in Egypt, and has sent the following observations:

a). Sinai Line. The Egyptian Press in mid-December 1993 reported the official adoption of a plan to rebuild the line across Sinai. There was mention of 'rebuilding links to the outside world'. It is unclear what this means in practical terms (such as the spending of money !) but Egypt has been developing a coal mine in northern Sinai, so there could be good traffic reasons for restoring at least some of the line.

b). USA Tanks and the Film Industry. On following up rumours of a USA tank loco said to be stored in Abu Zaabel works of the Egyptian Railways, it was discovered it had gone in November 1993 to a T.V. studio at 6th. October City (west of Cairo on the Baharia road.). This place was visited on 18/12/93; it belongs to the State Radio and TV Authority and is a brand-new site which is being equipped with various sets for shooting TV programmes; the railway equipment is part of the "Egyptian Village" set. About 150 metres of track has been laid, single in the middle, doubling at each end; a station is being built at one end, with perhaps another to follow at the other end in time. There is a level crossing in the middle, and two signals (of the three-bracket type).

Stock on site consists of a 4-wheel low-side wagon with high ends, a 6-wheel 3rd.class coach No. 19075 (Franco-Belge, La Croyere 1899), one coach (No. 6512) built by Ganz Mavag 1966 from the 'Tadpole' express diesel sets which were in main-line service until recently, 0-6-0 diesel shunter No. 4339, and USA 0-6-0T No.1160, which is Vulcan Iron Works 4467 of 1943 (plate on smokebox), USA No. 1994 of 1943 (circular plate on smokebox saddle). The steam engine is complete although obviously unused for a very long time - worn-out tyres, double-flanged almost and very thin !

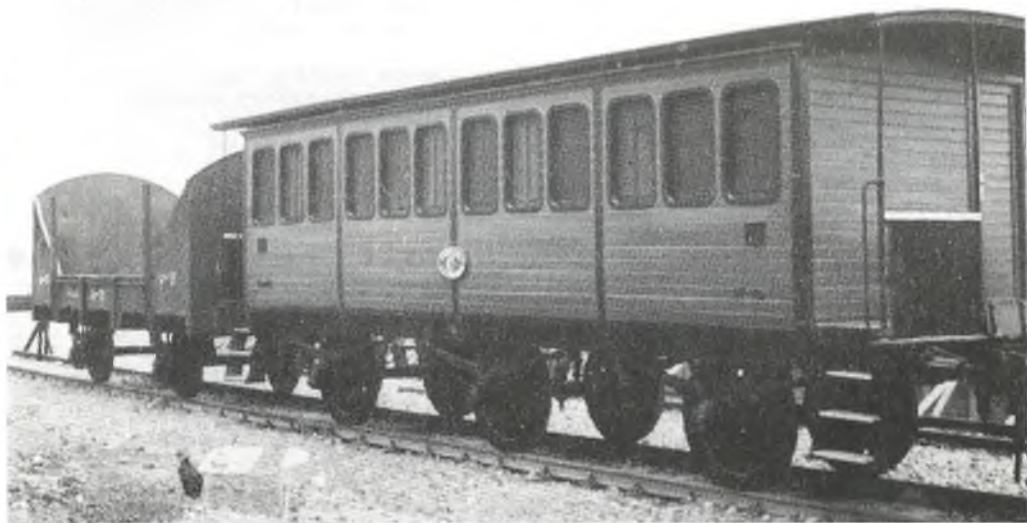
Tourret in "USATC Locomotives" pp.49-50 lists the histories of the thirty USATC tanks that served in the Middle East; As at 1/8/44 eight such locos in use on the ESR, and No. 1994 was one of three in service with the army in Egypt; it worked on the Ataka and Adabiya Bay Military Railway in 1944 and was named "Sapper", and towards the end of that year was renumbered WD 71304, reverting to MEF stock in 1945; in 1954 (Hughes p.57 says 1952) it was renumbered to WD 306. After this the trail goes dead, though sister locos were sold to the ESR. The Vulcan works numbers for the batch USATC 1952-2001 were 4425-474 of 1943.

The VIW plate was quite clean and might have been non-original although there would appear to be no reason to invent a number. The USA plate was thoroughly dirty and looked to have been there a very long time.

There was also a large pile of signal levers, rodding, pulleys etc. for the construction of a signal box, though it is unclear how room would be found for this !

Andy has sent several photos - some reproduced here.

c). The Lower Egypt Railway (metre gauge - see Hughes p.28) closed its last lines about 1990 and has been torn up except for the Mansura Yard which is largely intact and full of rolling stock being slowly dismantled in August 1993. This included 24 B-B diesel locos by "23rd. August Works" of Romania, four diesel railcars, lots of spartan metal bogie coaches (of modern 1970's-1980's build), a 5-ton hand crane on an old rail chassis, a 4-wheel staff/breakdown motor car, but no freight stock at all. The upper half of a steam loco cab was dumped. Some standard gauge track has been extended into the narrow-gauge yard for carriage sidings.



From "Fahrplancenter News" No. 12, published by Shmuel Rachdi, Tellstrasse 45, CH-8400 Winterthur, Switzerland - highly recommended ! - comes the following information:

The Rah-e-Ahan Iran (RAI) (Iranian State Railways) has apparently returned to service the French-built Turbotrains which, during the Iran-Iraq War, had been removed from Tehran for safe keeping against air attack and 'mothballed' elsewhere. The new timetable shows a twice-weekly Tehran-Mashhad service and a daily Tehran-Zanjan service employing air-conditioned stock and working 30% faster than the normal trains. Seat reservations and supplements are also necessary.

The RAI timetable shows the following long-distance services:

A. Daily Return Services:

Tehran - Tabriz. Two. All classes, only 1st. a/c.
 Tehran - Maregeh. One. (ditto)
 Tehran - Mianeh. One. (ditto)
 Tehran - Zanjan. One. (All air-conditioned).
 Tehran - Gorgan. One.
 Tehran - Mashhad. Four (two Air-conditioned), 1 Sleeper.
 Tehran - Ahvaz. Four.
 Tehran - Dezful. One.

B. Three times weekly, Return Services:

Tehran - Kerman. One. (All air-conditioned).
 Tehran - Sirjan. One.
 Tehran - Esfahan. One.
 Tehran - Gorgan. One.
 Tehran - Mashhad. One.
 Tehran - Tabriz. One.

C. Twice-weekly Return Services:

Tehran - Mashhad. One. (All air-conditioned).

D. Once-weekly Return Services:

Tehran - Razi - Turkey. One. (1st. & 2nd. only).
 Zahedan - Mirjawa - Quetta. One. (1st. & 2nd. only).

The service between Tehran and Djulfa, thence further via Nachitshevan to Erevan is now once-weekly, operated by Russian stock, but frequently suspended due to tensions between Armenia and Azerbaijan. The through coaches to Moscow no longer run.

Key points from the new timetable are:

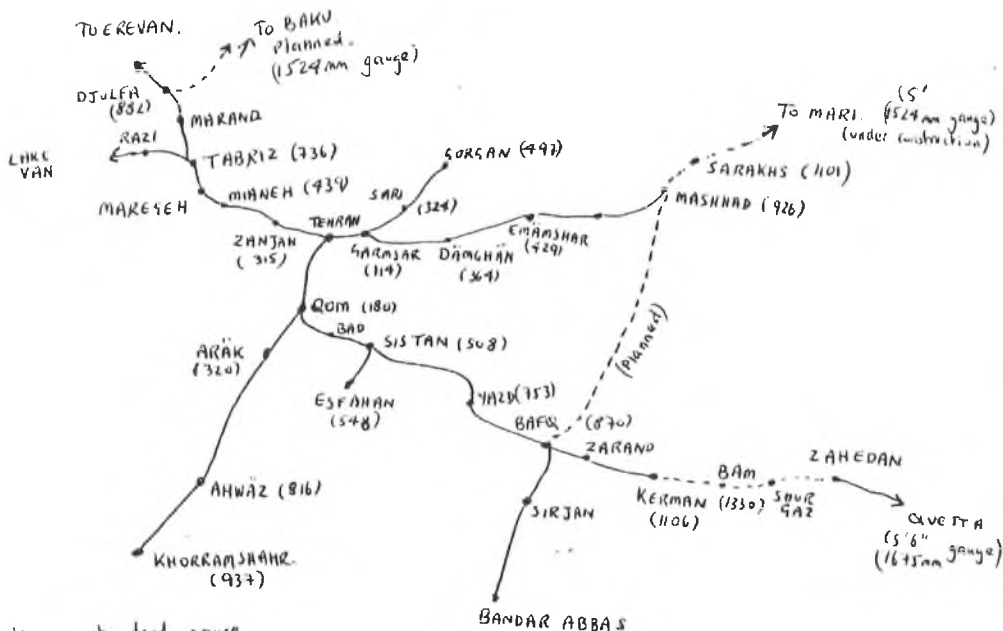
- a). The reinstatement of the service between Tehran and Isfahan;
- b). The introduction of services over part of the new extension from Bafq to Bandar Abbas. Construction work towards Bandar Abbas continues, and occasional passenger trains already penetrate beyond Sirjan.
- c). From early 1994 the stretch from Ahvaz to Khorramshah has also seen service restored - this line was badly damaged in the war. It would appear that two or three of the daily services to Ahvaz are extended to Khorramshah.

There are also several suburban services in the Tehran

area - details unclear - and additional trains on Moslem festivals between Tehran and the holy city of Qom.

As well as refurbishment of existing lines, construction works continue also at full spate on the line from Mashhad to Sarakhs with a view to extension on Russian gauge into Turkmenistan; the line to Bandar Abbas should be completed within this year, although the planned electrification of this line has been postponed on cost grounds. Works on the section between Kerman and Bam and further Bam to Shur Gaz have begun, with a view to completing the link with Zahedan before the year 2000 - the stated aim of the Iranian government. With this link a further section of the Trans-Asian Railway would be completed.

The Iranian Rail Network. (Schematic).



All Lines standard gauge unless indicated;
 Single track.
 Figures in brackets = km. from Tehran.
 NOT TO SCALE.

WLR. 3/97.
 (After Ruchdi)

From "The Locomotive Magazine and Railway Carriage and Wagon Review", Vol. XXIV, for the year 1918.

Some items of relevance:

1. No. 305 (Jan. 15th. 1918) has (pp.6-8) an article on "Locomotives of the Egyptian State Railways" by E.L.Ahrons, continued from p.209 of October issue, Vol. XXII, and with three photos.
2. March 15th. 1918. p.55 has an article on Caledonian Rly. 10T vans, which includes the note "The well-known engineering firm, Messrs. Clayton & Shuttleworth Ltd. of Lincoln, have recently taken up the manufacture of railway rolling stock...". [Claytons built some PR coaches in the 1920's].
3. p.65f. has a continuation of the Ahrons articles on ESR locos.
4. No. 308 (April 15 1918) has a photo of a loco works plate mounted on a board; the caption reads: "Bagdad Railway- The reproduction from a photograph...depicts an interesting trophy of war which has now been placed in the main hall of the Victoria Terminus of the Great Indian Peninsula Ry. at Bombay. This is the number and nameplate of the first locomotive of the German Bagdad Railway, which was captured from the Turks on March 11th., 1917, on the taking of Bagdad."

The photo shows three plates, reading "BAGDAD" and on three lines: "A. BORSIG / BERLIN-TEGEL / F.No.8476 1912", and a big figure "1". On the board is inscribed: "Name plate, Number and Makers Plate from the first Locomotive on the German Bagdad Railway, captured by the British Troops on the Taking of Bagdad on the 17th. March 1917. Presented by Captain N.L. Inkson D.S.O. I.A.R.O. Railway Department, Mesopotamia. (District Locomotive Superintendent G.I.P.R.).

This engine which had been partially wrecked by the retreating Turks was repaired by Captain Inkson and brought into service within a week, in time for the British advance on Samarra".

According to Hughes (p.94) Baghdad Rly. No. 1 was an 0-6-0T, later renumbered 401.
5. Issue 311, July 15th. 1918, pp.113f: An Illustrated article on "Military Railways in Mesopotamia".

"Interesting evidence of the work being done by our engineers in Mesopotamia is afforded in the accompanying illustrations. It will be remembered that about 90 miles of the Baghdad Railway, between Baghdad and Samarra, was opened for traffic by the Germans early in 1915. It was a bad blow to Turkish prestige when the city of Baghdad was captured by British troops on March 11th. 1917, a success which was rapidly followed by the capture of Samarra station on April 24th. Five locomotives were captured at Baghdad, and a further sixteen at Samarra, as well as a considerable quantity of other rolling stock, all of German make. Although the enemy had damaged the rolling stock as much as possible, our engineers, with very limited appliances, soon had the locomotives repaired, and the railway in full work. Its value

has been well proved in the later military operations.

Our first picture shows a six-coupled side tank engine, No. 752, shunting in the yard at Baghdad, hauling a tender for another engine. (Later 406 and 1206; Hanomag 7134 of 1914. Hughes.) The next illustration shows a 2-6-0 Mogul type goods engine running near Baghdad with a construction train. The pump for the air brake can just be distinguished on the right-hand side of the smokebox, but we understand the stock on the British-operated lines is being equipped with the vacuum brake. The engine is a superheater built by Borsig, of Berlin, with coupled wheels 4ft. 11-in. diameter; cylinders 21½-in. diameter by 24¾-in. stroke, with Walschaert gear. Working pressure 170lb. per sq.in. Heating surface 1,400 sq.ft. Grate area 24 sq.ft. Weight in working order 59 tons, of which 44 tons are on the drivers. Tractive force, 17,200 lbs.

[Note: Hughes p.94 lists three 2-6-0's by Hanomag and Henschel 2-8-0's, but none by Borsig. Ed.]

Our third picture shows a saloon carriage body, built at the carriage shops of one of the leading Indian Railways, mounted on a German underframe and wheels. The characteristic German spring gear will be noticed. [It is marked "Baghdad Samarra Railway No. 2 Reserved".]

When the war ends a network of railways will be wanted in Mesopotamia, for abundant proof exists that its soil is abnormally fertile. From Baghdad railways will radiate to link it with railways in other lands. From Tiflis in the Caucasus a line runs to Kars and to the Russian frontier. If carried on to Erzerum and Erzingan, to a projected railway, it would link up Southern Russia with Anatolia and hence with Western Europe, while south it would have connection with the line projected through Kharput and Mardin, to join the main Baghdad Railway. Lines from Baghdad to India have also been projected, one of which will pass through Ispahan in Persia and Kandadar in Afghanistan, another taking a more southerly Persian route passing through Baluchistan. The extension south of Baghdad of the main line will pass to Basrah, and no doubt to Koweit on the Persian Gulf. The future may easily see a very important railway running westwards from Baghdad. It may cross the Euphrates near the bridge of boats at Feluja. Passing by Ramadie, where the British have recently been victorious, it may run northwards to Abu Kemal, and leaving the river there, move directly on to Tadmor, thence dipping south west to Damascus and Beyrut, thus joining the Persian Gulf and the Mediterranean. This line would make a junction with the Hedjaz Ry. to Medina and Mecca, which will no doubt shortly join the British military lines penetrating Southern Palestine.

Since the war began Germany has constructed a line through Palestine to the Egyptian frontier, while the British have built one across the desert of Sinai, affording direct railway service between Cairo and Palestine. The swing bridge over the Suez Canal at Cantara [sic] was completed and opened for traffic on May 15th., a significant symbol of a new era."

6. Vol. XXIV, No. 316, December 14th. 1918, p.201. A photo of a loco boiler with the bottom-left-hand corner of the firebox badly blown outwards by an explosive charge. The caption reads: "The photograph...shows the boiler of a locomotive of

the Baghdad Railway, captured from the Germans, after being dismantled at the Parel shops, Bombay, of the Great Indian Peninsula Ry, where it had been sent for repair. The rent in the firebox has been caused by a dynamite cartridge placed inside the box."

From Vol. XXV.

7. On p.100 of issue No. 322 of June 14th. 1919 is an illustrated article "Wagons for the Mesopotamian Railways."

"A number of standard gauge 12-ton goods wagons have been built in India at different railway shops for service on the above lines. The design is one based on the requirements of the military authorities. It provides removable sides and ends, in addition to the usual side doors. It will be noticed that the draft and buffing gear is of the British standard pattern, a somewhat radical departure for Indian practice. The photographs were taken at the Khargpur shops of the Bengal Nagpur Railway."

[Editor's Notes: it is interesting that when the British took over a standard-gauge line in Mesopotamia, they had to import stock from India, which could provide metre-gauge stock later but had to build 4ft.8½in. stock specially. Whilst the buffing and coupling gear had to be consistent with that on the captured locomotives - i.e. of European type - the Continental air brakes were replaced by a type more familiar to British and Indian railwaymen ! An interesting example of different cultural and engineering influences. The captured line was of course built to European standards as it was intended to be a part of the link with Europe.]

8. Issue of July 15th. 1919, p.112: A photo of a German-type 0-4-0T "of the first engine to be turned out of the Shaiba Repair Shops, Mesopotamia and, incidentally, it is one of the six German locomotives captured by the British Army at Baghdad. It is built to suit the metre gauge". [There are no identifying marks on this loco, but it appears identical to the one pictured on p. 91 of Hughes, where it is identified as No.351, Borsig 7597 of 1910, preserved on a plinth outside Shalchiya Workshops in 1966. Hughes, p.94 note (g) mentions "several" such locos, at least three by Borsig, possibly five. Ed]

9. Same issue, pp.157-160: Continuation of the Ahrons article on ESR locos.

10. No. 327. pp. 186-190. An illustrated article by "R.L.B." entitled "By rail from Alexandria to Aleppo." Reproduced in full elsewhere.

By "R.L.B." From: "The Locomotive", Vol. XXV, Issue 327, November 15th., 1919, pp. 186-190.

This forms a fascinating parallel and contrast to Ron Garraway's Holiday Memories of 1919, (See 7:15) tracing (largely) the same route. There are some historical inaccuracies - I have added some notes at the end - but it reflects what an intelligent, informed enthusiast was likely to know in 1919. So much was then so new - many of the locos and lines almost brand-new - and the information is fresh ! All place-names are given as in the text.

"A trip by rail from Alexandria to Aleppo is full of interest to a traveller and especially so to a railway enthusiast. On leaving Alexandria we notice a few 2-8-0 tank engines, built by Baldwins, and gathering speed, pass through well-cultivated land until we arrive at Ismailia where there is a small engine shed. Some 0-6-0 tender goods and possibly a 2-4-0 or a 4-4-0 may also be seen. Characteristic features of the Egyptian State Rys. locos are the copper rimmed chimneys, brass domes and safety valve covers, inside cylinders and outside bearings. They are painted green and bear a very marked resemblance to the earlier Armstrong locos on the G.W.Ry. From Ismailia we go to Kantara, which was, quite recently, a "City of Tents"; it is situated on the desert and the Suez Canal runs quite close to the railway. Kantara was a large base camp for the E.E.F. Crossing the Suez Canal by a swing bridge we leave Kantara East and start crossing the Sinai desert by the Palestine Military Ry. For miles around nothing much but sand is visible; we approach the shores of the Mediterranean through very uninteresting country from a scenic point of view, but nevertheless the seat of much hard fighting. We pass through Romani, Katea (an oasis in the desert), and El Arish (on the sea shore), where there was a large R.A.M.C. Hospital, to Gaza, then north-eastwards through Esdud, and Tiluil until we arrive at Ludd. Like Kantara, Ludd was an important base camp for the E.E.F. troops going up to or coming down from the line. Immense quantities of rations, stores, shells etc. were handled here while the war was in progress. The track is double from Kantara for several miles, but then becomes single. Trains are worked on the "Control" system, somewhat similar to that used in Canada and some parts of the U.S.A. Crossing places are arranged at most stations. Needless to say, trains stop at every station, either to or from Kantara. The line from Kantara to Ludd was laid down by the "Railway Troops" Royal Engineers, about 1½ miles per day was the usual construction, but the greatest progress in any day at one railhead was two miles. This, under a scorching hot sun with none too much drinking water, was an accomplishment of which they may be justly proud and a great credit to all concerned. At Ludd may be seen 0-6-0 E.S.Ry., 0-6-0 L. & S.W.Ry. and some 4-4-0 and 4-6-0 (Nos. 871 to 880 superheaters, Walschaerts gear) built by Baldwins in 1916-1917 (see July "Locomotive".) The 4-6-0's are fitted with double-bogie tenders and have all modern improvements; they can haul fifty loaded 12-ton wagons A metre gauge line used to run from here

to Jerusalem, via "Junction", but apparently the locos then in use, 4-4-0 tender and 2-6-2 (Baldwin) [*1] were not powerful enough to haul the trains up the long and severe inclines to Jerusalem, so the 4 ft. 8½ in. was laid down in its place; there are a few stations with crossing places en route. Before entering "Junction", as it was called in military parlance, a fine bridge is crossed. Under the river flows a river or "wadi". The remains of the old bridge which had been blown up by the Germans and Turks were lying in the river bed at the time we were there, early in 1918, and a L.& N.W.Ry. 0-6-0 tender goods was at work in the yard near by.

Between Artuf and Jerusalem for twenty-five miles there are severe inclines of one in eighty with sharp curves and no length of straight. In the early morning with the rails greasy from the heavy dew, it was quite a common occurrence for trains to stick here, on account of the engines slipping. This was especially the case when the British Red Cross Hospital train was brought empty to Jerusalem for conveying hospital patients to places down the line. This train consisted of six 8-wheeled L.& S.W.Ry. coaches and was nearly always worked by a L.& S.W.Ry. 0-6-0 tender goods engine. On alternate days, a Turkish Red Crescent Hospital train was used for conveyance of Indian troops. This consisted of seven six-wheel coaches; both these trains were fitted with air-brakes. [*2] The load for the locos was about 165 tons; all goods and ration trains were banked in the rear. If a train did stick on this bank, the yard engine had to come out and couple on to the leading engine. For some time the yard loco was No. 99, a 0-6-0 saddle tank with inside cylinders and bearings, built by Manning, Wardle & Co. in 1891. Later on, this was sent away and a Baldwin 2-6-0 with an E.S.Ry. tender took its place. The writer has seen freight trains come into Jerusalem drawn by an E.S.Ry. 0-6-0, piloted by a Baldwin 2-6-0, and banked by a L.& S.W.Ry. 0-6-0.

After the enemy had been driven out of Jerusalem (the fight took place at "Nebi Samwil" a few miles out and situated in the hills), a narrow gauge line was laid from Jerusalem to Ramallah and Bireh, where a large supply dump was situated. The narrow gauge yard was just below the broad gauge one. The line to Ramallah took a circuitous route, leaving the yard the train for a short distance travelled in the opposite direction to its destination, then traversed a sharp curve and started climbing the hills. A few miles out at Shafat, the line crossed the road to Ramallah and then followed the contour of the hillside until coming round a long curve it entered Ramallah yard; there was no turntable and a triangle was used for turning engines. The narrow gauge engines used were 4-6-0 side tanks with long "stove pipe" chimneys and large domes with safety valves and chime whistles. Walschaerts gear was used and also central couplings. These locos were built by Baldwins. After the "stunt" had taken place, the locos and rolling stock were taken away and only the track remained, although at that time it seemed highly probable this would also be removed.

Returning to Ludd and journeying toward Damascus, we pass a few small stations, until Tul Keram is reached. For some miles before arriving at Tul Keram, a small narrow gauge line runs more or less parallel. This was a Turkish railway and has

been destroyed in several places. Large quantities of the rails have been taken up and stacked in "dumps" for removal when required. Close to the station at Tul Keram a large number of ammunition wagons, limbers and gun-carriages were collected. They all had the familiar "crescent and star" painted on them. These belonged to the Turks and were captured by the Allies, when Tul Keram was taken.

We next proceed through Ahudeira and reach Haifa, where we have a fine view of the sea, with Acre opposite; the station is a fairly substantial stone structure with low platforms. The broad gauge ends at Haifa, the line to Damascus being of narrower gauge (1.05 metres - 3 ft. 5½ in.) There are loco repair shops and running sheds with a great variety of locos. In the standard gauge shed, were 0-6-0 Egyptian State Rys., 0-6-0 L.& N.W.Ry., 0-6-0 L.& S.W.Ry., 2-4-0 Egyptian State Rys., 2-6-0, 4-4-0, 4-6-0 Baldwin superheaters.

In the narrow gauge shed were seen some 0-6-0, 2-6-2 and 2-8-0 side tanks, with Belpaire fireboxes, built in Germany. [*3] Some 2-8-0 tender engines built by A. Borsig of Berlin and 0-8-0[*4] built by the Saxon Locomotive Works of Chemnitz are used for working the trains.

From Haifa, en route for Damascus, our loco is a 2-8-0 built by Borsig in 1916. It has a superheater, mechanical lubricator, a peculiar chimney about 12 in. high, a powerful hooter and a very small 4-wheel tender. As we leave Haifa we see some fine houses built on the side of a hill, the scenery is pretty and the land well cultivated; we stop at Shamnan, Afeule (sic) and Beisan. Before the line from Haifa to Damascus was completed[*5], a branch line ran from Tul Keram to Afeule, but apparently it is not used now. Further on, we see the "Sea of Galilee", now noted for mosquitoes and malaria, and cross a steel girder bridge. Shortly after, the commencement of the River Jordan is seen, and while running along the Jordan valley we endure great heat; two more bridges, one of steel and the other of timber, are crossed. The bridges were destroyed during the war, but have been rebuilt, one by the Australians and the other by our Royal Engineers. Near one bridge are some sulphur springs and one could enjoy a hot open air bath, if so inclined. Now we see the River Yarmak and keep fairly close to it for some distance. The scenery is very pretty, hills on both sides and wild flowers and rushes growing in great profusion on the banks of the river. Sammach is the next stop and after leaving that place we climb gradually and pass round a severe curve, still climbing. After about a mile, we look down and see the track we have just passed over. The line still keeps to the side of the hill, on the up grade, and it is now several hundred feet higher than when the train entered the curve; we next pass through a short tunnel and round another curve; on our left are some fine waterfalls. Later, we stop at a small station, where the tender is replenished with water, and whilst stopping here, a goods train passes in the opposite direction. Leaving the station, we are still climbing and when level ground is once more reached, cross a very fine steel bridge with stone piers, and after stopping at a few small stations Deraa is reached. The train runs down one side of a triangle, and then backs into the station, where there is a fairly large engine shed. Here may be seen some 2-8-2 tender

engines, built by the Saxon Locomotive Works in 1918, they are superheaters and are fitted with Walschaert gear and double bogie tenders. these engines were captured by the Australian Light Horse when they took the town. Other locos seen were 0-8-0 tender engines and 0-6-0 and 0-8-0 tanks [*6], all built by German firms. Leaving Deraa behind a 2-8-2 tender engine we traverse rather uninteresting country until we arrive at Damascus. Just before entering the station we pass the fine loco. shops and sheds, where, a few months ago, a large number of engines were outside awaiting repair.

The station is a fine imposing structure built of stone; it has a large circulating area and apparently some of the rooms were intended for administrative offices. We leave Damascus for Rayak, behind a small tank locomotive, either a 2-6-0 or a Mallet 0-4-4-2. After traversing very pretty and thickly wooded country, we reach Rayak. Here the narrow gauge line goes to Beyreuth and the standard gauge line (1.44 metres) from Aleppo comes in. There are some well-equipped repair shops, although just before the enemy was driven out, considerable wilful damage had been done to the machinery. Several large standards and foundation plates had been smashed by sledge hammers, thus rendering them useless. The extensive running sheds were also wrecked. When we were at this place, en route for Homs, we noticed vast quantities of material left by the Germans and Turks - innumerable shells, and millions of rounds of rifle ammunition, destroyed motor lorries, rifles and other articles incidental to warfare. Outside the remains of the shed were some 0-4-4-2 Mallet Tanks and 2-6-0 side tanks. The yard engine was a small 2-6-0 tank called "Hermon". It had outside cylinders and bearings and was built at Winterthur. Some quaint 0-6-0 with four-wheel tenders were also there; the connecting rods were oval in section. These early 0-6-0 French locos were for the standard gauge.

We leave Rayak and duly arrive at Baalbek, said by some to be the ancient Babylon. The ruins are seen from the train, although trees rather obliterate the view. The land is well cultivated, apricots, olives, pomegranates and vines growing in profusion. From Baalbek there is a climb through very uninteresting and sparsely populated country until we arrive at Homs, which is a big centre for silk manufactures. The River Orontes, which is the principal river in Syria flows near Homs and on to Aleppo. Near Homs, a fine Mohammedan mosque is seen and for about two miles the line runs parallel with the high road. The mountains of Akkar - snow capped all the year round - are seen quite plainly and look very fine against a cloudless deep blue sky. The next station is Tel-Bisse and then follows Hama, where a very fine 2-8-0 tender engine built by Maffei, of Munich, in 1916, was seen. The country is now very fertile, apricots and figs being largely grown.

The track next passes for some distance through very uninteresting country until we arrive at Aleppo, where there are two stations, one belonging to the French Company and the other to the Baghdad Ry.; we run into the former; near the station is the engine shed with a 0-8-0 engine outside. The loco, which brought us up from Rayak was a small 0-8-0, with outside cylinders and; the slide valves work at an angle and the eccentrics are keyed to the driving crank pin. The

locomotives here have long "stove pipe" chimneys and the number plates are at the bases of the chimneys. The sand-boxes are on the top of the boilers. A steam brake operates on the tenders, but not on the engines. The writer has seen the following engines of this type, Nos. 21, 24, 26, 27, 29, 30, 31, 32. They were built in 1891 and 1894 by Cail. [*7]Near the engine shed a Turkish Red Crescent train was standing in a side track; it consisted of six four-wheelers and three six-wheel coaches all built in Germany. Both rails and sleepers are of steel of Belgian make. The locos and rolling stock all have the initials D.H.P., signifying the Chemin de Fer de Damas-Hama-Prolongements; the crescent and star are noticeable. No high speed is attained by trains anywhere and uphill the speed is very low probably on account of the condition of the locos, which have been out of repair for some time. There is a scarcity of water, as in many cases water tanks were destroyed by the enemy.

The Baghdad station at Aleppo is of quite recent construction and near to it are several large buildings which were to have been administrative offices. Near the station are the remains of a large warehouse; a terrible fire must have taken place here; huge steel girders have been twisted like pieces of copper wire and large quantities of glass were melted into one large mass. A quarter of a mile further down the line is the engine shed, similar in construction to an American round house and having from 30-35 pits. When the Allies entered Aleppo, the water tank had been destroyed, but it has now been replaced by the Royal Engineers. There are repair shops here, as evidently Aleppo was to have been an important railway centre.

We spent some time there and frequently went over the round house and shops; one large shop was not finished, only the steel girders being erected. Several crates of machinery, fish-plates, nuts and bolts are lying unpacked. The engines and rolling stock used on the Baghdad line are all German made. There were two fine 2-6-0's built by Borsig in 1916 (numbers 616 and 620). [*8]On these locos, the sand-box is fitted close to the steam dome and one casing covers both. These locos have the Westinghouse brake and the tender runs on six wheels. The latter followed a standard German practice on having the middle and trailing pairs of tender wheels equalized, but not the leading and middle pairs. Two 0-8-0 engines worked the trains sometimes, superheated, with single slide-bars and have Walschaerts gear. In all cases, the number plate is just below the chimney with the name of the station underneath.

We noticed No. 4839 Halle and No. 4852 Hannover at Aleppo. The yard loco was a small 0-6-0 with 4-wheeled tender, built by the Hannover Loco. Works in 1916. A loco. often used in the yard is a 0-6-0 tender goods with outside cylinders and bearings, built by Emil Kessler in 1891. Several of them have come to Aleppo for general overhauling. Outside the shops some quaint locos may be observed, a 2-4-2 Belgian State Rys. No. 2410, with a Belpaire firebox, square chimney and four-wheel tender, built in 1891. [*9] Some neat 0-6-0 side tanks built by Kerr Stuart & Co. are also there. "Adana" and "Tarsus" were there. These have inside cylinders and bearings and long side tanks, stove pipe chimney and brass dome and safety valve

covers. The safety valves are on the firebox. When we saw "Tarsus" it was minus a pair of trailing wheels.

Having described a journey from Alexandria to Aleppo by rail, we will leave readers there, and hope they have not been tired with the long journey. Obviously, no dining, sleeping or corridor coaches are now run and when we made the trip in the reverse direction from Aleppo to Alexandria we travelled most of the way from Aleppo to Ismailia in a cattle truck. No doubt when things are more settled, a through service will probably be run. Our chief regret is that we did not have our camera with us, as several interesting photos could have been taken, and should any mis-statements or inaccuracies appear, we trust we may be pardoned, as this article has been written from memory."

Notes:

*1 The 2-6-2T's were actually 2419-21 by La Meuse, captured by the British on the high seas and used as war booty on the Hedjaz lines.

*2 It is not clear whether this was of Egyptian stock; no Turkish standard-gauge stock would have been able to reach Jerusalem at this time.

*3 The only 2-8-0T was No. 300 (formerly 131) - Hughes (p.80) notes it was converted from a 2-8-0 in either 1909 or 1919.

*4 There is no evidence of any 0-8-0's on the Hedjaz; the writer may have meant 2-8-0's.

*5 The line Afule - Sebastiyeh -(Nablus) - Tulkarm was of course built after the Deraa-Haifa line, but by this time it would probably have looked pretty derelict since the through traffic would be going via the new link at Haifa.

*6 Again, there is no evidence of 0-8-0 or 0-8-0T locos on the Hedjaz; there were three La Meuse 0-10-0T's; the author must have overlooked some pony wheels on the others.

*7 There is a nice photo of No. 24 in Hughes, p.68.

*8 According to Hughes, Borsig built 2-6-0's 618-620 in 1912.

*9 Wow! Were these locos brought along by the Germans to help the war effort out? Although he has made a few mistakes, our anonymous author seems to be able to recognise most locos accurately. Did Turkey have some Belgian-type 2-4-2's? The Kerr Stuart tanks were probably Turkish. Hughes mentions none of these.

Noted in reading by Paul Cotterell, from Baruch Katinke's book "Me'Az v'ad Henah" (See earlier instalments in 11:22, 13:17, 16:15, 19:19 & 20:15). This is the chapter entitled 'The Magician's Camp of Von Griebel', on pp. 164-167 of that book.

[Editor's Note: On occasion in this chapter, as in earlier ones, Paul has had to deduce an acceptable translation or spelling from a very unusual Hebrew phrase for some technical term. I have on occasion included his deductions and sources in square brackets.]

"The laying of the railway to Suez pressed forward at a fast pace. Thousands worked at the hand labour; they dug, filled, built temporary bridges of wooden railway sleepers, erected permanent bridges and culverts. The work was done mostly at night because by day it was impossible to touch the burning metal heated by the sun.

The labourers were Arabs mobilised into the Turkish Army who, because of their lack of soldierly qualities, were employed only on forced military labour. The professional workers, on the other hand, were Turks, with Germans and Austrians in charge of them. Over all stood the old and experienced engineer Meissner Pasha.

As the work progressed a great shortage of loco coal began to be felt. The stores of coal in Palestine and Turkey ran out, and there was no possibility of bringing in coal by sea which was controlled by the English and French fleets. An attempt was made to produce coke/briquettes ["Pacham Tzeir" - literally "young coal"] from mines in the Lebanese mountains, but the great amount of sulphur ["Pirit"] in the coal damaged steam boilers and within a short time the iron and copper lost all their malleability, becoming brittle and fragile, and their strength diminished amazingly.

An experiment was tried with bituminous limestone ["Avnei HaSid HaBitumi"] from Nebi Musa on the Jaffa-Jerusalem road, and from the Yarmuk Valley. A few locos were specially adapted for use with this fuel which left huge amounts of burnt lime in the fireboxes and cut off the air supply necessary for combustion.

With the failure of this trial it was decided to fuel the engines with wood. Non-fruit-bearing trees were the first to be chopped down, then it was the turn of the fruit trees. Sometimes an order was given to chop down each tenth tree in villages and towns. The destruction of fruit trees was painful to us. The wood was taken in carts to various railway stations and thence to those main stations with loco fuelling facilities.

Hundreds of conscripted Arabs and Armenian prisoners were employed on cutting wood using hand saws. Piles of logs were built up at all the stations where engine watering facilities were provided.

Wood cutting with hand saws was slow, so I decided to build a mechanical saw. In a store building at Jaffa harbour I found a treasure-trove of circular saws but I could not find motors for them.

I had at my disposal three small locomotives which were used for shunting at stations. I decided to use them as sawmill power. I raised up the small loco and placed it on a solid base. I took down the connecting rods between the wheels and only one pair of wheels was left to be driven by the steam. A leather belt transferred power from the wheel to a post on which the saws were attached.

I received a severe rebuke for the erection of this primitive contraption, but even during the honeymoon [literally ! - "Yereach Dvash"] of my first sawmill, others began to imitate me because the sawmill worked without any breakdowns. Much of my time was taken up the cutting of wood. Sawmills were at work at five widely-spaced stations, and at the ten stations in my area log piles stood ready to fuel engines. Over a thousand men were employed in wood cutting and everything pertaining to it. Therefore I received permission to appoint an expert officer to manage the supply of wood in my area. I suggested to Mr. Avraham Krinitzky (later mayor of Ramat Gan) that he fill the post and he agreed. He was an expert in wood and carpentry; diligent and devoted, and suitable for the new post. He had to make daily journeys along the railway so I arranged for him to have used of a special carriage as a sort of mobile office and bedroom which could be attached to any train and took him from place to place.

Water was no less of a problem than wood.

The south, the Negev and the wilderness, are not rich in water. Drilling for water had not yet been done and a railway worked by steam engines cannot exist without large quantities of water. The railway management brought from Germany a special group of water experts at whose head stood Major Von Griebel [spelling ?]. One of his officers was my friend and neighbour Akiva Glielstein.

The mobile camp of Von Griebel was comprised of tents of camels which accompanied his march in the south, the Negev and the wilderness, in his search for water sources. He did not have any particular knowledge of geology and he did not make any trial borings. But he had a special talisman and many among the top railway management believed in it - "Winshelroot" was its name - "The branch that turns". It was a thin tree branch that he held in his hands, and when it turned upwards and then pointed down it supposedly showed the ground beneath to be rich in water.

[NB: This is clearly a reference to 'water divining' using a forked hazel branch. Ed.]

We, the mechanics, ridiculed this superstition but the Turks and Germans believed in it and expended much money on this magician's camp of Von Griebel during its march in the Arava and the desert.

After a while Von Griebel transformed his magic wand into a mechanical device; the branch being made of aluminium and when it turned it operated a dial which showed the exact angle to the water source, and by a simple calculation (so said Von Griebel) it was possible to determine at what depth the water lay.

At each spot where he (supposedly) found water he put up a large sign on which was written the depth of the water and the

name of the well. Tens of thousands [!!] of these signs sprouted in the desert and carried names such as "The Wilhelm II Spring" or "The Bismarck Spring". We railwaymen simply had to dig where Von Griebel indicated "to find" the spring. Amazingly the old and experienced engineer Meissner Pasha believed him too, and sometimes even took the "branch that turns" and 'discovered' springs of his own.

Once I came into conflict with Von Griebel and his disciples. It was decided to construct watering facilities in Beersheba station. Von Griebel and his camp arrived, walked around the site and discovered water at a depth of 36 metres. They called the well "The Spring of Sheba" and I had to build it with stone walls, three metres in diameter; to dig, deepen and construct the well until we reached water.

We dug down to a depth of over 36 metres but found no water, and in the meantime we brought water from afar in wagons, which put a strain on railway operations.

In the Wadi Beersheba, two and a half kilometres from the station, it was easily possible to discover water at a higher level. Water lay only 4-5 metres below the surface. However, this water layer was not very deep and after a few weeks of pumping it gave out, but it was enough simply to dig another well fifty metres from the first and there was again more than enough water for our purposes. Thus it was possible to exploit the upper water of the wide and long "Wadi Saba" for the railway without pause.

I went to the army officer in charge at Beersheba and requested permission to lay a temporary branch line from the station to the wadi, with a kilometre-long extension along the west bank of the wadi. The order was duly given and the line was laid without delay.

I placed a small pump there with a pipe which could be extended in either direction so that water could be pumped from a new well as necessity dictated.

We dug to a depth of 5 metres and pumping began. We did not build walls for the well, but just widened the diggings and the diameter from the top to prevent earth falling in.

The needy locos travelled to the wadi, filled up with water and returned to Beersheba station.

And in the meantime the diggers dug and the builders built and deepened the "Spring of Sheba" by the station, and had already reached a depth of sixty metres, but of water in the well there was none....

The railway building south of Beersheba progressed, and had already reached almost to Auja el Hafir. One day a management delegation arrived from Damascus, and among its members were Dieckman and Meissner Pasha to inspect the railway's progress.

Their train halted and they saw the locomotive uncouple and disappear somewhere up ahead.

"Where did the loco go ?", Dieckman demanded of me. I replied that it had gone to the wadi to fill up with water.

"Why did it not take water at the station well ?", they both asked.

"Because we've not yet found any water in it".

"And what depth have you reached ?", asked Meissner Pasha.

"We've already gone below sixty metres", I replied. "We've

had no order to stop digging".

"And how do you fill up the engines?", Dieckman asked. I told them what I had done. We all went across to where the station well was being dug, and there before our eyes was the prominent and handsome sign of Von Griebe: "The Spring of Sheba, 36 metres deep".

Meissner Pasha gave an order on the spot to fill in the well. I suggested that we use it as a waste pit and build toilets alongside. Meissner took my suggestion as a cheeky joke against himself and angrily told me to keep quiet. Then suddenly, Dieckman (the Jew hater) took my side and said that the well should be used as I had suggested. But Meissner was adamant and the well, built with stone siding to a depth of over sixty metres, was filled in with earth.

And right up to the British invasion the railway was supplied with water from the wells I had dug in the wadi."

[Note: This account explains the branch line along the 'Wadi Saba' seen on the map in 7:17, and corrects my speculations on the subject in 8:19. P.C.]

24.12.

BEERSHEBA STATION.

In "Eretz" Magazine for Autumn 1993, p.19ff, is an article on Paper-Making by Tirza Yuval; apparently this activity is centred in Israel on the old Turkish railway station at Beersheba, and the article contains the following:

"..This building played several significant roles in Israel's history, and today it is making yet another kind of contribution. Formerly a railway station, it now houses a center for the creation of handmade paper....

The railway station in Beersheba stood along a track laid by the Turks during World War 1 to link the Egyptian front with Damascus and the north. Dedicated on October 30 1915, in the presence of Kamal Pasha, th commander of the Turkish front, the station was used by the Turks for two years. Then it fell into the hands of the British, who laid a track from Beersheba to Rafiah, near Gaza.

In 1927 the Beersheba line was closed because it was unprofitable, and the station house was converted into lodgings for government officials. During Israel's War of Independence, it was used as headquarters for the Egyptian forces.

Thirty years later, the municipality of Beersheba opened a school (subsequently a college) of visual arts on the site. The waiting rooms were transformed into a gallery, and upstairs, in the old railroad offices, the Uncle Bob Leslie Paper Mill came into being....."

See 7:17 for further details of this station.

24.13.

From: "ALLENBY'S FINAL TRIUMPH"., By W. T. Massey, Special Correspondent of the London Newspapers with the Egyptian Expeditionary Force. Constable & Co. London, 1920.

From p. 250; (At Damascus): "There was a scene of remarkable enthusiasm when Colonel Lawrence rode into the city. The Arabs came in at a fast trot, and in the narrow winding streets, badly paved and neglected so that the tramway rails were in places nearly a foot above the level of the road, there was not sufficient room for demonstration...."

pp.257f. One of the first real delights of the Australians in Damascus was meeting with an Australian pilot who had been a prisoner for a fortnight. When he was over Amman he had engine trouble and was forced to descend. It was impossible to get away in daylight and the enemy captured him. From Amman he was sent north by train. At the best of times travelling is not luxurious in Turkish troop trains, and the pilot got little food or water, and had unpleasant companions, not all of whom could speak to him. He did not hear of the progress of the battle, but he had unwelcome proof of our activity, for when the train reached Deraa it was held up on the line while an awful mess was cleared away in front. His comrades of the Air Force had been busy with bombs, and another flight came over and wrecked his train just as it was going to pull through. Thereafter he had to walk, and he only reached Damascus a day or two before his brother Australians entered the city....

Nearly one hundred Italians were also found in Damascus. They had been taken prisoners on the Isonzo, and after working in labour battalions in Germany and Austria they were sent to exist under the Turks in Syria, and were employed in railway construction and repairs."

p.259: "Turkish paper money collapsed to 15 % (of face value), and it was not readily accepted at that. There were thousands of pounds of it lying in the Abana gorge where the Australians had wrecked a train, and the Australians had such small regard for it that a trooper who had left a ragged girl holding his horse outside an hotel while he tried to purchase some bread from the proprietor, gave her a Turkish £100 note as a gift."

p.263 (describing chaos and anarchy at Damascus) - "just when the situation appeared to be getting very alarming, Colonel Lawrence, who fortunately was in the hotel, borrowed a piece of paper from me and wrote a request that some British troops might be sent into the city. In a short time there was a squadron of Australian Light Horse at the Hedjaz Railway station. They galloped in and, as if by the touch of a magician's wand, the trouble ceased..."

p.273. "In estimating the value of the Arab assistance it is important to remember that General Allenby's breakthrough in the coastal sector was on September 19, and that if the Turks had preserved their railway communications they would have been able to get away a considerable quantity of material as well as many men. The Arabs unquestionably performed valuable services in raiding the railway, and they did far more than our aeroplanes could accomplish, effective as bombing from the air proved to be....[The column got to the south of Deraa on the night of September 16 and blew up a portion of the railway line.] On September 17 the Arabs worked round to the north of Deraa and destroyed six kilometres of railway, and on the night of September 17-18 went west of Deraa, burned the Tel Esh Shebab bridge and the Mezerib station, destroyed all rolling stock in it and smashed six German motor lorries. On the following day the Arabs moved to the south of Deraa to await General Allenby's offensive, having completely stopped railway communication down the Hedjaz line and between the Turkish VIIth and VIIIth Armies and Damascus.....

The Turks made strenuous efforts to repair their railway line. The main armies had been without communications for five days, and Amman had been isolated for eight days when the Turks imagined they were about to restore the railway. A trestle bridge which had been destroyed was reconstructed, but on the 23rd. the Arabs again swooped down on it and made it useless...."

From Ch. XXIV, "The Final Stage", pp.285 onwards:
"Immediately after the capture of Damascus the Commander-in-Chief decided to continue his advance northwards, not by a rapid cavalry raid on Aleppo...but by proceeding in stages. General Allenby had to look at his supply situation. Beyrout was absolutely essential as a base. The railway from Haifa, through Samakh to Deraa and on to Damascus, was being put in order and was available, but the rolling stock was extremely limited, and the motor lorry columns remained the principal means of supply for Desert Mounted Corps....When a further move northwards was started the supply difficulties increased with a bound. The lorries had to come from haifa, a distance of much more than a hundred miles, and they had to victual not only Desert Mounted Corps, but 20,000 prisoners on the road, some of them on their way to Ludd, others who were strong enough being employed in putting the highway into better shape. Every ten miles added to the journey enormously increased the problem.....

When the cavalry started the infantry were still three days from Beyrout. We did not know the position there, though it was clear we should be in the port and open it up as a base of supply very soon. The railway from Beyrout over the Lebanon to Damascus, a French undertaking, was destroyed in sections where the gradients were so steep that cogwheel engines had to be employed, and it had to be taken for granted that the enemy would see to the destruction of all locomotives that could be of service on that line. That railway, therefore, had to be ruled out of our calculations, and the single road, and

nothing but that road, could be relied on. In deciding upon the route to be taken during the advance the supply situation was the determining factor. It put out of consideration by the General Staff a possible advance up the road running from the north-east of Damascus through Nebk to Homs, Hama and Aleppo. We knew that road was passable and was fit for lorries in most parts, and the places which were bad could be improved with some little trouble. But the absolute necessity of obtaining supplies landed at Beyrout made it imperative that the cavalry should go over the Anti-Labanon range and proceed up the plain to the west of it.

There was another reason why General Allenby never hesitated in his choice....The Germans had made a substantial centre at Rayak. It was an important railway junction. Trains from Beyrout to Damascus passed through it, and all supplies coming from Europe, from Constantinople and Asia Minor were brought down to Damascus and the old Turkish front through Rayak. Our command of the sea denied the enemy any other route. German technical troops had made that little settlement on the plain a central distributing depot. There they established engine shops, repairing sheds for rolling stock and lorries, and workshops for various services. They had a large aerodrome there, too....In moving up the plain the troops could get supplies from Beyrout about as easily as if they were at Damascus with their base at Haifa, and when Homs was captured and the port of Tripoli opened by the advance of the 7th. Indian Division, that base would enable them to be certain of supplies up to Aleppo, so long as the weather remained good. A set-off, however, were the enormous distances and the troubles of the motor-lorry drivers - destined to be difficult beyond conception. However, it had to be done.....

The first part of the final stage, then, was Rayak. This was forty-five miles from Damascus, and a section of the road to it had been constructed for the purposes of the war. The road runs for a long-distance through wild, mountainous country. For some thirty miles most of the cavalry had to travel by the main Beyrout road, a well-engineered highway, with sound bridges and culverts. Before the war it was in excellent condition, but it had been allowed to fall into disrepair, and at some places the winter rains had washed big holes in it and had weakened the walls. The bottom of the road, however, was still hard, and the lorry drivers, whose estimate of the quality of the roads in this country was based on their experience of mud tracks, voted it good.

....From Meizelun the road rises to the side of a hill 4125 feet above sea-level and then falls in a steep and winding course to the ravine of the wadi El Korn. After a descent of nearly a thousand feet the road follows the course of the wadi, a stony torrent bed, till it again reaches a height of over 4,000 feet at Jedeide. Thence it passes over the watershed and falls rapidly to Mejel Aanjar, where it forks; one road leads to the plain and, crossing the Nahr el Litani, runs to Shtora and Beyrout, and, turning to the right at

Shtora, to Zahle; while the other goes to Rayak. One gets an idea of the troubles of the Turks from the fact that this latter road was built to economise fuel. All over the country trees had been cut down for the service of the railway, and olive-trees, which do not yield a crop till they are twenty years old, were sacrificed by tens of thousands. Wood was so scarce that it was found more economical to transport supplies from Rayak to Damascus by road than by railway, and, to provide a shorter route than that from Rayak through Zahle and Moallaka, the Germans laid out a road twelve miles long on the edge of the hills to join up with the main highway at Aanjar. The distance from Damascus to Aleppo by the route up the plain between the Lebanon and Anti-Lebanon ranges was 244 miles.

.....On the 3rd. October the [5th. Cavalry] division were bivouacked at El Jedeide, a station on the Beyrout-Damascus railway eight miles west of Damascus.....Reports came in that ammunition dumps and rolling stock were being destroyed at Rayak, and orders were given to the 14th. Cavalry Brigade and the armoured cars to march that night (5th. Oct.) on Rayak, twenty-four miles away, and seize the place at dawn on the following morning.....Rayak was occupied....at 2 o'clock in the afternoon of that day and Zahle one hour later, no opposition being met with at either place. Two guns, two Germans, and 175 Turkish officers and other ranks were captured.

If it would not be accurate to say that Rayak had been destroyed it was certainly covered with wreckage. The effects of a couple of raids by our airmen were seen all over the depot and aerodrome. Direct hits had made a mess of the station buildings, and the aerodrome had suffered severely, so much so that the Germans had decided to evacuate the place, and when the cavalry got there they found that the enemy had burned thirty aeroplanes and their hangars. The burnt machines were five Pfalz, six D5a Albatross, eighteen C5 Rumplers, and one C4 Rumpier. We found stores of wings, under-carriages, engines and bombs. Our bombs had killed a number of Turks and had destroyed some ammunition depots, and the Germans had done their best to blow up what remained. They had not completed their work when the report that the cavalry were almost upon them sent the last of them off in trains and lorries..... But, amid all the damaged property, our engineers were gratified to find a considerable quantity of engineer's stores, some railway engines and, in the railway yards, many broad and narrow gauge trucks. The value of the rolling stock and the use to which we could put it was well understood by the enemy, who in the next day or two sent aeroplanes from Homs to try to finish a job their engineers had had to leave. We lost several men as a result of their bombing, but the material damage was small, and, as soon as the enemy found that our Air Force were using his old aerodrome as an advanced landing-ground, their pilots did not venture over Rayak again.

The cavalry were no sooner in Rayak than the engineers made a hurried inspection of the railway, and on the following day they ran their first train from Zahle through Rayak to the break in the Rayak-Damascus line. Except that the traffic was run and controlled by men in khaki, the scene in Zahle railway station was such as one would imagine it in times of peace. Natives sat about and gossiped, and took a calm interest in a railway management that put some life into its work. Local paries were enrolled for railway purposes, and men who had had some experience, and there were many of them, were formed into breakdown gangs to repair the damage to the line.....

There were heavy thunderstorms and rains on the plain on October 8th. All the watercourses were filled, the roads became troublesome for the transport drivers, and large fatigue parties had to be detailed to clear culverts and repair them for the heavy traffic they would be required to carry. The natives stood by and watched with surprised interest the energy the troops threw into their jobs....."

pp. 296 - on the Homs - Aleppo road.

"The war had made this a new highway of communication with the outside world. Prior to the war there was scarcely a traveller on the road in a month, but the Germans, seeing that the Turks had no means of getting supplies by sea, had brought vast quantities of men and stores down it from Aleppo to relieve congestion on the railway. There were depots and halting places at regular intervals, and where stone was not available in the vicinity of the road the highway was engineered in a rough-and-ready fashion, but nowhere could it be described as good.

The topographical reports we had received through agents were not always reliable. They had seen the ramshackle Turkish carts rumbling and tumbling over the road and they described the track as fit for wheels. Well, perhaps it was in a military sense, for army drivers seem to get their vehicles, whether they are lorries or general service waggons, over all conditions of rough places, but the worst farm accommodation road I have seen in the British Isles compared very favourably with stretches of the Homs road.....

From Khusseir to Homs the road traverses a cultivated plain, and the population appeared to be making full use of the waters of the Orontes for irrigating their land. The cavalry took a line close to the railway. There was another and better road shown on the map, but this proved to be entirely inaccurate.....

Homs, looking at it from a distance, appeared to be a large, clean, whitewashed town. On entering one preferred the distant view. There is no enchantment in Homs.... A reconnaissance had to be made to ascertain the condition of the Homs-Tripqli road, in order to see whether it was fit for lorry traffic. A great deal depended on this road because, while the cavalry could be supplied at Homs, and some considerable distance

north of it, from Beyrout - where the 7th. Division had arrived and the Navy were landing stores in the harbour for the Army - scores of miles could be saved if Tripoli could be used as a base. The road, like all thoroughfares in a land ruled by the Turks, had been permitted to fall into a bad state in parts, but fortunately the armoured cars could get over it, and where armoured cars could travel the lorry driver was willing to take risks. The road was generally 24 to 30 feet wide.... The Turks had had a broad-gauge railway from Tripoli to Homs and the line followed the same route as the road, but the enemy had removed the rails during the war."

pp.301ff. Homs to Aleppo.

The Division began its march to Aleppo (115 miles) on the 19th. (Oct.), soon after news was brought in that the leading brigade of the 7th. Indian Division were in Tripoli....Enemy cavalry had been reported at Tel Bise, a station on the railway eight miles north of Homs... The Australian Flying Corps had previously made a bombing attack on Hama and dropped seven hundred pounds of bombs on the aerodrome there, on the railway station, and on troops in the neighbourhood, and on the following day an aerial reconnaissance showed that the enemy had evacuated the town....

From Hama, a cleaner and much better organised town than Homs, the road ran over undulating country intersected by a few wadis until it got on to a partly cultivated plain. The highway was not metalled anywhere, but the traffic from time immemorial had hardened it, and it was fair going with no obstacle to military movement..... The Sherifian force under the Emir Nasir was instructed to march on Aleppo along the railway....On the 25th. they moved across the 5th. Cavalry Division's road east of Aleppo. [Aleppo fell on the 26th.]

In Aleppo we captured 821 prisoners, eighteen guns, and a large amount of rolling stock and railway material.

On the 28th. Oct.... the Arab force occupied Muslimie Junction and found that the station, permanent way, and points had been destroyed, and the engines and rolling stock damaged. The 14th. Cavalry Brigade took over the defence of Muslimie Junction from the Sherifian army, and this was the situation when, at ten o'clock on the 31st. of October, a message was received by wireless from G.H.Q. to the effect that an Armistice had been concluded and that hostilities would cease between the Turkish Government and the Allies at noon that day."

And so the advance, starting from Kantara, reached its end at a railway junction in northern Syria. Throughout the problem of supplies and transport - by sea, road and rail - had influenced what could be done, where and when, and whilst the Allied forces had constructed or reconstructed new routes as they went, it is clear that poor and severed communications had drastically handicapped the Turkish and German forces.

OH WHAT A LOUSY WAR ! Strange Accessories on the Hedjaz Railway During World War 1.

By Uri Ben-Rehav.

First - a warning. Sensitive readers or those with weak digestions should skip this item of 'Harakevet', as it could easily spoil their appetities. However, the brave may continue reading, as this information is proven history. You have been warned !

It is quite understandable that, at the outbreak of the First World War, the German Army's High Command should be appalled at the public and private situation regarding Hygiene in this part of the Ottoman Empire. Most Europeans simply ignored this since, in most cases, they simply lived in self-proclaimed sealed enclaves and never mixed with the locals or their customs. At the outset the German High Command issued a decree that German officers should travel on the H.R. in special 1st. class coaches, with Other Ranks in 2nd. class only. (i.e. not the 3rd. class...) Thus, there would be no mixing with the natives, whether Turkish soldiers or soldiers from other parts of the Ottoman Empire. Naturally this led to fights and brawls between the two armies as the Turkish soldiers, very nationalistically-minded, objected to this discrimination. In consequence this order was soon cancelled, in order to produce some domestic harmony. Europeans and Asiatics henceforth travelled together. This however soon hastened contact with an enemy which at first the Europeans drastically underestimated and which proved in many cases to be fatal: the common Body Louse.

This cute little animal, liking the new diet and new taste of the Europeans, especially liked to breed in the upholstery of the coaches of the H.R. Epidemics soon started and spread. Even before the High Command they showed no respect - the highest-ranking officer in the German Army in this theatre of the war was also a victim: Generalfeldmarschall Freiherr Colmar v.d. Goltz-Pasha. In its effort to fight this small but very powerful enemy, the united German-Turkish High Command issued a series of decrees. Amongst others these included an order that on each H.R. station there should be installed a device to de-louse the personal belongings - such as uniforms - of the soldiers in transit. These installations consisted of a large kettle in which to boil water in, a very big iron drum and storage tanks for poison gas. All this was supposed to be working day and night.

These devices were to be found on all stations, guarded and serviced by trained personnel - but at this time without any German advisers. Alas, as was so often the case in the Ottoman Imperial Army, the situation on the ground rarely conformed to the original decree.....

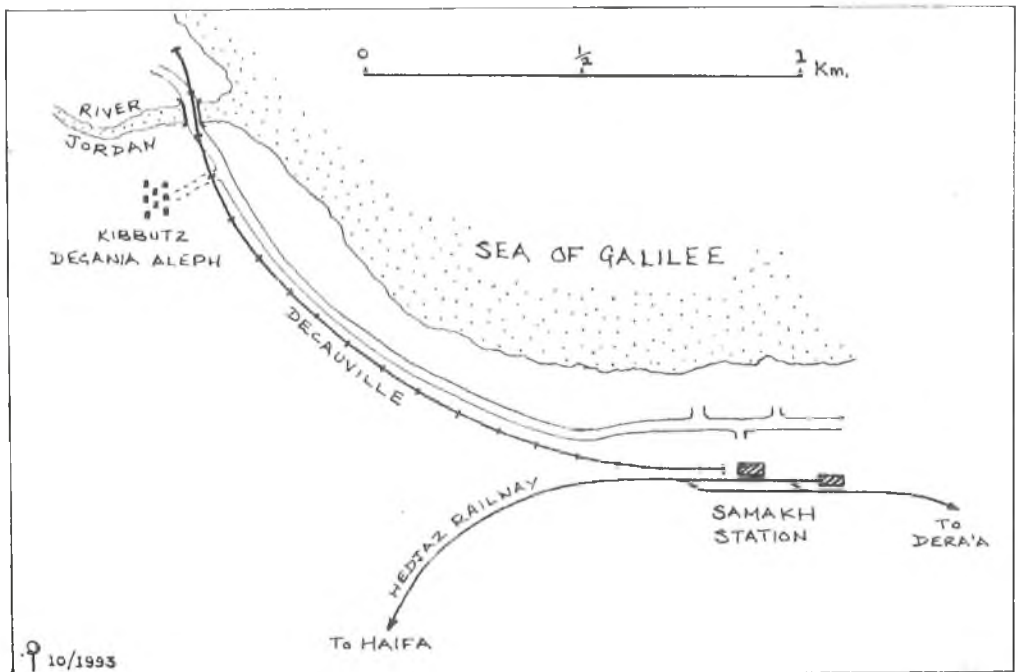
One example is found in the report by Prof. Dr. Victor Schilling who was attached to the German-Turkish High Command in Palestine and in charge of the Department for Sanitation. This is his report from one of his inspection tours of the delousing installations at one of the H.R. stations:

"We arrived at (?) station. Amidst the delousing apparatus, which was erected in the middle of the desert with so many difficulties and so much effort, a smiling, embarrassed and sleepy guard was found. Upon our request he opened the big drum. It was not only cold, obviously not having been used for a long time, but also full of old uniforms and rags - all full of crawling lice. We asked the soldier what this was supposed to be and, unbelievable as it sounds, received the answer that he had received no firewood for a long time and so this had become his sleeping place, ignoring the lice. This was one of the most tragi-comic situations in my life."

The extent of the epidemic caused by the lice could be estimated by the fact that in Spring 1916 in Syria there had been 10,000 reported cases of typhoid fever in the armed forces and ca. 40,000 reports by the civil population.

Well - if the above has spoiled your appetite, address any bill for compensation to the HR Delousing Dept. !

24.:15. A MYSTERY DEGAUVILLE RAILWAY. By Paul Cotterell.



The original map from which the accompanying sketch is taken was discovered several years ago among files in the collection of the Israel Electric Corporation at Haifa. The original was dated 12th. July 1931. As can be seen it shows a 'Decauville' line running from just short of the main HR station building at Samakh alongside the road to end just beyond the bridge over the River Jordan. This map is the only reference I have seen to such a Decauville line. A note on the map states that the Decauville "is to run by the existing railway siding", and the use of this verb tense suggests that the map shows a proposed layout rather than one which had already been built. Adding weight to this supposition is the fact that the Decauville line is not shown on another map of the locality dated 5th. September 1931, i.e. just a couple of months later. Presumably the idea had been abandoned in the interim.

Not content with speculation alone I wrote to Deganiah Aleph to see if any of the older members might recall such a light railway running so close to their Kibbutz, but was informed that nobody could remember a line, nor was there any other evidence for its existence in the Kibbutz archives. All this seems to be pretty conclusive proof of that this interesting proposal was never carried out; but I still have faint hope that someone may be able to prove me wrong.

At least it is still possible to wonder why this Decauville line was proposed. Perhaps it was to be used in connection with works on the parallel road or at the Jordan River bridge. However, it is significant I believe that the original map was prepared by the Palestine Electric Corporation (predecessors of the IEC). In 1931 work was progressing on repairs to the unopened Rutenberg hydro-electric power station at Naharayim further down the Jordan River, following extensive damage caused by flooding in February of the same year. It seems more likely, therefore, that the projected Decauville line may have been connected in some way with this repair work, though I am unable to suggest a more precise purpose. Motive power would probably not have been a problem as the PEC had several Hunslet 60cm. gauge 4-6-0Ts at Naharayim.

Missing from the original and my sketch map is the jetty at Samakh from whence boats once plied to Tiberias. A couple of fuzzy photos that I have seen show this jetty with rails laid along it, presumably for the loading and unloading of the boats. [Or fuelling ? Ed.] As stated in 22:21 it is not known if this track connected up with the HR at Samakh station. Almost certainly not, I think; nevertheless the jetty rails do appear to be laid to a gauge noticeably wider than 60 cm.

One final point: while it will be obvious to many readers, others not familiar with the track layout at Samakh should note that the extent of HR lines in and around the station was greater than shown in this PEC map.



EXCERPTS FROM "ALTNEULAND", BY THEODOR HERZL.

The novel "Altneuland" ("Old-New Land") was an epoch-making work, for it could be said to have inspired much of the later Zionist endeavour. In modern terms it is a mixture of Science-Fiction and Fantasy, since it is set in a society in an alien land in a postulated future - not unlike those novels set on Moon colonies ! First published in 1902, in it Herzl writes of two characters who, through an unlikely set of circumstances, leave Vienna in 1902 and, after visiting Palestine briefly, stay isolated on a South Sea island for twenty years. In 1923 they return to Palestine (en route for Vienna), to find that remarkable changes have taken place in their absence, and a whole new industrial and agricultural co-operative society has been established, a new Jewish State (albeit a peaceful part of the Turkish Empire !) In some respects his vision turned out to be remarkably prophetic, in others he was, not surprisingly, less than accurate. Nevertheless, it is important to recall that the book was written when the land was a wretched, underdeveloped, barren and backward province. Herzl's genius lay in imagining the same landscape transformed by the technology already available at the turn of the century - steam, electricity, irrigation, telephones - and a society transformed by some of the forces of co-operation and respect for human rights that have always existed in small amounts but rarely in adequate forces to influence a whole nation.

There are several translations; the following is taken from "Old-New Land", translated by Lotta Levensohn, 2nd. ed., pub. Bloch Publishing Co. & Herzl Press, New York, 1960. It is in "German-American" !

p.42. (Still in 1902). "Jaffa made a very unpleasant impression on them. Though nobly situated on the blue Mediterranean, the town was in a state of extreme decay. Landing was difficult in the forsaken harbour. The alleys were dirty, neglected, full of vile odours....They hurried away from Jaffa, and went up to Jerusalem on the miserable railway.. The landscape through which they passed was a picture of desolation....."

p. 61f. Kingscourt and Friedrich have landed at the large new harbour at Haifa, in 1923:-

"The city itself seemed thoroughly European. One might easily imagine himself in some Italian port. The brilliant blue of sky and sea was reminiscent of the Riviera, but the buildings were much cleaner and more modern. The traffic, though lively, was far less noisy. The quiet was due partly to ... the absence of draught animals from the streets. There was no hoofbeat of horses, no crackling of whips, no rumbling of wheels. The pavements were as smooth as the footways. Automobiles speeded noiselessly by on rubber tires, with only occasional toots of warning. An overhead rumbling caused the travelers to glance upward.

"All the Devils !" shouted Kingscourt. "What's that ?" He pointed to a large iron car running along the tops of the palms, whose passengers were looking down into the street. The wheels of the car were not underneath, but on its roof; it

moved along a powerful iron rail.

"An electric overhead train", explained Littwak. "You must have seen them in Europe."

"We have not been in Europe for twenty years".

"Overhead trains are nothing new. There was one running between Barmen and Elberfeld in the 1890's. We installed them as soon as we rebuilt our cities, because they make street traffic safer and easier. Besides, they cost less to build than elevated or surface lines".

[Note: The reference is to the Wuppertal "Schwebebahn", still in service. Ed.]

p.67. "They had reached a cross-road where the heavy traffic caused a momentary halt. Their automobile had to wait. Now they realised the advantages of the overhead railway. The great cages went whizzing past on their thick, double iron rails. They neither interfered with the pedestrian traffic, nor were they impeded by it."

p.81. "The distance from Europe to Palestine is much less than to America. And the journey is more convenient for people who are afraid of seasickness, since they can come all the way by rail. The network of railways begun in the nineteenth century in Asia Minor was completed long ago. Trains run now to Damascus, Jerusalem and Baghdad. Since the railroad bridge over the Bosphorus was finished, it is possible to travel directly, without change of cars, from Saint Petersburg or Odessa, from Berlin or Vienna, from Amsterdam, Calais, Paris, Madrid or Lisbon to Jerusalem. The great European express lines all connect with the Jerusalem line, just as the Palestinian railways in turn link up with Egypt and Northern Africa. The north-to-south African railway (in which the German emperor was interested as long ago as the 1890's) and the Siberian railway to the Chinese border, complete the railway system of the Old World. We are at an excellent junction in that system....Railways are certainly not new to you, Mr. Kingscourt. There was nothing experimental about it. The Russian-Chinese line was already complete twenty years ago, the Baghdad line was under construction, and the Cape-to-Cairo line projected. Palestine, lying at the exact geographical center of traffic between Europe, Asia and Africa, could hardly have been left out any longer."

p.126. (1923). "David was a friend of the priest (at the Greek Church at Sepphoris), and was inviting him to the Seder at Tiberias. Just then he appeared with the dignified clergyman, who regretted that he could not join them immediately. He would take the electric train that passed through Nazareth in the afternoon....."

p.127-8. "Outside of Sepphoris, they had to halt at a railway crossing because a train was due. It appeared presently, rushing southwards at great speed. When the visitors remarked that the locomotive had no smokestack, they were told that this line, like most of the Palestinian railways, was operated by electric power. There was one of the great advantages of having begun from the beginning. Just because everything here had been in a primitive, neglected state, it had been possible to install the most up-to-date

technical appliances at once....

....The transition to the most up-to-date transportation facilities was not expensive, because we had no old stuff to amortize. We did not have to drag along wornout rolling stock until it was totally useless. Our railway coaches are very comfortable - well lighted and well ventilated, free from smoke and dust. There is practically no jolting despite the high speed. Workingmen no longer have to travel in cars like cattle pens. Of course, every precaution is taken on our railways for safeguarding the public health.

You will also be interested to know that the railway fares are very low here. We have adopted the system of fares in vogue in Baden during the reign of the kindly, wise Grand Duke Friedrich. From the viewpoint of the public interest, we have tried to make it as easy as possible for the workers to find employment. It does not happen here that railway coaches are shunted back and forth empty from a place where there is an acute shortage of labor to another where there is acute unemployment merely because railway fares are prohibitive. Our network of railways stretches from Mount Lebanon to the Dead Sea, and from the Mediterranean to the Hauran like a system of sluices for fertilizing the country with man power.

Our freight traffic, both inland and transit, has grown very extensive because we have harbors and grain elevators, and our railways link up with the trunk lines of Asia Minor and Northern Africa....

....All these places can be reached by rail within a few hours. God has blessed our land.....

Travel is really a great pleasure here. Sometimes I board an observation car without intending to go anywhere in particular. I do it just to enjoy the views."

p.210. Joe Levy, the first director of the 'New Society', is reminiscing about the early days of the colonization and rebuilding process:

"I was urging at this time the formation of the first railway companies. The wretched little Jaffa-Jerusalem line would of course be wholly inadequate for the coming needs. First of all, we made sure of a coast-line railway southward from Jaffa to Port Said and northward to Beirut, via Caesarea, Haifa, Tyre and Sidon, with a junction at Damascus. After that came the new line to Jerusalem; the Jordan Valley trunk line with spurs to the east and one to the west to Lake Kinneret; the Lebanon lines. The capital for the railways was raised in...Russia andAmerica. I had my troubles with the board of directors over the interest guarantees. They thought me insanely bold to be willing to guarantee profits from such railways. But I forced my ideas through, and the event justified me. It took me five years to secure approval for one line after the other. All that is an old story now, and the railways have been taken over by the New Society."

p.234f "A handsome electric launch was waiting to take the four travelers across Lake Kinneret. Those who were remaining in Tiberias came to see them off.....The crossing was a fleet as a dream, and the launch soon docked in a little bay. It was only a few yards' walk to the electric railway station, where they soon caught a train. Their destination was El-

Kunetra, where David had his appointments. From their seats in the drawing-room car they observed the gradual ascent of the roadbed to the town, which lay a thousand feet above sea-level. El-Kunetra, as a railway junction between Safed and Damascus, was a town of some commercial importance in Transjordan.

When they alighted from their train, they noticed a train on the next track marked for Beirut.....

[Next day] The morning sky was glowing with delicate colour as they boarded the electric train that was to carry them through a bewitching spring landscape....

[There follows a discourse on hydro-electric power stations, and the following day they continue by road,] "Every now and then the Jordan valley train rushed by on the right bank."

p.247, They come to the new Jerusalem - "modern sections intersected by electric street railways; wide, tree-bordered streets...."

Apart from a few other scattered references to characters in the novel catching electric trains to Tiberias and elsewhere, the remaining section of railway interest is astounding, breathtaking in its vision. Set, remember, in 1923, but written so much earlier.... Two characters debate the possibilities of further progressive change:

(p.261): "You remember the words of Ecclesiastes: 'That which hath been is that which shall be, and that which hath been done is that which shall be done. And there is nothing new under the sun.'"

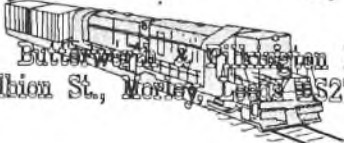
"Pardon me, Mr. President !" shouted Steineck. "That must be taken with a grain of salt. All that now is did not always exist, and all that is to be does not lie behind us. I recall not Ecclesiastes, but Stockton-Darlington. Understand ?"

"What about Stockton-Darlington ?" asked Lord Sudbury. "Do you refer to the first railway, built by George Stephenson a hundred years ago ?"

"Quite so, my lord !" cried the Professor. "A few days ago the Academy decided to suggest a worthy world-wide tribute to Stephenson in 1925. Our suggestion is that at the exact moment when the hundred years are fulfilled, locomotives in every part of the world, wherever they may happen to be, shall stop and whistle slowly three times. That is the Stockton-Darlington ceremony which we propose. Passengers in trains all over the world will be obliged to remember Stephenson, the harbinger of a new era. You will admit, dear Mr. President, that between Stockton and Darlington the wisdom of Ecclesiastes goes off the rails, will you not ?" "

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ATHLIT MEMORIES.

Mr. J.J. Rodgers, now of Sheffield, was in the Duke of Wellington's Regiment in the war, later transferring to the 2nd. Battalion Royal Ulster Rifles; in this capacity he was one of the troops in charge of the Athlit Internment Camp in the 1946-8 period. In this camp were kept various refugees from Europe, awaiting 'official' entry into Palestine. He writes:

"I was sent on a detachment to guard a Military Hospital at Beer Yaaqov. While I was there I received orders to escort a train from Haifa to Gaza. I and two comrades reported to the station with our weapons etc. We were put in an armoured train which consisted of two steam engines back-to-back.

Two Army drivers drove the train while we sat in a make-shift compartment reading or playing cards.

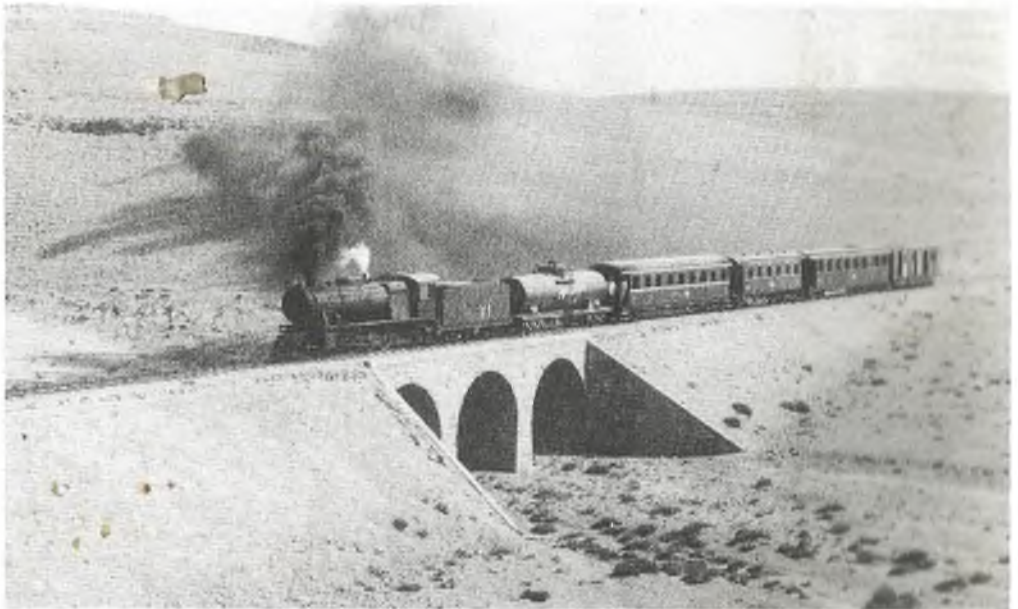
After reaching Gaza with no trouble the driver told us to go and get something to eat, which we did.

A few hours later we arrived back at Haifa and were told to report back to our camp.

I was very puzzled and I asked the driver what we were supposed to have done, thinking to myself that I would volunteer for this job on a regular basis!

Then he told me that we were running a few minutes in front of troop trains, and if the lines had been booby-trapped we would have blown the mines up....

As you can guess, I didn't bother volunteering. However, I heard a few months later that the regiment who took over from us did get blown up in this way. Further, a train had been blown up before our own trip....



24.19. Out in the real desert south of Amman is Jordan Hedjaz Railway 2-8-2 No. 51, built by Haine St. Pierre in 1905. The train is a TEEF special from Oatmanah (1989-2) and includes