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הרכבת

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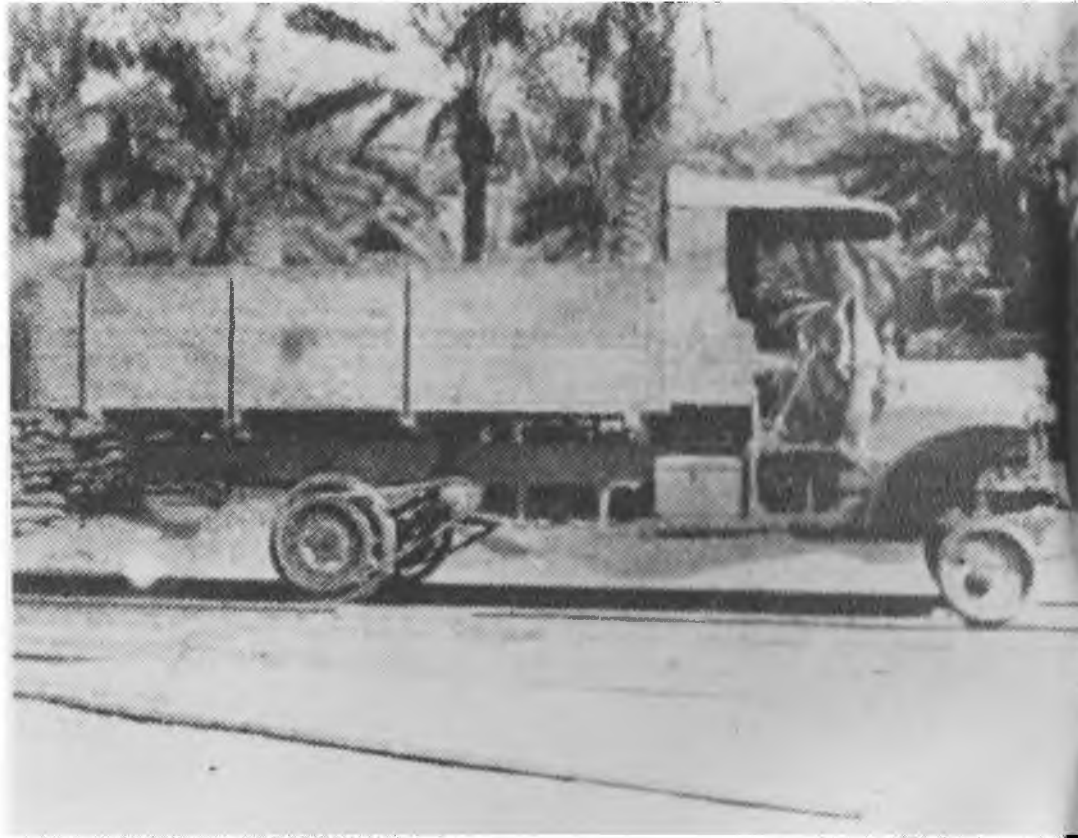


30:1 *IR G12 bo-bo 111 hauling a train of refurbished stock into Hadera Maarav station on 30/5/95 to inaugurate the opening of double track between there and Binyamina. (Photo: Steve Tish)*

EDITORIAL.

Welcome to Issue 30. Since my life remains at an exciting stage ("May you live in Interesting Times") and the future remains vague, though with several possibilities, I regret that I am still unable to provide future addresses for 'Harakevet'. Rest assured, issues will continue to appear and, even if I do move, mail will be forwarded. In the meantime, there is such a lot of fascinating stuff on file, and here is a chance to publish some more of it and place it on record. Once more, my thanks to my contributors.

Rabbi Walter Rothschild.



30: 3 Baghdad, 1918. "The Peerless (truck) converted to run on the broad-gauge military railway." A reminder of the Mesopotamia campaign, and improvisation on the standard-gauge Baghdad-Samarra line. (Photo: The Tank Museum, Bovington.)

30:4 NEWS FROM THE LINE.

1. More Delays and Incidents. Delays to passenger trains resulted from two separate incidents on 6th. June 1995; in the early afternoon a ballast spreader, working between Binyamina and Zikhron Ya'akov, derailed in mid-section. It was able to rerail itself, but not before trains 7 and 8 (expresses made up of IC3 sets) had been delayed for up to 75 minutes. Later that same day train 54 from Tel Aviv to Nahariyya was held at Herzliyya for 20 minutes when a passenger suffered a heart attack and an ambulance had to be summoned.

Next day there were more delays in store. A point failed at Atlit, causing confusion and disruption to services. Train 10 (Tel Aviv - Nahariyya) could not be released and its passengers were transferred to the following train 56 (Tel Aviv - Haifa) which continued on to Nahariyya. A coincidental block failure between Hoterim and Hof Carmel meant more time lost with trains running up to 50 minutes late. Train 10, stranded at Atlit, stood for over two hours before the point was repaired and it could be worked to Haifa as empty stock.

2. Mk. 2 News. ex-BR Mk2C coach 684 has been repainted in IC3 colours. It was first noted in traffic thus on 14/6, but bears a paint date of 28/5. The roof is white and the car number black. 683 has also been repainted, also with a white roof but with white car number, and a paint date of 28/6/95. 687 and 688 have both been taken to Qishon, the former for possible and the latter for definite refurbishment into IC3 colours. Perhaps this means that the Mk2C coaches are to be given an extensive extra lease of life after all. (Is this the fourth or fifth IR livery worn by these second-hand coaches?)

3. "May He Bring Peace Upon Us..." From Sybil Ehrlich: Because of work on Hashalom Station on the Ayalon link, various timetable changes have been announced by posters from 8/5/95. The Jerusalem-Tel Aviv train will leave at 14.55 instead of 15.05, the Tel Aviv - Rehovot train of 17.15 will leave at 17.05, and the TA-Rehovot 07.50 and 08.40 return have been temporarily cancelled. Hashalom station is now due to open in October - it isn't clear whether these changes will be in force until then. See cuttings in (8) below.

4. "Gesher Tzar M'od". The new footbridge at Herzliyya is now open, its steelwork painted red; like that at Haifa Merkaz, it gives the station an "English" look.

5. A Reader Writes. Danny Osborne, who is hoping to make a video of IR early next year, spent a few days 'scouting' in June '95; he reports 103 in action at Lod on 22/6 with another of the class under overhaul at Haifa (engine removed); the TA-Jerusalem train departed on 22/6 with a full rake but detached all but two coaches at Lod; "Travel onward seemed to be at a fair lick, with bogies hitting into curves, making for a lively ride". He noted problems at level crossings, with trains frequently having to make heavy brake applications on approach to them; on one such (alas, unidentified) such a heavy brake application was made that air was lost and it took about 10 minutes to recharge.

6. Doing the Gaze Strip. According to 'Yediot Aharonot' of 10/7 the Gaza Strip is to be connected to Ashdod Port by railway within a year. Transport Minister Yisrael Kessar is reported as saying that the new line, to be laid on the old formation from about Shikma Junction to the Erez loading point on the edge of the Gaza Strip, will be of some 9 kms. length and cost some 20 million Shekels. (Presumably this indicates that the line will continue under the new Palestinian Authority further southwards? Or will the checkpoint be also the transshipment point for produce?)

7. Signals. The semaphore signal featured in 27:1 and noted further in 28:6 was installed at the Haifa East Railway Museum in July, nicely repainted and devoid of the convolvulus plant which had previously climbed up its lattice post threatening to obscure sight of its arms. A close inspection of this signal before its re-erection at the Museum showed it to have been by Saxby & Farmer rather than the Railway Signal Co. Not all parts are original, however. One of the counter-weight balances is marked ESR, while another part has the raised initials WD. Not visible in the photo in 27:1 is a third arm for shunting purposes set on the main post. Of the other semaphore signals once to be seen at Haifa East, those inspected were products of the Railway Signal Co. This inspection, though, was neither systematic nor comprehensive.

8. Various Press Comments. Thanks to Steve Tish for a large wad of miscellaneous press cuttings, including:

"Ichot Hasvivah" for April/May 1995, No. 9, pp.18-20 has a lengthy article on the advantages of railway development.

A press release from IR of 19/6/95 announced further major works in

October in connection with the construction of 'Hashalom' station in the Ayalon valley; other suburban stations will be at Yitzhak Sadeh, HaHaganah and HaUniversita.

Another two-page article (pp.25f) appeared in 'Maariv' for 20/6/95 on the T.A. suburban plans - the accompanying diagram shows lines to Modiin and Rishon Letzion via Bat Yam.

Another article in 'Maariv' on 21/6/95 concerned a visit by a Dutch railway delegation to Israel; illustrations included a NS "Koploper" train and an aerial view of the west end of Utrecht Centraal Station. The delegation was headed by the Director General of the Dutch Ministry of Transport & Water Management, and was to participate in a seminar on "Railways Infrastructure - Planning, Finance and Strategic Co-operation" at the Tel Aviv Hilton, 18/6.

"Globes", the Israeli financial paper, had several articles on IR's financial position in 1994 (4/7/95), Kessar's latest promises about construction of a line to Eilat (7/6/95), problems concerning the process of tendering for a rubbish-removal-by-rail contract (5/7/95), the replacement/erection of a railway bridge at Lod over one weekend (12/6/95); more on the Dutch consortium visit (from the ANG Bank) to investigate investment possibilities in railways in the Middle East (18-19/6/95).

"Maariv" for 19/6/95 included tenders for the doubling of the Tel Aviv South - Lod section. On 22/6/95 there was a photo of work in progress on 'Hashalom' station. 'Kol Bo' of 23/6/95 had a brief article on the possibility of turning the 'Nesher' cement sidings into a freight terminal.

The "Israel Scandinavia Trade Review" No. 1, for May '95, has a review (p.23f) of Danish links. "One of the largest deals in recent years was in 1992 when Israel Railways purchased 10 IC3 passenger trains from ABB Scandia A/S at an estimated cost of \$50 million. Since then another order for seven trains at a cost of about \$35 million has been made, and the first of these will be delivered at the end of 1995. The Danish company is optimistic about trade with Israel. Massive rail investment is planned over the coming decade, and plans are already afoot for a regional network. "ABB Scandia will be in a good position", says Alex Greenshlag, managing director of Adbin, the Haifa-based representative of ABB Scandia in Israel. "Firstly the company is already represented here, and it has committed itself to producing part of the trains in Israel. It is assisting Israeli industry to move into new areas." "

9. More Doubling. The 14 km. Hadera - Netanya double-track section was officially inaugurated on 30th. May - part of the 48km. double track now

extending from Tel Baruch Junction to Binyamina, built to "modern European standards" and permitting a higher line speed of 160 km/h. (Details from the official press release.) The Binyamina-Haifa section should also be doubled within a year. When completed, this should permit Tel Aviv - Haifa expresses to cover the route in 45-48 minutes, and 3 or 4 trains to run in each direction per hour.

Steve Tish attended the opening ceremony; the opening train comprised loco 111 on 640/ 616/ 605/ 78/ 115/ 114/ 116. Quite an eclectic rake !

10. Refurbished Coaches. On the same day the first of the coaches refurbished by 'Haargaz' at Sarafand and Ardan projects of Holon "to a state almost as new" was re-introduced to service. No. 640 has new air-conditioning equipment and the power end has been repainted bright red. It bears a paint date of 21/5/95.

Refurbished coaches 605 and 616 re-entered service from Haargaz on 16/4/95, and 78 on 24/4/95. (None bear paint dates.) Next ones due to enter their works are: 74, 601 and 641. Coaches 51, 54 and 55 are to be converted to Generator Cars by Ardan Projects, and 623 was already undergoing such work when Steve Tish sent me the above info. At least four of the former French coaches are also imminently due into service.

11. Statistics. In the first quarter of 1995 passenger traffic on IR was up by 27% on the equivalent period.



30: 4A

Morning market train from Battir to Jerusalem at Battir station, Jan. 1945; PR loco no. 17 propelled a LSWR coach and a Sentinel articulated pair (SC1 - by now unpowered) up the gradient. (Photo: Robert W. Richardson.)

30: 5.

NOTES AND CORRECTIONS.

a). On 29:22 (b): Theo Pelz writes that he served on the "Dromit" from February 1953 for about a year, with an interruption of some weeks in autumn 1953. The 25-Taf vans were carried on board in July of that year.

b). Whither El Sejed ? Paul Cotterell theorises on the photo of El Sejed (29:19 and loose centrefold): "Perhaps it began as a Halt, as a wayside halt for operating purposes (for taking water and fire-cleaning), with the locals taking advantage of this for their travels. In time this could have become officially recognised and the stop included in printed timetables." Paul reckons that both photos (clearly taken on the same day, incidentally) would date from early days on the J-J, perhaps around 1895, when the line was still in a fairly basic state. Deir Aban station acquired a slightly more sophisticated air in following years, as is evidenced by one other known photo of the place. The photo in Harakevet 29 shows the original J&I building set in a treeless wilderness; this was later replaced with a rude concrete structure which dates back some fifty years to about the end of the Mandate. "I seem to remember that the original building has been blown up, but I cannot recall by whom."

The Editor has also been hunting in his archives for references to El Sejed, and has come up with the following, which tend to disprove Paul's theory:

The "Palestine Exploration Fund Quarterly" XIII of 1893, pp.20-22, has an article by the famous Baurath Conrad Schick, describing the new line. He writes: "From Ramleh it..... bends in large curve south-eastwards to the village Naaneh, to the west of which it passes at 29 kilometres or 95,000 feet from Jaffa. Then it goes over many winter watercourses in a south-easterly direction comparatively in a straight line to the large Wady Surar, and crossing it in the neighbourhood of Cherbet Kefr'Arad about 7 kilometres or 23,000 feet from Naaneh goes on the south side of the stream 2½ kilometres further to a place called 'Ain Sejed, which is the third station, 39½ kilometres or 129,5000 feet from Jaffa. On the south side, not far from the river bed, is a copious spring. The place is considered unhealthy and the workmen got fever when working there and in the neighbourhood. From here the line goes south-eastwards...." The implication is that there was no regular habitation at the spot, merely a useful spring ('Ain) just under half-way along the route - yet it was an advertised stopping place. At this point there was no station or halt

mentioned at Naaneh. Even Cherbet (nowadays transliterated Khirbet) merely means an uninhabited ruin.

A. Vale's article in "Railway Magazine", April 1902, refers to water supplies: "There exist water tanks at every station on the line, the most abundant springs being those of El Sejed, kilometre 73.9 (between Deir Abban and Bettir) and Bettir..." Describing a journey, "we pass the stations of El Sejed and Deir Abban without seeing the respective villages, or any villages at all." We must also note that locomotive No. 5 was named "El Sejed".

The 1894 Report (p.8) of the Société de Chemin de Fer de Jaffa à Jérusalem refers to certain repairs "de la gare de Jaffa, de la station de Ramle, des haltes de Lydda, Séjed, Deir-Aban....." - implying three levels of facility. Yet Lydda, we know from a photo in Vale's article, had a proper station building, a loop and a fenced platform area.

The Report for 1900-01, p.7, explains a diminution in freight receipts as coming from two principal causes; the second is that "les stations intermédiaires de Sejed et de Deir-Aban, qui reçoivent les céréales et graines de toutes les contrées environnantes, ont reçu, en 1900, 1,596 tonnes de moins qu'en 1899 et éprouvé une diminution de recettes de 9,696 fr. 46, représentant 55% de la perte totale, subie sur l'ensemble du trafic des marchandises." The accompanying table indicates total receipts from 'Petit Vitesse' freight in 1900 as 2800,147 fr. 41, dropping from 297,312 fr. 58 in 1899, a drop of 17,165 fr. 17, or 5.8% overall, for a drop in 1,957 tonnes of freight overall - about 9%. Although the figures for Sejed and Deir-Aban are not separated, it indicates that there was indeed some substantial freight traffic from these two stations.

In "Railways and Scenery" (pub. Cassell, London, 1932) J. P. Pearson mentions a trip from Jaffa to Jerusalem in February 1908. His special train passed through Lydda, stopped at Ramleh for 6 minutes, at Sejed for 13 minutes, Deir Aban 4, Bittir 4. Clearly Sejed was a major halt in this respect. He also mentions that the tour organisers "handed us in, at Sejed, a biscuit-and-cheese lunch on the train...."

30:6: MIDDLE EAST NOTES AND NEWS.

1. LEBANON. Andy Wilson has sent an excerpt from "The Lebanon Report", vol. 6 no. 6, June 1995, p.113, "Ecobriefs": "On May 15, Lebanon and Syria agreed to several joint initiatives in the transport sector; rail links

between Syria and Lebanon's northern border are to be rehabilitated, including the Khirbet Akkar-Tripoli-Shikka [i.e. Chekka. Ed.] and Homs-Rayaq lines. Both sides also agreed to cooperation between Middle East Airlines and Syrian Arab Airlines, including the joint development of otherwise unprofitable routes. Lebanon and Syria also plan to establish a joint commercial shipping company." Khirbet Akkar is in Syria, and is presumably the junction with the Latakia line."

Andy suggests that the Chekka-Beirut section is excluded from the above because it is already officially classed as 'operational'. It is, of course, temporarily closed as reported earlier and the bridge across the Nahr el Kalb is removed and track converted to an asphalt road for about a mile south of the bridge site. The erstwhile Chekka shunting loco, EMD No. 602, is in the depot at Beirut now with the other CEL s.g. diesels.

The steam locos are still at Tripoli - four G8 and two French 0-8-0's. They look to be reasonably complete, unlike the Beirut narrow-gauge locos which have been extensively robbed of brass components.

2. OMAN. It is confirmed that the narrow-gauge line is in a park to the north of Muscat, some way out of town; it is about a mile in length and was equipped by Severn-Lamb.

MYSTERY OBJECT QUIZ !!

30:7

From Uri Ben-Rehav come two photos of a most remarkable contraption, found at Kibbutz Ain Harod in September 1993. Is it a long-lost 0-2-0 precursor of "Rocket"? Is it an experimental stage in the development of an Israeli version of the French TGV? Think it over..... then turn it over!



Answer : A British Army mobile boiler for heating water for laundry etc. purposes, at a nearby camp; of World War 2 vintage. The Decauville rails are nothing to do with it, of course, but were there by chance.

30: 8 **A MYSTERY WORKS PLATE GONE MISSING.** Paul Cotterell.

One day in 1987 Steve Tish and I paid a visit to Qishon Works. As usual on such occasions we called in at the offices (i.e. the wooden bodies of the Midland and LSWR coaches) to announce our arrival. In the ex-Midland coach we chatted for a while with a guy called Zvi Schwartz (confusingly there were two Zvi Schwartzes on IR) who had assembled a small collection of wagon worksplates which he had cleaned up, painted, and displayed on a side wall of the coach by his desk. One plate in particular caught my eye. It was lettered LNWR - or possibly L&NWR, I can no longer remember if there was an ampersand or not. Either way, the plate came as a shock, for I had seen no reference at all in PR documents and lists (nor anywhere else for that matter) to wagons from the London & North Western Railway having been sent to Palestine. And it definitely was a wagon plate, not a worksplate from one of the 'Coal Engines' that worked locally for a few years during and just after World War 1. Can anyone say what LNWR wagon, or wagons, might have been involved? Perhaps the London & North Western Railway Association in England could offer an explanation.

I tried to persuade Zvi Schwartz to donate these worksplates to the museum at Haifa East, but he refused. He had more than one bone to pick with the railway and was damned if he was going to do anything for it. He'd rather throw the worksplates away than hand them over to IR. Quite possibly he did so. When next I returned to Qishon Workshops both Zvi Schwartz and his collection of plates had disappeared. He had been pensioned off. It's anybody's guess as to what happened to the plates. I like to think that, instead of just discarding them, he may have taken them home with him, in which case there's a slight chance they may surface again sometime.

30: 9

WHO OWNS AFULE ?

Jacob Wahrman has sent me a copy of a page from "The New Palestine" for March 27th. 1925; this is apparently a publication of "The American Zion Commonwealth" which had then recently acquired land in the vicinity of Herzliyya and elsewhere - including, according to a photograph, "The Afulah Station", the picture showing a two-storey stone building, single-storey goods shed, water tower etc. This cannot be correct, since the station remained owned and in use by Palestine Railways until 1948... Can any reader clarify this confusion?

30: 10 **BACK POCKET MEMORIES.** By Paul Cotterell.

Most old enginemen will be able to produce a faded, creased snapshot from their wallets showing themselves on the footplate in days long past. The two reproduced here are, perhaps, of more than usual interest for they also feature a couple of LMS 2-8-0's.

Leaning out of the side window aboard 70308 is Driver Nahum Greenberg who survived any injury inflicted by the falling arrow to finish his official career with IR as Inspector of Accidents. Behind him stands Fireman Yehiel Bloch who, shortly after, left the Land of Milk and Honey for the lure of the 'Goldene Medine' of America.

In the other picture Assistant Station Master Yitzhak Leshchinski of Atlit station is handing up to Fireman David Turk the single line staff for the section on to Zichron Yaakov. (At that time the intermediate station, or Halt, at Dor - then still known as Tantura - did not possess passing loops as it does now). Driver Eliyahu Brunnengraber surveys the transaction from the cab of 70521.

Messrs Greenberg and Brunnengraber now volunteer their services three days a week at the Haifa East Railway Museum and were kind enough to fish out of their pockets the original snapshots from which these prints were made, as well as providing details for the above notes.



and the narrow oil fuel tank on the tender, give an excellent look-out for reverse running, but the crews would surely have sweated buckets in a Middle Eastern summer. A roof ventilator might have provided some slight relief but none is indicated. The boiler is pitched noticeably high; compare this with, say, the P class boiler centred at 9' 3" above rail height or that of the LMS 8F 2-8-0 at 8' 11". The height of the proposed 2-8-2's boiler is indicated by the relatively wide firebox situated above instead of between the frames. Quality of ride might have been compromised as a result, but high speeds were not required and the loco could have functioned satisfactorily as a mixed-traffic unit. The large casting atop the boiler housed a sand box (at front) and a steam dome. Other features may engage the attention of other readers.

The design appears to be a thoroughly simple and practical example of the period. This, I would estimate, would be about 1945-50, and it will be remembered that the PR General Manager, A.F. Kirby, was making preliminary enquiries concerning new steam locos during this period. (See 11.16.) He had expressed a preference for NBL products and indicated that an order for twelve new engines (possibly to be increased to twenty-four) was to be placed in the UK. It seems likely, therefore, that the accompanying drawing shows what these locos would have looked like had the British Mandate lasted a few more years.



30: 12 The Khartoum Steam Tram. No further details available on original print, but the loco appears to be a Krauss 60cm. gauge tank. (Photo: The Tank Museum, Bovington.)

Richard Katz wrote "Ein Bummel um die Welt", an account of a two-year trip around the world by Camel and Rail, Ship and Car; it was published in 1927 by the Ullstein Verlag, Berlin. Two excerpts from this book are so good I want to share them with readers, even though Egypt and Sudan are slightly outside our 'normal area'; the events described took place in January 1925:

"ALLAH WILL IT...."

"Even a little droplet of dirty water can reflect the sun; likewise this - not very clean - story reveals also a spark of oriental piety.

I was travelling in the Cairo tramway from the Place de l'Opera to the village of Gizeh. As is normal in the Orient, the open Trailer Car served as Third Class for the poor natives, whilst the Second Class was situated in closed, oven-hot Motor Trams. Like every Turkish house it was divided into a 'Harem' for the women and a 'Selamlik', in which the men sweated equally under hats, turbans and tarbooshes, for it was, despite being January, a very hot day.

There was only one woman amongst us, a large Negress, who was looking after a pretty little girl. This little child, who must have been four or five, fidgeted ever more restlessly in her place. Long before the Negress explained the reason, we had already predicted it from the clear indications give.....

The fat Negress rustled through her no-less fat knitted bag, and pulled out from between several oranges, a full bunch of garlic and some knitting an enamel pot, which she placed in the middle gangway of the tram, upon which the little girl took her accustomed position.

Till now I was the only one who took any notice (for I was the only European in the compartment); after a quick glance to establish what was happening, the men continued reading their newspapers. None of them seemed to join me in wondering: Couldn't this have waited ten minutes until the terminus? Or, if the situation really was so urgent, couldn't it at least have waited half a minute until the next stop? Above all - shouldn't a four- or five-year old girl already be a bit modest about her ablutions?

As I have said, no-one moved or made a fuss. The Conductor was indeed in the gangway, but he turned to maintain guard over the little one. She finished her task with signs of great pleasure, whereupon the Negress pushed the pot - now full - under the opposite bench.

After a short while the Arab gentleman, under whose legs the pot now

stood, began to mutter and grumble. When this didn't help, he asked the Negress directly if she would remove the property of her protégée under her own place; it was too hot for such odoriferous products. The black lady, clearly of similar opinion, took the pot reluctantly by its handle and emptied it, without a backwards glance, with one sweep through the window behind her.

She shouldn't have done that.....

First we heard a cry of shock and then a frightful racket. An Arab banged with his stick against the side of the tram and entered it, demonstrating to our gaze a turban which, thanks to the results of the little girl's stomach pains, now looked like a chocolate cake ! The man would in all likelihood not have made quite so much fuss, were it not that his was no ordinary turban but a green one, a holy headcloth, that only those who had made the pilgrimage to Mecca in the past year was permitted to wear; its recolouring amounted almost to sacrilege !

Unfortunately I wasn't able to understand everything that the man in the once-green turban said to the Negress (for he did speak very quickly); however I could tell that it wasn't very friendly. One phrase, that I was able to translate, was to the effect that he doubted that her parents had been married; in another he likened her to a vile manifestation of the devil.

The Negress was much calmer under the torrent of his words than he had been under the torrent from the enamel potty. As he finally paused for breath she asked, calmly: "Why are you fussing so much, you impatient and unbelieving person ? Allah willed it, that you should be walking past as I emptied the container."

The Arab was silent for a while. Then he spoke quietly and almost apologetically: "Maresh" (It doesn't matter !)" and jumped off.

The only one who seemed amazed was, again, me....."

From p.33: "Oh yes ! Khartoum is certainly a Capital ! Indeed, it has a Zoological garden, in which from time to time a Crocodile creeps in from the nearby Nile, and it even has - this point I've been keeping till last - a Tramway ! This shuts up any doubter. Every hour a little snuffling narrow-gauge loco pulls six filthy open carriages for the Negroes and two, by African standards, slightly-less filthy carriages for the Whites, six kilometres from Khartoum to the confluence of the White and Blue Niles. At the junction of these two source rivers of the Nile, which indeed continue to flow in parallel with their clear and dark waters for some distance downstream, a steamer sets its course for Omdurman, and one reaches this ferry after the Tramway has managed to derail itself harmlessly once or twice, for its rails have no foundations....."

Sybil Ehrlich came across a volume of this weekly newspaper in Jerusalem - and I, as Editor, have been ploughing through some back issues at the National Newspaper Library in Colindale, London. It's a forward-looking and optimistic paper on the whole; Here are some 'tasters' - it is my intention, if possible, eventually to publish complete extracts relating to railways over the several years that the paper ran.

From the issue of Nov. 12th, 1920, pp.686f.: An anonymous article entitled: "The Future of the Railways." Quite prescient in its discussion of possible electrification and privatisation !

"The raising of the railway rates has caused some natural emotion. It means a stiff increase in the cost of travelling and a corresponding increase in the cost of living. The reason advanced is that owing to the heavy cost of working the railways are being run at a loss. Doubtless this is quite correct, but the question is a wider one, and the Government will one day have to consider all that is involved in the finance of railway working in Palestine.

The Palestine Government has inherited an expensive and unsatisfactory railway system. The railway was built hurriedly during the war for military purposes. The track was not properly laid, and the line was not ballasted, so that in bad weather break-downs were inevitable. The rolling stock consisted to a very large extent of cast-off material from Egypt. The engines are in most cases machines which were already worn out before they came to Egypt. The personnel in its upper ranks rarely consisted of professional railwaymen, and in its lower ranks was recruited mostly from Egyptians who are notorious for the short way they have with machines or animals. It would be remarkable indeed if under such circumstances the railways did not give grounds for complaint on the part of the enduring traveller and business man.

In fairness, it must be admitted that under its present chief the railway administration is striving to improve things,. Special services are putting the trains more at the disposal of the agriculturalist and business man. There is a much improved through service to Egypt, the journey to which in the last few days has been appreciably reduced in time. Of course there is still much leeway to make up. But the railway administration is not unconscious of the defects and when new engines arrive the ground for many present complaints should disappear.

One thing among others the railway authorities could do even now to increase the comfort of travellers is to introduce a body of authorised

porters with fixed tariffs, and to exclude from the railway stations all other porters. At present the porters are often incompetent, undisciplined and piratical.

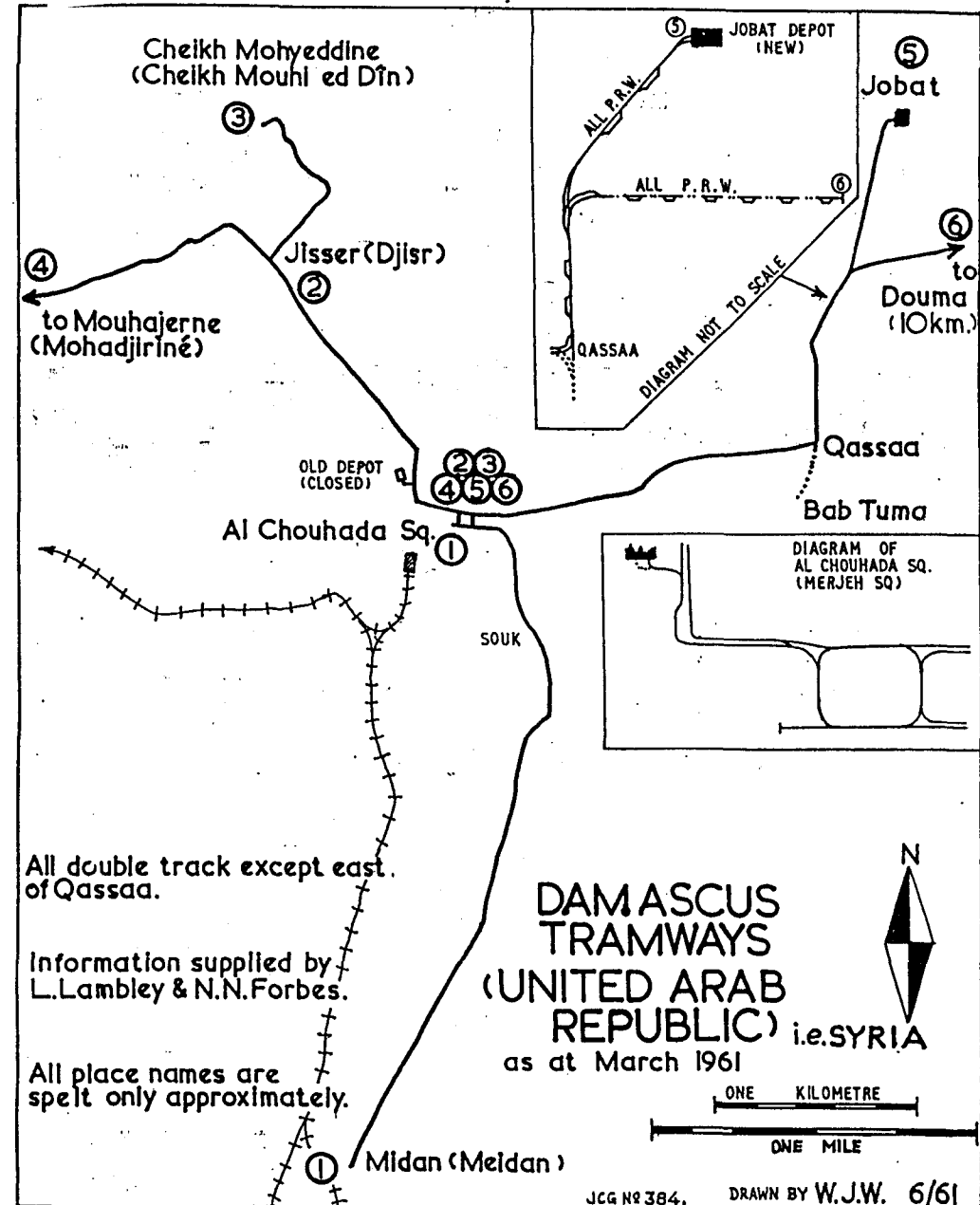
The High Commissioner in his speech opening the Advisory Council announced that the Palestine Government is to operate, without owning, the line between Kantara and Rafa. It is understood that this section was originally offered to the Egyptian State Railways but refused by them, doubtless because of the heavy loss in operating it. As the Egyptian Government has no financial interest in this section, and as the Palestine Government likewise has no financial liabilities on its account, it is natural to conclude that the Imperial Government retains financial responsibility for the Kantara-Rafa section. That would be perfectly just, because not only did the Imperial Government build the railway for strategical purposes, but those strategical purposes still hold good. Now that the British Garrison in Egypt is to be withdrawn to Kantara and the Canal Zone the maintenance of the railway connection between Kantara and Palestine stands out as a strategic necessity.

These decisions in regard to the desert railway cannot fail to have certain political consequences. The Imperial Government, as the owner of this railway and as the guardian of Imperial strategical interests, is bound to intervene energetically to secure the preservation of through traffic between Palestine and Egypt, now threatened by the demand of the Suez Canal Company for the removal of the railway bridge. That is one consequence. Another is that the refusal of the Egyptian state to take over the responsibility for the desert railway, and the transference of it for the purpose of operation to the Palestine Government, must tend to place the whole Sinai Peninsula in more direct association with Palestine and to remove it from association with Egypt.

The guarantee of the Palestine railways against loss on the Kantara-Rafa line does not of itself go far to balance revenue and expenditure. One root of the trouble is the high cost of fuel. In this connection, when so much money has to be spent on reconstructing a railway system as must be spent in Palestine, it is very well worth while considering whether electrification would not be advisable. Only experts can work out the economies of such a revolution, but everybody can see that it must take some little time before a large scale electrical scheme can be executed, whereas some of the needs of the railway are very urgent. It is to be hoped however that the administration is giving the very closest attention to this question, for hydro-electricity is the key to the economic development of Palestine.

There are some good authorities who doubt whether the Palestine railways can ever be made an economic success in the hands of the Government, and who think that in the end it would be good for the finances of the

Government and for the people if the railways were handed over to a private Company, to be run of course under state supervision. The time has not come to discuss this question, but it is important enough to be mentioned even now, and should the pessimists turn out to be right it will have to be threshed out."



So far as I'm aware Hof Carmel (formerly Kafr Samir) never aspired to a platform and had to make do with a small stone building on the west side of the tracks. The layout stayed pretty much the same as depicted here until 1994 when work got under way to provide an altogether more grandiose station to serve suburban trains as well as those along the main line (not that any train had stopped here, apart from crossing purposes, for many a long year.) The British Army had a presence here for a long time, with a siding leading off to the Royal Army Service Corps depot and another trailing off southwards into the Neuhardhof base. Both sidings were still in situ in 1995, though long disused and partly submerged under car parks and suchlike.

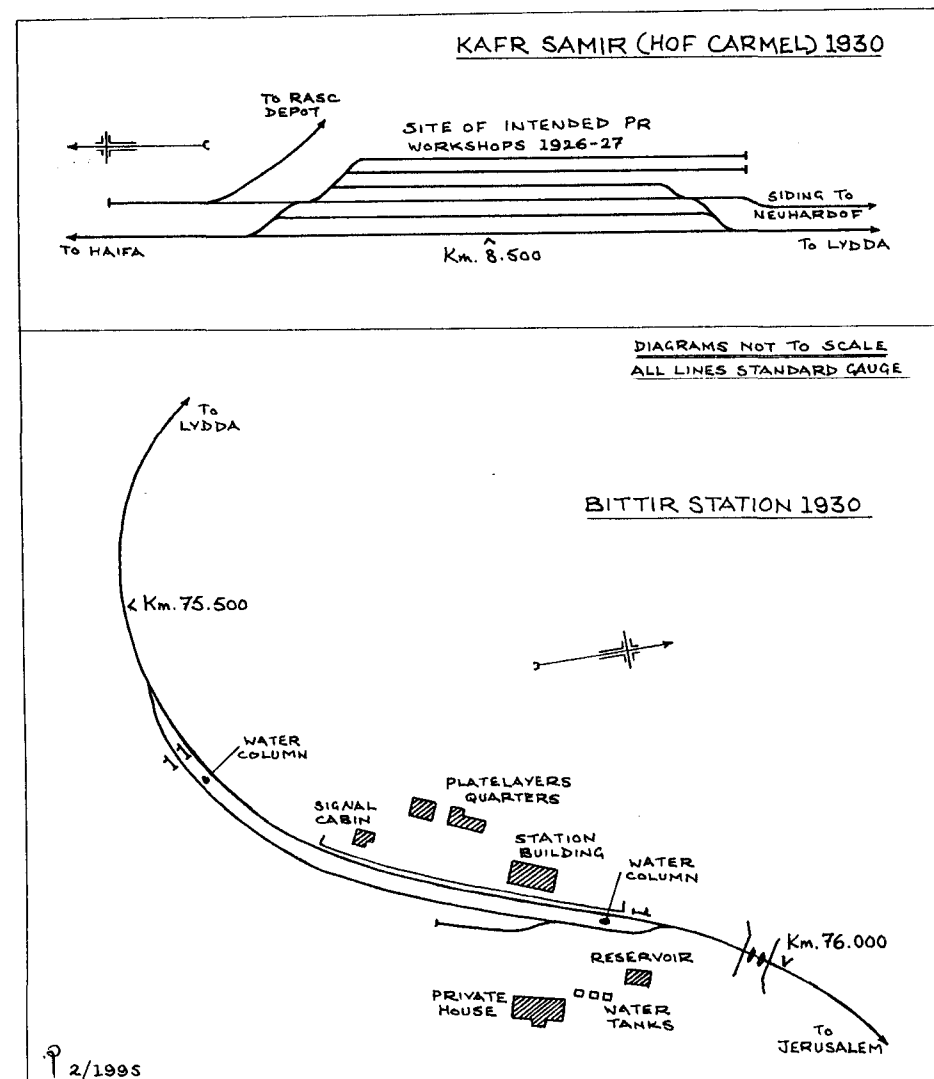
Readers may recall that before Qishon Works were built PR had come close to erecting workshops in Bat Galim about 1923 (see 17:24). I was considerably surprised to discover that PR had also proposed workshops at Kafr Samir. Four Ways & Works Dept. survey plans, dated 1926 and 1927, show that shops were intended for the east side of the line as indicated in my sketch. The site was later partly occupied by a petrol station, a Burger Ranch and an Israeli army base. Had these workshops been built here one supposes that the dual gauge would have had to be extended out of Haifa in order that the IIR locos and rolling stock could be brought to Kafr Samir for overhaul. The PR plans show that the proposed workshops at Kafr Samir were to have been of the same basic layout as those eventually built at Qishon.

[Ed. notes: Presumably the PR ideas for building workshops at Kafr Samir would be based on the same premises as those for Bat Galim and Qishon - the need for a good wide area of level, firm ground near the railway. The fact that the RASC shops were later built here proves that the area was suitable.

Around 1981 I was arrested here when trying to photograph the old station buildings; the Army patrol that picked me up tried to make out that I had been photographing the army base in the near vicinity - but, fortunately for me, one of their number was of British origin who was able to convince his comrades that, yes, in England there really are people who take photographs of railways! I then went on to the beach itself where, at that time, two very derelict and rusty PR steel coach bodies were dumped on the sand. Whilst taking photographs I inadvertently disturbed a young couple who were 'otherwise engaged'; having explained that I was photographing the 'Karon Rakevet' the male partner explained firmly that this was now a 'Karon Fooki', and indicated that my interest in old PR rolling stock was not shared by he or his friends. So - I never got to explore the sidings!]

Bittir station in 1930 may be compared to Walter's sketch of it some fifty years later in Harakevet 4, page 9. The intervening changes are evident enough. It may be noted that while Up starters were provided for both the through road and the loop line in PR days, there does not seem to

have been a Down starter for the loop. Having been brought up in Britain to expect full signalling protection for trains, I am often bemused and concerned at the apparently cavalier attitude displayed to signalling on PR. As a system of protection it frequently leaves much to be desired, but folk seem to have muddled by quite successfully without an exorbitant number of horrendous collisions. Perhaps the enginemen were specially trained to keep an eye on the road ahead and a hand on the brake at all times on the off-chance that they encountered something unexpected steaming towards them



EGYPTIAN SIGNALS.

Some time ago I entered into correspondence with Mike Christensen of the Signalling Record Society, about pictures of Egyptian signalboxes which seemed to me to look as though they were of (British) Great Central Railway design. He has sent copies of the 'Railway Gazette' for Nov. 13th. 1931, pages 626/627, which bear illustrations of various recent installations on the E.S.R., and comments:

"Much of the signalling on the Great Central Rly. was provided by the Railway Signal Company of Fazakerley, Liverpool. It seems clear that the RSCo also provided a lot, if not the majority, of the signalling equipment used by the E.S.R. Certainly ESR use electric train staff as its primary means of control of traffic on single lines, and the RSCo had the market in these instruments sewn up.

The RSCo had the overseas market - certainly in the British Empire - pretty well to themselves. They had a near monopoly in Ireland, and sold a lot in South America. The company had a reputation for products which were solid and, above all, cheap.

Don't get too concerned with signalbox design. By their nature the structure has to be built locally, though sometimes the woodwork was sent out ex-factory. More often, local labour was used, working to plans of how big the structure had to be to accommodate the lever frame. So the structure may have a local flavour, but be pure RSCo inside. The ESR was very much a 'British' railway, even down to details. One illustration, of Luxor No. 1 signal cabin, shows the Signal Linesman's and the Telegraph Linesman's boards (a white square and a white oval) hanging on the front; these would be reversed, to show a black side, when the equipment was out of order so that any passing linesman would know he was needed. Pure 1880's Britain, predating the telephone !"

Of course a lot of ESR equipment was used on the Sinai Military Railway and on the Palestine Railway in its early days, and RSCo lever frames and signal posts were very much in evidence until recently on IR and can still be found in places like Bet Shemesh.

By Alan Clothier.

Alan, now of Whitley Bay, was in Egypt as a Railway Engineering Consultant 1977-1984, and led the Implementation Team tackling numerous areas in need of improvement from the beginning of 1980 until the end of 1983, with periodic visits until 1992. During this time he covered the entire network with the exception of the ENR lines in the Sinai, which by then were non-existent. However, he had close access to all the official records ! The following are from notes and articles he has sent.

The first railway bridge across the Suez Canal was built in 1918 at El-Hirsch, near Kantara, and was removed in 1921.

Official records show that there were three bridges at El Ferdan:

- 1st: 1942, built by British Army, 147m., damaged by shipping 31/12/54.
- 2nd: 1955, built by Baume & Merpent, 210m., destroyed in conflict, 1956.
- 3rd: 1965, built by Krupp (?), 317m., destroyed in 1967 war.

"Egyptian Railways in 125 Years, 1852-1977" has this to say:

"(C) Ferdan Bridge was built in 1942 with a length of 147m and a navigable span of 45m. The bridge was removed in 1955.

(D) the first Suez Canal Bridge [presumably so called because it was the first inspired by the railway administration !] was built in 1954 with a length of 210m and a navigable span of 96m. It was destroyed by explosives by the invading British, French and Israeli armies during November 1956 after the Crisis of the nationalisation of the Suez Canal.

(E) Second Suez Canal Bridge was built in 1965 with a length of 317m and a navigable span of 148m. It was destroyed in the 1967 war and is now under repair by the German Company of Messrs. Krupp." [I saw the removed trusses etc. derelict on the west bank of the Canal near El Ferdan around 1980.]

More details are gleaned from the 'Railway Gazette' for Jan. 14th. 1955, on pages 22, 34 & 48. [See below.] Clearly the 1956 bridge was planned and in course of erection, if not fully erected, by the time the wartime bridge was struck by a tanker on the last day of 1955 (celebrating the New Year, no doubt !).

For whatever period the lines east of the Canal were operated again by ENR for the period between end of hostilities 1956 and 1965, or the 1967 war, it must have been necessary for the ferry to have resumed operations as no bridge was available.

In the early 1980's even the ENR Authorities still included (and probably still do) proposals for re-instatement of their lines in the Sinai plus the construction of a new line from El-Shatt southwards to Sharm-el-Sheikh (some 340 km.) The project provided for two tunnels connecting the Sinai railways with the main system at Kantara and Deversoir but the only tunnel constructed under the Canal to date is that for road traffic just north of Suez.

From 'Railway Magazine', March 1955. p.214.

"During the second world war another swing bridge carrying a railway was constructed, but at El Ferdan, halfway between Ismailia and El Kantara, on the understanding that it would be removed after the war. Although this bridge was found to impede navigation it was allowed to remain in position, despite representations by the Sue Canal Coy., whose concession permits it an unimpeded right-of-way, until an oil tanker collided with it on December 31st. last. Meanwhile, however, a new and permanent bridge had been completed some distance to the south, with two longer revolving spans giving a 315ft. clear opening for navigation. It is expected that the wartime bridge, for which there is no longer a use, will now be removed completely."

From 'Railway Gazette', Nov. 6th. 1953. p.516.

"A double swing bridge for rail and road traffic is being built by Baume et Merpent over the Suez Canal to replace the bridge which was erected in 1942 and damaged by a steamer in 1947. The new bridge is composed of two identical swing spans with unequal arms. Its total length is 210m with a clear headroom under the swing span of 4½m at high water level. The distance between the centre of pivot piers is 112½m and the distance between end abutments is 207 1/4 m. The free navigable channel is 96m. The main girders are double cantilever trusses of through type; the longer arm has seven and the shorter one six panels. The bridge is designed to carry Class 'D' locomotives of a total weight of 180 tons and axleload of 25 tons at 2m. spacing. The road is designed for normal traffic of maximum axleload of 15 tons at 3m between axles. The operations of turning, wedging and locking the spans are effected by a system of rack and pinions driven by a diesel engine installed in the machinery room."

Further details in 'Railway Gazette', of Jan. 14th. 1955, p.48.

"...In recent years...the increasing size of vessels using the canal has demanded extensive improvements in the navigable channel, including a bridge with a wider opening. A new bridge of the same general type as the old but with longer revolving spans has been constructed. It consists of two identical 342-ft. through truss spans eccentrically mounted on 33-ft. dia. concrete and masonry piers, the foundations of which were sunk as welded and bolted steel caissons under compressed air.

The two parts or arms of the spans designed to swing over the navigation channel and meet on its centre line are each 185 ft. in length, the landward arms measuring 158 ft. and provided with 52-ton cast-iron counterweights to balance the longer navigation-channel arms. Though the inner faces of the piers are 337 ft. apart, the actual clear opening for navigation is reduced to 315 ft. by the provision of fenders to protect the spans, when open to let ships through, consisting of reinforced concrete horizontals carried on welded box piles, and extending the length of the spans. A cross-section of the canal shows that the abutments are high and dry on the banks of the cut, and that the piers are in from 6 ft. to 16 ft. 6 in. of water, depths not approached by large vessels.

The trusses of the spans., which are square-ended, are spaced 20 ft. 4 in. apart centre to centre, and are designed to carry a single line of railway and a timber roadway and footways. The girders are 24 ft. 7 in. deep at the ends and 49 ft. 2 in. over the piers. The weight of steel in the superstructure is 1,323 tons, and there are 139 tons of cast steel in the revolving mechanism, bolting and wedging equipment.

This equipment consists of a system of double bolts to lock together the ends of the navigation-channel arms and to transmit and distribute the rolling load between them. Also, the positive and negative reactions to this loading are taken care of at the abutments by an arrangement of wedges and reinforced-concrete anchoring jaws, the reinforcement of which is bedded deeply in the abutments. The operations of revolving the spans, bolting and wedging are normally electric, but hand-power can also be used when necessary.

A 38-hp. generating set is housed in a cabin between the trusses of each span, above its pivotal point and over the track. It normally supplies power to two 15-h.p. motors for revolving the span, and to a 5-h.p. motor at the landward end of the span working the wedging mechanism. On one of the spans it also feeds a 5-h.p. motor at the end of its longer arm for the bolting mechanism. As, however, the two power plants are linked by cable, either can be used to supply power to both spans, if necessary.

The work has been carried out by Baume & Merpent S.A. of

Morlandwelz, Belgium."

(The same issue notes (p.22 & 34) that when the western span collapsed across the tanker on 31/12/54, the Suez Canal was blocked for 4 days.)

Little is known about the later operations and fate of the line to El Shatt on the eastern side of the Suez Canal, built in 1942. The ESR Working Timetable for Nov. 1st. 1945 to Oct. 31st. 1946 shows that the line from El-Kantara East Junction to El-Shatt was operated as part of the ESR, not PR, which is not mentioned in any detail. Passenger trains on this line were restricted to 60 m/h as far as km.65, then to 30 km/h on to km. 90, and finally to 40 km/h to El-Shatt station. Goods trains were not allowed to exceed 30 km/h anywhere on this line. On the swing bridge across the Canal (between El-Ferdan and Itnein stations) speed was limited to 20 km/h, not more than two coupled engines being allowed to pass over the bridge. A triangle for turning engines was provided at El-Shatt. Regarding breakdowns on this line the PR crane was to be used for accidents situated between Kantara East Junction and Itneen stations and the Ismailiya crane for accidents between Taletta and El-Shatt stations. (What was to be done between Itnein and Taletta stations remains a closed book !)

This line was in Category II which permitted all locomotive classes (up to that time) to run over it except the 4 Henschel-built 0-8-OT's 1196-9.

Permitted loads were as follows:

M.L.D.'s one coupled - 30 loaded wagons.

two coupled - 60 loaded wagons.

E.S.R. engines Category 545 - 624 - 50 loaded wagons between Nifisha and Kantara East, and between Itneen Station and El-Shatt; Category 9700 - 40 loaded wagons.

Length of train was limited to 500m including engine and brakevans.

Load of goods trains between Nifisha marshalling yard and El-Kantara East were not allowed to exceed 55 10-ton wagons and a length of 500m including engine and brakevans.

It was required that trains be stopped and the ganger examine the line to ascertain and certify the line to be clear when heavy rains occurred in the Tissa to El-Shatt section and when heavy rains or sand storms affected the El-Kantara East Junction to Khamsa Station section.

The services in operation on the Nifisha Yard to El-Kantara East and on to El-Shatt are on pp. 56-59.

They comprised:

Down Trains. (Nifisha (Farz) - El Qantara East.(P.R.) comprised:

Conditional Goods 671A, Nifisha-El Shatt, dep. 0100, pass Itneen Cabin 3 0148, crossing 674A at Tisa'h, arr. El Shatt 0535.

Regular Goods 661/656 Nifisha-El Qantara East, dep. 0340, Ismailiya 0355-0400, arr. 0630.

Conditional Goods 685/674 Nifisha-El Qantara East. dep. 0435, Ismailiya 0450-0515, arr. 0700.

Conditional Timing for 753 Military People [sic! Not 'Passengers'] Cairo-Haifa, 1, 2 & 3 class; 70 km/h Cairo - El Ferdan, 60 km/h El Ferdan - El Qantara E. Junc.); Ismailiya 1930-1950, El.-Q. E. 2037-2044.

Regular Goods 647/654 Nifisha-El-Q. E. dep. 1745, Ismailiya 1800-1810, arr. 2000.

Conditional Goods Nifisha-El-Q. E. dep. 1945, Ismailiya 2000-2005, arr. 21.50

Express Cairo-Haifa 751, 1, 2 & 3 class & Sleeping Car. Ismailiya 2145-2200, El-Q. E. 2245-2250.

Up Trains.

Regular Goods 659/662, El-Q.E.- Nifisha. dep. 0130, Ismailiya 0342-0410, arr 0430.

Conditional Timing for 752 Military People Haifa-Cairo, El. Q.E. 0205, Ismailiya 0250-0310, pass Farz cabin 0317....

Express 750 Haifa-Cairo; dep. 0427, Ismailiya 0512-0527, pass Farz cabin 0534.

Regular Goods 651/634 El-Q. E. - Nifisha. dep. 1800, Ismailiya 2045-2110, arr. 21.30.

Conditional Goods 672A El-Shatt-Nifisha. dep. El Shatt 1600, pass Itneen cabin 3 2102, Ismailiya 2135-2240, arr. 2300.

Conditional Goods 655-646, El-Q. E.-Nifisha. dep. 23.40, Ismailiya -143-0220, arr. 0240.

From the above it can be seen that the majority of the sparse traffic on this section travelled at night; this comprised only two regular goods and one passenger Down (plus 3 conditional goods & 1 troop train), and the same up except there are only 2 conditional goods paths. One conditional train extends to/from El-Shatt.

On the Qantara East - El-Shatt line itself the service is slightly more complex. The 'stations' (clearly mere blockposts and loops in most cases) were at Wahid (km.9.308), Itnein (km. 19.140), Talatah (km. 30.803), Khamsah (km. 50.740), Saba'h (km. 77.344), Tisa'h (km. 104.572) and El Shatt (km. 112.121).

Train 671A from Nifisha joined at Itneen, crossed 674A at Tisa'h 0502-0515, arr. 0535;

Regular Goods 671 passed dep. El-Q. Junc. at 0635, crossing 674 there, crossed 674A at Talatah 0742-0756, crossed 670 at Khamsah 0841-0906, crossed 676 at Tisa'h 1053, arr. 11.10.

Conditional Goods 677A worked Sundays, Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Fridays, dep. 0910 (crossing 674A), crossed 670 at Itneen 0952-1010, crossed 676 at Saba'h 1238-1300, crossed 672 at Tisa'h 1358, arr. 1415.

In the reverse direction from El-Shatt:

Conditional Goods 674A dep. 0450, crossed 671A at Tisa'h 0510, crossed 671 at Talatah 0754, arr. Qantara East Junc. 0900 (crossing 677A).

Regular Goods 670 dep. 0610, crossed 671 at Khamsah 0821-0855, crossed 677A at Itnein 1004, arr. 1045, crossing 677.

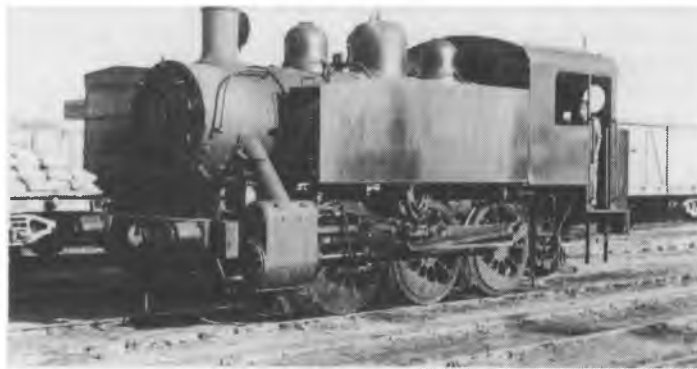
Ration Train 676 travelled Tuesdays, Fridays and Sundays; it dep. 1010, crossed 671 at Tisa'h 1031-1100, crossed 677A at Saba'h 1250-1335, crossed 677 at Khamsah 1434-1500, crossed 673 at Wahid 1630, arr. 1650. These, clearly the most important trains of the week for most along the line, also called at km. 97 1121-1140 and km. 87 1205-1225.

Conditional Goods 672 dep. 1330, crossed 677A at Tisa'h 1351-1405, crossed 677 at Khamsah 1559-1620, crossed 673 at Itnein 1729, arr. 1810 (crossing 651).

Conditional Goods 672A El-Shatt-Nifisha dep. 1600, crossed 677 at Saba'h 1716-1800, crossed 673 at Khamsah 1859-1945, then passed Itneen 2058, and crossed the bridge.

There is no clue how the ration train worked southwards ! Life must have been fairly tedious at most of the blockposts, though it is interesting that almost every one was used at least once a day to cross trains. Clearly by this period the intense wartime traffic was long gone.

30: 18 W.D. (USATC) O-6-OT No. 1996 at Cairo, Nov. 1944.
(Photo: Len Redshaw.)



30: 19 "THROUGH THE FORBIDDEN LAND".

I recently came across a marvellous travelogue called: "Through the Forbidden Land: Journeys in Disguise through Soviet Central Asia", by Gustav Krist, translated by E.O.Lorimer and published by the Readers Union Ltd., by arrangement with Faber & Faber, 1939.

Krist was an Austrian soldier who had, during the First World War, been captured somehow, somewhere, and had survived forced labour in harsh conditions in obscure parts of trans-Caspian Asia. During this period he seems to have survived, or adapted, by "going native" to some extent. This book seems to be the sequel to another called "Pascholl, Plenny ! Prisoner in the Forbidden Land". There is no date, but from internal evidence it seems to have been written about Krist's travels over a period of 16 months, in various disguises, during 1925/6, and may have been written - or, more likely, translated - in 1936. The story is quite hair-raising in its account of the primitive brutality and casual violence of the area. All I can say is that it really gripped me, and I should like to quote excerpts from it here, even though not all have to do specifically with railways and even though the area covered is just off the normal definition of "Middle East". After all, you are unlikely to read this stuff otherwise !

p.48. ("At Qizil Arwat)...I took two tickets, and Khores and I mounted the train bound for Charjui, some 500 miles away, the then Capital of the Turkmenistan Soviet Republic. The incredible cheapness of travel on the Russian railways took my breath away. For a journey rather longer than from Vienna to Lake Constance I paid 31 roubles apiece - say, about £2. 19s., for our seats in an express train. This sum gave us a right to a sleeping place and indefinite supplies of boiling water for tea.

p.69. "(From Charjui) I took two tickets to Samarquand.....After a journey of nearly 14 hours, past Qaghan and Katta Qurghan, we reached the former capital of Timur and the capital of the Soviet Republic of Uzbekistan, about 232 miles distant from Charjui. The Turkistan trains crawl incredibly slowly though the desert. The sleepers are simply laid flat in the sand, and since no renewals or repairs have been done to the permanent way since 1914 the trains are obliged to creep along the lines with the utmost caution, though these are laid as straight as a die and curves are almost non-existent.

p.98. It was an unpleasant surprise on reaching Khoqand that the Soviet authorities had sent the cart, horse and supplies of fodder via Skobelev to Sukhana on the Qizil Qaya railway, which branches off to the south about half-way between Khoqand and Andijan.....There was nothing to be done but to take the train to Gorchakovo, the junction for Sukhana. I had to wait three days till the train coughed its way slowly in. When at last we started I was so exhausted by the heat that I fell asleep in the carriage in spite of the racket made by my Sart fellow travellers. I woke to my horror at Fechenko, having overshot my station. I didn't feel like waiting another three days for a return train to Gorchakovo, so I hired a carriage to do the 25½ miles back. When I got to Gorchakovo I found that I was in luck for once, for a train was starting next day for Skobelev and Qizil Qayan.

The small-gauge railway rattled through a barren valley southwards towards the Alai mountains.....After a run of about 4 hours our tiny train drew up in Sukhana. During the War some thousands of Austrians, Hungarians and Germans had been sent to work in the Qizil Qaya coal-mines and hundreds of prisoners had died from hunger and sickness in the province of Ferghana.

p.194: From Qara Kul I proceeded some fifty miles by rail to Bukhara. The railway runs in an absolutely straight line to the small "qishlaq" of Qaghan, which is the junction for the branch line to Bukhara.....In olden days the railway was never used and it had been destroyed by the Bukharans, but since 1922 it has again been in action. Two trains a day run to the station in front of the main city gate of Bukhara. The little train consisted of one engine and two coaches, and it proceeded at a very leisurely and comfortable pace, finally coming to a halt just under the city wall."

p.202f: "The position of the Jews in Bukhara is unique. In earlier days they were considered unclean, and so much despised that they could not even be sold as slaves. They were forbidden to acquire land - they can do so less than ever now under the Soviet regime - and they were not allowed then or now to wear the gaily coloured robe or turban of Bukhara. In deference to the religious susceptibilities of their fellow-citizens they are still compelled, as they have been for centuries, to wear a cap of felt or fur, to proclaim them unmistakably as Jews. They are forbidden to wear the Muslim sash around their waists and must close their cloaks with a narrow hempen cord. They are compelled to live in a special quarter of the city. Within the four walls of their own houses, however, they fling off coarse cap and cloak and wrap themselves in the magnificent garments and silken robes which are denied them without."

A map shows the Jewish Quarter on the South-West corner of the walled city, and the railway station with the line to Qaghan outside the walls on the South-East corner.

p.207: In the Museum made from the former Amir's Palace in Bukhara:

"In the opposite wing the guide opened the doors of a built-in cupboard. A completely-furnished railway sleeping-compartment of the end of the nineteenth century came into view. The last Amir's father had a passion for railway journeys and to indulge it often travelled to and fro between Bukhara and Qaghan. The mullahs, however, objected, and he had an exact copy made of a sleeping compartment. Behind the window of the compartment there was a tiny room in which his servants used to stand and wave strips of coloured paper past the window panes, so that His Majesty might enjoy the complete illusion of a railway journey."

His journey continued through the winter, and eventually he returned via Persia, where he travelled by bus, being held up now and then by bloody civil war conflicts, with the remains of atrocities scattered along the roadside:

"Since Spring 1924 or 1925 a weekly motor bus has run between Meshed and Tehran.

The rattling tin-kettle - a product of General Motors Ltd. - carried me via Nishapur, Sabzawar, Mihr, Mazinan, Abbasabad, Miandasht and Maiamai to the town of Shahrud, where I had to wait for a further bus connection."

(The distance between Nishapur and Shahrud was 375 miles).



No: 20 WD 143, one of 6 metre-gauge 4-6-4T's originally built for Malaya but diverted to the Qena-Safage Railway in Upper Egypt, in store at Suez Royal Engineers Workshops. ca. Jan. 1947. (Photo: D. S. Currie.)

FROM THEN TILL NOW Part 7.

30: 21

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 & 24:11.) This is the chapter entitled 'A Medal Instead of a Bullet' on pp. 172-4 of that book.

"In the First World War we were blessed here with two Jemal Pashas: Jemal Pasha the Big, and Jemal Pasha the Small. Both were Turkish generals (pasha), and leaders of the Young Turks faction which created the revolution in their country in the days of the Sultan and Caliph Abdul Hamid.

Jemal Pasha the Big, Minister of the Fleet and Transport, was appointed during the World War as supreme commander of the forces of Turkey, Germany, Austria and Hungary, in Iraq, Syria, the Land of Israel, and the Arabian Peninsula. Jemal Pasha the Small was, at that time, commander of a brigade in the land of Israel.

Both Jemals were of medium height, real gluttons, but while Jemal Pasha the Big was a beast of prey who hated not only his enemies but also his allies the Germans and Austrians, and specially disliked Jews, Jemal Pasha the Small was more humane and Pleasant.

The English and French pilots threatened the Afula-Suez [*sic.*] railway line each day. When the aerial attacks began an order was given that a train under attack must travel at full speed. As was usual with Jemal the Big's military orders, this order concluded with the threat of death to anyone who did not carry it out properly.

The bitter experience which the Turks gained from these aerial attacks forced them to completely reverse the order: when under aerial attack a train must stop and stand.

One day I received a telegram from Damascus which informed me that Jemal Pasha the Big was on his way by train to inspect the Front and that I was to make ready two resplendent locomotives for his transport. Further, the telegram told me to act with the utmost caution and choose the best engine driver.

I did everything demanded. I chose a skilled Turkish driver, we polished the engine until it shone, and we waited at Samakh for the arrival of the train from Damascus.

Jemal Pasha arrived at Samakh accompanied by the engineer Mouchly who was Chief Superintendent of the Samakh - Dera'a - Damascus line. When the train arrived at Samakh the loco was uncoupled and our engine

[*note singular !*] was coupled on and the train continued to Afula and from there, after a short rest through Sebastia (ancient Shomron) to Tulkarm.

At kilometre 41.800 on this line the train passed through a tunnel [*see note*]. We were not far from this tunnel when eleven planes began to attack, bombing us and firing at us with machine guns. According to the order I should stop the train, but upon seeing the horde of planes circling above us and knowing that only 700-800 metres ahead was the tunnel where the train could hide, I decided to accelerate.

The track there passed through sharp curves in the hills and all the time I looked back to see if the planes had damaged any of the coaches. I saw them waving a red flag from the last coach as a sign to halt. When I did not stop they began shooting at the engine. I carried on until we entered the tunnel, where we stopped. Suddenly I saw Jemal Pasha descend from his coach and approach the loco escorted by high-ranking officers. His face was distorted with rage. He came to the loco and asked "Who is the driver?" The driver's face paled and he was unable to get a word out of his mouth.

As the official in charge of the loco, and responsible for the driver's actions, I answered: "I am he". Then he turned on me and asked: "Do you not know of the order to halt in case of an attack from the air? Did you not see the red flag we waved? And did you not hear the shots we fired at you?"

I answered quietly that I had indeed seen and heard everything, but since I was aware of the importance of the passengers I wanted to save them by getting them in the tunnel so they should not be harmed.

"Did you know there was a tunnel close at hand?" asked Jemal Pasha.

With difficulty I refrained from laughing. I told him that I knew that the tunnel at kilometre 41.800 was long enough.

His face relaxed and kindly, unlike his usual demeanour, he took off a medal which he wore on his chest and, pinning it on my chest, ordered one of his escorts to note my name so that a military certificate could be made out to go with the medal.

The engine driver, seeing that things had turned out well, also relaxed. Pointing at him, Jemal Pasha asked me: "Who is this?" I answered that he was the driver.

"And you, what is your business here?" he asked me. I answered that I was the district superintendent and that I was accompanying my important visitors by travelling on the loco.

He called to one of his escorts, removed his military medal and pinned it upon the engine driver.

I thought to myself that it was good to receive a medal and not a bullet....."

Note: Katinke used the word 'niqra' to describe the tunnel. This is a decidedly singular use of the word. 'Niqra' translates as crevice, hole, cavern or grotto, as in Rosh Haniqra (Head of the Grotto). In modern Hebrew a tunnel is 'minhara'. The tunnel in Katinke's tale is the Ramin Tunnel of about 250 metres length. Until the building of the tunnels at Rosh Haniqra on the HBT line in World War 2, the Ramin Tunnel was the only such 'crevice' anywhere in Palestine. While Katinke stated that it was at kilo 41.800, the 'Hedjaz Railway' (pages 34 & 66) notes it as being at km. 49 from Afula. Ramin Tunnel also features in 'Harakevet' 11:18 where it is referred to as Silet edh Dahr Tunnel.

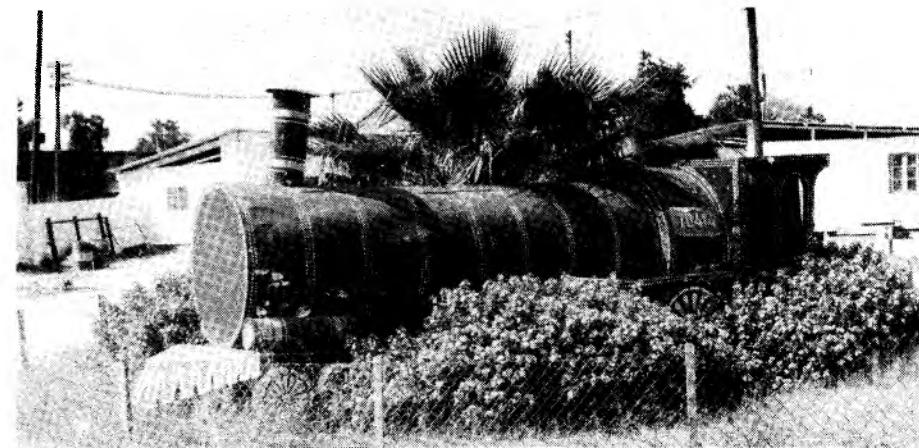
As a little sidelight on this series, Yakov Wahrman has sent me a copy of page 118 from "The Near and Middle East Who's Who", Vol. II : Israel, pub. Tel Aviv, 1949:

"Katinka, Baruch. Seren (Captain). Civil Engineer and building contractor, born Bialystok, March 1887. Educated: religious college of Wolozyn; Technical college in Germany. In the country since 1908; before First World War served as Chief Engineer at "Atid" Soap Factory. Haifa; during World War 1 served in Turkish Army as Chief Engineer of Hedjaz Railway; was amongst founders of Engineers' Association, 1919; one of founders of Bath-Galim Qtr., Haifa; constructed many buildings as contractor including the Jerusalem YMCA. Pub: Many articles on architectural subjects. Married: Yehudith Zarolnik; two daughters, one son. Address: 17, Radak St., Rehavia, Jerusalem."



One night in the summer of 1988 I was standing on the platform at Hadera West watching the progress of train 334 making its way from Lod to Haifa. At the head of the freight was a G12 - nothing out of the ordinary about that. Then, as the first few wagons came in view, I saw the outline of a steam engine in the station lights. Not unnaturally, I was rooted to the spot. For a second or two I was completely nonplussed - after all, everyone knew that there simply weren't any steam engines on IR, and hadn't been for almost thirty years. Then, as it came opposite me, comprehension dawned. I relaxed, somewhat dejectedly, for what I was seeing was only a non-working replica, though a very realistic one to be sure. The 'loco' concerned was made of tinsplate, I think for filming purposes, at some unknown date. It is based on a typical American-type 4-4-0, and has been tucked away in the diesel depot at Lod (at least since 1980). A few enquiries established that it was being taken to Qishon Works and my accompanying photo shows it at the Works on 11 August 1988, still aboard the bogie flat wagon on which it had travelled from Lod. The engine's bogie wheels can be seen at the left, its driving wheels being in the cab. I know of at least one person who has seen this loco at a distance in Qishon Works and is now convinced that a PR Baldwin 4-6-0 survives on IR. I hate to disabuse him, but the truth compels me to do so. The reason for the loco's transfer from Lod remains obscure.

The American-type was not the only such loco which was once to be found at the Lod diesel depot. A considerably cruder example used to stand in a flower bed there, and can be seen in my second photo taken in June 1975. It was numbered - almost inevitably - 70414, this being the number of the LMS 2-8-0 which hauled the last steam train out of Beersheba; not that there was much danger of anyone confusing it for the real thing. It has disappeared since then, but I have not been able to discover why it should have been removed.



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This is the title of an article by Hadley Watkins, the YMCA Secretary of the Bournemouth branch, reprinted in 1928 as a booklet (Price 1/-) from the 'Bournemouth Times and Directory', and found in the Thomas Cook Archive: The style is whimsical, each paragraph ending with a climactic statement.

From pages 8-11:

"The Way of the Philistines.

From Cairo to Jerusalem is to-day a prosaic and matter-of-fact all-night railway ride. Thanks to the British Army, rail communication was effected between Egypt and Palestine, and water from the Nile is now poured into Jerusalem, the mains running parallel with the railway track. From earliest childhood, when we first heard the story of Joseph and his brethren, Egypt and Palestine have been closely associated in our minds, yet it is difficult to imagine two countries fundamentally more different. Egypt is a country of the valley, a long narrow strip of irrigated land hedged in on either side by lofty cliffs, cleft in twain by the

Giver of All Things.

The Nile is "The Father of Egypt" and the bestower of every gift. Palestine on the other hand is a country of hills. Snow-topped Hermon looks down on the Lake of Gennesaret and the green pastures and hills of Galilee; while from the shores of the Dead Sea 1,300 feet below sea level, the towers of Jerusalem may be seen 3,700 feet above. Jerusalem is truly a city "set upon a hill". There is yet another and more impressive point of contrast between the two countries. Egypt impresses the traveller by its mighty monuments raised to a religion now dead and forgotten. Palestine is the birthplace of a living religion whose influence is felt the world over. To Mohammedan, Jew and Christian alike, it is holy ground. It seems almost irreverent to put your piastres down at the Cairo booking office and ask

"For a Second to Jerusalem."

We were a mixed crowd in that train on a Saturday evening, and, as the sun set behind the Pyramids, there were memories of Cleopatra, and some wonderment as to what the Sphinx had to say about the modern locomotion, the noise, the rattle, and the smoke. Travelling by the Port Said express involves a change at Kantara East, which is reached by ferry across the Suez Canal. This little bit of transport really means stepping over from Africa into Asia. Our route lay along the old trek, as the line runs through the arid desert to Philistia, the same desert through which Jacob trekked to visit his lost son Joseph in Egypt, and the same through which Sir Archibald Murray's expedition marched, driving the enemy into Gaza and Beersheba. Before reaching these now memorable places we were on the

Track of the Israelites.

This is no place to enlarge on the geography of the Exodus, and the route taken by the Children of Israel, but no event in Egyptian history is at all comparable in interest with this, neither has any event had more influence on the destiny of mankind. One thing is now definitely established: the writer of the Mosaic account was not only a witness of the events

recorded, but he must have personally traversed the ground. Here was the Goshen of the Israelites, and from the railway can be seen the ruins of Pithom, one of the treasure cities built by Rameses the Great, who in the opinion of the majority of Egyptologists was the Pharaoh of the oppression. Once across the "bridge", which is the Arabic name of Kantara [actually "Causeway"; Ed.] we are undoubtedly on the ancient caravan route which was traversed by Abraham, Joseph and Jacob, and by which the Holy Family went to and from the

Valley of the Nile

When our armies, with the magnificent assistance of the Egyptian Labour Corps, began to make this Cairo to Jerusalem railway, they called it the "Milk and Honey railway". Later, finding it nothing but sand all the way, they called it "The Desert Railway". There was an old tradition in South Palestine that the Turks would hold the country "till the waters of the Nile flow into Palestine". This was an almost impossible event. Over the rolling plains of sand are still to be seen piles of wire entanglements. At Kilab was Allenby's G.H.Q. before and during his attack on Gaza.

It was sad to remember that the railway which now links up Egypt and Palestine was constructed at the cost of over 10,000 British soldiers' lives - an average of 27 lives for every kilometre. A vast cemetery now contains the bodies of our men from many of the scattered battlefields. Gaza, also the scene of other terrible battles, was one of the five Philistine cities. On the right is seen the hill to which tradition says that Samson carried the gates of Gaza, and on the left is a Mosque where is buried the grandfather of Mohammed the prophet. Shortly the blue enamel plate with white letters announces the arrival at Ashdod, another of the Philistine five cities. This place has connections with the Ark of the Israelites, and later, was the Azotus where Philip "was found", after the baptizing of the eunuch. All very interesting to the biblical student, but at the next stop, Lydda, which was the ancient "Lud", the place from where our own patron saint, St. George of England, hailed from, and where, after his martyrdom by Diocletian at Nicomedia, in Cappadocia, his body was brought and buried. With my thoughts full of Peter's visit to Lydda and the mention of Aeneas, and again to Joppa, "forasmuch as Lydda was nigh to Joppa", where Dorcas was miraculously restored, and where Peter "tarried many days with one Simon a tanner", and also where I knew the famous Jaffa oranges were grown, although I did not see one, as it was the "off" season. With one's thoughts full of such matters of interest, and in the early dawn of the morning there came a thrill of another kind. This one was the cry of the Arabic porter,

"Change Here for Jerusalem."

This we quickly did, and on that platform we were some motley crowd as we waited for the next train. Arabs, Copts, Armenians, Egyptians, Jews, and all the rest of us Gentiles. Never mind, the olive groves across the plain of Sharon, and the myriads of wild flowers, provided a feast common to all, and so far we all had one common object, however varied our motives may have been. This was to cast our eyes on "Jerusalem the Golden".

Having left the Haifa train at Lydda, we were "through"

for Jerusalem. That is, through the mountains of Judea, Jerusalem itself lying some fourteen miles beyond the hill on the right, crowned with some trees. An ancient Israelite who was engaged in reading the Hebrew scriptures, tracing the course of the script with his forefinger from right to left, had a shop, as he told me, in Jerusalem, and could supply me with some rare antiques which had quite lately come into his possession. Things were quiet now and the opportunity was all in my favour. Casual references on my part to Joshua and the historic battle against the Gibeonites, the slaying of Goliath by David, and the exploits of the redoubtable Samson, all ended in the same place - the shop just outside the Jaffa Gate, where the rare antiques were awaiting the first fortunate purchaser. After patiently watching the circular route of the train continually winding round innumerable hills, the first glimpse of Jerusalem greeted the expectant eye, and at last the city of holy memories became a thing of fact and no longer imagination. The approach to Jerusalem by rail is a

Demoralising Experience.

One wished most devoutly that it was possible to approach the city after the fashion of the Crusaders or by the caravan route, or indeed, any way less distracting than the rush of a locomotive. Yet it is in this fashion that the present day traveller arrives at the gates of the city of David and Solomon. The railway station itself, with its prosaic enamel plate name, and unseemly scramble of hotel touts, Arab porters and taxi drivers, suggested anything but a haven of peace. The station lies a mile outside the city walls, and before the traveller alights from the train he is invited to book himself up for all sorts of prospective excursions on the morrow and the next day. Bournemouth Square hardly displays more enterprise. Every hotel is the only one within the city walls, or overlooking the Holy Sepulchre, or contains beds which are absolutely above suspicion. This latter is a very solid recommendation, if it can be relied on, anywhere in the Near East. Mosquitoes one can set up a kind of intimacy with very quickly, but there are other variations of the insect family with which the less familiarity the better.... Even a few years ago the good people who visited Jerusalem arrived leisurely in carriages, on horseback, or on foot, and the latter class, the pilgrims - knelt in the sacred dust as they passed into the city through its

Time Honoured Gates.

Now the commercial traveller with his sample cases of rare antiques (made in Birmingham) dashes through in a taxi, and out again on the north side in his mad rush to Nazareth and Tiberius, [sic] via the Damascus Gate. This is the way of the restless Anglo-Saxon. In olden times it was the rule for pilgrims never to enter any house until a visit had been made to the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, but the church closes at sundown and the table d'hôte dinner is waiting at the hotel, and it seems as if one had arrived at Monte Carlo instead of Jerusalem....."

From "Yediot Aharonot" for 17/1/95, where it was printed below a colour picture of an IC3 and a diagram of proposed routes. Translation by Sybil Ehrlich.

SUBURBAN RAILWAY

To judge by the latest declarations of Transport Minister Yisrael Kessar, we are going to get a suburban railway.

Such a railway is expected to have far-reaching real-estate implications. According to the director-general of the Association of Real Estate Agents, Avi Zitrenboim, existing and planned residential areas far from the railway will lose their value, and land close to the railway lines (but not too close) will increase in value because of a desire to build on it. "This will not be a revolution, but almost an earthquake," he says.

Here is a list of suburban railway stations, as of this moment, as presented by land assessor Haim Glanzer.

NETANYA

The principal railway station and central bus station will be sited at the junction of the coastal road with the Ayalon highway (at the triangle which will be created between them and the railway line). The new railway station will not supersede the existing one in the centre of the industrial zone or the one at Beit Yehoshua south of Netanya.

An interchange will be built close to the new station, above the coastal road, that will link Netanya with the Ayalon highway going north. According to the plans, a business district will be built west of the interchange.

KFAR SAVA

Two railway stations are planned for Kfar Sava. The first will be built on the planned railway to be constructed along the line of Road 531 - a road proposed to link southern Kfar Sava with Rosh Ha'ayin. The second station will be in Nordau Street, next to the cemetery and the Ruhama institution. On this site there is a 15-dunam [3.75-acre] plot of land scheduled for an urban bus station, a railway station, parking and a commercial centre.

In the eastern industrial zone of Kfar Sava the municipality plans to construct a new central bus station.

TEL AVIV

In addition to Hashalom station, currently under construction, and in addition to the already existing Arlosoroff station (North [sic]), another two stations will be built: one at the Yitzhak Sadch bridge and the other at the Hagana bridge.

Hashalom station will be particularly important because of its proximity to the Kirya [government offices] area and Hashalom centre. Hashalom bridge itself will be widened to 12 lanes, of which four will be devoted to public

transport which will be needed to serve the thousands of passengers travelling to the station.

ROSH HA'AYIN

The logistical centre of Israel Railways is to pass through Bnei Brak (opposite the Ayalon mall) to Kassem junction, which since the Oslo agreement has become a real-estate hit. The junction is to link the planned Trans-Israel Highway (Road No. 6) with the Trans-Samaria Highway. A giant industrial zone, already visible in its preliminary stages, is to be built close to the planned junction.

A station currently exists at Kassem junction, east of the Afek Park, which is part of the Yarkon Park. Today the line is used only for freight. Opposite the station is land which has been annexed to Rosh Ha'ayin.

According to planned recommendations the station will be moved to the park area, and a transport terminal will be built. It is also recommended to build a road bridge over Road No. 6, to link the office area and the railway station with the industrial zone on the other side of the road. The railway from Rosh Ha'ayin will of course pass through Petah Tikva.

RISHON LEZION

The future railway will go from southern Rishon Lezion and continue to Lod and from there to Tel Aviv. The station will be built in the southern agricultural area, at the planned junction of the Rishon Lezion-Ness Ziona-Rehovot road. The station will be built on an extension of the line from Rehovot to Lod and Tel Aviv.

The light railway, in any event, will go from western Rishon Lezion through Bat Yam and Jaffa (Jerusalem Boulevard) into Tel Aviv, serving tens of thousands of families living in the new part of Rishon Lezion. Journey time will be slightly longer because of the winding route: 40 minutes on average.

LOD

The recommended station: north of the town, in Sokolov Street, in the area between Lod's planned new business district and the new residential areas net to the northern industrial zone.

MODI'IN

The line is planned to pass through the new town of Modi'in, and is also expected to serve Ben-Gurion Airport.

RAMLE

A joint Israel Railways and Egged station will be built at the junction between the railway line and Tel Hai Street. The railway line will be straightened, and on the vacated land thousands of flats will be built. Also in the area of the old station, which will be vacated, hundreds of flats will be built. At the new station there will be a city square and a large commercial centre.

REHOVOT

The Rehovot municipality is planning to build an entertainment area in the southern part of the city, outside the residential area. Swimming pools, tennis courts, wedding halls, a cinema, a stadium and business premises are planned.

The recommendation is to build a railway station about 3 km. south of the existing station next to the Weizmann Institute and the Faculty of Agriculture.

NESS ZIONA

The Ness Ziona station is planned for the south-eastern part of the town, and will serve the large high-tech industrial zone.

YAVNE

It is recommended to build a station in the area between Doami [?] and Ha'atzmaut streets near the planned new central business area. The station will be built near the town's southern exit next to the cemetery.

An additional station is recommended, after the line is built next to Road NO. 4 - Ashdod-Rishon Lezion, opposite the existing transport centre (including parking, petrol station, supermarket and bus station). The railway station will be built on the other side of the road, and a bridge will enable pedestrians to cross to the car park.

ASHDOD

Contrary to the wishes of the municipality, which wants to build a central bus station in the town's "City" ['v' O], the recommendation calls for a light railway [rakevet kala] or tram [hashmalit], because the railway line would pass through densely populated areas and would constitute a nuisance.

The preferred solution: to build the central bus station net to the railway station on a 20-dunam [5-acre] site, at the junction of the Tel Aviv-Ashkelon road and the road leading to the "City".

Via Sidney Fingerhood has come this memoir from Robert W. Richardson of Bellefonte, Pennsylvania:

"When in late 1944 I got a furlough to Palestine from the Persian Gulf Command; in Tel Aviv they offered free bus trips to Jerusalem and other places, but as a railroad buff I sure was not going to ride a bus if there was a train.

So I got the morning passenger train; it worked hard up from Jaffa, then out to Lydda Junction. I then rode the five-car train to Jerusalem. I must have been the only American G.I. to go by train !

Next morning I got up early and rode the local to Battir; the engine backed down and had a defunct self-propelled train as coaches [the Sentinel set. Ed.] then loaded up the market women and vegetables and pushed the train back to Jerusalem. Several days later I rode the evening passenger train to Lydda and Tel Aviv. I had a cab ride, and though engines had American electric headlights they were not used.

Also one night I rode the early evening mixed train from Tel Aviv to Lydda and back, a bunch of mostly flat cars and one coach. Most passengers rode the flat cars.

Everything was steam then, most engines being American-built. I still have the tri-lingual working timetable they gave me. The crews of whatever category were all friendly and helpful, and I could take all the photos I wanted. The reaction of my fellow Signal Corps members was "You went by train ? You paid a fare when the bus was FREE ?!"

I see they have great plans for additional passenger trains in Israel. They got some very bad advice from an American railroad executive in the 1950's, to tear up about everything. He did that in Colorado and California, and most of it is now regretted....."

An intriguing insight especially into the mixed trains and the workings of the local Jerusalem-Battir trip ! Were they driven back from the cab of the Sentinel railcar ?



January 1945. Robert W. Richardson standing by 4-6-4T No. 15 at Jerusalem.