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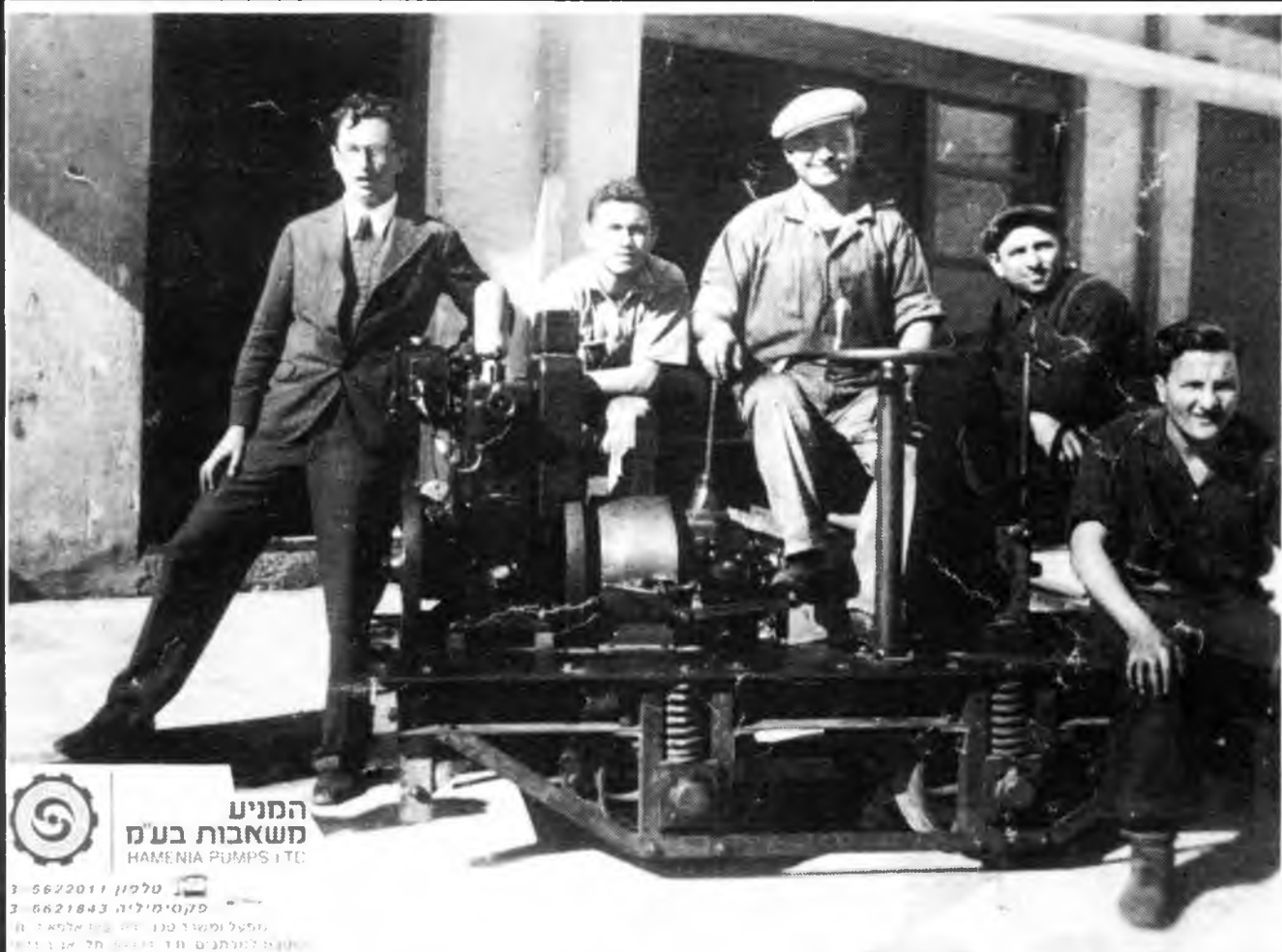
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For the first cover of our new century: The first and only locomotive constructed in Palestine / Israel ! (A few converted tractors perhaps excepted.) The "Hamaniya" Loco referred to in 46:21. For more details see inside, 47:5(k).

47:2. EDITORIAL

It had been hoped to make Issue 47 the last of 1999 - instead it will be the first in 2000. (We will not get involved in millennial discussions !). Nevertheless, it is a good point to thank once more the many contributors who make this possible - much of the information for "other lines" comes from "Continental Railway Journal" (C.R.J.) or "Fahrplancenter News" or "Railway Gazette International" (R.G.I.), all themselves the results of much work by other editors and collectors of miscellaneous information. And Paul and his team keep digging up nuggets at the collection of old pigeon-dropped paper now called the Haifa Railway Museum Archives.....

Extra work stresses plus a knee infection held the Editor back from his "spare time occupation" in the latter months of 1999, but the interest remains undiminished. We hope to keep roughly punctual with future issues. There are exciting developments in Israel, and a lot of reports and photos have come from the DGEG trip to Jordan and Syria - these will be held over until the next issue when I have had time to co-ordinate the various versions. But at last (and thanks to Paul sending some replacement photos) we have the report on the expeditions into the jungles east of Lod. Enjoy !

The Editor.



47:3. *Not part of a James Bond film, but everyday operational problems at Mafraq. 6/11/99, during the DGEG tour. (Photo: Tomas Meyer-Eppler).*

47:4: NEWS FROM THE LINE

- a). **Locos in Service.** Evytar Reiter writes that on 6/10/99 he noted Co-Co 704 on the 20.15 Tel Aviv - Haifa, and that in recent weeks quite a lot of the nominally-freight CW(JT42CW) Co-Cos seem to have been used on passenger trains - including, from his personal observations, 603, 604, 606, 607, 608, 609, 610, 614, 615, 707, 708, 709. This is in addition to the ten Bo-Bos Nos. 731-740, which are all in current use on this line. Presumably this use reflects either a lack of new Bo-Bos or the increased absence of the G12 Bo-Bos from the scene. However, on 26/8/99 he noted G12 124 working an afternoon (ca. 16.00) push-pull train between Hof Carmel and Kiryat Motzkin.
- b). **Information.** According to RGI 11/99 p. 695, IR is expanding its Information Technology systems to include management of property and associated contracts, and engineering data. Local software company Aplicad is supplying two systems based on IR's existing optic fibre network.
- c). **TA Suburban developments.** RGI 11/99 p. 711 has a photo of the new curve linking the site of University station to the refurbished curve for the line to Kfar Sava.
- d). **Politics and Budgets.** For the first time on Israeli history, all transportation issues have been placed under one administrative office, that of Transportation. Current holder of the office of Minister is Itzhak Mordechai. The portfolio includes IR, the ports, the PWD (all the roads until now were not classed under Transportation !), all metro and underground schemes, and the Trans-Israel Highway. (Construction on this mammoth project, a 270 km. motorway from Rosh Pinah to Beersheba, began 24/10/99.)
The IR Budget has grown to more than one Billion NIS for 2000, compared to 540 NIS for 1999. This will allow for more rolling stock orders. (There are rumours of a further ten IC3's, more double-deckers, perhaps some second-hand GM locos.) A major problem now appears to be a shortage of rolling stock.
- e). **The Beersheba line** - trackwork seems to be complete and signalling is due to be finished by Feb. 2000. "Pasim" members enjoyed a trip at Sukkot 1999, and the 63-minute schedule is impressive. R.G.I. 1/2000, p.12 featured a photo of platforms under construction - the station complex will be incorporated into regional Court and Government offices, adjacent also to the central bus station.
- f). **Ben Gurion Airport Line.** Latest plans are for an underground terminal here, due to open 2002. "Harakevet" looks forward to reporting further extended opening dates in the future ! (Watch this space).
- g). **High Speed.** From the "World Speed Survey" in R.G.I. 10/99 p. 665; Israel appears, with three trains from Hof Carmel to Tel Aviv Merkaz, a total of 84.4 km., booked at 40 minutes, a speed of 126.6 km/h. (See also note on Saudi Arabia.)

- h). **Light Rail Tunnel.** According to "Israel Line" e-mail bulletin from the consulate in New York, dated 25/11/99, based on 'Globes', "Minister of Transport Yitzhak Mordecai and Jerusalem Mayor Ehud Olmert inaugurated the digging of two tunnels on the Mt. Scopus road which will connect eastern Jerusalem neighbourhoods and Ma'aleh Adumim with Haim Bar-Lev Boulevard. The project, costing NIS 250 Million, (approx. \$59M), will include a light rail train and is scheduled to be completed in 2002."
- i). **More Jerusalem Light Rail News.** (and see 42:4). From R.G.I. 1/2000 p.9: On Dec. 5th. the Israeli Government and the Jerusalem Municipality issued a formal invitation to prequalify for a 30-year concession to build, operate and maintain the city's first light rail line. Bidding documents were to be available from the Ministry of Transport four days later, with a closing date for prequalification bids of May 2000. The city is planning to hold a briefing conference for interested companies on Feb. 1st. The chosen concessionaire would design, finance, build and equip the first line and then operate it for 30 years. Work began on diverting utilities along a 14 km. route, which runs from Pisgat Ze'ev to Mount Herzl via Jaffa Road. The Municipality has already spent US\$14M on this work, and Transport Minister Yitzhak Mordechai has allocated US\$24M for preliminary works in the current financial year.
- j). **New Station News.** IR opened the new station at Beer Yaakov on Nov. 6th., built at a cost of US\$700,000 to replace the existing halt. Work has also begun at last on the Ayalon Line station at HaHaganah - this should cost US\$ 3.5M.
- k). **Messianic Millennial Speculations.** Until now "Harakevet" has managed to avoid getting its head too far into the clouds, but a contact in London informs us that an engineer of his acquaintance, working on the Channel Tunnel project, has been asked by the U.S. State Department to doodle some provisional costing estimates for a high-speed rail link between Cairo and Tel Aviv, with possible links to other countries, "to be built some time in the next 25 years if everyone stops shooting at each other for long enough". It is considered this may be part of a bargaining chip for the current peace talks.....

47:5. NOTES AND COMMENTS

a). Lebanese Railway Society.

In the "Bulletin d'Informations 1999 " of the 'Association pour l'histoire des chemins de fer en France' (AHICF), p.5, is a note concerning the formation of a branch in the Lebanon. This will be known as the "Association française des amis des chemins de fer, section Liban", or "AFAC-LIBAN". A brief introduction indicates that its aim is "to bring together those convinced of the value of preserving the Lebanese railway heritage ("la patrimoine ferroviaire libanaise") and believing in the future of railways in Lebanon. The aim of this branch, whose base is in Beirut, is to encourage and assist the authorities in preserving the remaining railway material and eventually return it to public service. At a time when Lebanon hopes to restore its railways, it is important to raise the image of railways in the eyes of the Lebanese. In creating a link between the

past and the present, the Railway provides an excellent means also of laying foundations for the railway of the future. As regards material that could be saved, one can include the former type 040C (Prussian G8) locos of the former Nord and Est, the 040 built by Cail in 1906, the SLM rack locomotives of 1050mm gauge, some more than a century old, and other items of historical value. The fixed installations and buildings also deserve preservation." (Editor's Translation.)

Membership of the AFAC-LIBAN is open to Lebanese and French and others who may have no link with the Lebanon but who share and support the group's aims and wishes. Contact person is given as the Secretary General, Tatig Tendjoukian, 32, Rue du général-Beuret, 75015 Paris; tel. 01 45 31 04 70, fax: 01 53 68 91 20, e-mail <mavik@wanadoo.fr>

"Harakevet" welcomes this initiative, which can only help in rescuing historical items and raising the general awareness of railways in this fascinating and turbulent region. It would be wonderful if, one day, joint activities between a Haifa and a Beirut Railway Museum were to become possible ! A Millennial wish, perhaps ?

- b). **Suez Canal Co.** The same "Bulletin" refers to a new book on the construction of the Suez Canal - "Nathalie Montel, "Le Chantier du Canal de Suez (1859-1869), une histoire des pratiques techniques", pub. Presse de l'Ecole nationale des Ponts et Chaussées, 28, Rue des Saint-Pières, 75343 Paris Cedex 07, 384 pp, price 295 FF.

I am not aware to what extent railways were employed in this major civil engineering project, but cannot imagine that they were NOT used - though I have personally seen nothing in print on this subject. Maybe this book has some information.

- c). **LSWR 0-6-0's in the Middle East.** Further to Paul's account in issue 46, Bert Dyke has written in to say that "only one loco was lost en route in 1917, on the P. & O. "Arabia", and this was LSWR 0148. The locos involved were Adams "0395" class 0-6-0's, built 1881-1886, 5' 1" driving wheels, Tractive Effort 15535 lbs., Boiler Pressure 150 lbs., cylinders 17 1/2" x 26", with Stephenson valve gear. All the ones sent to Palestine had the extended cab roofs fitted at Bulak Works, Egypt, and Nos. 168A and 028 also had extended smokeboxes. So - sent to Palestine were:
Nos. 027, 028, 030, 084, 0158, 0159, 0164, 0168, 0172, 0395, 0396, 0398, 0399, 0401, 0405, 0434, 0437, 0438, 0444, 497, 499, 501, 502, 503, 507, 508, 512, 513.

Of these, 027, 030, 0434, 0437, 510 and 512 were transferred onwards to Mesopotamia (i.e. Iraq.) Also 0156, 0174, 0402, 0403, 0443, 498, 500, 504, 505 were sent to Mesopotamia direct.

0105, 0165, 404, 406, 437 and 512 were sent from Egypt to Mesopotamia also (and the rest to Salonika). He has dates from S.R. records. [N.B. I am aware that 512 appears twice - it also does in Bert's letter ! Ed.]

None were returned to the U.K. A photo in "R.M." April 1941, p. 172, shows LSW 443 at Baghdad on a Samarra ambulance train of German wagons. There are records, if you know where to look.....

Regarding rolling stock sent over in World War 1, ten-car trains were despatched; one became the "C. in C." train - set AT40, built by the Midland), the others became Hospital Trains. AT40 had been especially built by the Midland at Derby Works; it did not return to the UK but was converted at Bulak Works at Cairo to run the Cairo - Haifa/Jerusalem service from 1920 on. The LSWR "Eagle" stock had originally been used as a special Club train for First-Class commuters."

- d). **Off the Rail.** Paul has sent a copy of p. 36 of the American magazine "Railway Age" for Aug. 21 1961, in which is stated that "Feasibility of monorail lines between Tel Aviv and Jerusalem, Sodom and Elath, and Beersheba and Ashdod is being studied by the Israel Planning and Development Co. in Tel Aviv." It will come as a surprise to many observers that Israel ever had a company devoted to Planning ! The schemes sound, in Paul's words, to be "bloody daft"; one assumes that the latter two, at least, were intended for freight rather than passenger haulage, since at this time the towns concerned were little more than hamlets..... Does anyone have more details of these "feasibility studies" ?
- d). **On 46:6(j). The "Belpamela".** Bert Dyke also notes that he dealt several times with the "Belray" and the "Belpareil", but he never saw the "Belpamela". "The Danish Maersk Line also ran heavy-duty vessels with jumbo derricks; one lovely evening the "Peter Maersk" rounded Wingate Bay, like a huge yacht with flare bows, spotless, and we berthed her with four ex-ROD GC 2-8-0's on deck. What a lovely sight ! I forgot the war, the Red Sea, air raids - just went aboard and sat on a footplate ! Happy days...."
- e) **Re. 45:6:(xiii): Paul Cotterell writes:** "From File 125.8/12 in the IRM Archives it is evident that Inspector's Van No. 4701 was renumbered to 4901 sometime between 13th. and 18th. October 1928. On the assumption that this van was ex-ESR, I wonder if its renumbering might provide some small clue to Alan Clothier's puzzling over other ex-Egyptian vehicles. Then again, 4701/4901 may well not have been Egyptian originally."
- f). **Re. 44:16 : Wadi Surar "station building destroyed by fire" - this incident was on the night of 28-29th. August 1938.**
- g). **Re: 39:10 and 40:6:(i).** Steel Brothers of Haifa are noted in IRM archive file TAB/1. This is one of numerous files dealing with the Transport Advisory Board in WW2 Palestine. Steel Brothers are described as Government Agents and had representatives sitting on the Board.
- h). **Correction to 46:6(a):** Cost of test fitting the Baldwin 4-6-0 with poppet valves was £P 753.

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- i). **Correction to 46:15** - the Turkish TV team visited Israel in January 1998, not 1989 !
- j). **Photo credits:** The photo of Deutz 57082 at Kibbutz Ein Shemer was taken by Evyatar Reiter. That on the back of issue 46 was also by Richard A. Bowen.
- k). **HaManiya.** Uri Ben-Rehav has risen to Paul's challenge in 46:21 with the following information: "Paul is certainly right in assuming that this is the one and only undertaking to construct a locomotive in Palestine/Israel. The picture (see 47:1) shows Meir Kolodny, second from right, the owner of Hamaniya and constructor, proudly displaying the loco. He is still with us, fresh at the age of 91, and I am indebted to his son-in-law, Mr. Ze'ev Engler, present Managing Director of the plant, in providing the picture and information. (Hamenia Pumps Ltd., 7, Beit Alpha St., Tel Aviv).

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Whilst the exact gauge of the loco has been forgotten, one can assume that as 60cm. rails were readily available for Decauville purposes, this was also the loco's gauge. The little Diesel motor was of 30h.p. or 40 h.p. - hard to remember after all these years...

Despite searching several references no "Gan Hadar" was found. However, the loco was acquired by a Mr. Moshe Gardiner. He possessed a large farm, named "Kalmannia" after his late father Kalman. This farm, founded in 1926, was located some 3km. north of Kfar-Saba. The extensive orange groves planted at this time bore so much fruit after ten years (as to be seen in the sketched picture) that to speed up the transport from the trees to the packing house a little railway was constructed. This was a revolutionary process at this period, when the common means of transport was still a donkey carrying two baskets on its back. Kalmannia still exists today, but in 1952 was donated to the Berl-Katzenelson Foundation to form an educational institution.

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On the bottom left corner of the photo is attached a small advertisement for the firm of the time our little loco was built."

Thus Uri; he suggests this was the only loco constructed by the firm. To explain the photo caption in 47:1, at Bnei Beraq two bizarre creations of unknown origin still exist and are used occasionally to shunt grain wagons - one formed from a tractor on large rail wheels with fragmentary buffer beam, the other slightly more modern and substantial, formed of a farm tractor mounted on an Esslingen bogie. Two converted farm tractors also exist at Qishon Works, used for shunting the Traverser tables. So the spirit of improvisation has been expressed a few times.

- l). **Refuah Shelemah!** I have no intention of writing an Obituary for Bill Alborough of TEFS (once "To Europe For Steam", later "To Everywhere for Steam", mainly because he is still alive and kicking. But we note with concern that he is kicking a little less strongly than before, due to ill health, and he and his family are facing a worrying future. We wish them all well (the heading of this paragraph is "A complete Healing" in Hebrew.)

47:6. OTHER MIDDLE EAST RAILWAYS

A. TURKEY.

- (i): **New Link.** From R.G.I. 10/99, p. 614: The Turkish General Directorate of Railway, Ports and Airport Construction has called tenders by September 30th. for a feasibility study into the proposed rail link between Polath and Afyon, which would provide a direct route from Ankara to the southwest.
- (ii). **Upgrading.** Also from R.G.I., 10/99, p. 620: On Sept. 17th. TCDD called bids for upgrading the Ankara-Istanbul main line at a cost of US\$ 237 M. Submissions are due by December 15th.
- (iii). **Izmir LRT.** From R.G.I. 11/99: By the Nov. 4th. deadline, more than 30 domestic and foreign firms were expected to have submitted bids for engineering and consultancy services for the 4.5 km. Ucyol - Fahrettin Altay extension of Izmir's light rail line.

In C.R.J. 120 p. 578 is a report that Halkapinar station at Izmir has been rebuilt to incorporate the new metro, and a depot built on a formerly-derelect site to the east.

- (iv). **Bosphorus Tunnel plans.** From R.G.I. 12/99. p.762. Bids close on Dec. 6 for pre-qualification for consultancy and engineering services on the Marmaray project covering the Bosphorus tunnel and the Sirkeci - Halkali commuter corridor.
- (v). **Georgia Link.** From R.G.I. 12/99 p.763: The General Directorate of Railway, Port and Airport Construction has proposed that the Turkish government should underwrite the loans needed to build the Georgian section of the planned 278 km. Kars - Tbilisi link, now costed at US\$ 600M. (cf. 5/99 p. 269.)
- (vi). **Camlik Museum** - is, according to CRJ 120 p. 578, no longer leased out, but controlled by the manager of the museum at Alsancak, who is seeking sponsorship to repaint the exhibits and tidy up the site.
- (vii). **Izmit Deviation.** At Izmit, some 90 km. from Haydarpaşa on the main line to Eskisehir, the single-track main line runs through the middle of what has become the main road in town, paralysing traffic whenever a train passes. (This is seen to good effect in the video "Bagdadbahn" reviewed earlier in 'Harakevet'.) Now a double-track deviation is being built round the south side of the town, starting at new platforms adjacent to the existing station at the Istanbul side of the town) and rejoining the existing route south-east of the built-up area.
- (viii). **Istanbul Museum.** According to C.R.J. 120, p.577, the "Rahmi M. Koc Sanayi Müzesi" in Istanbul has acquired some railway items from TCDD. These include G10 0-10-0 55022, which has been presented by the Turkish Government and was in 9/99 still at Sirkeci station awaiting removal by road transporter to the

museum site - a journey fraught with difficulties in the narrow and steep streets. A 60cm. gauge 0-6-0T+T is from the Zingal Forestry Co. The museum has also acquired from TCDD a remarkable 4-wheel carriage, the State Carriage of Sultan Abdül Aziz, built by the Metropolitan Carriage & Wagon Co. at Saltley, Birmingham in 1866, and highly-decorated inside and out. The vehicle has an iron chassis and timber body, with papier-mâché panelling ! It is believed to have been used by the Sultan during his 1867 State Visit to Britain and then in further travels across Europe. It has been restored at the museum's workshop over the past 11/2 years.

B. JORDAN. (See 46:9.)

A one-page article in "R.G.I." 10/99, p. 629, reveals the Wisconsin Central takeover in its context as only part of a world-wide expansion.

"August 18 saw the signing of an agreement under which management and operation of the 292 km. Aqaba Railway in Jordan will pass to a consortium that includes Wisconsin Central Transportation Corp. Financial close of a package to underpin US\$130M of capital investment in two new branch lines and upgrading of existing track and rolling stock is expected by the end of 1999. In addition, the government will receive a single payment of 20M Dinars (US\$28M) for the lease.

The line will be leased for 25 years under a build-operate-transfer deal that sees WCTC's diverse railway operations extended to six countries spanning four continents. The company is currently negotiating the takeover of freight operations from Polish State Railways.

US partners WCTC and Raytheon Infrastructure, a subsidiary of Raytheon Engineering & Contractors, will hold at least 51% of equity in the joint venture. Other partners are Consolidated Contractors (based in Athens), Mitsubishi Corp. and Kowar Group (based in Amman). Jordan Phosphate Mines has an option to own 25% of the business.

The Aqaba Railway consists of a 170 km. section of the 1,050mm gauge Hedjaz railway between El Abiad and Batn el Ghul, plus a 113 km. line to the Red Sea port of Aqaba which was opened in 1975. The principal traffic is phosphates originating at El Abiad and El Hassa mines, each of which is served by a 4 km. branch line, and exported through Aqaba.

The Hedjaz Railway opened in 1908 between Damascus and Medina in Saudi Arabia, but the track south of Batn el Ghul has been disused since the first world war and was mostly dismantled in the 1970's. The section from El Abiad to the Jordanian capital Amman is intact but carries no traffic. Passenger and freight services between Amman and Damascus were relaunched in July 1999, thanks to improved relations between Jordan and Syria. [See other journalistic reports on this relaunch. Ed.]

An important part of the BOT deal is a commitment by the joint venture to construct a 22km. branch to the Shidiya phosphates mine, to the east of Bir Chedieh. Although there

is a loading facility for this mine on the main line, most of the output and all incoming supplies in fact move by road to and from Aqaba.

Currently, the two northern mines produce around 3 million tonnes a year, but their output is set to decline. Shidiya is a larger operation, and the railway is expected to be carrying 10 million tonnes a year by 2002.

WCTC Vice-President for Corporate Planning Earl Currie, who was involved in the contract negotiations, says that "a major objective for the new company is to apply the operating principles in Jordan which have earned Wisconsin Central its international reputation for service delivery. Achieving this objective will enable us to deliver the projected increase in traffic volumes efficiently and reliably."

A second new branch, 16 km. long, will be constructed to serve a new industrial and port complex known as Wadi Il, located south of the original Aqaba port. This will be used to take phosphates and phosphoric acid (from a plant at Shidiya) directly to a new fertilizer plant, but it would also allow imported materials to be moved directly to Shidiya by rail.

Following financial close in a few weeks, and assuming that a US\$50M long-term loan from the US Overseas Private Investment Corp. is available, work will start on the line to Shidiya early in 2000. The branch in Aqaba will follow as a second phase.

ARC has around 300 wagons, mostly hoppers to carry phosphates, and 21 diesel locomotives supplied by US General Electric. An early priority for the joint venture is to upgrade both wagons and motive power in order to improve the reliability of the service provided to the mines. Wagon and locomotive servicing and maintenance is carried out mainly at Ma'an, where the ARC headquarters are located, but locos are also serviced at Aqaba.

This is not a heavy haul operation. Thanks to the dry climate, there has been hardly any corrosion damage to the rails and sleepers since the line was laid almost 100 years ago, and with minimal traffic passing up to the 1970's, the original 1908 track remains in use today. Some sections require lining and levelling, but otherwise most track is still able to carry the 16-tonne axleload currently applying.

On the section built in the 1970's the track condition is described by WCTC as 'fair to good'. The ruling gradient against loaded trains is 2.7%, with curves down to 125m radius, and some rail on these curves will have to be replaced due to severe corrugation. It is also the intention to field-weld a proportion of bolted joints.

As this is desert country, sand is blown on to the track in places. Methods of preventing this are being considered.

Once the concession is up and running successfully, the joint venture will examine opportunities to carry general freight between Aqaba and Amman. At present, a large amount of freight - much of it in containers - is carried more than 300 km. on the highway between the capital and Jordan's only port.

North of Menzil, just beyond El Abid, control of the line passes to the Hedjaz Jordan Railway. It would therefore be necessary to negotiate a new concession agreement for management and operation of the 130 km. from Menzil to Aqaba."

Well - I doubt whether "Harakevet" will be around to cover the negotiations for extending the lease in 25 years time (2024 ?) - but it seems there will be a lot of news in forthcoming months. If traffic is set to more than triple, one can only assume the current ageing fleet of General Electric diesels will need to be supplemented or replaced (one wonders whether Mitsubishi's place in the partnership has any significance in this respect ?), not to mention more wagon stock, possible introduction of more "mixed freight" in terms of fuel and supplies rather than purely phosphates, further extensions, and so forth. If ever there was time to rebuild the whole thing to standard gauge, as well, this would be it (though Japan, South Africa, Queensland, New Zealand etc. have set precedents for massive freight operations on 3'6" gauge - not very dissimilar to Hedjaz gauge.) After all, most of the new traffic will be originating south of Ma'an, and any hopes (in the messianic future) of through freight to Israel, Iraq or Syria would eventually require standard gauge. We look forward to receiving more information as these proposals reach fruition. Ed.

C. IRAQ.

More Bunkers ? From R.G.I. 10/99 p. 621: The Iraqi Transport Ministry announced in August that it was to resume planning work for the proposed Baghdad Metro network, which was put on hold in 1980 during the war with Iran.

D. LEBANON.

From R.G.I. 11/99, p. 694: Transport Ministry officials are considering purchase of rolling stock and other equipment from Czech companies to spearhead rehabilitation of the country's war-damaged railway.

E. IRAN.

From the Agence France Presse (AFP) of 27/10/99 (thanks to Uwe Pietruck).

- (i) More Locos. Electronics concern Alstom has announced a major contract for 100 locomotives for Iran, worth a total of 192 Million Euro (1.2 Billion Francs; 375.5 Million DM.) The announcement coincided with the visit to Paris of Iran's President Mohammed Chatami. 20 of the locos will be constructed at Alstom's plant in Belfort, the remaining 80 by a partner in Iran.

R.G.I. 12/99 p. 764 adds more detail - the locos are Type AD43C 4300 hp. diesel-electrics with Ruston engines and ONIX asynchronous drive, and the partner is Wagon Pars. "Middle East International" of 12 Nov. '99, p. 20, indicates that Alstom's UK operation "had complained previously about British government inflexibility over export credit guarantees to Iran" - hence, presumably, the French construction, though exactly how national political issues affect multinational companies remains a mystery to your Editor. Further context: During Chatami's visit orders were also signed for three Airbus A330 jets, and talks were held with Renault and Peugeot - the latter currently manufacturing 25,000 vehicles a year in Iran.

- (ii). The Train from Spain.....More Second-Hand Stock. RAI has signed a contract with RENFE of Spain to purchase 49 Bc10X and Bc11X couchette cars, three R12 restaurant cars, two Cafeteria/compartmmnt coaches and eleven Generator Vans for Pts. 890M. RENFE's Malaga workshops will refurbish and regauge the cars for delivery before May 15th. 2000.
- (iii) Steam survivors ? Unsubstantiated rumours from a reliable source in London indicate that there may still be two former WD 8F 2-8-0's stored somewhere in Iran - condition unknown. A British group was known to have been negotiating to purchase one in 1979, before the Islamic Revolution put a stop to any such ideas. Watch this space.....

F. SAUDI ARABIA.

- (i). Sand storms ? The "World Speed Survey" in "R.G.I." 10/99, an annual survey of the best or fastest timetabled trains, shows Saudi Arabia at position 14 with Trains 1/3 from Al Hufuf to Ar Riyad, a distance of 310.0 km., in a time of 150 minutes, an average speed of 124.0 km./h.
- (ii). Expansion Plans. From R.G.I. 12/99, p.766: "Proposals for a major expansion of Saudi Arabia's rail network are back on the agenda, after a year-long feasibility study. Together with rolling-stock they are costed at around US\$ 2 Billion.

One is a 1,000 km. heavy-haul line from the port and industrial cities of Dammam and Jubail on the Gulf Coast to the mineral-rich areas in the far northwest, costed at US\$ 1.2 Bn. to US\$1.6 Bn. Terminating at Auriyat, it would benefit phosphate mining at Al Jalamid in the Turayf region and bauxite at Zubaira. The State Mining Company Ma'adin announced in September that it had secured a concession to explore for phosphates in this area and in the Wadi Sirhan region. The second is the long-planned line running East-West from Riyadh to the Red Sea port of Jeddah, which would connect with the existng line from Riyadh to Dammam.

Speaking on Nov. 9th., the World Bank's representative in Saudi Arabia, Dr. Abd al-Hafiz Shaikh, said he believed the projects would benefit the industrial sector in Saudi Arabia and be carried out by the private sector, with government support. The Japanese-owned Arabian Oil Co. is being encouraged to invest in the project as part of a deal under which its offshore concession in the Gulf would be renewed when it expires in February."

G. SYRIA. From R.G.I. 12/99 p. 762: Alsthom has completed the first 30 Type AD33C Co-Co diesel locomotives for Syrian Railways. Built at Belfort in France, they have Ruston engines developing 3,200 hp.

47:7. ARCHIVAL EVIDENCE (3). By Paul Cotterell.

- a). **USA Tank Joins the Navy.** In issue 5:5 a very brief note was made of the USATC 0-6-0T No. 71270 which was belatedly taken into IR stock as No. 22, and in a subsequent issue I seem to remember expanding slightly on this reference by relating verbal evidence of the loco possibly being put to use in Haifa harbour (see also 45:16). Confirmation of this is provided by file 48/6/Peh in the museum archives. The following is a summary of the correspondence in that file.

In May 1958 the Israel Navy wrote to IR requesting the use of a steam locomotive for use on its wharf in the port for a period of twelve days. The reason for this request is unknown. USA No. 22 was "made serviceable" and an IR fireman deputed to instruct a naval crew how to handle the engine. No. 22 entered service with the Navy on 12/6/58, being released from this duty on 22/6 after just ten days. Shortly thereafter a letter arrived complaining that No. 22 had only worked for 142 hours (50% of the possible operational time) due to several failures. Repairs had been necessary to the pistons, and the injectors had needed stripping and cleaning after each 8-hour shift. In consequence IR agreed to reduce the hiring charges.

The file does not enlighten us about No. 22's previous history. Had it been resurrected from dumped condition for this short period of work with the Navy? The succession of failures suggests this to be the case. But, if so, why go to the bother of putting No. 22 back into some semblance of serviceable order when, presumably, one of the other USA 0-6-0T's would have been a better proposition? If the others were not still actually at work they would surely be in better shape than No. 22 as the Esslingen 0-6-0D's would only have taken over from them a short time before.

- b). **Sentinel of the Seas.** In November 1954 the Israel Nautical College (i.e. the Naval Officers School) in Akko wrote to IR wanting to borrow a steam loco for instructing the students. A couple of months later, after someone from the college had poked around Qishon Works, the request was revised. The college now wanted "Sentinel Patent Boiler No. 1377" and its bogie, these being the engine unit of 1.05m. gauge HR Sentinel Cammell steam railcar No. SC11, and also the "feed pump" (injector?) from a Kitson 2-8-4T. The Sentinel boiler had already been sold to Winograd Brothers (presumably scrap merchants) of 2, Levontin Street, Tel Aviv, but had not yet been taken away. A flurry of letters from different sources persuaded Winograd Bros. to agree to the boiler going to the college, and it went there in May 1955. Nothing further is recorded about the Kitson "feed pump". (See File 24/6/Peh for more details.) (See (i.) below.)
- c). **Steam Laundry.** On pages 109-110 of "Hedjaz Railway" Rick Turret noted that "Three replacement boilers for the Hartmann 2-8-2's, which had been ordered by the British from the UK but which arrived after the Mandate ended, were not used for the Hartmann 2-8-2's but sold to factories." I don't know where Rick ferretted out this

choice morsel of information but assume it wasn't from File 7/24/Peh now in the museum archives.

Correspondence on this subject opens with a letter (undated but ca. January or February 1957) from the "Yehudit" Laundry of Haifa Bay requesting permission to buy "1 of 3 new [i.e. unused] steam boilers... which were intended for Hartmann locomotives". (There is nothing to indicate how the "Yehudit" Laundry got wind of these boilers). Alternatively, a boiler from an "American Shunting" or a "Manning Wardless" [sic !] would be suitable.

Thereafter the correspondence gets bogged down and complicated, with other parties (including Government ministries) suddenly becoming interested in these three Hartmann boilers. Things drag on and nothing gets sold. Eventually, in May 1958, IR decides to advertise them for sale by public tender, but no offers are received. The Transport Ministry now steps in and decides that the boilers should be offered for sale abroad instead. The Foreign Ministry is asked to help look for likely customers. South African Railways expressed themselves uninterested, but George Cohen & Sons and Company Ltd., 600 Wood Lane, London W12. evidently were. Their letter to IR (via the Israel Embassy in London) is not on file, but IR's reply of 3/12/58 is. The Stores Superintendent in Haifa asked a price of £5,000 for each boiler FOB Haifa. [Free on Board - i.e. to include loading. Ed.] He also wrote (inter alia):

"We regret to inform you that [no maker's drawings] are available here. We suggest you obtain same from the makers, Rob. Stephenson & Hawthorns Ltd., Darlington. For their guidance you might state Palestine Railways Indent 9714. Boilers No. D6273 tested on 14.11.47."

Nothing more is heard from George Cohen. In April 1959 the firm of 'Zikit', Dyeing and Finishing Company Ltd., North Yarkon Industrial Area, Rehov HaBarzel 16, Tel Aviv, applied to IR for one of the boilers and this was apparently sold to them along with extra fittings.

A second Hartmann boiler appears to have been sold to Haifa Oil Refineries in late 1959 or early 1960. Disposal of the third boiler is unknown.

File 7/24/Peh also contains an undated German general arrangement drawing showing the boiler only for a Hartmann 2-8-2. It is annotated as being that of HR 254, Hartmann works no. 4023 of 1918.

A possible footnote to this story is contained in file 20/79/Peh. Issue Voucher No. 26 records that "Loco Boilers..... 3 cases" were released to IR from Haifa Port on 7/7/48. Were these the Hartmann replacement boilers ? (Also released on the same date, incidentally, were "14 cases superheaters".)

d). **Radiation.** While on the subject of German locos: how about this slight snippet from file 35/24/Peh ? On 5/2/52 "Fertilisers & Chemicals Ltd." of Haifa wrote to IR wishing

to buy or hire the radiator from WD No. 70246 (this being former Wehrmacht Reichsbahn type WR 550 D 14 0-8-0DH No. 11118 captured in North Africa). They were out of luck, however. On 21/2/52 the CME refused to sell or hire the radiator "until we decide the fate of these old diesels." (See (i.) below).

- e). **Air Raid at Rehovot.** From file 3/79/Peh. LMS 2-8-0 70397 was noted as being derailed at Rehovot station in May 1948. Also at Rehovot were 39 wagons, two of which had been "slightly damaged by an air raid on the station on 30/5/48 at 09.15." There is nothing to suggest that the LMS 2-8-0 was derailed as a result of this air raid.
- f). **Stranded at Jerusalem.** From file 9/79/Peh: Baldwin 4-6-2T 8 and Baldwin 4-6-4T 13 were noted as being at Jerusalem station on 22/8/48 - presumably stranded there by the British pullout and Israel's War of Independence. Also at Jerusalem on the same date were 62 wagons, plus another 4 wagons off the rails and in use by the police !!
- g). **Decauville Relics.** From file 11/79/Peh: Among items at Nahariyya on 16/8/48 which had been recovered from 401 TSD (Transportation Stores Depot) at Azzib were:
 - 80 metres of Decauville track.
 - 2 Decauville points.
 - 2 Decauville turntables.
 - 3 Decauville wagons (parts).
 - 2 Decauville wagons (complete.)
- h). **From File 24/79/Peh:** Among items removed from a warehouse at Jaffa station on 22/1/54 was a Decauville wagon with two wheels only, for scrap.
- i). **Sentinel Railcar Conversions?** Also from file 11/79/Peh: On 2/8/53 the Acting CME of IR wrote to Sentinel in Shrewsbury under the subject heading "Two Standard Gauge & Two Narrow Gauge Steam Railcars supplied under Req. No. 2034/1 Indent 2814 to Palestine Railways in 1927 [sic] (Ref. your Drg.No. Z 5546/4)." The CME wanted to know if it would be possible to convert these steam railcars to diesels. An alternative possibility aired by him was the conversion of the narrow gauge railcars to standard gauge using as much as possible of existing parts.

The CME continued: "The order should comprise full set of erection drawings for conversion to be carried out in Israel, full set of instructions etc. Parts of German origins which may be used eventually to be quoted separately." Could the CME have had his eye on those redundant ex-Wehrmacht diesels for the "parts of German origin"?

However, Sentinel's reply of 20/8/53 evidently ended these musings: "It is estimated that the performance requirement specified in your enquiry would necessitate a power unit of not less than 300 BHP, and as we have not an engine of this power in our present production range, we regret being unable to quote you in this instance."

[The standard- and narrow-gauge railcars were, on delivery, intended to be easily convertible to the other gauge. Ed.]

j). **Cyprus Takeover?** From file 108/82/Peh From file 108/82/Peh: On 29/11/51 the Israeli Consul in Nicosia wrote a "Most Secret" letter to the Foreign Ministry in Jerusalem. The Consul had learned from "a most reliable source" that the whole of the 2ft. 6in. gauge Cyprus Government Railway was to be sold after its closure "at the end of 1951". Next month the Ministry of Transport requested the reaction of IR to this intelligence. Not surprisingly, Israel Railways were not interested. In March 1952 a Mr. Eliahu Pshouti of Tel Aviv (an agent ?) sent a list of all the CGR material for sale and wanted IR to provide him with a list of possible customers in Israel. In July 1952 the Transport Ministry requested IR to prepare an estimate of expenses for the "Negev Railway Committee" for operation of the CGR equipment from "the phosphate quarries to Beersheba": The expenses were to be calculated on several case studies, one of which was to include "locomotives of the type on the CGR today" [i.e. steam] or diesel locos of the type you recommend buying." From a subsequent lack of correspondence in the file it appears that IR managed to wriggle out of this exercise in futility. It would have been very nice for me if, for example, those four large and handsome Kitson 4-8-4T's had arrived from Cyprus for a spell of work in the Negev Desert, but who can blame IR for breathing a sigh of relief when the whole episode quietly blew over ? [I am intrigued about this "Negev Railway Committee", no doubt a part of Ben-Gurion's vision of expansion into the Negev, and would love to learn more about its ideas if more comes to light. At this time the standard-gauge line to Beersheba was still, I think, under development. Ed.]

k). **Hedjaz Railway Stock in Israel, 1948.**

From the IR General Manager's Report for the Years 1948/49-1951-52 I have extracted the following details concerning Hedjaz Railway rolling stock left in Israel following the British withdrawal:

(1): HR Locomotives according to the last Mandatory Report of 31/3/47:

Krauss 0-6-0T's	- total 4
La Meuse 0-10-0T's	- total 2
La Meuse 2-6-2T's	- total 1
Hartmann 2-8-0's	- total 4
Hartmann 2-8-2's	- total 6
Winterthur 2-8-0's	- total 6
Borsig 2-8-0's	- total 2
Krauss 2-8-0's	- total 1
Sentinel-Cammell Railcars	- total 2

Less Locos damaged between 31/3/47 and 15/5/48:

Krauss 0-6-0T	- total 1
La Meuse 1-10-0T's	- total 2
La Meuse 2-6-2T	- total 1
Hartmann 2-8-0's	- total 4
Jung 2-8-0's	- total 2
Krauss 2-8-0	- total 1
Sentinel-Cammell railcars	- total 2

Less Locos "missing" as of 15/5/48:

Hartmann 2-8-2's	- total 3
------------------	-----------

Total HR Locos in IR stock as of 15/5/48:

Krauss 0-6-0T's	- total 3 (Nos. 10, 16, 19.)
Hartmann 2-8-2's	- total 3 (Nos. 254, 256, 265.)
Winterthur 2-8-0's	- total 6 (Nos. 152, 153, 154, 155, 156, 159.)
Borsig 2-8-0's	- total 2

(Nos. 163, 164.)

(In addition there was a 15-ton steam crane - unnumbered - and a "helper" wagon - i.e. crane runner No. 1502 - included in the fourteen-strong loco stock. For some reason this list omits the SC railcars 11 & 12, although it is clear from correspondence above that these were also in Israel.)

2. HR Coaches according to last Mandatory Report of 31/3/47:

1st. Class	- total 1
1st./2nd. Class	- total 3
3rd. Class	- total 23
3rd./Brake	- total 1
Brake/Postal/Luggage	- total 3
Saloon	- total 1
Pay (?) coach	- total 1
Ambulances	- total 2
Guard's coach	- total 1
(This possibly Full Brake? "Van Pivoach" - Heb. unclear. See below - No. 1726.	
Service Coaches	- total 2 (Total: 38 vehicles.)

Less Coaches damaged between 31/3/47 and 15/5/48:

3rd. Class	- total 7
Ambulances	- total 2
Service coach	- total 1 (Total = 10 vehicles.)

Less Coaches "Missing" as of 15/5/48:

1st./2nd. Class	- total 2
3rd. Class	- total 5
Brake/Postal/Luggage	- total 1
Pay (?) Coach	- total 1
Service coach	- total 1 (Total = 10 vehicles.)

Total HR Coaches in IR stock as of 15/5/48:

1st. Class	- total 1 (No. 418).
1st./2nd. Class	- total 1 (No. 438).
3rd. Class	- total 11 (Nos. 45, 55, 57, 62, 67, 69, 70, 84, 259, 430, 435.)
3rd. Brake	- total 1 (No. 51).
Brake/Postal/Luggage	- total 2 (Nos. 618, 1763.)
Saloon	- total 1 (No. 437).
Guard's (?) Coach	- total 1 (No. 1726.)

[Note: The 1944 PR WTT lists 1726 on p. xxiv as an "Inspector Van", but under "Goods Rolling Stock". Ed.]

(Total = 17 vehicles.)

[For completeness - and information taken from the WTT cited above:

- 1st. 418 was built Baume et Marpent, and had 30 seats.
(See Tourret p.61 Fig 45)
- 1st./2nd. 438 was built Roeulx (Yemen) 12 1st. & 32 2nd. Class seats.
(Tourret p. 105 Fig.65.)
- Of the 3rds: 45 was B & M, with 64 seats;
55 was ex-J&J and had 47 seats,
57 was ex-J&J with 48 seats; (See Tourret p. 112 Fig. 73).
62 & 67 are noted in this WTT as being
Ambulance Coaches under conversion back to
- 3rds. The builder is noted as B & M.; (See Tourret p. 117 fig. 80).
69 was Roeulx (Yemen) with 36 seats; (See Tourret p.112 Fig. 74.)
70 and 84 were former J&J 3rds. with 50 seats. (See Tourret p.110 Fig. 70).
259 a Baume & Marpent with 64 seats. (See Tourret p.114 Fig. 77).
430 & 435 B. & M. with 68 seats. (See Tourret p. 115 Fig. 78.)
- Brake/3rd. 51 was ex-J&J with 32 3rd.-class seats and
Brake/Luggage compartment; (See Tourret p.116, Fig.79.)
- BPL's 618 & 1763 were from Ammendorf, 6 Ton capacity;
(Tourret p. 61 Fig. 47.)
- Saloon 437 was built Baume et Marpent, and had 2 beds.
(See Tourret p.117, Fig.81).

So we see that hardly any two of the seventeen coaches were alike !! Noticeable, however, is that all the above coaches are found listed as PR stock in 1944 - no CFH coaches from Syria appear to have been included after the Yarmuk bridges were blown and effectively isolated the Haifa-Tzemach stretch from the rest of the HR system. The "missing" coaches could include those in use in PR service in Transjordan - which, if so, raises the intriguing possibility of Israel claiming them as former "Palestine Railways" stock !! TEFS reports indicate that at least two ex-PR coaches, including 1st. [No. 48 and 3rd. No. 66, are at Amman. Ed.]

The "Missing coaches" or those "Damaged-Written-Off" between the 1944 WTT and the 1948 list would appear to be:

- 1st./2nds. 48 & 81 (Roeulx).
3rds. 52, 58 & 60 (J&J); 65 (B&M); 66 (B&M Ambulance);
68 (B&M Ambulance); 72 (J&J); 85 (Nürnberg);
86 (Ammendorf); 232 (B&M); 428 (B&M); 431 (B&M);
432 (B&M); = 13.
BPL 622 (Ammendorf.)

The Pay and Service coaches are hard to identify - though the WTT refers to a Brake Van (unnumbered) "under conversion in Shops.) However, these 3 coaches did not make it to May 1948 and need not concern us too much. The situation regarding 3rds. and Ambulance coaches is hard to resolve, since the 1947 Report clearly reflects a very

different situation to the 1944 WTT, and coaches were being converted back to civilian use. For the rest, the information fills the identity gaps.

[Incidentally, The current stock of the HJR at Amman includes 48, 66, 81, 221, 231, 432; in Syria the CFH has 231, 234, Ed.) (See Harakevet 38:8)]

3. HR Freight Stock according to last Mandatory Report of 31/3/47.

Low-sided Open wagons	- total 97	
High-sided Open wagons	- total 42	
Vans	- total 171	
Brake Vans	- total 2	
Cattle wagons	- total 5	
Tank wagons	- total 36	
Flat wagons	- total 23	
Ballast wagon	- total 1	
Tare wagon	- total 1	(Total = 378 vehicles.)

Less freight stock damaged between 31/3/47 and 15/5/48:

Low-sided Open wagon	- total 1	
Vans	- total 5	
Brake Vans	- total 2	
Tank wagons	- total 1	
Ballast wagon	- total 1	(Total = 10 vehicles.)

Less Freight Stock "missing" as of 15/5/48.

Low-sided Open wagons	- total 27	
High-sided Open wagons	- total 16	
Vans	- total 85	
Cattle wagons	- total 3	
Tank wagons	- total 22	
Flat wagons	- total 8	(Total = 161 vehicles.)

Total HR freight stock in IR stock as of 15/5/48:

Low-Sided wagons: total 69. (Nos. 1501, 1505, 1509, 1510, 1512, 1514, 1519, 1521, 1524, 1532, 1534, 1539, 1544, 1546, 1548, 1551, 1552, 2404, 2405, 2407, 2408, 2410, 2414, 2418, 2421, 2424, 2426, 2429, 2433, 2444, 2445, 2455, 2473, 2478, 2480, 2481, 2482, 2483, 2484, 2486, 2489, 2531, 2549, 2561, 2564, 2565, 2583, 2587, 2590, 2592, 2593, 2594, 2612, 2614, 2616, 2618, 2620, 2811, 2812, 2847, 2848, 2857, 2861, 2914, 2975, 3000, 3005, 3015, 3646.)

High-Sided wagons: Total 26. (Nos. 1556, 1600, 1605, 1606, 1608, 1613, 1614, 1619, 1626, 2449, 2461, 2477, 2516, 2611, 2622, 2624, 2650, 2863, 2873, 2948, 2994, 3014, 3205, 3218, 3633, 3635.)

Vans: Total 81. (Nos. 801, 810, 812, 817, 818, 820, 834, 843, 851, 855, 858, 864, 871, 873, 885, 890, 892, 920, 932, 933, 945, 948, 979, 1006, 1204, 1208, 1231, 1248, 1262, 1266, 1267, 1271, 1277, 1278, 1283, 1288, 1291, 1322, 1393, 1399, 1416, 1700, 1702, 1703, 1706, 1710, 1711, 1712, 1713, 1720, 1723, 1727, 1734, 1735, 1739, 1740, 1744, 1747, 1749, 1755, 1760, 1761, 1767, 1768, 1769, 1771, 1774, 1775, 1776, 1781, 1784, 1785, 1786, 1787, 1789, 1794, 1795, 3249, 5004, 5007.)

Cattle wagons: Total 2. (Nos. 751, 1777).

Tank wagons: Total 13. (Nos. 1511, 1516, 1523, 1553, 2411, 2427, 2507, 2552, 2810, 2842, 2918, 2946, 3252.)

Flat wagons: Total 15. (Nos. 1506, 1552, 2569, 2573, 2702, 2703, 2704, 2705, 2706, 2919, 2926, 2934, 2947, 5002, 5102.)

Tare wagon: Total 1. (No. 605.)

(Total = 207 vehicles.)

47:8. THE BAGHDAD RAILWAY CLASS 700 0-6-0WT.

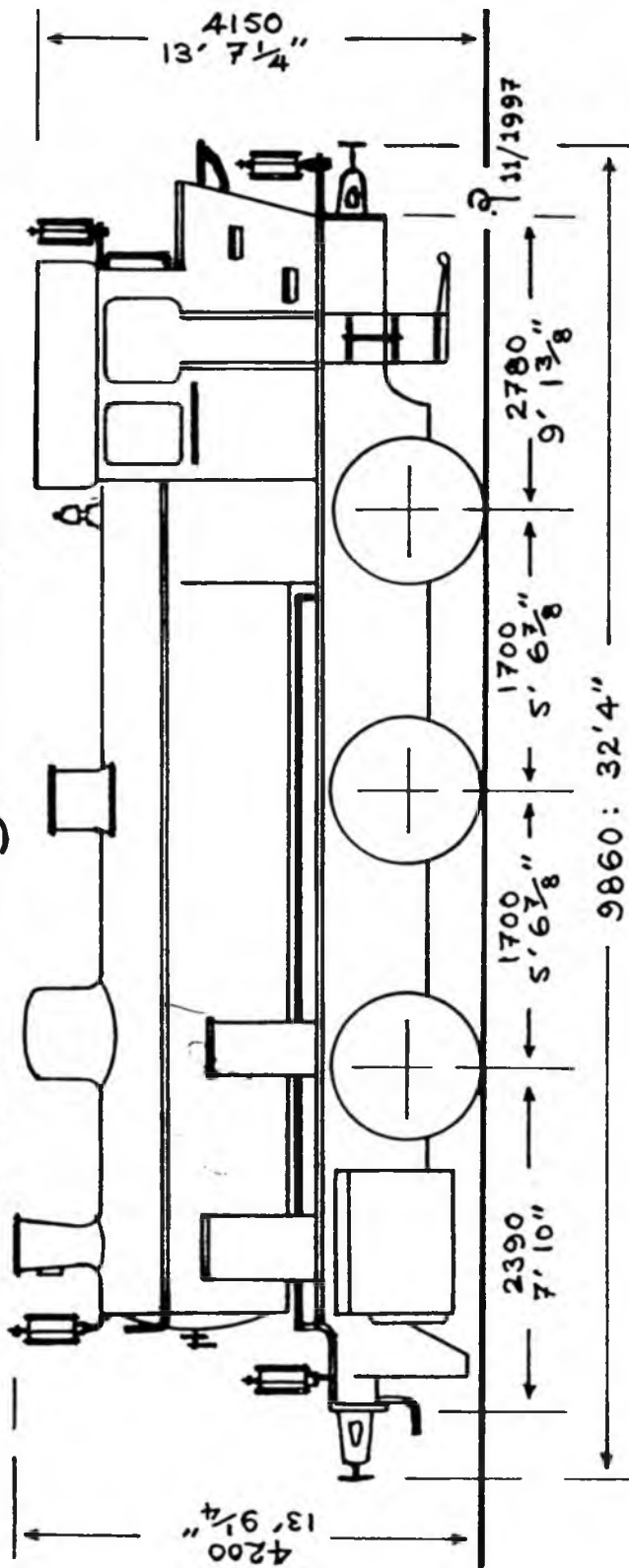
By Paul Cotterell.

0-6-0T No. 752 was the only member of Class 700 on the Bagdad Railway. It was a well-tank shunting loco built by Hanomag in Germany (works no. 7134 of 1914 according to Hugh Hughes, though the diagram gives a building date of 1913.) On page 34 of "Middle East Railways" it is further noted as DHP No. 406, later becoming ISR No. 1206 of Class SH. I know nothing more about this engine. Can someone else add anything ?

700 Class Locomotives.

Type O-6-O. (Shunting) Tank.

Builders - Hanomag, Hanover, Linden.



CAPACITY - WATER 1110 GALLS: COAL 2 TONS.

NO. OF LOCOS ON LINE - 1 (No 752). CONSTRUCTED IN 1913.

WEIGHTS - EMPTY ? IN SERVICE. ?

GRATE AREA: 18.33 Sq. Ft.

BRAKE: HAND.

BOILER PRESSURE: 170 LBS PER SQ. INCH.

NUMBER OF TUBES: 200.

CYLINDERS - DIA. 18 1/8". PISTON STROKE 23 5/8".

TOTAL HEATING SURFACE: 1327 Sq. Ft.

WHEEL BASE - TOTAL :- 11'-13 3/4".

TRACTIVE EFFORT: ?

DIAMETER OF WHEELS (WITH TYRES) - 4'-0".

47:9. A CAMEL AT REST. By Uri Ben-Rehav.

On my trips and hikes throughout the country I am quite used to meeting camels of the genus "Camelus", but guess my surprise when I spotted, in October 1997, a camel of the genus "Cameron" ! [See Harakevet 5:6, 6:6, 8:10, 14:23 for previous references to these minute machines and their nickname.]

It happened when visiting the "Nesher Portland Cement Works" at Ramleh, where it stood on a special concrete plinth next to the Visitors' Centre, well preserved and painted in blue and yellow. The footplate door was open for youngsters to climb in, but all moving parts were welded down to prevent accidents.

פ'תחילת הרכבת
מס' 561

In front of it is mounted a board, in Hebrew, stating:

"The First Loco

Used to move Cement wagons

At the plant

1957-1980."

It really was the first loco, because on enquiry to the Public Relations Officer it transpired to have been the only one there !

The manufacturer's plate states:

"Ing. M. Gelinek & Ing. O. Judfmann

Gebus- Lokomotiven

Lokomotiv-Type VL Nummer 561

Leistung 75 PS Gewicht 5.5

Max. Geschw. 26 Km/h. Baujahr 1957.

Breuer-Lizenz."

הרכבת

All rails on the spur from the main Tel Aviv - Jerusalem line have been lifted, and a small concrete bridge (or large culvert) is all that is left."

[The Editor Adds: I walked this spur from Ramle Station in 1994 - the tracks were overgrown with thistles, and the loco was painted only yellow and standing rusting; I understand that one plate has been purchased by a British enthusiast. I was able to make a brief and unofficial walk around the sidings, and recall several Metro-Cammell built, 1930's, quite handsome bogie hopper cement wagons standing in the sidings, also disused. What has happened to these ?]



קטר הרכבת הראשון
שימש להסעת קרונות מלש
במפעל
1957 - 1980

47:10. THE EGYPTIAN PHOSPHATE COMPANY'S RAILWAY.

From "The Locomotive", Nov. 14th. 1936, pp. 356-358.

There has been some notice in the past of the Qena-Safaga railway built for possible military necessity in World War 2 and lifted shortly thereafter, and now of the more modern ENR Qena - Safaga mineral line. This item covers the mineral activities that were taking place at the coast in the 1930's.

"The Egyptian Phosphate Company's railway is a private line used for conveying mineral phosphate from the Company's mines in the Red Sea range of mountains down to their port at Safaga on the coast. Here the phosphate is dried and refined before being loaded into shops by means of an aerial ropeway and loading gantry, which can handle 200 tons per hour and accommodate ships of up to 12,000 tons gross tonnage.

Safaga itself is a small settlement entirely devoted to the interests of the company situated some 240 miles south of Suez, where the mountains and sea converge. It is linked with Suez and other communities north and south by a telegraph line, which runs the whole length of this coast of Egypt. A desert motor "road" also follows the coast, though it is rarely used except by desert patrols and for local purposes, and there are similar "roads" through the mountains to the Nile valley from points north and south of Safaga; regular communication is with Qena (near Luxor) is maintained over the latter, otherwise shipping provides the only normal link with the outside world. Most of the phosphate is exported to Japan, but a small coasting vessel calls once a week bringing water and occasional consignments of stores and equipment from Suez.

The mines are situated due south of Safaga, and at the present time the bulk of the Company's activities are being transferred from their old mine at Umm Huétat to a new one at South Gasus, three miles away. A branch line of the railway has been constructed to serve the new mine, the distance of either from Safaga being about 19 miles by rail.

The railway, which is of metre gauge, is single throughout and has no passing loops. Flat-bottomed rails are used, weighing 55 lb. per yard, and are laid on hardwood sleepers with natural sand and stone ballast. The sharpest curve is of 7 1/2 chains radius, and the steepest gradient against the load is 1 in 61 on the new branch. There is also a gradient of 1 in 55 with the load on the Umm Huétat line, and a short section of 1 in 50 at Safaga leading up to the gantry which serves the storage magazine. The track has been described by a visitor of some experience as "the finest track.

Notable engineering works on the line include a tunnel about 100 yards long on the Umm Huétat line, with an embankment at one end and a series of steep cuttings at the other. The tunnel is driven on a curve through shale formation, and is lined with blocks of local limestone.

Special precautions have to be taken against the occurrence of wash-outs on the rare but not unknown event of heavy rains falling in the mountains. On one such occasion, for example, the line was so badly damaged that thousands of sleepers were carried out to sea, though most of them were subsequently recovered by boat or from the beach. Formerly these precautions took the form of large ditches flanking the railway on the danger side and backed by a substantial bank made of the excavated material. But the present practice is to lay the track flush with the ground in the "wadis" (which are normally dry) so that when the latter are in spate, the stones and boulders brought down by the torrent may pass over the track without damaging it. It is then only necessary for gangs to clear away the debris to make the track ready for use again.

At Safaga the storage magazine consists of elevated bins of 10,000 tons capacity, and is served by a gantry up which the hopper wagons are shunted so that they can discharge direct into the bins from above.

This gantry consists of some 40 braced girder spans, and is partly laid out on a curve.

At Safaga also are the engine and repair sheds and requisite sidings for the rolling stock, and an extension of the main line passes through the plant to the jetty.

The railway has no signals, traffic on the main line being worked on the "one engine in steam" principle, but an additional locomotive is kept continuously in steam at Safaga for shunting. Until the opening up of the new mine at South Gasus, the locomotive operating on the main line made two return trips per day between Safaga and Umm Huétat, on weekdays only. No provision is made for carrying passengers.

The rolling stock consists of six locomotives, 26 thirty ton bogie hopper wagons with chain-operated doors, tare 11.3 tons, two bogie tank wagons 28 tons load, 14 tons tare, two bogie flat trucks, and sundry light 4-wheel tip trucks, trollies, one four-wheeled carriage.

Of the locomotives, Nos. 1 and 2 were built by Andrew Barclay, Son & Co. of Kilmarnock (Shops Nos. 1214 and 1278) dated 1910 and 1912 respectively. They are side tanks of the 0-6-2 wheel arrangement and have coupled wheels 3 ft. 3 in diameter and trailing truck wheels 2ft. 3in. diameter, with outside cylinders, 15 in. diameter by 22 in. stroke, with ordinary link motion. The working pressure of the round topped boiler is 180 lb. per sq. in. Total weight in working order 40 tons; water capacity of tanks 4 tons; bunker capacity 3/4 ton of coal. Arrangements are made for burning oil fuel if desired. The device on top of the boiler is a locally made feed water heater. The normal load for these engines from the mines to the port is 9 bogie hopper wagons of 30 tons capacity, loaded.

Engine No. 3 is dated 1914, and built by the Avonside Engine Co. Ltd. of Bristol (No. 1670). It is an eight-coupled side tank with 3 ft. 6 in. dia. wheels, and outside cylinders 16

in. bore by 22 in. stroke with Walschaert valve gear. The boiler pressure is 180 lb. per sq. in. and the total weight in working order is 45 tons. The tanks hold 4 1/2 tons of water and the bunker one ton of coal or oil fuel. The load for this engine is 10 loaded 30-ton hopper wagons from the mines to the port. There are two feed pumps instead of injectors. The Belpaire firebox is of copper.

The fourth locomotive is a 100 h.p. "Sentinel" patent geared steam locomotive built at Shrewsbury by the Sentinel Waggon Works Ltd. in 1934. It has four chain-driven wheels, 2 ft. 6 in. diameter and two vertical cylinders 7 in., by 9 in. The boiler, which works at a pressure of 375 lb. per sq. in., has a grate area of 5.1 sq. ft. and a heating surface of 64 sq. ft., and the locomotive weighs 17 1/2 tons in working order, and has a maximum speed of 10 m.p.h. in low gear or 15 m.p.h. in high gear. It is used for shunting loaded wagons from the incoming trains at Safaga to the dryers, and from the dryers to the storage magazine by way of the gantry, up which (1 in 50) gradient it can haul a load of 90 tons at 4 1/4 m.p.h. in low gear. The tank capacity is 340 gallons and the bunker 5 cwt. coal.

The fifth locomotive is a 22 h.p. Deutz Diesel locomotive, which is used for occasional duties.

The last locomotive is a 150 h.p. Diesel-mechanical locomotive which has just been delivered by the Hunslet Engine Co. Ltd. of Leeds, intended to handle the South Gasus traffic. It has an eight-cylinder heavy oil engine which drives the six-coupled wheels through a friction clutch, a normal type constant-mesh gearbox and a jack-shaft, but the clutch and gears are operated in conjunction with the throttle by a special method developed by the manufacturers."

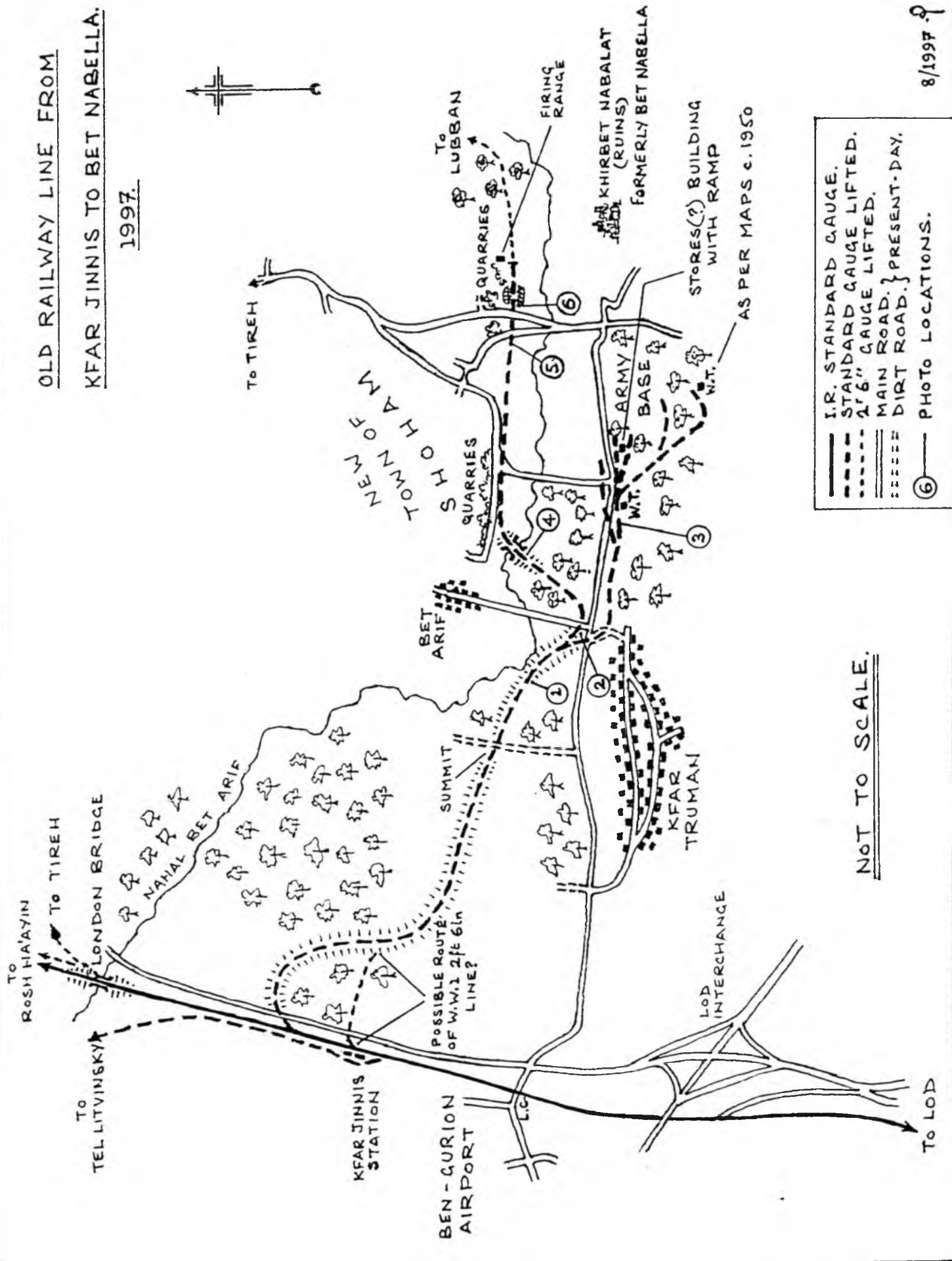
47:11. EXPLORING LOST RAILWAYS. By Paul Cotterell.

Part 1: Kfar Jinnis to Beit Nabella.

Introduction: During 1997 I made several field study trips, in the company of Uri Yinon, to see what could be discovered of three long-closed railway lines to the north of Lod (Lydda). Uri is a professor at the Goldschleger Eye Research Institute of the Tel Aviv University Faculty of Medicine at Tel Hashomer. His main spare time interest is the history of the ancient town of Lod, and he also has a weakness for pillboxes from the British Mandate period. He does not profess to be a railway enthusiast but soon became enthusiastically involved in the subject once we began our search on the ground. I am grateful to him, not merely for providing the wheels which made our studies possible, but also for posing pertinent questions and suggestions throughout our travels. His comments and deductions proved very useful, gave encouragement at times of frustration, and, more than once, saved me from making elementary mistakes.

We studied three lines together: two of which originated in 1918, and the third from about 1960-61. Very little has been recorded about them. They are shown and briefly mentioned in "The Railways of Palestine and Israel", with a fuller account in 'Harakevet' 25:13. These two sources should be consulted for comparison with this present series of articles.

OLD RAILWAY LINE FROM
KFAR JINNIS TO BET NABELLA.
1997.



8/1997

The two narrow-gauge lines dating from World War 1 have been bedevilled by, among other things, cartographical inaccuracy and vagueness. The same accusations may justifiably be levelled at the sketch maps accompanying these articles. However, it has been my intention in drawing them to emphasise those features which are relevant to our studies, while keeping the maps as clear and simple as possible. I hope they may provide an incentive and guide (in conjunction with decent modern maps) to anyone else who would like to explore these railway remains.

Historical Outline: The British standard gauge railway from Kantara reached Lydda "by February" 1918, which provides a reasonably accurate date for the start of construction on the 2ft. 6 in. gauge lines that served the troops newly dug-in along the front to the north. Work on the nearly 20 kilometre long branch to Lubban began on 9 May 1918 and the line opened throughout on 15 August. It would have become redundant immediately after the final British offensive which began just a month later on 18 September.

Early in 1921 Palestine Railways utilised part of the narrow gauge route for laying a standard gauge branch to serve stone quarries near Bet Nabella [also known as Nabala, Ed.] and Deir Tarif (this latter village has disappeared under the new town of Shoham). The former narrow gauge formation, of course, was widened and upgraded to accommodate standard gauge track and trains. At some unknown date a short branch was laid to serve an army base, this still being in use by the Israeli Army. (This branch might have originated as a narrow gauge line to a military depot in WW1.) Several sidings were built on the approach to the base (a couple of old maps show these sidings as 'track lifted' but differ as to how many sidings there were - my sketch shows their general layout.) It is not known when the Bet Nabella standard gauge line and military sidings were closed, but this probably occurred between 1946 and 1948. [Still in use in 1948. Ed.]

The PR Working Timetables of WW2 give some insights into the Bet Nabella branch. Three level crossings are shown for the line. The first (a class C crossing, i.e. for "less important tracks") was at km. 1.228 from Kfar Jinnis. I assume this to have been for the side road/track shown on my map opposite the entrance to Kfar Truman. The second crossing (also a Class C) was at km. 3.300, presumably over the Bet Arif road. The third (a class A crossing, i.e. for "Main Road or other asphalted road crossings") was at km.5.060 on the "Lydda-Majdal-Yaba-Qalilya road". This would be the road going north from the army base and forking left towards what is now Shoham (the right-hand form is a new stretch of road which has just been completed in 1997). The WTTs do not show an overall length for the standard gauge line, but we can estimate this at approximately 5.300 kms. The military branch and sidings totalled about another 2 kms.

The Kafr Jinis - Beit Nabala [sic] Line was further noted as follows in WTTs:
Maximum Load 600 tons, 100 axles. P. Class (winter): 550 Tons; H. Class (winter): 550 tons. Maximum speed 40 K.P.H.

Ruling Up Gradient: Down Direction 1.87% from K. 4.850 to K. 5.050.
: Up Direction 1.90% from K. 1.700 to K. 1.450.

The WTT No. 4, in operation from 1 November 1945, shows a Beit Nabala Trip Goods due to depart Lydda daily at 04.45, reaching Kafr Jinis at 0500, thence to Beit Nabala arr. 05.16. This shunted at B. Nabala, Kafr Jinis and Tel Letwinsky [sic] as required. It returned to Lydda "for relief" at 1200. A second daily trip working was scheduled to leave Lydda at 1500, arriving Kafr Jinis at 1515, "Thence to B. Nabala or Tel Litwinsky as required".

No mention of what was shunted at Bet Nabella. I wonder if both quarry and army traffic was dealt with by the morning trip working or whether the afternoon tripper looked after one site "as required". This is pertinent. The junction for the military branch was located on a noticeably steep gradient. If one train handled wagons for both the quarries and base then part of the train would presumably have to stand unattended on this gradient while the other part was being dealt with elsewhere. A connected problem is the lack of run-round loops at the quarries and army base, for none are indicated on known maps or anywhere else. 600 tons adds up to a fairly lengthy consist, so I really can't visualise trains being pushed along the branch in one direction - just too dangerous a manoeuvre. There's plenty to speculate about on the operation of the line.

The term "within living memory" is a flexible one. I have spoken to Max Seidenberg, who worked trains a few times along the Bet Nabella line as a young fireman around 1937-38. He tells me that in those days the trip freight was a single daily working. It ran at night and always with a Baldwin 4-6-0, the P Class then being new locos and used on main line trains. Max remembers the trip working arrangements as follows: The train of empties arrived at Kfar Jinnis from Lod, the loco was then uncoupled and ran light, tender-first, to Bet Nabella where the loaded wagons were picked up and taken back to Kfar Jinnis. The Baldwin then coupled on to the empty wagons and propelled them to the Bet Nabella quarries. It seems that a lookout stood in the leading wagon to signal instructions to the loco crew, doubtless with a lamp as all this would be taking place in darkness. After leaving the empties at Bet Nabella the loco ran back light engine to Kfar Jinnis where it took the loaded wagons on to Lydda. It is of interest that Max does not recall any branch line to the army base - raising the possibility that this was only laid at a later date, perhaps in World War 2.

The Route Described. It is best, for our purposes, to divide the former narrow gauge line to Lubban into two sections. The first section, dealt with here, is that to Beit Nabella which became a standard gauge branch in its own right. The old narrow gauge continuation to Lubban will be looked at more closely in the next article.

We began our investigations at Kfar Jinnis Station. This is now known on Israel Railways as Te'ufa ('Aviation' or 'Flight') after the nearby Ben-Gurion Airport, though it serves no operational purpose on I.R., there being just the single main line passing through the remains of the old station. These remains are quite extensive. (See 33:23 for a ca. 1943 layout diagram. Also 25:13 for earlier notes on this area in 1918).



Uri Yinon photographs a stone viaduct on the Bet Nabella line; Visible in the distance is Beit Arif.



Looking west from the Beit Arif road towards the junction with the branch to the army base (heading off to the left.)

The sidings/loops on the east side of the station were still in situ under the trees, though all points to the main line had been removed a long time ago. Several station buildings stood ruined. Thick brush prevented us discovering the junction for the Beit Nabella line. For the same reason we were unable to verify the layout on the west side of the main line as shown in 33:23. I remain unconvinced about those curving loops behind the station buildings, and wonder (perhaps perversely) if that diagram was for a proposed layout not actually constructed as drawn.

The section from Kfar Jinnis to the summit was not examined at first hand. From Kfar Jinnis the Bet Nabella branch took a long curve through what are now orchards before straightening out. A curving dirt road on the northern edge of the orchard appears to be a positive indicator of the old railway formation.

Insubstantial early cartographic evidence (see Harakevet 25:13) suggests that the WW1 narrow-gauge line took a more southerly course away from Kfar Jinnis, as indicated on the accompanying map. While not proven, this is certainly possible, for two likely reasons: First, the standard gauge would need to be more substantially built than a temporary narrow-gauge line, and the sweeping curve may have been necessary to gain height on a reasonable gradient. Secondly, the lengthy standard-gauge sidings/loops at Kfar Jinnis could well have dictated a more northerly junction for the post-WW1 branch to Bet Nabella.

From the summit of the branch we could look back and see the old formation on a slight embankment, now a dirt road, disappear into the orchards. The summit is a dirt cross-



The old brick-built water tower on the army base line.

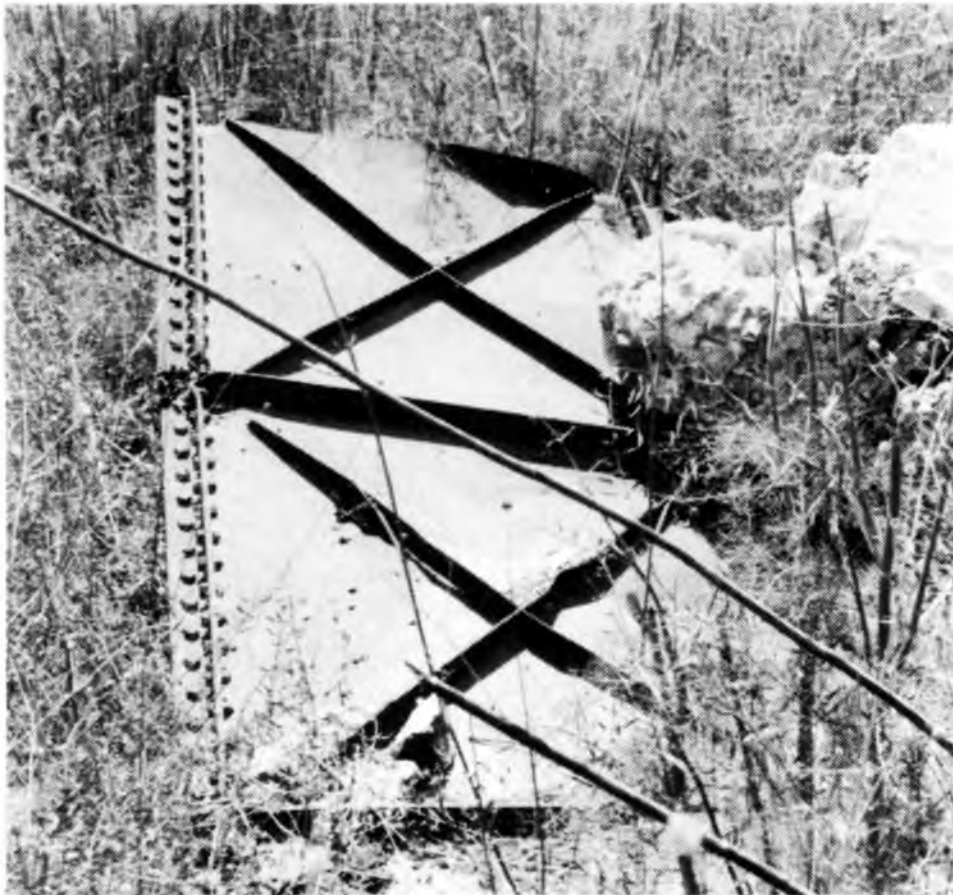


Remains of the bridge over Nahal Beit Arif, looking east.

roads, the eastern arm of which (the former railway) descends through avocado trees towards the junction with the army base branch. On this section a nicely-preserved stone culvert was discovered. The junction itself, on a high embankment, is plainly visible.

From here the military branch, as a dirt road, crosses the main east-west road and then all traces are lost as it curves into another orchard. While trying to pick up a hint of the line among the trees we found some interesting relics which came as a great surprise to Uri who, despite his local knowledge, had never seen a reference to them before. There was an ornamental fountain and adjacent water cistern. A few metres to the south was a small ruined building. A couple of items of electrical equipment were still attached to one wall and we tentatively concluded that the building had housed a pump to feed the fountain. We could not decide whether or not these incongruous survivals had any direct relationship to the railway. Probably not, even though the line had run very close by.

No doubt attached to the next find, though. This was a circular brick-built water tower, in some danger of collapse, shown on old maps of the locality. It is prominent above neat rows of fruit trees where the military line had once divided into several sidings. Nothing could be discerned of these sidings though further on, and partly hidden among eucalyptus trees, is a tall ruined building with a loading ramp on its north side. This may have been a store, served by one of the sidings. We were now right by the perimeter fence of the army base and further exploration of the sidings area was judged imprudent: not that anything could be seen to encourage the risk of possible apprehension and interrogation.



What is thought to be steel plating from a water tower, looking west from the Beit Nabella - Tireh road.

Returning to the junction, the quarry line descended to cross the Bet Arif road, was lost among more fruit trees, and then emerged on embankment to a bridge over Nahal (Wadi) Bet Arif. The bridge superstructure had long gone, but the sturdy stone abutments and central pier remained in an excellent state of preservation.

Once across the wadi the line had turned east at the base of a steep hill where the first quarry faces were located. These have now been further cut back for the recent building of a road which is partly located on the old track bed. We are about to make an abrupt transition from the relatively flat and fertile coastal plain to the barren hill country of Shomron (Samaria.)

At the next road crossing (that shown as km. 5.060 in the WTT's) we found the only piece of rail to be encountered anywhere on our explorations of the branch itself. On a second visit to the site just a couple of months later even this remnant of hardware had disappeared under a pile of rubble ! Another fragment did, however, survive close by; what looked like a side panel of steel plating from a water tank believed to have stood on the north side of the track almost at the end of the standard gauge line by the last small quarry. This is approached through a short cutting which has a crumbling stone retaining wall on its north side. The actual end of standard gauge track was just below a firing range owned by David Menachem who we shall encounter again in the next article. He told us that a buffer stop still remained at end-of-track but, if so, investigation showed this to be buried out of sight under a large pile of rocks. David also said that the two tiny quarries here,

located several metres above the standard gauge line, had small crushing plants with stone being pushed in narrow (60cm.?) gauge skips for tipping into main-line wagons below. After some discussion and investigation it was agreed probable that a surviving stone building nearby was directly connected to the quarrying operations, possibly for cutting and shaping newly-quarried rock into square blocks."

Notes from Editor: A hunt into the archives reveals the following information on this line, to supplement Paul's observations and suggestions:

The P.R. Report for 1942-3 described (p.4) the Beit Nabala line as being 4.9 km. in length (excluding sidings). p.37 lists the Ordnance Depot at Beit Nabala as one of 15 rail-connected military depots constructed during the war, branching at "Kilo 3 of the Beit Nabala branch line."



The cutting and crumbling stone retaining wall just short of the end of the standard-gauge track formation.

In Ginzach HaMedinah File Mem/374/R/35/40 is correspondence in August - Sept. 1940 regarding the possibility of utilising sidings at Beer Yaaqov for War Department purposes; this culminated in a "Secret" letter of 30th. Sept. from Lt. Co. C. Baker: "A site for the R.E. Base Stores Depot has now been selected to the west of Beit Nabala whence it is proposed to lay a siding leaving the Beit Nabala Railway between Km. 3 and Km. 4. In view of the above, the sidings at Beer Yaaqov will not be required."

A letter of 22/3/48 from Brigadier Cole to Arthur Kirby states that at this point there were still 30,000 tons of stores at Beit Nabala to be cleared. In a letter from Kirby of 26/3/48 he

states that 10,000 tons have been moved from Beit Nabala to Consolidated Refineries, leaving still 30,000 tons.

Regarding operations - file Mem R/5/43 at the "Ginzach HaMedinah" contains the results of investigations into an accident between Train 82A and Military Lorry No. 10125 at Beit Nabala, 6th. January 1944. It occurred "on a level crossing over the public roadway near the Military Siding at Beit Nabala on the 6th. January 1944. Immediately prior to, and at the actual time of the accident, warning was being given to road traffic by a railway shunter exhibiting a danger signal to approaching traffic. His signals were ignored by the driver of the military lorry who attempted to pass over the crossing in front of the train. When the lorry was halfway across the railway it was struck by the leading wagon of the train, which was being propelled at a speed of approximately 5 kilometres per hour. The two leading trucks were derailed and damaged. The lorry was also damaged but fortunately no-one was injured. A steam crane had to be brought from Lydda to rerail the railway wagons." The problem was that the Army was refusing to pay the railway £P233.855 for the damage, and was repudiating responsibility ! So further reports were made, which showed that the accident occurred at 07.00; the Workmen's Train serving No. 10 R.E.B.S.D. [Royal Engineers, Base Stores Depot] had arrived at 06.39; after the workmen had derailed the rake of 12 box vans was being propelled by the engine over line 6 onto line 7, for stabling until required for the return trip in the evening. The wagons derailed were WD boxvans 11570 & 11675. Loco was 872. Shunter Said Abdul Aziz was flagging road vehicles with a red flag, and Shunter Mohammed Mustafa Abu Salam was riding on the steps of the leading vehicle giving signs to the driver Abdul Khader A'mer. The statement of Yard Foreman Alyan Mahmoud Mansour included: "I arrived from Kafr Jinnis with the labourers train.... and 50 metres before the sand drag line I stopped the train and got down from it to open the points. I opened the points and stopped at it and the train entered line number 7. After the labourers got down the train returned to the stopping place and I was still at the points according to arrangements and while I was at the points I saw trucks falling at the crossing. I closed the points and went to see the occurrence...."

But - other statements from road users declared that there had been no whistling, and the gateman (a Sapper) asserted that the red flag normally left in his hut overnight was not collected for use until after the accident ! So it appeared that the train crew had hurriedly concocted a version of events favourable to their devotion to rules.... But even from the information given, it is hard to construct a view of the track layout or the methods of operation.

Robin Davies, who was a railway engineer at Lydda at the period, told the Editor that the trip working to Beit Nabala, Tel Litvinsky, Sarafand and Kafr Samir was usually relegated to a loco with high mileage and poor condition, too weak for a proper main-line trip. He recalls Baldwin 4-6-0 No. 907 being used for a long period on this job.

Regarding the Quarry - what was it actually for, and when was it opened ? Paul suggests proper building blocks, and certainly the PR needed a lot of stone for buildings, bridges etc. Or was it for track ballast ?]

47:12. FURTHER MEMORIES OF BERT DYKE.

I have received three further lengthy letters from Bert, concerning his wartime experiences, and the following is extracted and edited from them, in (mostly) his own inimitable style.

Kantara and Sinai.

"I have articles from the Institute of Loco Engineers, about the 1925/6 return of several Baldwin 4-6-0's to Newcastle for refurbishment etc. They were shipped from Port Said in a "Christen Smith Line" loco-carrying steamer (and I've seen a couple of them a few times) - twelve of the 1918-built Baldwins, and there is a most beautiful photo of No. 891 out of Scotswood Works, Newcastle - Armstrong Whitworth of course. 891 - I ask you - staggering into Kilo 40 (i.e. Kantara East) with 100 lbs. on the dial in my days - there she is, rebuilt ! Also details of the six rebuilt into 4-6-2T's, with superheaters and another mint photo of PR No. 7, ex-shops. A vivid reminder of No. 5 after she had her cylinders blown (ex-Lyddá) - as in my own photos. There are also references to the much better cabs, drawgear and drag boxes.

I recall nights of trains rolling in to Kantara East filled with mustard gas cylinders (consigned as "Butterflies") and all the lads shunting so carefully you'd think they were newborn babies, yet we "Dutch-dropped" and "fly-shunted" naval shells as carelessly as if they were Empties ! And the night the Haifa driver came into Kantara East with a 2-8-2 simmering and my "mate" Page stepped off the footplate, into the arms of the Special Intelligence Branch - carrying a box of hashish, the fool."

("The mustard gas, by the way, went to Sarafand, and later to sea on Liberty ships, and was dumped. How times have changed...")

"The Movement Control RSM's name at Lydda in 1942 was Walter Pagan; another real character was Don Farrar (a driver), ex-Wigan Springs Branch LMS, went up and down on the Haifa train and was always good for a footplate run; he was a Sergeant, attached to 182 Rly. Optg. Coy. R.E. An extraordinary fact was, he came panting up to Kilo 40 one day, informing me that one of "his own" Black 8's was laying at El Shatt - from Wigan Springs Branch shed - and he was going to get her to Kantara if it killed him. He did, too; What with long footplate hours, and dollying up his "8", poor old Don hardly slept, but I understand his feeling. I don't have the loco number now, but Don often had Yankee 2-8-2 1175.

By the way, the 2-8-2 burnt-out at Lydda on 10th. Nov. 1942 wasn't the victim of an air raid, but of the dear old Irgun Zvai Leumi, now why did they have a go at engines ? - that hurt me ! (I recall a search at a "communal" in the Plains of Jezreel, and what we found there - our sympathies were not with the authorities - we felt it was not Arab country, historically.) Couldn't even find out the 2-8-2's number, it was incinerated.

A PR train of Aussie troops was sanded-up in a sandstorm for 11/2 days - it was hauled by No. 894, a Baldwin coerced into main-line service from our yard and wharf duty, and only got as far as Khan Yunis too, when it got stuck - that was 21st./22nd. June 1942. Kilo 40 camp at Kantara was buried in the storm !

Something I am proud of: On June 5th-8th. 1942 we had jumbo-derrick "Belray" tied up at Kantara Wharf full of goods wagons, 40-ton Yankee opens and vans with lovely "Commonwealth" bogies. We also had a large freighter "Shillong" discharging. Baldwin PR 4-6-0's 876, 863, 902 and 913 shunted us twice each day, and cleared 1600 tons of general cargo each day. That was little-old "Kilo 40", and when I took Amy past on the P&O "Strathnavar" and on an Anchor Line ship "Cameronia" again, to see where we had toiled - there's not a sign of siding, wharf or camp, just a coping stone dock edge. Sixteen of us on detachment did the lot, with shifts of 300-odd labourers. One day, a little 0-4-0T numbered 44 (P.R. ?) appeared at Kantara East [actually a WD loco. Ed.] In fact, we had so much work that we encroached a little on the Canal fairway whilst manoeuvring, "very bad form." Naval vessels especially were most imperious about "right of way".

A Greek tug brought us a string of dumb barges early June, and a flotilla of feluccas came along, they were all chartered to R.E. (IWT) [i.e. 'Royal Engineers - Inland Water Transport'] and carried 60 to 200 tons each. The Greek hopped off north very smartish, and we were left moving 200-ton cargoes of bombs and shells, stern-on to the wharf (so many !) with running gang-planks for our labour to run up and out with cargo. We soon learned why the tug hopped it - an air raid warning, we were isolated and did not always get them. Eighteen bombers swung in from over the Salt Flats north of Port Fouad, hit us with machine-gun fire and small 50-pounder bombs and skittered out via Damietta Delta. They did this often, hitting El Firdan, El Ballah, or El Kirsh depot, and often getting clobbered by Hurricanes or Tomahawks on the way out ! I watched a 50-pounder drop between two barges of shells and noticed two mines floating in the Canal outside the felucca lines. Turned round, not a sign of human life - other than 300 running out to the dear old Sinai wilderness - and turned back to face a barge with smoke curling out in a spiral. Rushed aboard, and started to move the shells, and a voice said "Ezzyak, ya Shawish Dick" - it was just one Egyptian Rais, one of two Saidi foremen (we had all sorts of ethnic gangs). Mohamed Hamoudi - he only had one eye (trachoma in the other), and was barefoot. He said "Khod" and I lifted the ends of shells with him, to the "smoker". "Wahid, etnein, talata" ("one, two, three") and we slung it into Suez water. I shook his hand and told him it was my war, not his. Old Cleverclogs in heaven looked after me that day - it was smoke shells, the sort the Royal Navy used in action as a smoke screen ! I moved heaven and earth afterwards through my Major (& 2nd. Echelon) to get him a reward and he did, they released £E50. Old Hamouda was in tears. Took me up to his oldest wife in her little mud shop, stocked with everything from split peas and pulse, to curry and ghee - yes, £50 did all that for him and his old age. She did an unprecedented thing for an older Moslem - in her own house, in front of her family and the younger wife, she opened her yashmak and kissed me. "Ed hini bosa 'Il'llah". A Kiss from God, she said. I'll never get a better compliment..... But she did pong a bit !

Almost every day an old Benheim or Wimpey [Wellington] lumbered up the length of the Canal with a huge metal circle round nose, wingtips and tail. Anti-magnet, to counter mines. Just like some ships, when we were on "Franconia" trying to get home from Norway, Focke-Wulfs dropped torpedoes, and one hit our bows, and blew that Degaussing cable (anti-magnetic) round the masts, bridges - and my gun. Lucky old Dicky, I was on the after bridge - I had been on the forward bridge going up, and so I got back to Gourock three days later.....

All down the Sinai side were winches; each had three RAF 'types', a tent, a balloon and a bomb. Every few kilometres. A lonely job - not done by very fit men, but B and C categories. We were 16 RE in the camp - a community compared to them, so we welcomed as brothers any who could walk, sail or hitch to the dock, where we regaled them with sugar, tinned food etc. which "fell off wagons". One night, an RAF Erk walked five kilos to us, and on the way back, wild dogs got him - hardly left anything bar buttons and boots - and so we knew we had company. Did you know wild dogs roamed the Sinai ? That left two only on that winch, and their balloon got away in the N.E. void - into Sinai. The RAF wanted that bomb, each blimp had one, like a miner's Davey Lamp, on the cable under the balloon. Just my line - I got two likely lads, water, grub, rifles and ammo and set out S.W. - awful walking country. We found first an old 1917 army dump, sandstorms shift the whole landscape as you know, and there was a wall of old black shells staring at us - and the dogs lived there ! We shot two, and the rest vanished in the hills - we laagered in a wadi, and when they came out (eating their comrades) shot three more. Then on to the mirage, like a silvery line of buildings, which dwindled to a silvery pile of balloon fabric. Found the bomb, back to the Allenby dump we went, and managed to unscrew a handling ring rusted onto a nose of a big 'un. Inside was cordite in strips like thick plastic, so I loaded my pack full. (True suburban me, "might come in handy one day, so keep it.") I bet that dump is there now, under the sand. But the old stuff did come in handy, that's the joke. Half a year or so later, in another desert 1,000 miles on - we got stuck. Six or eight of General Ramcke's 9th. Paras - I'll never know how many - holed up in an Italian-built Post Office. The top two storeys were blown, shelled, like hammocks of reinforced concrete, and they were on floor one. (No room service.) Marble staircase, damaged. And I had this brilliant, totally amateur idea. Got the cordite, into an old 40 gal. drum, packed tight with debris and stuffing. Had to roll that under the stairs, lay an overlapping line back to a wall, and hopefully light it ! Got nicked in the shoulder going in, nicked in the bum going out, trying to emulate a mole. Boom ! - it went beautifully, and all four storeys settled with a big sigh for ever onto the Paras. Old Allenby will never know how his 1917 Palestine junk helped (unless I meet him in Hell.) Well, I got a slug of schnapps from the Major, and a dollop of Acriflavine on my bum, and all was well.....

Now Kantara East had a Court - an Imam and Cadi - and our Chief Foreman got arrested for a double murder (a wife and lover, smeared all over the walls); Now, we didn't want to lose him. If he went, the whole bribery system would collapse, and the labour would fade away. I had to go and pay his fine. No-one in the Court was bothered, and land disputes went on until about 4pm. - in the meantime I had seen the Cadi, paid the fine, (paid him,

too). The Rais (Foreman) came home with me, jaunty as you like, and I went to the fourth wedding soon after.

Also a family funeral, that shook me, a gaudy coffin with paid "shriekers" (women who ululated in mourning), then they tipped the body in the air, and all looked over the edge and sighed with relief as it landed face up. The undertakers are clever - everyone ends up face up - straight to Paradise ! The coffin goes back to the hiring shop. I stress these were Upper Egypt people - from Ombo, Luxor, Shellal - I don't know if this was general practice. Interesting.

Malta Convoy.

Our blokes used to volunteer to travel to Malta on the convoys, as gunners, and to stevedore the ships, a very hazardous trip. I had a fellow gunner, a bloke from Doncaster Loco Works, "Nigger" Lockhart (we were good gunners as a result of the Norway campaign, and in my case, Spain and the Civil War as well.) He was torpedoed and burnt, I dragged him out too late. As a kind of revenge I went on the next Valetta convoy, on a 10-knot 'lucky' ship, "Stanhope", with an R.N., survivor, off a cruiser. Just one day out of Alex, the Dutch tanker alongside was hit and burnt, and I got a very quick snap with my old Brownie as the Dutch flag haled over and down. But we got there and got back, albeit damaged, and my Major told me I was "f-ing mad" and he'd not authorise it again. No, I was lucky.

Port Sudan.

At this point I was 1009 Dock Operating R.E., attached to 182 Rly. Optg. Coy., then attached South African Operating, or attached 115 Indian Rly. Optg. Coy., or attached Camerons, Argylls or anybody at all ! I could volunteer for anything temporarily to do a railway job. On June 16 1941 the "Clan Ranald" berthed at Port Sudan and we found two ROD G.C. 2-8-0's in her hold after taking out jeeps, trucks, tanks and Bren Gun carriers. They went to Egypt. Followed by the "Dilwara" disgorging South African troops - to which I later got myself "attached". Loaded her with prisoners, and next was a Pilgrim job for Medina and Mecca !

(Incidentally - one of the Robinson 2-8-0's was of 1911 build, painted WD 6997, she'd been to the Middle East before in 1917 and then back to the LNER, and then was one of the 92 sold in 1940/1 to the the War Department. Well, much later I went up from Ras el Esh to Port Said on a footplate, a 4-4-2 "Amenhotep", one of the famous ESR Atlantics; Ahead of us had been a train, 'a mile long', of wounded, and yards of bolster wagons and armoured vehicles. When we pulled into Port Said yard (I was going to the driver's home), there was 6997, smokebox door gaping, full of tarry ash, forlorn and tatty. (I snapped her.) Later still, she found her weary way up through P.R. to the Lebanon, and that new line tunnelled up to Beyrouth by Basutos, New Zealanders et al. Now that loco did her bit for Britain !)

Two Typical Days.

To dock 5am., our 0-6-0T 30 shunting bolster wagons to my ship "Velho" (an East African coaster), and the "Hangibby Castle" (hit, and No. 5 hold burnt-out), both from Massawa, bunged full of Italian salvage (had already discharged ancient guns, turreted tin tanks, millions of small arms and ammo and rails (we wanted these). In the deep holds, steel sheet for loco and RASC workshops - heavy, hundreds of tons. The 30-ton bolster wagons were in position by the four derricks, and the crew donkey-man on winches and my four gangs ship and shore. We were on short rations, I was filthy and hungry, and had the usual 'trots', so, all started to discharge, I went below to another red-hot "evacuation", and a call into the revolting Galley (Lascar crew), to get anything at all to eat. A "doorstop" of bread full of weevils, slapped some Indian ghee on it, crammed my mouth, rushed on deck. The bolsters were full, up to the pegs over bogies - at least 60 tons on each, bent up like bows (I even drew a diagram in my diary). Spitting out weevils, I screamed at the four Foremen "Bas, bas, ya ibn et arbaeen sharmosti". A very normal oath, "Stop, stop, you sons of forty thousand harlots". They stopped singing, stopped work, and about 70 men roared with glee. One foreman said "Tyeb, tyeb, ya zar zuft" - which was a real colloquialism, it means "Good, good, you are like bitumen". An insult - "You are lower than a man's feet". Unloaded half to the wharf, left about 32 tons on each bolster, altered it all to free the buffers and couplings, and woke up No. 30's crew from under the bunker. Along came Mikado 2-8-2 181, shoving more bolsters, derailed them on our steel. Then a bloody Eyetie prisoner ignited a mountain of scrim netting (camouflage), and that had to be beaten out. Worked until 10pm. (17 hours), it was no good going out to Abu Sultan camp, they had no grub either, so got some curry on "Hangibby Castle" (more trots). Decided to kip in the warehouse. Woke at 4.30 am. Fire broke out again, and 159 was already shoving wagons in for me. I'd had it. Flopped on some sacks of rice, heaving with weevils, wrote the diary, and a scruffy Airgraph to my Amy ("Clapham, London, England". Dawn just coming up, pearly pink, Red Sea sky, rainbow surf over the coral reefs beyond Coal Wharves, aircraft carrier and submarine coming round the headland into Wingate Bay, followed by her 'chickens', another battered convoy, with pelicans and ibis flapping around. Blissful sights. Just yet another day, wouldn't have missed it, really. Can't stress enough, the luck I had, to be in the right place at the right time.....

Egyptian State Railways.

We had plenty of dealings with them. I knew about the famous 4-4-2 "King" class as a teenager, and was delighted to ride on them - never dreamed I would. ESR had carried out a complete renumbering scheme in 1925/6, and really confused the system, the 4-4-2's came out as 1 - 80, a few were rebuilt as 4-6-0 but were not a success, it made too long a rigid wheelbase, and they were gobblers of fuel. But such beautiful, elegant locos, as Atlantics worldwide often are. But the builders - Nos. 1 - 5 by Berliner Maschinenbau 1913, Nos. 6-25 by Baldwin (Philadelphia) 1920, Nos. 26-60 by N.B. Loco, Glasgow 1925, Nos. 61 - 75 by Linke Hoffman, Breslau, 1926, Nos. 76 - 80 by Schneider of Creusot, France. Beat that for diversity ! Lack of adhesion prompted experiments with six-coupling - and with long splashers, smoke deflectors, double windowed cabs, and a chimney band,

they suited my "GWR eye" ! Long nameplates in Arabic and English then appeared, and some names they were. 66 and 67 were first, and 67 "Mohamed Ali El Kabir" took my eye very early indeed, in fact 8th. April 1941, shortly after leaving "Orion" at Port Tewfik (having been a gunner in her for eight weeks.) Another King, "Seti II" took me from Tewfik - overtaken at Zagazig by 67, we lay side by side, and I hopped off down with her driver who was devotedly oiling around. A Benha man, it was his engine, his name in the cab - we made contact in French and English. Zagazig incidentally was another place like Bittir on PR (and IR) - always vandalised, rock slinging etc. Perhaps the same ethnic hooligan tribe ? Port Said had 9 and 70, all the while I was at Kilo 40, and 56 "King Fuad I" was at Ismailia and No. 29 was "Prince Farouk", 60 "Ibrahim Pasha", and 80 finally "Khedive Ismail". At Cairo, Alex and points south and west I think I saw them all.

Some of the old Nasmyth Wilson double-framed 0-6-0's of 1891 were still extant. 787 trundled freight Kasfareet - Kantara - Port Said, very often double-heading one of the Borsig 2-6-0's, usually 552. Even to me, a savour of the old days. One batch of 4-4-2 tanks were rebuilt as tender 4-4-0's (565-574) and at the same time in the 1920's some 2-6-2T's converted to 2-6-0 mixed-traffic. As 2-6-0's I had runs coming up from Shellal and Aswan, through Luxor, Komombo etc. (where all the tourists now go).

In the 1914 war a ship "Achaia" was captured with four 2-6-0 engines, new, from Hannoversche M.A., Germany [Hanomag], bound for the Baghdad Railway in 1915. Colared by the British, they were 'awarded' to E.S.R. At least one, No. 102, was donking around on Shellal freights in 1941, her wheel base screamed and screeched alarmingly. I have a snap - and is she German !

[See 45:17 - was this loco from the same batch as Bagdad Bahn 623-625 ? Ed.]

There was an old 2-4-0 knocking about as Benha Pilot (No. 54) - an odd number, too - I thought she was a Nasmyth-Wilson. The 4-6-0's built for Assuan - Luxor were gone, but the N.B. Loco's 2-6-2 side tanks seemed very modern; 5' 03/4" drivers, they had a Tractive Effort of 22,640 lbs., and Ross Pop safety valves, Walschaerts gear, oh swish ! On all kinds of passenger duties, they reminded me of the dear old 55XX Prairies of my GWR, Bristol Division. And how about the Cairo Bab-el-Luq to Helwan suburban line eh ? - nobody seems to bother about the Steam Railcars from the word Go, Clayton (of Lincoln) sets from 1920, also Birmingham Carriage & Wagon Co. sets of 1926, a little better, and the streamlined Sentinel-Cammell 2- and 3-car sets - all steam. I used to go out to El Maadi and run about on them. It was a nightmare for them to get out of Bab-el-Luq terminus. Cairo had ungated level crossings, manned by two sweating Ghaffirs, in blue robes. Millions of felaheen, mules, camels, gharries and handcarts, you never saw a Railcar pass without nudging one or two animals aside. Then there was the 2'6" gauge Western Oasis Railway, with Bagnall 2-8-2's, and Delta and Fayoum Light Railways - these employed Krauss 2-4-0T's, even Fowler 2-4-0T's of 1872 ! Real rarities, lucky old me, I got out to Barrage several times and sampled them.

Migration:

In those days, the desert Arabs migrated across Sinai once a year, en masse, and it took four days to get them across via the old Transporter and ferry at Kantara, as they had thousands of camels and no priority of crossing. (I suppose they're all in Porsches or BMW's now.) There was a huge Customs shed there, and amid the complete chaos of Beduins and camels, a bit of bribery and polite fiddling went on. I went down after a call one day. Egyptian officers were holding a camel, and one punching it up under the stomach. "Heena, esma", he said, and I put my earhole to its belly as he hit it, and heard a clunking noise. The bloke holding the nostrils put his hammer pistol to its head and killed the beast; they slit open the gut, and out poured dozens of little circular canisters about 4 inches by 1 inch. God, that camel must have had an ache, plodding across Sinai. They were of course full of pure hashish - these were in fact Kodak and Ilford film canisters - when exported to hot climates they were sealed in soft metal tubes. The owner sat calmly (Insh'allah, ma lash). It was a wonderful sight, a whole tribe on the move, very rare. Walking all the way then.

A Birth.

During a short leave in Jerusalem in '42 (staying in the Wall by Damascus Gate) I and another ex-GWR bloke used to walk round that 1914-18 cemetery, and on behind the old University and behind and above the Garden of Gethsemane and the Church of All Nations, out on the Bethlehem road, etc. Then it was real agricultural land between the University and the Garden of Gethsemane, and a whole row of women were hoeing - those big half-circular hoes with a foot-long handle, back-breaking work. Joe and I leaned over the wall, high above, and marvelled. Then one woman, very pregnant, came over to the wall, followed by another, to the ditch below us (longish coarse grass and weeds) and proceeded to have her child, below where we were. All over; the older woman called up to us, to my utter amazement, "Andak sekhina ?" Of course we had a jackknife, we were Royal Engineers after all ! - Well, you can guess what she wanted that for. I let it down on my lanyard. My head was spinning - thought of the days of long ago, and a stable, and here we were, nothing had changed.

It was the same feeling I got when I stayed three nights at the old monastery at Capernaum, where the 10th. Legion did its training in Roman times and then marched across Europe and conquered Britain. And the monk who told me of it all had been to Buckfast Abbey in Devon - where I got my crucifix which I showed him in my Army tunic ! History was there, with me.

I was then due to go to Haifa OCTU (Officer Cadet Training Unit) but persuaded Major Diamond to let me off, and had my civilian pay made up by my dear old GWR and would rather be free to volunteer on railway jobs, as ever.

Sudan.

My favourites here were the 2-8-2 Mikadoes (150-168) built for SR by Robert Stephenson at Darlington, and I have a shot of No. 160 (new) photographed ex-Works. I liked these,

cabs like the proverbial drawing rooms and with the spectacles for the crew - with narrow doors opening flat against the firebox, letting in a breeze (and sand), a really thoughtful addition. They had Weir feed pumps and even a filtrator water softener on the boiler bands. I've seen three of these on one ex-Kassala Mail, due in 8pm. Fridays at Port Sudan (No. 19), with 24 bogies and 7 or 8 Sulbs (covered vans), with 1,200 passengers. On time, too.

I bumped up the Coastal Plain with the Super, Johnny Hogg, on a Drewry railcar in 1941, and as we entered the hills, there was a beautifully-built stone culvert, it ran diagonally away from the line, disappearing in sand. This was No-Man's Land, near Erba. To my query, he explained that in November it would rain, and the water cascaded off the iron-stone hills just there, and would be turned by the culvert away from the line. "£12,000 we spent on it, solid masonry." Well, at a Piastre an hour, yes, they'd get it done - Then ! By November, I'd been to Eritrea and Ethiopia, had malaria, been wounded and was back ("Lucky Dicky"). It rained - eleven inches. Only the bloody water didn't run that way at all ! We had the weekly Kassala due that day, Friday, and there she was, stuck behind an eight-mile wash-out. First time I'd seen track rolled up like a spiral spring. They rounded up every camel for miles for the cotton bales, gum-arabic slabs, mail and the thousand or so passengers limped and crawled eight miles to another Garratt-headed train sent out from Port Sudan. Happy Days !

The banker and pilot engines out of Asoteriba sometimes used cotton seed for fuel (I klid you not), and it made billows of chocolate smoke across the Nubian desert as it turned to red-hot ashes instantly. We had a launch - the 'Mayfly' - also burnt cotton seed, and choked us as we crossed Wingate Bay to work. Had you seen the sort of coal we got there, you'd see why we burned cotton seed and bits of wood, too.

We had, then	23 4-6-0's	Nos. 69-77, 79-81, 84, 86-95.
	32 4-6-2's	120-134, 220-235.
	29 2-8-2's	150-168, 180-189.
	13 2-6-2's	200-212.
	10 Garratt 4-6-4+4-6-4's	250-259.
	6 4-4-0's	1 - 6.
	6 0-6-0T's	7 - 12.
	3 old 0-6-0's	013-015.
	6 0-6-2T's	21 - 26.
	1 0-6-0T	No. 30 (ours).
	4 2-6-4T's	31-34.
and	3 Diesels	400-402 (all at the Docks),
and	1 Sentinel 4wVBT 54.	

Also five old 4-6-0's out Sennar way, Nos. 16-20. Then, of course, we got six SAR 'B' 4-6-0's as a loan/gift from Durban, Nos. 468, 473, 538, 542 and 572, and another which was whipped off to Atbara, and welcome they were! They were literally lit up, steamed, and

shunting rafts of empties into the berths before recovering from sea sickness ! And what an escort they had, Aircraft Carrier "Indomitable", six Aussie destroyers, a sloop R.N. "Bullfinch" from the East - they looked after that convoy, eh ?

Mostly, the SR locos were NBL built, a few Stephensons, the tank locos of course from Hunslet of Leeds, brought out on the 'Belpareil'.

Pilgrim traffic:

We used two ships, the "Taif" and "Talodi" - Egyptian passenger/cargo vessels - green, lined, with the old Islamic sickle moon on the funnel. Fortunately we had a hastily-commissioned "Captain" from that famous M.E. Stevedoring Company - Gellatly Hankey - they ran all the ship/shore work from Aden to the Gulf and India. He was Anglo-French, and spoke dialect and language in the Red Sea. How we ever sorted out that vast crowd of Moslems, Allah only knows - wartime, shortage of ships and food, but they still all wanted to be "Hadji". Every alley, deck, hold, winch and companionway was full, engine room and all. Plenty died, both on ship and shore, but we shuttled them in and across to 'heaven' - in spite of fleas, bugs, malaria and every other fever. A Garratt 4-6-4+4-6-4 rolled in with a freight from West Sudan and had more pilgrims on the roof, drawbars, bufferbeams and in the odd "hadid" (open wagon) than did the passenger services. I wouldn't have missed it for the Pools-winning fortune.

When the Pilgrims were in full flood, our Garratts moved colossal loads, once over the Red Sea Hills from Erba - Asoteriba - Port Sudan was a level doddle. But up over Gebeit and Summit, to Haiya (Junction for Kassala) we used two bankers, mainly the Mikadoes, or "Khr" 4-6-0's, at times there were daily-plus trains of 600-plus Prisoners of War. We used the 'Taif' and 'Talodi' to Joppa but pressed into service a few British-India ships like 'Jehangir', and even 'Jalakrishna' - a freighter (in the service of good will to Moslems). When I say "B. I. Freighter", have you any idea of them, then ? She had to be de-bugged first. The crew used the Jalpeak, metal tubed bunks in tiers of hollow tubes. I watched, fascinated, as we berthed her at the Gun Wharf and the crew used blow-lamps, moving them along the tubes, until a brown cascade of bugs poured out of the bulkhead ends into buckets of boiling salty water. Millions ! Then sealed up, gas in for the reduction of rats. A busy day. Next day, the pilgrims' train rolled in, at 11.30, No. 5 Berth then (civilized) - next to an aircraft carrier. 19 bogies, plus 3 Sulbs, oldest stock of course and Garratt 258. Over 1,000 decanted into "Jehangir" that day - lucky old sods not to get "Jalakrishna".

Once, two Pacifics brought in a Prisoner train from Shendi, 1400 men on, we used the Polish "Sobielski" (too good for the beggars), the "Dunera" and a very fast "Prince Baudouin" - she would do 33 knots, had worked on the Dover-Ostend run and used to belt down to Kilindini and back in no time. I went on her once, we had a stropky bunch of Alpini and Bersaglieri types, (Italian POWs), needed calming down. That's when I got my other camera and film ! I loved it all, actually.

While in Sudan - I identified a bottleneck at Kamob Sanha - when on control - a very populous village with a passing loop of course - rather shorter than others. I tentatively put this forward (me - just a humble soldier), and they lengthened the loop by almost a quarter-mile, with Colonial Office permission. So I left a little mark on the Empire !

Eritrea.

Then, the 'Dinosaur Line' Agordat - Asmara - Massawa, 1'111/2" gauge, a difficult line to quantify, as it was blown, burnt - as was Eritrea. Articulated tanks (some 0-4-0) and some 0-4-4-0T and even 0-4-4-2T rebuilt. The larger ones were Ansaldo built, and originally numbered 440-01 - 100. The top end Agordat - Biscia was never a passenger line really, very much a Decauville track, the smaller tanks took open wagon freights, I did get a run on a purloined "Littorina" railcar - I have snaps where they are above the clouds. Truly. Yet we found a glass-lined four-wheel milk tank (in 1941 - almost as soon we had them here).

Further yet (the line never reached here) was Tessenei. This place had water, and when we went through it was dynamited over, with a pipe and pump, to stop the Eyeties who sometimes slung a corpse into water supplies - a mule, camel or even an ostrich ! Jerry never did this (Geneva Rules.) So when we did get there, there was a queue. Thousands of prisoners, Scotties, British, Indians, and local tribal people. We were exhausted, broke down in the scrub and had trouble with baboons (and scorpions) over two days, my mate's lips were cracked and his tongue swollen. We waited 111/2 hours for water, rigidly controlled by the Argylls - who would "give it" to you with a rifle butt if you broke ranks. Some died anyway - but discipline held, a panic wouldn't have helped.

Had an adventure at Nefassit, where we found eleven tank locos in a curved siding under the mountain. Shot up, rusty, forlorn (but still some orange coloured water in the tanks.) We were seventeen mixed blokes ex-hospital, all very shaky, RE, RAOC, Punjabi, Argyll, Cameron, Ghurka, and one RASC. (But armed.) A mob of Alpini troops hadn't surrendered, and as I was "sort of" i/c [in command. Ed.] I decided to hole up in the cabs of the derelict locos. I liked the smell, oil and rust and steel, it sort of comforted me ! So we shot the beggars in the legs as they descended the rocks, they carried off the halt and lame, and we did get to Asmara - all 17 of us. The Cameron Major was chuffed, and put me in for an award - but after all, that doesn't pay the mortgage, does it?

They had a cableway also from Massawa to Asmara, carried a lot of freight - you could only put six wagons on one loco from the port. Ruling gradient was 1 in 28 ! So the cableway was necessary. And so were brakes, on the way down it was "runaway line" unless you were cautious. Railcars were best really, even Asmara is 7,700 feet above sea level. They never did finish the line to Tessenei. But I got malaria - nearly finished me.

Steamer Trip.

I was the only bloke to get the luck to take the three-week river run down from Khartoum (Mogren Quays) to Geniena and the Uganda border through the Sudd Swamps on Sudan

Railway steamers - I have photos of course - also of a strange bird in the swamps like a stork, with a huge shovel beak. Years later, in 1976, Attenborough had a BBC feature about the "rare shoe-bill", never been photographed - yes, you guessed it, the same as my 1941 snap ! It was all luck, I happened to be down to 6 stones weight, due to fever and long hours, and 'Super' Johnny Hogg treated me to a "break".

Op. Had a (forgettable) journey to Gobat tented hospital for an operation, woke up on a pallet with a Ceylon bloke, both bleeding like stuck pigs, and covered with flies. Horrible, that, when you're too weak to flap 'em off. Jacob Rasandyagan - we became friends. Years later, 1949, I rolled with Amy into Colombo harbour aboard "Strathmore", it was "handing over day" from the Empire; we went to see Jacob. A week's carnival, elephants, Bengal Lancers, fireworks, trains were covered in garlands; Amy in a cool hotel on the waterfront, ships fully dressed - even the Russians. I was rolling down the Kandy 5' 6" line on a Nanu-aya 4-6-0 with a Tamil driver !

General.

There's a whole book in my diaries, things I had forgotten, like being on leave in Cairo when King Farouk and Queen Farida were hustled out of the Abdin Palace to the Yacht at Lake Timsah, as he was 'ready to treat' with Jerry when they came. Everyone, EVERY-ONE was hustled out of barracks, leave homes, bunks and hospitals to line the streets to Cairo Main Station, though we hadn't a clue about it politically.... until afterwards. Don't know whether this is all relevant, but I suddenly realise at 81 that my life, because of railways, has been bound up with History.

Awaiting DeMob in Scotland.

In 1945/6 I was in Shandon Castle in the Highlands, awaiting release to 'Civvy Street'. Nominally Post Sergeant (from 4.30am to 11am) but in reality working with the West Highland on the most scenic line in the UK, Glasgow - Fort William - Mallaig ! Nights with single-line signalmen at Helensburgh, double-line men at Cardross, in snow and sun, I hardly slept in those days, walked from the boxes at 4am to the mail centre, and on duty !

Australian Life.

Working in Queensland in 1952 (Coronation year) I rushed a train at South Brisbane - two trains in, one on the move, and I leapt in. Wrong train ! The little PB15 4-6-0 (built 1893) built up speed as it was a Commuter train to Outer Regions - first stop Cannon Hill, where were the huge stockyards and abbatoirs in the bush. Roared past Morningside - my station - at a good 50mph, no chance to jump. I got out at the Stockyards, thousands of bellowing cattle and sheep, and a long way home, trains were very scarce here. Straightaway, a huge C17 2-8-0 (built by QR in 1927) hooted and lumbered out of the yard, with a raft of at least 50 double-decker stock cars. An arm came out of the cab and a grinning face - none other than a cousin's husband, of Mayne sheds, an all-night empties to Wallangarra (on the NSW/Queensland border). Good old Cyril, 20 mph. at Morningside and I dropped off to Amy, none the worse. You see what I mean - luck !"

[Bert is, one might say, a "character", and he informs me that until now he has rarely gone through his diaries or told his remarkable memoirs to anyone - which is why I am including here a few items which are not strictly speaking "Middle East Railways". Ed.]

See the back cover:

47:13. CEL Polish-built tank wagons (constructed 1983/4), apparently never used, rust away at Tripoli, Lebanon, in Sept. 1996. (Photo: Andy Wilson).

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