

# HARAKEVET

הרכבת

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Editorial Address: 9, Primley Gardens, Leeds, LS17 7HT. U.K.  
tel. 0532 - 693330.

Welcome to Issue No. 5. As a result of some publicity the number of requests for information and copies of No. 4 overwhelmed me for a little while - indeed, if anyone somehow missed out on 4, please let me know. The intention is now to go "quarterly" - September, December, March and June. No promises!

There is a lot of "good stuff" in this issue. I am pleased to be able to include three articles by Paul Cotterell - one relating Ray Tustin's experiences in the Second World War, one updating his book, a third seeking more information - thus justifying this newsletter's function and existence; Hugh Hughes has sent two offerings from New Zealand - one telling of his own journeyings, the other clarifying some historical background to the abortive Acre-Damascus scheme, following on from my notes and queries in 4:5(a); Uri Ben-Rehav has been researching the narrow-gauge during the First World War, and has come up with some fascinating material on the incredible difficulties faced and (largely) overcome by the engineers of the time. Incidentally, one cannot help thinking, on reading his articles, how history might have changed had the standard-gauge lines through Turkey been opened and available a year or so sooner; the whole balance of power would perhaps have shifted. The activities of T.E.Lawrence are also put in a better perspective. (Incidentally, a Mr. Moore, one of Lawrence's companions in the Hedjaz campaign, died near Leeds in July, just before I could interview him). The account of the German Air Force pilots using their own trolley to go swimming reminds me of the sail-powered trolley used on the Spurn Point railway near Hull - and I can't help wondering whether someone remembered the idea when the "Flying Zeppelin" experimental propellor-driven railcar was developed in Germany. There are some further excerpts from my own researches, and an account of life in Kishon in the '40's.

Many thanks to all who have sent in material - I now have enough for another issue, once I have processed it I Please don't worry about language - I can "edit" articles if required. After writing the first three issues almost single-handed, it's nice that readers are now sending in material to share with others. I can only crave your patience.

1. Some snippets of Current News from the Line:

a). The new Bo-Bo No.T44 (see 2:10) has had a difficult introduction to service. Apart from a few trial trips, it stood idle until June (being fitted with Indusi train control mechanism), then on 6/6/89 entered "regular" service on trains 25, 28/415, 416/35 & 56. It was characterised by good acceleration, and "an air of being master of its job" - though the air horn has "a most unmelodious beep". It worked once more week later, then broke down on train 34 between Herzliyya and Shefayim. Some four weeks later it failed again, between Hof Carmel and Bat Galim with train 38, causing a 90-minute hold-up. The failure was serious - as electrical fault and a burn-out in the traction motors. After repairs it made a trial run to Tel Aviv, coupled to a G12 in case, and with the Kalmar engineer in attendance. On 24/8, whilst double-heading a G12 on freight 329 to Lod, it broke down again on the hill between Binyamina and Hadera West and was dumped at Hadera while the G12 took the 1650 tons on alone.

b). The railways system was paralysed by a strike between 12th and 23rd. August; the strike ended only when the Minister of Transport promised to intervene.....

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## 2. Activities of the German Railway Operating Groups on the Hedjaz Railway in World War I.

(By Uri Ben-Rehav, of P.O.Box 642, Bat-Yam, Israel).

"During World War I it was not only the "Allies" who used Railway Operating Groups in Palestine. (Note: On 20/5/1918 a British unit started construction, of a 30 km. line between Jerusalem and El - Biria. Under the command of Lt.-Colonel Jordan Bell, this line was finished on 31/7/1918). The "other side" also used such units - not in the building of new lines but rather helping with technical assistance, the running of lines, administration and eventually, as defeat approached, in destroying as much as possible in order to prevent it falling into British hands. (See the report of Major D.G.Heslop in "Railway Magazine", April 1934, p.442).

At the beginning of hostilities on the Hedjaz Railway all station and train personnel were native Arabs and Turks. The official language was Turkish; only a handful of clerks in the higher positions knew some French. Both armies involved, the Turkish and German (also Austro-Hungarian) had extreme difficulties of communication with each other - incidents frequently ending in fights and brawls. It took a very long time for the partners to come to a kind of mutual understanding, both in language and in mentality, but then a new situation developed: By winter 1917/1918 a crisis approached as the numbers of station and train personnel decreased alarmingly, due to death, sickness but - primarily - desertion. Partly in order to fill the vacancies, partly to improve security, two German units were ordered to serve on the Hedjaz Railway. These units consisted of E.B.S.K. No. 11 (i.e.Eisenbahnbetriebs und Schutzkompanie : Railway Operation and Protection Company), under command of Captain Borck, and E.B.S.K. 44/48, under Captain Pösentrup. These two German Army units, unlike their Allied counterparts, were made up purely of professional railway personnel of all trades and categories; the technical equipment was of an excellent standard.

In coordination with the Turkish authorities E.B.S.K. 11 took over the line Samakh - Afule - Tulkarm; the arrangement was that all workshops and maintenance facilities came under its control and command, and all Station-Masters were staffed by this unit; the Turkish personnel became responsible only for shunting and lower jobs. Each Turkish engine-driver and fireman had a German counterpart, and was under his direct command. This 'modus vivendi' was not easy on either side, but a war was on. In September 1918, when the Front collapsed, the Turks mostly deserted and the Germans were left to run things alone; however they managed to save and bring to safety many wounded soldiers and much technical equipment, blowing up and destroying the rest.

The second unit, E.B.S.K. 44/48 under Captain Pösentrup, saw action in an entirely different way; on each railway station between Aleppo and Amman some of its officers or men functioned as liaison officers between the Turkish authorities and the German/Austro-Hungarian Army; nevertheless the overall responsibility remained in the first stage with the Turks. The German unit helped to streamline the daily running of trains, at the same time also giving a helping hand in all technical fields; in most cases the Turks lacked even a basic know-how. As an example, the Germans constructed and kept efficiently-working telephone and telegraph networks. In early October 1918, when the collapse of the Front came nearer, the majority of the native personnel deserted and the Germans were left to run the H.R. single-handed; as each station and installation was threatened, and likely to fall into British hands, it was their responsibility to destroy it; this they did completely.

With the total collapse of the Front and the resulting termination of hostilities these two units suffered the same fate of all military units on the losing side: they simply dissolved as though never existing; only the personal memories remained to be awakened by a researching historian."

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This material was based on: R.Diekmann: "Die Hedjazbahn und die Syrischen Privatbahnen im Weltkrieg und ihre gegenwertige Lage", in: "Zwischen Kaukasus und Sinai, Jahrbuch des Bundes der Asienkmpfer, Bd.2, Berlin, 1922.

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### 3. TUSTIN IN PALESTINE by Paul Cotterell.

As I write this, Israel Railway has been on strike for ten days (more trouble with the takeover by the Ports Authority, so I've had time on my hands. Reluctantly - very reluctantly - I decided to finally get around to sorting out all the stuff that has been stashed away haphazardly over the years. I'm rather glad that I did (in retrospect anyway), otherwise some interesting items would have remained in the dark, such as these notes from the late Ray Tustin of Leicester. The name R E Tustin appeared below many fine photos in numerous publications, and several of his Palestine Railways shots considerably enhanced my own book. The following extracts are from two letters which Ray wrote to me in March and April 1980, when I was collating information. I am no longer able to ask his permission to reproduce them here, but hope (and feel sure) he would not object.

I shall quote Ray verbatim as far as possible so that his dry wit may come across. I queried some of his recollections along the way, and now deal with these queries in footnotes.

"I was in the Sappers and was originally sent to their base at Ismalia in Egypt. Then on 25 Sept 1944 I was posted to Jerusalem and travelled on a troop train alleged to leave Ismalia at 7.30 p.m. but, in fact, was very much later. The engine was ESR 852 ex-LMS 2-8-0, and the train comprised 20 USA ridged roof bogie vans with a PR 3rd/Brake at each end. These were marshalled with the van portion at the inner ends and when we had backed into the PR station at El Qantara, and the engine changed for a WD engine 9359 (ex-WD 515), we drew forward to alongside the shed and 0-6-0ST 26 spent a while changing the PR 3rd/Brakes from end to end in order to get the vans at the outer ends! I concluded from this first acquaintance that the Palestine Rlys were more fussy than the ESR who had, incidentally, run the train across the Delta without the vacuum brake as 852 hadn't got hoses at the tender end!

"We had, of course, fed at Qantara, and I should mention that 9359 brought a water tank with her for her journey across the Sinai.

"At Gaza we had a long wait to pass 9120 Lima 2-8-2 (later 71120) on a southbound train and our engine detached the water tank wagon and filled up with water and mazout in the interval. I particularly noticed my first Baldwin 4-6-0 No. 906 which had obviously just been repainted in black livery with the large primrose numerals which were just being introduced on the PR engines. (I was told later that these huge numbers were to easily identify an engine to officialdom if an engine was spotted being fired incorrectly and making too much smoke). My destination was the transit camp at Haifa but I was soon off again for Jerusalem on the 28th.

"The 6.30 a.m. to Lydda had 907 on 5 coaches and we stopped everywhere. I noticed particularly the PR signalling with a single post in each direction in the position where we would normally put a distant. This carried two stop arms, the upper of full length to indicate whether the train was to take the straight run through and the lower, of slightly shorter length, to indicate a run into the loop. These were connected to the point lever at the entrance to the loop and a flagman stood there to show us either a flag by day or a lamp by night. Well out beyond the signals was a whistle board with a large black W on a white ground, the whole about 2' 6" square. (Telling you this may be 'old hat' to you, but things change and it is worth setting down, as this simple form of block post was news to me and has probably now been changed anyway. I never did manage to get a picture of one of the 2-arm signals).

"No. 11 4-6-2T, painted green with the large numerals, took us on to Jerusalem. I also saw 4-6-4T 17 in maroon and 8 and 9 black, all with the large numerals. It would seem that they were trying various colours for a

new livery at this time. I am glad that they settled on black, for it looked extremely smart and was always spotless.

"Whilst at Jerusalem I often saw the afternoon short working to Bittir which always had a Baldwin engine, either 4-6-0 or one of the tanks and three vehicles, an elderly bogie coach and one of the Sentinel railcar twin sets behind. (Not, I regret, the GIP vehicle you referred to in your letter!) All coaches were painted brown, and on the return journey the train was propelled up the grade back to Jerusalem. (About a year later this train omitted to stop at Bittir through the fireman emitting to couple the brake hoses at Jerusalem and No. 8 went down into a wadi which dented things somewhat. I saw her under repair at Qishon on 10 Sept 1945).

"It was not long before I moved off again to Cyprus and then Egypt - both journeys by air unfortunately. Then on 25 June 1945; I was off again on a train of 15 ESR vehicles from Cairo Main behind ESR 850. The train was made up of sleeping cars in the centre with 1st, 2nd and 3rd class vehicles working both ways and a bogie van at each end. There was the usual free meal after we had backed into El Qantara and 850 was exchanged for a Lima 2-8-2 71147. (Rather strangely these engines had no headlight but carried normal British express passenger headlamps). This was a memorable journey on a brilliant moonlight night, with the old (sic!) Lima chuffling along on the sand covered track which deadened the running but made up for it with much use of her moose whistle through many walkers on the track - even at this hour!

"882 and 900 were at Gaza - the latter with the new large numerals - whilst 45 and 47 were at Lydda (the latter with large numerals). 871, 873, 11, 12, 813 and 63 were also seen, all having the large figures, the latter being on the ex-Haifa train which passed us here. We passed HR 154 at Tulkarm, also newly painted with large numerals and spotless. I also noted that mixed gauge went up the Nablus branch as far as I could see." (This was laid for 5 kms to the Nur esh Shams stone quarry - P.C.)

"70736 (LE 6217) took me on from Haifa on the HBT; the rest of the train comprising a steel van built at Howrah, India, with bogies from the South China Ironworks, Hong Kong, then two ex-GIP bogie opens but with lengthwise seating which could drop to form beds - no corridor connections, painted cream, lettered HBT and built by Cammell Laird at Nottingham in 1923 (traces of an original crimson lake paint showed through underneath). There followed an ESR wood bodied second, another ex-GIP vehicle and another Howrah steel van at the rear. Of engines seen here PR 29 and HR 12 were in the new livery and PR 50, 907 and HR 16 and 120 in the old." (See footnote 1). "We left punctually at 2 p.m. on mixed gauge to the junction with the Acre branch where the splitting signals had an N on the arm relating to the branch, although why such care was necessary at a point where the trains of the differing gauges couldn't go anywhere but down their correct gauge mystified me! A whole batch of Whitcomb diesels was out of use at Ez Zib - 71228/37/51, 71542/55/75/91/92/94. We passed 04s 70705 and 70739 en route". (See footnote 2).

"I was back at Haifa on leave in September 1945 and visited Qishon Works on the 9th and saw a whole lot of stock. (Engines in the new livery with large numerals are marked thus \*.) 1\*, 4, 14\*, 15, 8 (under repair). 872, 887, 876, 913, 903\*, 884, 911, 898, 46, 61, 70308 and 70397. Hedjaz (stored): 39, 100, 103 and 108, RC's 11 and 12.(For repairs): 77, 153, 155, 163, 164, 120, 10 and 19 (the latter being fitted with the tender off 163. While we were there Jung 2-8-0 122 brought in La Meuse 0-10-0T 2435\* to have its tender chanted for that off 2432. At the station and shed on the same day were 916, 917, 865, 891, 40\*, 42, 48\*, 63\*, 70586, 70541, 70391,

70388, 70596, 70410, 70572 and also USA 71121 and 71178. Hedjaz 154\* (on the Acre train), 254\*, 256, 257\*, 122, 156\*, 2-6-2T 2421, 16 with a flat wagon with a large steel cistern thereon for extra water, and 12\* with the 4 wheel tender off 164.

"... I was suddenly recalled to UK from Tripoli (Lebanon) in December 1945 and moved off on the 20th by the morning train from Beirut to Haifa: 70778 (LNE 6312), one GIP coach, one ESR 1st/2nd (built Linke Hoffman), four USA box vans and a steel van at the rear. We made the usual punctual HBT running but, most unfortunately, knocked down and ran over a Lebanese peasant woman walking along the track near Tyre. Continuous whistling and hard braking couldn't avoid hitting her. She was undoubtedly stone deaf but was killed instantly. Much strengthening and other engineering work was going on in the tunnels near Ez Zib and there were several telescoped GIP vehicles stored there and locos 70736 and 71195."

"At Haifa were PR 29\*, 43, 50, 63\*, 884\*, 919\*, 70287 (see footnote 3), 70397, 70596 and 70521. My train, due out at 2 p.m., didn't leave until 4.45 owing to the late arrival of the Cairo train of which it was the return working. This, at least, enabled me to photograph (surreptitiously!) HR 164\* on the afternoon Samakh train and 257\*, 156\*, 12, 19\* and 120 were also seen. The train comprised twelve ESR 3rds with an unknown LMS 2-8-0 to Qantara. My last view of a Palestine engine was of 893 which we passed on a loop somewhere in the Sinai in the middle of the night, blowing off furiously and bursting with energy to take a heavy freight northwards.

"I am, and always have been, an enthusiastic Gauge '0' model builder with a leaning to the LSWR. After my Middle East adventures I seriously thought of building a line in the garden based on the Palestine and Hedjaz Railways with the engines in the new colours and displaying much highly polished brassware. Such a mixed gauge line appealed to me immensely and I gave it serious thought but eventually I expanded my Southern interests and it didn't proceed. I think the thing that rather bothered me was the need to have detailed research into every piece of rolling stock as drawings seemed quite unobtainable at the time. The unrest in Palestine just after the war rather precluded worrying the folks at Qishon, but I still feel that it would have made a very interesting and unique model railway.

"... A point I forgot to mention earlier related to goods brake vans. On 23/9/45 I noted two 'done out in the new style with large numerals'. These were 4808 and 4825, and looked like old Great Central vans. Stupidly I didn't record the colour and can't now recollect it at all! I remember, though, that many goods trains had SR standard 'pill box' vans still with the large external sand boxes hereon. If only I had more film! I would have taken pictures of all these!

"Footplate trips were the rule in Egypt and one or two in Lebanon too, but not in Palestine. Probably the most exciting day was a ride on an ESR 2-6-0 all the way from Cairo to Suez and back one summer's day in 1945. Towards the end of this trip I was so thirsty that I resorted to drinking water out of the tender!

"But I enjoyed it all, sometimes rough though it was. In the main I got nothing but kindness and understanding from the railwaymen I talked to, no matter where I was, the only exception being from a French shedmaster at Tripoli who was singularly uncooperative - fortunately I had already taken a few surreptitious pictures before I walked into his office to ask for permission which wasn't given!"

#### Footnotes:

1. I assume that what Ray meant when he referred to "the new livery" in

this, and other subsequent passages, was the introduction of large numerals on the engines. Other than the very few PR locos mentioned in thin account and my book as being painted green or maroon, the engine livery was black.

2. So far as known WD 70739 did not work in Palestine.

3. I know of no WD 70767, presumably this should be 70387.

When I queried Ray on these two locos he replied: "I may be mistaken ... for most locos were observed from moving trains and although they didn't move fast on PR in those days the small figures of five-figure numbers were often difficult to pick up. I hoped to check with other ME information but details of WD engines seem conspicuous by their absence."

#### 4. Glossary.

In issue 3:1 I inserted a brief Glossary, asking for comments. Several readers were kind enough to point out how quaint some of these words were! So - here are some additions and amendments. As always, beware of the fact that dictionaries rarely reflect working slang. Thanks to Paul, Alon and others:

(P.S.Two appeared in 4:4).

חולון	: "Chugon".	: Bogie.
חלון	: "Chalon".	: Window.
אדום	: "Adom".	: Red.
ירוק	: "Yarok".	: Green.
תחנה	: "Tachanah".	: Station.
תחנת-הרכבת	: "Tachanat HaRakevet".	: Railway Station.
דגל	: "Degel".	: Flag.
קרונאי	: "Kronit".	: Trolley.
גשר	: "Gesher".	: Bridge.
מנהרה	: "Minharah".	: Tunnel.
בתי-מלאכה	: "Batey-Melachah".	: Workshops, Works Buildings.
פחם	: "Pecham".	: Coal.
סיבוב	: "Sivoov".	: Curve.
מבקר	: "Mevaker".	: Conductor.
תא	: "Ta".	: Cab.
מחסום	: "Machsom".	: Level-Crossing.
מפלג	: "Miflag".	: Point.
מסוט	: "Massot".	: Point (more usual word).
רדד	: "Reved".	: Ballast.
צ'צ'ט	: "Chatzatz".	: Ballast (more usual word).
קטאר יטוק	: "Kattar Ittuk".	: Shunting engine.
צמצמ	: "Matzmed".	: Coupling.
פולמוס	: "Semaphor".	: Signal. (!)
פולמוס	: "Simanor".	: Signal - lit. Colour Sign, Colour Light.

5.

Locomotives in Palestine and Israel - an historical update.

Publication of 'The Railways of Palestine and Israel' generated a heartening response from numerous interested parties, and my return to Israel in 1986 after some six years in The Great White North (Canada) has meant that I've been able to amend and amplify the loco lists in my book. This task has been made easier since I am now an employee of Israel Railways with greatly increased access to the necessary information on current affairs, and also through the continued interest and kindness of various enthusiasts - in particular, so far as present specifics are concerned, to Hugh Hughes whose notebooks (as has already been seen in Harakevet) are a model of meticulousness, and to Theo Pelz whose observations over several decades have been very useful too. So here - and as an exclusive to Harakevet readers - are the amendments. And if anyone has corrections to the corrections then I'd very much like to hear from him:

Palestine Military Railways ex-LSWR 0-6-0s:

There is still uncertainty about the subsequent identities of those 0-6-0s which went to Iraq, but it is thought that the details are:

105 became Iraqi State 423.  
165 became Iraqi State 425.  
404 became Iraqi State 429.  
406 became Iraqi State 430.  
434 became Iraqi State 431.  
437 became Iraqi State 432.  
512 became Iraqi State 438 as shown.

Palestine Railways Class H3 rebuilt 4-6-4Ts:

No. 14 was noted by Hugh on 29/3/43 painted in a maroon livery.

Palestine Railways Class N Nasmyth Wilson 0-6-0Ts:

In the 'Catalogue of Nasmyth Wilson & Co. Limited' (Arley Hall Publications, 1981), G.S. Moore gives the building date of No. 42 as 1935 rather than 1934. The works number of this loco (1609) follows on immediately from those of its two predecessors (PR Nos. 40 and 41), so it seems likely that this order was completed at the turn of the year 1934-5. It is possible that, while Nasmyth Wilson's order book gave 1935 as the building date, the works plate itself could have shown 1934. We shall probably never know for sure unless the works plate turns up somewhere. Since no PR/IR steam loco builder's plate has ever been discovered to my knowledge (and, believe me, I've searched high and low!), this detail may well remain unresolved.

War Department ROD 2-8-0s:

70746 became Iraqi State 1402.  
70756 became ESR (number unknown).

War Department USA 0-6-0Ts:

71267 became WD 301.  
71270 was out of service at the end of WWII, believed stored at Sarafand. Surprisingly, it was put back to work by IR about 1956-7, as No. 22, and scrapped c. 1960.  
71276 became WD 304.  
71290 became WD 305.  
71294 became WD 306.  
71295 became WD 307.  
71296 became ESR 1156.  
71297 became WD 308.  
71299 was out of service at the end of WWII, believed stored at Sarafand, and was scrapped c. 1960 without being rehabilitated in the meantime.

War Department LMS-type 0-6-09E:

One of these locos, thought to be 70052 (built Derby 1941, ex-MEF 13), was on hire to PR from June to October 1942 for shunting at a military depot. It went to Italy in 1946 and is reported as remaining, in FS stock (as one of series 700.001-4) until 1972. (Thanks to Hugh, and Rick Tourret's book 'War Department Locomotives').

War Department Andrew Barclay 0-4-0ST:

Theo tells me that this loco, WD 70243 (previously 31, 'Sahel') was stored at Sarafand after WWII and not at Haifa East as I wrote on p. 77 of 'The Railways of Palestine and Israel'. It is presumed to have been scrapped c. 1960 at the same time as the other steam engines.

War Department Baldwin 0-4-0ST:

This loco, WD 70245 (previously 37), was named 'Mechelen' as it had worked in that Belgian city after WWI. My thanks to John Slyth of the Stephenson Locomotive Society for this info.

Israel Railways SAFS Bo-Bos:

These three oddities were built in 1951, arriving in Israel early the next year. Their SAFB works numbers are the same as the running numbers (101-3) and, despite my comments to the contrary in 'Continental Railway Journal N. 72', the builder's numbers are carried on the works plates. (Don't ask me how I managed to miss them!)

Israel Railways EMD Class G12 Bo-Bos:

106 was withdrawn following sabotage on Jerusalem line (date unknown).

118 was built in 1962.

119 was withdrawn following accident (date unknown).

123 was withdrawn following accident (date unknown).

125 works number is 31689.

126 works number is 31690.

130 (ex-ER) was shot up in Six Day War shortly after (?) capture, and is believed never to have worked on IR.

Israel Railways (ex-ER) Class G16 Co-Cos:

At first these three locos were given the numbers 301-3 by IR after capture in the Six Day War. For some unknown reason they were renumbered 161-3 about two years later (c. 1969).

Israel Railways Deutz Class BDH 0-4-0DMs:

201 is long withdrawn but still dumped at Qishon Works (7/89).

203 is now preserved at the Museum Ha'aretz.

Israel Railways Essingen<sup>[sic]</sup> 0-6-0DHs:

211-15 were built in 1955.

216-20 were built in 1956.

N.B. Only about seven of these locos remain in service (7/89), though 221 has recently been tarted-up in IR's new colours.

Israel Railways HKD Class G26CW-2 Co-Cos:

Additions to stock since 1982:

612 838048-1 1983.

613 838048-2 1983.

614 858036-1 1986.

615 858036-2 1986.



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Israel Railways (ex-ER) Jung 0-6-0D:

4239 is believed to have been withdrawn c. 1970 and then scrapped.

Israel Railways EMD Class GT260W-2 Co-Co:

701 built 1989.

N.B. This loco arrived minus works plate so its builder's number remains a mystery at the moment!

Israel Railways Kalmar Verkstad Class T44 Bo-Bo:

Built 1989, wks. no. T40100/C01.

N.B. As at 15/7/89 this loco had still to receive its running number: Informed rumour suggests it will become so. 131, following on from the C12s. You'd have thought they'd have gone for a new number series for what is a very non-standard loco!

So, there it is. All details believed correct up to 7/89. It will be noted that I've not updated details on the WWI military locos of narrow gauge, nor on the industrials. Information on these is very scant indeed, and I'm working on the history of the various industrial lines and concerns, so prefer to hold fire on these for now.

Paul Cotterell. Haifa, July 1989.

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6. CAMERON'S CAMELS by Paul Cotterell.

Kenneth (K.R.M.) Cameron was another railway enthusiast in the British army in Palestine during WWII. He was in a particularly privileged (not to say responsible) position, as he was in command of two companies from the Royal Engineers at Jaffa and Suez. Fortunately, he had a camera with him and, no less importantly, knew how to use it to good effect. He does not seem to have made such copious notes as others, but was still able to provide me with some nuggets. One paragraph from among his letters to me leaves us with an interesting query. The letter is dated 18 March 1978 and the passage in question is as follows:

"So far as the Wehrmacht diesels are concerned, none had arrived before I left the Middle East, but we did get a number of Italian "camels", which were diesel driven four wheeled tractors which could shunt wagons: they moved close in to the wagon and took some of the weight of the wagon from under the buffer beam so as to provide the "camel" with sufficient adhesion. We had one at Jaffa for a while, but although adequate for moving wagons they were quite hopeless for moving dead locomotives. Where they went to I do not know."

This is the only reference to these "camels" that I can ever recall seeing, and I'm sorry now that I didn't at least give them a passing mention in my book. A photograph of that at Jaffa would have been nice, of course, but Kenneth seems not to have thought it worth a shot, which is unusual as he photted just about everything else there. Can anyone provide more details of these "camels"?

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7. A Philatelic Curiosity.

At a recent stamp exhibition (at the NS 150 celebrations in Holland) I saw an Egyptian, vertical format 10M stamp of 1957, clearly part of a propaganda campaign. The text declared: "Gaza: Part of Arab Nation", and the illustration consisted of a map of the Gaza Strip, showing the railway line and the stations of Rafah, Khan Yunis, Deir el Balah and Gaza. Alas I have no picture of this unusual stamp - does anyone else?

WLR

8. More Esslingen Railcar Coaches. (See 1:8, 2:12, for previous references).



Photo taken May '89 by Trevor Kletz of Manchester;  
Location described as "Besides the Afule-Tiberias road near Kfar Tavor in a sort of junk yard". "Havvat Susim" means a "Horse-Ranch" or possibly stud farm. A Horse-powered railcar ?

Photo below - at the headquarters of "Yad Sarah", a charitable organisation that lends and donates medical equipment, cares for the elderly, etc. At 43-45 Rehov HaNeviim ("Street of the Prophets"), in Jerusalem. Photo taken July '89 by Sybil Ehrlich of Jerusalem. Coach is in two-tone blue with white stripe and roof. No number.



9. "The Haifa-Damascus Railway." By Hugh Hughes.

Details of this early standard-gauge railway project, together with a vast amount of correspondence on the subject, are preserved in two large foolscap volumes at the Public Record Office, Kew, London, the reference being F078 5186 & 5451.

The original concession was obtained by Shukri Bey, Ministry of Public Instruction, and Yussuf Elias Effendi, Engineer of the Vilayet of Syria. They were unable to find the necessary capital and in 1890 it was arranged that Elias should buy out Shukri and that J.R.Pilling of Manchester would then acquire the whole of Elias' interest. Pilling formed the Syrian Ottoman Railway Company in London, with a capital of £600,000, and the Firman of Concession was granted on 26th. Sept. 1891, the railway to be completed within four years.

The Syria Ottoman Railway was originally empowered to build a line from Akka to Damascus with branches to Haifa, Bosrah and Hasbeiyeh, and also to establish a navigation service on Lake Tiberias and harbours and wharves at Haifa or Akka. The gauge of the system was to be "from 1.44m to 1.45m between inner edges". The Company was also given "a preferential right on equal terms to all lines starting from any point of the coast between and inclusive of Haifa and Beirut and terminating either at Damascus or Nawa, and to the eastward or the southward of the lines to be constructed by the Concessionaires." In July 1892 the well-known contractor George Pauling agreed to start building the line and work began in December 1892 with an elaborate ceremony at Haifa. (See below).

Unfortunately owing to lack of funds the contractor could not be paid and work ceased after 5 miles had been built. Pilling obtained extensions of time in 1895 and again (for two years) in 1898. In July 1898 Pilling formed a syndicate with Mr. A.F.Hills of the Thames Iron Works and Shipbuilding Co. Ltd., Blackwall, London, who had previously built three Ironclads ("Mahmoudie", "Messoudie" and "Izzedin") for the Turkish Government. Hills ordered plant, steam cranes, diggers, trucks, sleepers etc., and continued the line formation as far as Beisan; he even ordered an 0-6-0T with 3ft.6in. wheels and 14x20 cylinders from Hawthorn Leslie of Newcastle-upon-Tyne (makers number 2409 of 1899).

However in March 1899 the Turkish Minister of Public Works died and his successor repudiated the existing agreement and eventually, in June 1900, Hills closed down the works. The HL locomotive never left the U.K. and was later delivered to the Seaton Burn Coal Company as their No. 8. The Syria Ottoman Railway went into liquidation with Hills as the Receiver. In March 1902 the Sublime Porte informed His Britannic Majesty's Embassy of the terms of the purchase by the Imperial Ottoman Government of the Haifa-Damascus concern; namely, payment of £155,000 in two equal amounts over two years bearing interest at 5%. However it is not recorded whether this payment was in fact made.

Some further interesting facts were given in "The Chronicles of a Contractor", the autobiography of George Pauling. (Constable & Co., 1926), page 123: "For one thing the finance had not been completely arranged and consequently it was possible to enter into a definite contract only for the first five or ten miles. However, the directors, who were Manchester people, the concessionaire being a Mancunian named Pilling, determined to make a great flourish at the ceremony of cutting the first sod, and it was arranged that I should leave England again for Syria in company with three of the directors and two or three newspaper men. On arrival at Haifa I was instructed to provide a big entertainment for about 500 notables and 10,000 natives. I put this business in the hands of Messrs. Thomas Cook and Son and they sent from Egypt a steamer with several hundred waiters, all kinds of provisions, refreshments, and the various necessities and luxuries for such a feast as I had been commissioned to provide. For the consumption of the natives quite a big

quantity of sheep had been secured. Large marquees were erected to accommodate the notables; about a ton of fireworks had been imported; and altogether a most elaborate outfit had been supplied for the delegation of everyone during the few days over which ceremony extended. Everything went off admirably. Pashas and other high officials from Jerusalem, Acre, Constantinople, Beyrout, and other places were present, and a big impression was made on the Turkish mind of the wealth and capacity of the people to whom the railway concession had been given."

Pauling further mentions some of the stations on the route - Nazareth Road (5 miles from Nazareth), Endor and Nain. Skirting the Sea of Galilee the line was to pass up a ravine "where, it is locally believed, the Gadarene swine ran down into the sea." While construction was in progress Pauling and a Mr. Houghton had the bright idea of transporting to Chicago, for the World's Fair, two million bottles of Jordan water; the scheme was "to sell them at a dollar each for the purpose of baptizing children, and what might not be used for baptismal purposes could probably be utilized for diluting whisky." Alas, the Turkish Government were so slow in granting permission for this enterprise that the scheme had to be abandoned.

(July '89).

10. "Society of Friends of the Railways in Israel" - was founded around 1960 by Hans Kohut, of Givatayim, with official assistance from Menachem Savidor and others, and for

## For New Vistas of an Ancient Land

Travel  
by  
TRAIN



some years produced excellent publicity material, brochures, statistical reviews etc. Hans has kindly sent me some of the materials, and this is from the cover of a three-colour brochure, printed to a highly-professional standard. The main aim was to combat the massive anti-railway lobby within the governments and other influential bodies. Hans writes: "Despite all our efforts we had very little success, and I am somewhat downhearted by the state of our neglected and under-privileged railways. In 40 years not one passenger lost his life through a fault of the railways, yet on the battlefield of our highways around 20,000 persons were killed during the same period.

I can't guarantee the statistics, but I'd like to see the railway fortunes revived, and shall return to the "Society of Friends" in future issues. WLR

11. Account of a Journey, Damascus - Cairo - Damascus, in 1945; by Hugh Hughes.

"My train left Damascus at 0800 hrs., ten minutes late, on Monday 2nd. April 1945. Two 3rd.class bogie coaches noted at Damascus were C240 (tare weight 17670kg.) and C241 (17400kg.), both pointed reddish-brown and built by Baume et Marpent, Haine St. Pierre, Belgium. All stock had central buffers with screw couplings on either side. Goods stock was painted grey. At Cadem 0-6-2T 5BA (from the Beirut line) and 2-8-0 106 were noted; also a 4-wheeled van numbered C1 and marked TL (presumably from Tramway Libanais), tare 7,100 kg., built by SA des Ateliers de Braine-le-Comte.

We arrived at Dera'a at 1230 hours, where 0-6-0T 35 was shunting; the following were noted at the shed there: 0-6-0T 37, 2-8-0's 104, 123, 124, 161, 2-8-2 259 and Mallet 2-4-6-0 201. On the way down the gorge to Samakh we passed 2-8-0's 95, 109 & 162, and 0-6-0T TL6 was shunting at Samakh.

The train had left Dera'a at 1325 hrs. and duly arrived at Samakh at 1630, the train engine being 2-8-0 160 (Borsig 9009 of 1914) with a short four-wheeled tender. The train comprised the following vehicles:-

D312 11600kg. Baggage Van, built Huber 1913.  
C239 17400kg. Third Class.  
AB102 20100kg. First/Second Class.  
0238 17940kg. Third Class, built Baume & Marpent.  
C231 17500kg. Third Class, built Baume & Marpent.  
AB101 19100kg. First/Second Class.  
K1056 10550kg. Bogie goods van.

I travelled in AB101, a bogie vehicle with open platforms at each end and a side corridor, containing three first-class compartments (each with 4 seats, and four second class (6 seats), with a lavatory between the two classes. The compartments at each end of the carriage were labelled "Dames", with frosted glass on the corridor side. The livery was reddish-brown with yellow lettering, "AB<sup>AF</sup>101" being at the lower left-hand end of the body panelling (with the Arabic equivalent at the right-hand end) and "C.F.H." in the centre with "سغ" above it. The vehicle was approximately 50 ft. long. A few additional coaches were added at Samakh and the train departed at 1700 hrs. behind 2-8-2 257, arriving at Haifa (East) about 2000hrs.

On 4th. April, before leaving for Cairo, I visited the sheds at Haifa (East) where the following were noted:-

PR: 0-6-0T 49 (NW 1651 of 1938); 4-6-0 902.  
HR: 0-6-0T 16; 2-8-0's 77, 153 (Winterthur 2288 of 1912) & 159; 2-8-2 254 (Hartmann 4023 of 1918); 2-6-2T 2421 ("Reconstructed by W.D."); articulated Sentinel railcar No. 11, and the tender from 2432.

The Cairo train left at 1523 hrs., hauled by 2-8-2 71121, and consisted of:

ESR	1654	Luggage		Ganz	1925.
ESR	899	3rd. Class	36250kg.		
ESR	677	3rd. Class	35000kg.	Gloucester.	
PR	S221	2nd. Class	36600kg.	Metrop.(Saltley)	1922.
PR	120	1st. Class	38450kg.	Birmingham RCW.	1921.
WL	766A	Sleeper.	42900kg.	Ringhoffer. (Wagons Lits).	
WL	1778A	Sleeper.(18)	43500kg.	Nurnberg. ( " " ).	
WL	2351D	Dining Car.		Ringhoffer. ( " " ).	1912.
ESR	133	1st. Class	46450kg.	Ringhoffer.(Prague).	1927.
PR	122	1st. Class	37800kg.	Birmingham RCW.	1921.
ESR	591	2nd. Class	43450kg.	LHL. (Leuchammer).	
ESR	821	3rd. Class	39275kg.	Metrop.(Birmingham)	1925.
ESR	815	3rd. Class	39110kg.	Metrop.(Birmingham)	1925.
ESR	816	3rd. Class	38710kg.	Metrop.(Birmingham)	1925.
PR	BPL550	Luggage		Metrop.(Saltley)	1922.

HR 2-8-0 154 was noted at Tulkarm. Lydda was reached at 1820, departure being 1845; noted there were 4-6-4T 14, 0-6-0T 41, 4-6-0 60 and 4-6-0 64 (on a Jaffa train). At Gaza (arrival 2035, departure 2115) 71121 came off to get water but then returned to our train. We reached Ismailia at 0600 the next morning and Cairo at 0915; the train engine would no doubt have been changed at Qantara East.

My return journey started at Cairo Main station at 1800 hrs. on Thursday 3rd. May 1945. We arrived at Qantara East at 2310 hrs. where we stopped for a meal and the train eventually left behind 2-8-2 71082 (Lima 7899 of March 1942) in black livery and very clean; the tender still showed traces of the letters "P.R." but the only embellishments were the engine numbers painted in yellow on the cab and tender sides.

Lydda was reached at 0840 hrs., ten minutes late. A passenger train came in from the north behind 4-6-0 60 (NBL 24219 of 1935) also very clean in black livery with yellow numerals. In the station were 0-6-0T shunters 42 and 45, with small yellow numerals (although 47 seen later at Haifa had very large numerals on the tank sides) and by the shed was 2-8-4T No. 4 only identified by a small number plate. Also there was 4-6-0 902 attached to a tender with "873" in large numerals on the sides to confuse the unwary !

The journey onwards to Haifa (arrival mid-day) was uneventful. Kilometre plates, on posts on the west side of the track, were rectangular and painted white with a black border and black numerals (in arabic on the south side of the plate and in western numerals on the side facing north), e.g. 91 . The kilometres were measured from Haifa. Similarly the gradient plates carried black numbers on a white background (but without a black border), e.g. 325  
↘ 0.22  
↘ at km. 104.

I left Haifa at 0715 hrs. on 5th. May. The train engine was 2-8-0 120, with a small H on the buffer beam and a makers plate (Jung 1210 of 1908) on the cylinders; the engine number was painted on the cabsides. En route to Samakh I noted 2-8-0 159, marked Q on the buffer beam, with large numerals on the tender sides and makers plates (Winterthur 2291) on the dome. The makers numbers carried by both these locomotives were incorrect for the engines concerned, no doubt due to the interchange of cylinders/boilers.

The shunter at Samakh was 0-6-0T 35, the number being in arabic on the front and in western style on the sides. A makers plate (Hohenzollern 2399 of 1908) was on the bunker and again disagreed with the "official" version. The train, consisting of a brake van followed by four passenger coaches and then 2 boxcars (I travelled in first class coach 438, built at Haifa in 1929), was hauled by 2-8-2 261, painted the usual black but with western-style numerals in red on the smoke deflectors and tender sides; arabic numerals (also in red) were on the sides of the cab. The makers plates (Hartmann 4030 of 1918) were also on the cab. En route to Dera'a we passed 2-8-0 123 (Jung 1204 of 1908); in this case, as with 261, the makers numbers were correct.

The train arrived at Dera'a at 1400 hrs. and left at 1430 hrs. behind 2-8-2 259 (Hartmann 4028 of 1918), arriving at Damascus about 1900 hrs. From there onwards our journey was by a Nairn articulated "Pullman" coach across the desert to Baghdad - a somewhat different mode of transport ! "

(Hugh Hughes; 5/89).

Editor's Note- My thanks to Hugh not only for the account but for the valuable lesson given on the importance of taking full notes of journeys ! I doubt if most of us could recall much about a journey even of a few months ago, despite some scrawled notes. The Hedjaz coaches were obviously numbered in the continental style - A= 1st, B=2nd, C=3rd, D=Baggage - but I am intrigued by mention of coach 438, built in Haifa in 1929. Perhaps this was just rebuilt at Haifa from some other configuration ? The Nairn "Pullmans" were well-advertised in journals of the period - consisting of a tractor unit pulling a bus-style road trailer across the trackless wastes - there is even a story of one that set off into the desert and was never seen again.....

#### 12. A Jerusalem Tram.

### Streetcar gift to Museum

An electric streetcar named Doris is soon to start plying between the gates of the Israel Museum and the entrance, by courtesy of Haim (Scottie) and Doris Morrison, who have given it to mark their recent 50th wedding anniversary.

The Morrisons, who head respectively the United Israel Appeal in England and that country's Friends of the Israel Museum.

This appeared in the "Jerusalem Post" International 29/8/87. I am informed that it was a real tram, not a road version, but that the municipality refused permission to lay rails, and the scheme is in abeyance. Does anyone have more details ?

Four tram lines were proposed for Jerusalem prior to 1914, but the war stopped all such schemes.

WLR

13. "The Hedjaz Railway and its Logistical Problems in World War I."  
by Uri Ben-Rehav, Bat Yam, Israel.

Immediately after the proclamation of general mobilization in Turkey, on the 2nd. August 1914, an urgent order was issued by the Turkish High Command to the General in command of the 4th. Army, Zacki-Pasha in Damascus, to start a plan of action directed against the Suez Canal. Then Zacki-Pasha informed the General Staff that he was not able to do so, because of logistical problems, Enver Pasha himself, the War Minister, personally ordered the commanding general of the 8th. Army Corps in Damascus, to start planning. This was Colonel Djemal Bey, whose nickname was "Little Djemal", in contrast to the famous Djemal-Pasha. Since a German officer served in parallel with each high-ranking Turkish officer, the German Colonel Friedrich Freiherr Kress von Kressenstein became his Chief of Staff; five additional German officers served under him. One of the first conclusions of the planners was that, without reorganisation of the management and the operation of the Hedjaz Railway, the whole operation would be jeopardised<sup>[sic]</sup>.

Could the Hedjaz Railway undertake such an enormous task ? After all, it had not been designed to transport such quantities as in this operation. So - what was the situation regarding its condition, maintenance and supplies ?

At the outbreak of hostilities the picture was not unfavourable. In July and August two coal-ships had unloaded coal in Haifa; the stock of coal found at the French private railway, being confiscated, guaranteed a supply of at least five months. Lubricating oils, tallow and other items important for the everyday running of the railway constituted no problem. Locos, wagons and coaches were, in the given circumstances, in relatively good condition. Taking all this into account, the reorganisation went ahead.

After deliberation it was decided that all civilian transport service on the line Deraa - Maan - Medina should be terminated; only the most urgent service should be given. With the help of locos and rolling-stock thus freed for military needs, it was possible in 14 days to despatch nine trains daily, each with 13 wagons or coaches. These reached Sileh, the starting-point of the Suez Canal campaign route. To gain some idea of the quantities so transported we must bear in mind that in the middle of January 1915 ca. 20,000 Turkish, German and Austro-Hungarian troops in two columns, escorted by ca. 5,000 camels carrying water and other supplies, started the march from Beer Sheba toward the Suez Canal. The operation, for reasons out of the context of this article, failed - but the point is that the railway proved its worth in efficiency and reliability. From this time on the Hedjaz Railway received the highest priorities in every way, military and civil. This constituted a revolution in thinking, as before this undertaking nobody really believed that the Hedjaz Railway would be able to "pull it off".

With all this activity going on, however, there was a side-effect to which at first nobody gave a thought - though it was soon plainly to be seen. The reserves of coal slowly but surely dwindled. The British-imposed blockade made it impossible to smuggle coalships to the port, even though several tried to run the gauntlet.

The authorities now, under this pressure, had no other choice but to rely on local resources. After some research it was discovered that at the beginning of the 19th. century there had been a productive coal mine in Lebanon, though it had soon closed down because of low quality. Now, in Spring 1915, the old shafts were cleared of rubble and production started again. Difficulties were great; on the one hand, it was impossible to find experienced miners and mine personnel; on the other, the coal had a very high sulphur content which had a very adverse effect on the boilers and other parts of the locos. Another disappointment was the low capacity of the mine.

As the situation grew critical, the military and railway authorities founded a special department under a German professor, to prospect for coal in the Lebanese mountains. The result was negative - no other coal was to be found in Lebanon; nevertheless, because no other choice was left, production in the only mine was kept up during the rest of the war; indeed, in the last year of the war a special narrow-gauge railway was laid between Mergelaya and Bahamdun.

The disappointment with coal led to a decision to change from coal to wood for fuel. Syria and Palestine being woodless countries, wood was mainly to be found in Lebanon; however, small clusters of eucalyptus trees grew in swamps, whilst olive trees and other fruit-bearing trees were found in settlements and near villages. Taking into account that the efficiency of locos fired by wood was some 30% lower than with coal, it was calculated that the Hedjaz Railway needed an annual supply of ca. 150,000 tons of wood.

In autumn 1915 the Supply Department of the Hedjaz Railway started to distribute this amount among the stations, in spring 1916 this task being completed. By summer of this year, however, as all - or nearly all - wood near the railway line had gone, a special Wood Supply Authority was established, responsible to the civil authorities. Harsh laws were enforced: each town, village and settlement had to contribute a quota of wood. As a further measure, special contractors were employed. They and their workers received "Vesikas", that is to say, exemption from military service. Nobody liked to serve in the Turkish army, so very quickly a thriving black market of thieves, cheats and swindlers developed, dealing in these Vesikas.

As already mentioned, the enforcement of the laws was very harsh indeed. In orchards every 10th. tree had to be chopped down - literal "decimation"; in Arab villages the olive trees, almost the only source of income for the natives, went the same way. Not surprisingly the authorities succeeded in collecting enough wood for the time being; nevertheless, the need for more wood grew from day to day. Large military operations depended more and more on the Hedjaz Railway. "Operation Pasha" in July 1916, the second Turkish/German/Austro-Hungarian attempt to attack the Suez Canal, involved ca. 16,000 troops and their logistic support. The railway lines were also longer, having by this time already reached Auja-el-Hafir (Nitzana) on the border of the Sinai desert. A further burden was the uprising of the Arabs in the Hedjaz in October 1916. The railway became the only way to supply the troops. The difficulties with which the railway was daily confronted grew with the sabotage by Beduins under British officers and losses due to damage to rolling-stock and locos.

As woods near the railway line became more and more depleted, and with beasts of burden such as donkeys, mules and camels already confiscated by the military, the railway authorities had no other choice but to build special lines to wood-rich locations. Lines constructed and in service were: Kosseir - Hermil (19km.), Tulkarm - Kafr Kara - Litera (Hadera), (40km.), and Kalaat Anese - el Hishe (40km.). Under the supervision of a German officer even a cable-car from Hermil was built.

The fuel situation became so critical in Summer 1918 that the whole functioning of the Hedjaz Railway came in question. However, on the 19th. September 1918 two decisive things happened: Firstly, the big tunnels in the Taurus and Amanus mountains in Turkey were finished and coal trains from Germany could reach Palestine directly, thus solving the fuel problem; secondly, the big British offensive started, which resulted in the total collapse of the Turkish/German/Austro-Hungarian armies. All came to an end as on 30th. October 1918 the armistice was signed and all hostilities ceased.

In retrospect it must be said that efforts to guarantee a steady supply of fuel to the Hedjaz Railway could have been much eased had it been possible to build the important tunnels on the standard-gauge line through the Taurus and Amanus mountains sooner. However, the majority -



better to say, nearly all - of the skilled workforce was made up of Armenians. These craftsmen, being arrested and persecuted by the Turks, were replaced by local natives. The results speak for themselves.

Contrasting with the fuel crisis, the situation regarding lubricating oil was never critical during the war. At the outbreak of war a relatively good stock was at hand, but, as with fuel, after about half a year a substitute had to be found. In the first stage experiments were made with resin from wood in the Taurus mountains, but after lengthy trials by German chemists produced no satisfactory results these experiments were terminated. Palestine is rich in olive oil, so it was tried for use as a lubricant. The pure olive oil couldn't be used as it was needed for human consumption, but at the primitive native oil presses large quantities of residue were to be found. Using benzine it was possible to extract a high-quality lubricant from these residues, which still contained 10% oil.

The authorities, not wanting to be solely dependent on olive residue, tried to diversify their efforts. True to this wish they planted vast fields of Sesame in the plain between Haifa and Jenin; the oil of this plant also gave excellent results. Another plant for oil products was also cultivated in this plain - Rhizinus, from which castor oil was extracted. In Cadem, the central workshops of the Hedjaz Railway, a special oil-processing and -refining mill was set up. The prime product was for medical purposes, whilst the secondary-stage product had very good properties in lubricating bearings that came into contact with steam and hot water. In Beirut an old oil press was reconstructed and adapted to produce tallow. Animal bones and carcasses were used as raw material.

All these efforts became superfluous as during the later war years a steady flow of lubricants from Roumania was guaranteed.

During peacetime all illumination in stations was by means of kerosene; as this was now very scarce and all stock was reserved for military use, cottonseed oil was provided for illumination purposes. A special processing plant was built at Atada; its capacity was more than enough. Illumination on the trains themselves was now non-existent; whoever wanted to have some kind of light had to provide it for himself. He could bring along a candle or, for a "bakshish", the conductor supplied one.

That the railway, to the very end of the war, was able under such conditions to give service not only to the military but as far as possible also to the civilian population must be regarded as proof of the high morale of its personnel<sup>[sic]</sup>. Not only did all services perform their duty to the best of their ability, but the Hedjaz Railway in wartime expanded its lines by 444 km. ! Is there any better proof that a railway could, in times of crisis, provide a fast and efficient transport service, lessening the pressure on the roads ?

It is impossible to end this article without mentioning at least three "curiosities", born out of the scarcity of loco fuel:

1. A line was built in May 1916 between Auja-el Hafir and Makdaba, to supply the front line. Instead of locos, mules were used to haul the wagons !

2. One could observe on the line between Afule and Haifa a flat wagon, with, mounted on it, the pilot's cabin from a German aeroplane, including the Daimler motor. The passengers sat on benches, tightly strapped on. These were German pilots going from their base in Afule for a swim on Haifa beach. This train/plane made history as it held a world-record for speed on the narrow-gauge: It did 100 km/h !!!

3. Last but not least - a further strange-looking contraption: Near the end of the war, as aeroplane fuel was only available for direct military needs, a further flat wagon was supplied for the pilots' use; in the middle of this wagon a high mast was mounted, and on it a large sail. With this "Sailway" the inventive pilots went for their swim in Haifa Bay. This vehicle went down in history as the "Phönizischer Bäderexpress", or "Phoenecian<sup>[sic]</sup> Summer Camp Express".....

'This is not just another round of talking and dreaming'

17/12/88

## Ambitious rail system gets go-ahead

By LARRY DERFNER

TEL AVIV – The Treasury has approved the first step in building an electrically powered passenger train system, including commuter trains in the Tel Aviv and Haifa areas, the head of the Ports and Railways Authority told The Jerusalem Post last week.

Shaul Raziell said that Finance Minister Moshe Nissim has approved the authority's expenditure of NIS 20 million to commission the blueprints for such a rail system and to improve immediately safety and comfort arrangements on existing lines.

It will take five years to complete the network and "many tens of millions of dollars," Raziell said. But, he added, "the Ports and Railways Authority is very wealthy. We have all the money that is required," and it can get loans if necessary.

The lines will include Nahariya-Tel Aviv, Tel Aviv-Jerusalem, Tel Aviv-Beersheba/Dimona, and Tel Aviv-

Ashdod. These should be completed within three years, Raziell said, with trains running at speeds up to 160 kph.

Construction will also begin on commuter trains connecting Haifa and Tel Aviv with their suburbs, including a Tel Aviv-Ben Gurion Airport stretch. The Tel Aviv lines will be the last to be finished, in about five years, he said. Discussions have been held for many years on an electrical rail system. Plans were drawn up, but they were only very general, Raziell said. Nissim's approval of the NIS 20 m. expenditure was "the first real step... a sign, or proof that the government means business this time, that it's not just another round of talking and dreaming," Raziell added.

France's national rail company, Société Nationale de Chemins de Fer (SNCF), will undertake the major part of designing the system. This company is "the best in the world" on designing mass transit systems and has been the largest international designer of such systems

over the last 10 years, he said.

SNCF will begin work by the end of the month and present its plan to the authority within 10 months. Negotiations over the cost of the contract are still underway, but Raziell said the company has asked for more than \$1m.

Asked if the cost of the project might better be calculated in billions of dollars, rather than tens of millions, Raziell explained; "We are not talking about building tunnels or cutting through mountains." Most of the tracks already exist, with most of the new ones having to be built for the Tel Aviv commuter trains.

The trains are not meant to compete with the buses, but to compete with private cars," he said. "Our objective is to create the mass transit system needed to solve the problem of congestion, especially in the metropolitan areas, and to decrease the number of traffic accidents."

16/12/88

("Jewish Chronicle").

## FRENCH HELP SET UP RAILWAY SYSTEM

The Ministry of Finance has at long last approved an appropriation of £6.5 million to commission detailed plans for a new electric railway system which will transform transport in Israel.

In the past two years, the population explosion of automobiles has made it palpably impossible to continue with the present system. Hold-ups on arterial roads around Tel Aviv during the rush hour last up to two hours, as people from dormitory towns try to get to work in and around the metropolis.

The proposed plan envisages new lines linking Naharia, in the north, and Tel Aviv; Tel Aviv- Jerusalem; Tel Aviv-Beersheba) Dimona to the south, and Tel Aviv-Ashdod – also to the south – with commuter trains serving

the Haifa and Tel Aviv regions.

Construction of the system is expected to take about five years.

France's national railway company, Société National de Chemins de Fer (SNCF), will undertake a major part in designing the system.

According to Shaul Raziell, the head of the Ports and Railways Authority, SNCF is "the best in the world" for designing mass transit systems.

The Egged bus co-operative has criticised the concept savagely, claiming that Israel has not got the means to set it up, or to maintain it after it is finished.

The Transport Minister, Haim Corfu, insists that the trains will not compete with the buses, they will simply get private cars off the road.

Has the Messiah come ? These plans, first publicised some months ago, seem to promise almost everything that those with an interest in Israel's railways have been, arguing for years, if not decades. However, experience teaches us to be cautious; there are several newspaper reports on file that assure the reader that the line to Eilat is as good as finished !

## Trains now go further

("Jewish Chronicle", 26/8/88).

A new five-mile extension of the Beersheba-Ashdod railway line has now been opened.

It will enable the shipment of coal from Ashdod port to a new power station under construction south of Ashkelon.

The ceremony was attended by the Transport Minister, Haim Corfu and hundreds of leaders from the Israel Bonds Organisation which helped to fund the project.

The intention here is to provide a new shuttle or "merry-go-round"-type service to supply the power station with imported coal by rail. This sort of thing was at one time proposed for the power station near Hadera, but coal for this is shipped direct to the site.

15. Video Review : "Dampfabenteuer im Libanongebirge".

This 40-minute colour video film is produced by "Eisenbahn-Kurier Verlag", and can be ordered from "Eisenbahn-Kurier, Postfach 5560, 7800 Freiburg, West Germany. Cost is 89 DM. (close on £30), Plus p.& p. A warning for English readers - I was rudely awakened by the postman and charged an extra £4.34 for V.A.T. as well.

The title means "Steam Adventure in the Lebanon Mountains", and the film shows a journey on the Syrian section of the Beirut - Damascus 105cm. gauge line. It is clear that what we have is a cleverly-edited composite of several journies<sup>[sic]</sup>, since the rolling-stock behind 2-6-0T 753 (Winterthur, S.L.M. 854 of 1894) consists sometimes of bogie coach AB452, a 4-wheel van and two bogie vans, sometimes of two coaches, a 4-wh. "Fourgon" van and a bogie van, sometimes of one 4-wh. coach, the Fourgon and two bogie vans ! There is a running commentary, in German, explaining in quite amusing style some of the incidents on the trip. These include an engine-driver hired for the special filming train who loses his temper very dramatically at any delay (the film-crew film him shouting at them for holding up departure !), a serious accident on a level-crossing which leads to a taxi being written-off and two of the passengers injured, and a sudden eruption of armed soldiers at the end of the trip, Serghaya, which leads to a hasty return back to Zebdani, 12 kilometres away, where a pause can be made for a wash and siesta.

The film opens at Cadem depot, Damascus, starting with a melancholy look at the derelict hulks in the undergrowth before moving to the active depot. No. 753 is shown running out of the two-road shed, taking water and fuel-oil, having the sand checked etc. In the background are fascinating glimpses of the standard-gauge line from Aleppo, with East German-built coaches and what looks like an ALCO diesel minus most of its hood - but I could be wrong. The scene then shifts to the Hedjaz station in Damascus - rows of bogie vans, Ganz railcar set R-12, a row with the driver and departure through the teeming city, clearing the traffic by inches. After 15km., and an hour's journey (including the level-crossing accident), the train reaches Ain Fijeh station, which is perused in detail - the, station building, the water-tower etc. A young girl takes water from a tap on the platform, and the engine too is watered by a rather primitive apparatus. Shortly after departure wet rails at a further level crossing lead to some slipping, then the train is out in magnificent scenery, passing through villages (near President Assad's Summer Residence), through a tunnel and winding its way through the Wadi Barada. After three hours Serghaya is reached - last station in Syria - and the loco is turned on a short manually-operated turntable (a very tight fit even for a 2-6-0T), being recoupled after further shouting and ranting from the driver. (The stoker is, in contrast, a model of cheerful equanimity throughout, and at one point walks around the loco whilst in motion, apparently for the hell of it). After the station is suddenly invaded by armed troops, the train beats a hasty retreat to Zebdani for a pause to oil and inspect the engine, wash from a tap on the wall and rest; we then see the station-master's office-cum-booking office, complete with ancient telephone for train-despatching and a clock made in Paris. The fire is relit - very dangerously with naked flames in an oily cab - the Station Master rings the bell, and the train is seen returning through the gorge in afternoon and evening light, back to Damascus.

The film is copyright 1989, and was shot by Joachim Schmidt and Wolfgang Schumacher. In my view they have made a very good job - in who-knows-what circumstances - of portraying this line, which seems in so many ways "frozen in time" and which few of us are ever likely to be able to visit. The tape is then made up with a further 20 minutes of miscellaneous shots of trains in Germany, Switzerland, Finland, Czechoslovakia<sup>[sic]</sup> and so forth - "trailer" material for other E.K. videos. Good stuff, but I'd rather have seen the space used for some more of the Syrian material. Still, one sees a good balance of loco., coaches, stations and landscapes. Worth getting.

W.L.Rothschild.

16. Some Factual Background to the Video.

Out of interest I append some details taken from the British "Geographical Handbook to Syria", Code B.R. 513 - Restricted, produced by the Naval Intelligence Division, April 1943.

Pages 378-381 describe the Beirut-Damascus line, 90.7 miles or 146 kilometres long. Rail, 43 and 55 lb. per yard; steel sleepers. Max. gradient 1 in 14 on the rack sections (totalling 20 miles), 1 in 33 elsewhere. Although the film shows a journey starting at Damascus, the line is described from Beirut; the relevant section, from p. 379:

"From Rayak (km.65.0) the railway continues eastwards, and Penetrates the Anti-Lebanon by the valley of the Wadi Yafufeh. At Jisr er Rummaneh the railway turns south and rises, though less steeply than in the Lebanon, to the watershed (alt. 4,160 feet) south of Serghaya, between the Yafufeh (Litani) and the Barada. The railway then follows the Zebdani depression for nearly 13 miles to Et Tekkiyeh, where the valley contracts and turns south-east. In several places the river valley becomes a narrow defile, and near Suk Wadi Barada the railway passes through a tunnel. Beyond Ain Fijeh it turns south, and near Hameh it is joined by the Beirut-Damascus road before the two pass through the Rabweh gorges, crossing and recrossing the Barada. Once through the gorges the railway enters the Damascus oasis, reaches the Baramkeh station north-west of Damascus, and, skirting the western suburbs of the city, arrives at its terminus in the Hejaz station. In the last section several bridges not exceeding 60 feet long and a tunnel 180 yards were necessary to negotiate the deeply incised Barada valley."



Km. from Beirut	Stations and Passing-loops	Remarks
64.0	..	Plate girder bridge over tributary of the Litani
65.0	RAYAK	Alt. 3,100 ft. Junction for standard-gauge line to Aleppo. PL. (narrow gauge), 2 PL.8 (standard gauge). Transporter for transfer between gauges. Tbl. Coal-stack. Locomotive depot and repair shops. Water tank. Max. grad. 30 up.
77.0	YAFUFEH	Alt. 3,722 ft. Water tank. Max. grad. 30 up.
87.0	SERGHAYA	Alt. 4,524 ft. Water tank. Max. grad. 28 down.
88.5	..	Col. 4,636 ft., the watershed of the Anti-Lebanon.
98.0	ZEBDANI	Alt. 3,993 ft. PL. Goods shed. For town, see p. 234. Max. grad. 25 down.
110.0	ET TEKKIYEH	Alt. 3,620 ft. PL. Max. grad. 28 down.
112.0	..	Masonry bridge across Barada (single 40-ft. arch).
114.0	..	Tunnel 180 yds. long.
115.0	SUK WADI BARADA	Alt. 392 ft.
119.0	DEIR KANUN	Alt. 2,970 ft. PL.
123.0	AIN FIJEH	Alt. 2,712 ft. PL. Water tank. Sdg. Max. grad. 17 down.
129.0	JEBEIDEH	Alt. 2,585 ft.
131.0	..	Bridge over Wadi Methalun.
133.5	HAMEH	Alt. 2,543 ft. PL. Water tank. Max. grad. 25 down.
137.0	DUMMAR	Alt. 2,442 ft. PL.
138.0	..	Plate girder bridge over Barada (50 ft. long).
140.0	..	Steel girder ridge over Barada (60 ft. long).
141.0	..	Steel girder bridge over canal (30 ft. long).
144.0	DAMASCUS-BARAMKEH	Alt. 2,295 ft. Sdgs. Goods sheds.
146.0	DAMASCUS-HEJAZ	Alt. 2,260 ft. Junction with Hejaz railway. ES. Tbl. Coal-stack. W. (good supply, reservoir, 2 water-columns). Locomotive depot. Main narrow-gauge repair shops. For town, see p. 207.

17. Kishon in the 1940's.

On 20/1/82 I interviewed, in Jerusalem, Mr. Livnat (formerly Weissbach), who had worked at Kishon Works from 4/7/44 to 31/12/61. The following is extracted from longhand notes I made during the interview; complete accuracy cannot be guaranteed, but if nothing else it is hoped they will spur others to interview former railway workers while this is still possible.

A Captain Johns had been in charge of the railway workshops in Haifa, although he had gone by 1944. He was an interesting engineering figure, who lived in Haifa and knew everyone and everything. The feeling was that "they don't make 'em like that any more", and "Everything was better when Capt. Johns was here".

Young Mr. Weissbach was 20 in 1944, and entered a form of Jewish national service, "Kibbush Avodah", a scheme to get young Jews some form of employment in areas where very few Jews worked so far. At that time there were some 900-1,000 workers at the Workshops, of whom maybe 100 were Jews. The senior staff were mostly British; Departmental Heads were British, Christian Arabs, Greeks, and perhaps 1 or 2 Jews out of the ten or so.

He had had some vocational training at Yagur and began as a loco fitter. At this time Palestine was the economic and military base for all activities in the Middle East and North Africa; supplies were at a premium, as were personnel trained in metalwork etc. Earlier, he had been employed making pressure-gauges for the Royal Navy.

The Railway Workshops were the largest industrial establishment in Palestine at this time, and could do almost any job. They incorporated a foundry, smithy, facilities for machining, welding, woodwork, upholstery, a paintshop etc., and possibly the heaviest crane in Palestine. Getting a job was difficult - the middle-management was mostly of "Mediterranean" origin, and promotion for Arabs was discouraged. Jewish recruitment was also low, as ulterior political motives were suspected. Jews were not promoted or allowed too much access. He was told his highest possible wage would be 700 mills per day, but was in fact paid 1 lira per day.

He was the youngest Jew there. Some had been there since Turkish times, and spoke Arabic or Yiddish but no Hebrew. On the whole, Jews shunned the railways. He had to sign a statement that he was prepared to work on Saturdays. Only senior staff had earned the privilege or right to a 5-day week.

The steam locos were all oil-fired by this time. Both narrow- and standard-gauge were worked on at Kishon shops. The narrow-gauge ones were "very intricate machines"; he recalled one from 1898 - Swiss, from SLM. Later machines had piston valves, but there were some Krauss locos with slide-valves, which needed a great deal of grinding, scraping etc., and included "an enormous amount of small parts". "The overhaul was like re-manufacturing hand-made, individual parts" - since there were few spares; cost was no object at that time. There was no part of a steam engine that could not be made in the workshops, including boilers.

In 1946 Meir Livnat "did the progress" - was promoted to "progress-chasing", to coordinate repair movements, the parts required, materials ordered etc. This was largely because of his ability to speak English. There were around 15 locos under repair at any one time - taking 8 - 10 weeks each, though boilers were transferred. Also spares were made and sent to the depots. Amman shed, it was noted, "used up a lot of shiny new spare parts" - especially little brass fittings, that were probably used as ornaments !

Regarding the "Rakevet HaEmek" (Jezreel Valley line), the trains were always late. "No-one ever really paid a ticket - it was so different from the Palestine Railways". Examples: the 7pm. train came at 9pm. He recalled the Madrich (leader) of a group bargaining a fare with the conductor - and then all over again with a second conductor at Afule - during a trip from Afikim to Yagur.

The 1948 Takeover.

Although there had been no equality between Arabs and Jews, there had also been no confrontation. The Jews were simply the "discriminated minority".

On 30/12 or 31/12/47, there was a bloody incident at the Refineries. Etzel - the "Irgun Zvai Leumi" - had thrown hand grenades at Arabs waiting

outside for employment. Some were killed, and the result was a pogrom on the Jews in the refineries. There were many casualties. That same day, the news spread to the railway workshops with the result that by 1pm, three hours before the normal end of the working day, the British began leaving - since the Arabs were in a threatening mood and closing all the doors. Those few Jews - around 100 - who were unable to leave assembled together for safety; the only armed guards around were Arabs, and the situation was tense.

The complex was divided into two main sections - the Workshops themselves, and the Offices outside. Meir was in an unusual situation - as a part of the workshops staff, but with access to the Offices. He was advised to use this privilege as a way of bluffing his way out of the shops so as to raise the alarm in the outside world. At this point weapons were being made from steel bars, but no actual clash had developed.

So - rather like "looking at a wild animal to keep it in check", he walked out, and was not stopped as this was his normal route and he was thus a familiar sight. Anyone else would have been stopped. He walked - not ran - a long half-kilometre to the outside main gate, through the gate and to the Vulcan works and the Haganah H.Q. in Finizia. They discussed whether to storm the place to rescue the Jews, but eventually decided not to storm it yet. If help was needed, though, those inside should shout for it.

He therefore walked back, through the gates, to his fellow-Jews, told them that the "outside" knew what was happening and, if anything happened, to shout.

Meanwhile, discussions had been going on amongst the Arabs as to whether or not to kill the Jews. A group of young Arab communists were probably those who swung the balance against the nationalists. The Workers' Trains were due to leave Kishon at 4pm. for Haifa and Acco, and the Communists said the Jews outside would have blown these trains up had there been a massacre of Jewish workers inside.

So - at 4pm. they all went home, and "dropped their tools of murder".

The Jews did not return to work for a few days until Paratroopers were stationed in the workshops, and these patrolled for several weeks.

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(W.L.Wothschild).

#### 18. For The Record:

I have been trying to "drum up support" for a while: here are two of the few successes so far:

"Continental Modeller, July/Aug.'89.

#### **Israel Railways newsletter**

Walter Rothschild is editing and distributing a newsletter on the railways of Israel. 'HaRakevet' (Hebrew for 'railway' or 'train', we are told) is produced as photocopies and contains a fascinating mixture of historical and contemporary information. Potential contributors or those who are interested in receiving a copy can contact him at 9 Primley Gardens, Leeds, LS17 7HT.

Rabbi Rothschild is also co-ordinating an attempt to purchase a Stanier 8F 2-8-0 from Turkey for preservation in Israel. Similar locomotives were supplied under War Department auspices and twenty-three remained to enter Israel Railways stock upon formation of the independent state. Members of the class had the double distinction of hauling the first IR train as well as the last steam working. All offers of practical assistance to acquire one of these engines are welcomed.

If any reader can pass a copy of his copy on to another enthusiast magazine, Jewish or Israel- oriented newspaper or magazine, or whatever - please feel free to do so. There must be lots of other people "out there" who'd like to be on the mailing list !

Jerusalem Post, International Edition, week ending July 8, 1989.

#### **MIDDLE EAST RAILWAYS**

Sir, - I am interested in establishing a study circle for those interested in the railways of the Middle East - history, development and current events. 1992 marks the centenary of the first line in Israel - from Jaffa to Jerusalem - and it would be appropriate to mark the event in some way. A small newsletter, *HaRakevet*, has already been established, and I would be grateful if any reader interested in the subject would contact me for further details.

Rabbi WALTER ROTHSCHILD,  
9 Primley Gardens,  
Leeds LS17 7HT