

HARAKEVET

ISSUE 52 April 2001

ISSN 0964-8763

הרכבת

A Quarterly Journal on the Railways of the Middle East

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Back in July 1992, Hedjaz Jordan Railway locos 23 and 81 at Amman Station.
(Photo: Peter Nothdurft.)

Editorial.

This issue marks the end of Series 13, and the future sees some major administrative changes.

These are caused partly by the success of this little amateur magazine - the amount of administration has grown and I am not really expert in the latest techniques of keeping databases etc. In addition, the Editor's job situation remains - shall we say 'fluid' ? - and for the foreseeable future it makes sense to concentrate a lot of the administration in England. The Subscription Form that should be enclosed with this issue will tell you more, but in essence the intention is to handle subscriptions through Steve Waldenberg at his firm in Leeds, (where the bank accounts are in any case based) whilst editorial matters can still come to me. People seem to like the Colour cover, so we shall stick with it; the pending change to Euros in large parts of Europe (alas, not yet England) means also that the days of subscribers sending a variety of strange banknotes will hopefully be reduced. Subscriptions will have to rise a little, partly to cover the colour (which Steve gets printed elsewhere and then matches to the rest of the issue) but the rise is kept to a minimum. Subscriptions will now be listed in Sterling and Euros, though payment can also be made in US Dollars, and while the amounts may not be accurate to the nearest cent, the idea is to be rounding up to a full unit for pragmatic reasons.

This issue was meant to go out in March - we are just managing April. Apologies for the slippage. The amount of news flooding in from Israel is incredible, and we have a lot of material on file regarding past or historical matters. ("On file" is a euphemistic term for "piled up on, around or under the Editor's desk".) The Hedjaz system seems to keep staggering on - I have written the last obituary far too often to wish to do it again. International links between other countries are slowly being established or restored, though the time when Israel would be linked to a standard gauge regional network seems, alas, still a long way away. In difficult times, a hobby becomes even more important - the historical items are a form sometimes of escapism, sometimes of establishing relevant facts. Hopefully you, the readers, will continue to enjoy and support this magazine.

The Editor.



52:3. Haifa East Station, in December 2000. Compare this view with Plate 11 on page 11 of 'The Railways of Palestine and Israel', taken ninety-five years earlier from the same spot. See also Plate 35 on page 29 of 'Hedjaz Railway'. (Photo: Paul Cotterell).

NEWS FROM THE LINE.

[This rubric is expanding with every issue - thanks now especially to Aharon Gazit, who faxes through information on tenders, press releases etc. - other contributions are largely from Paul Cotterell and Sybil Ehrlich, but my thanks go to all contributors who enable me, from a distance, to keep 'up-to-date' with the massive and rapid changes on the IR network.]

a). Jerusalem Trams.

More of the same news: from the Jerusalem Post of 14/2/02: JERUSALEM ISSUES DRAFT CONTRACTS FOR LIGHT RAILWAY. by Tal Muscal, economics reporter] The Jerusalem Light Railway project tender committee handed contract drafts to five groups bidding for the tender yesterday. Completion of the first line is expected in 2005, at a cost of NIS 1.6 Billion. The municipality says the bidding groups have until the end of next month to return the drafts with comments. Bidders will be also be required to state their proposals for the division of tasks and responsibilities between themselves and the public sector, under the BOT (build operate and transfer) model. Finalists will be chosen by year's end. Each of the five bidders is a consortium of local and international groups contending for the 30 year concession to operate the first of eight lines. The 'City Line Jerusalem' group is made up of Daimler-Chrysler, Building and Construction Holdings, Etgal Corporation, FIBI Investments and Belgian company STIB. 'City Pass' group is comprised of Alstom Ltd., Elco Ltd., Ashtrom Ltd., Poalim Investments, and the international consortium CGEA. The third group, known as 'Adanim', includes Canadian Bombardier, Dutch tram builders HTM, Building and Properties and Clal Insurance. Also bidding is the 'Ariel' group: Spain's CAF, Canadian corporation Lavalin-SNC, the Delek Group, Dankner Investments, Baran and Stuttgart-based SSB. In addition, the 'Pasim' group includes Africa-Israel, Feuchtwanger Industries and Hanover-based Uestra. The first line will be 14 kilometres long, from Pisgat Ze'ev to Mount Herzl, through the city center. The line will encompass 24 stations, requiring some NIS 400 million worth of infrastructure development." Aharon Gazit adds that infrastructure works totalling \$75M, financed by the Transportation Ministry and the Jerusalem Municipality, are going ahead - these include moving infrastructure (water pipes,

sewage, electricity and communications) and widening roads and building public transport lanes in readiness for the LRV project. Since the Environmental Impact survey has been finished, the District Planning Committee is set to approve the project within the next few weeks. According to the tender documents, the public sector is committed to changing the bus network so that bus routes will feed into rather than compete with the LRV, and thus create an integrated public transport system. The LRV will also get priority at road junctions. The concessionaires will be solely responsible for assessing and meeting passenger demand. - there will be no "safety net". From the documents it is also clear the winning group will get a concession for 30 years for building and operating Line 1. Jaffa Road will become a pedestrianised precinct; the municipality has also decided to reduce parking facilities in the city centre in order to encourage use of public transport, and will divert private car traffic to nearby streets. There will be some months of test running before full public operation begins. In the meantime a committee has been formed to seek international tenders for boring a tunnel under Zahal Square for the LRV system; the winner will be chosen in July 2001.

b). Border-Line Case.

According to a note in the 'Jerusalem Report' of 15/01/01, the Palestinian Authority has asked foreign investors not to bid for the proposed Jerusalem commuter rail line because the planned right-of-way runs over what it says are Arab lands.

c). More Booming Statistics.

Israel Railways carried 1.1 Million passengers during January 2001, 17% more than in January 2000. In a press release dated 18/02/01 Mr. Uzani commented that the growth in traffic has been characterizing IR over the past two years; however, the increase is lower than expected due to the strike which lasted 2 weeks, which caused the loss of at least 130,000 journeys. Growth was:

Ashdod - Haifa: 59,000 + 15%.
Tel Aviv - Nahariyya : 148,800 + 15%.
Tel Aviv - Beer Sheva : 98,000 + 313% !!
Tel Aviv - Haifa : 358,500 + 8%.

Starting from June 2001, and until June 2003 the railways will receive 14 double-decker trains and 8 IC3 units. (In fact, in Feb. 2001 Mr. Uzani and the Israeli representative of Bombardier made a brief visit to Görlitz to check on progress.) (See also item (o) below for later statistical reports, and (r) for the double-deckers.)

d). More Statistics.

An interesting survey, commissioned recently by the Transportation Ministry from the 'Midgam' (Sample) Institute, headed by Dr. Yitzhak Dayan, reveals some new opinions of the public regarding public transport. Made in July 2000, the survey shows that while the railways' image has been significantly improved, the image of other modes is in decline. 1208 people from 60 different places were questioned; a slightly increased use of public transport was revealed; 89% used at least one mode, though 50% are car owners. Only 11% didn't use public transport at all. - 78% used an urban or inter-urban bus in one way or another. - 72% used urban buses, of which 30% were commuters. - 61% used interurban buses, of which 6% were commuters. - 56% used service taxis (midi-buses), of which 8% were commuters. - 53% used 'special' taxis, of which 3% were commuters. - 39% used the railways, but only 1% were commuters - that means that the railways have a huge potential ! The preferred intercity mode is Israel Railways, at 51% ! Bus share is 26%, taxis 19%. Reasons for preferring rail are: Speed 72%, travelling comfort 57%.

[Editor Notes: I am wary of such surveys, even when the news is good. A lot depends on where people were asked! On a street corner? Outside a car park? Outside a bus station? A railway station? An urban shopping mall, or an out-of-town shopping mall (which most reach by car)? Just over 1,200 people is not so much on which to base a national policy.....]

e). Advertising and Politics.

A new IR publicity campaign began on 31/01/01; since the country was in the grip of an election campaign, the slogans took on and parodied the political theme - "13 Million have already voted !", "Only the train will bring us peacefully", "Bottle-necks, nerves, delays - shall we continue ?" The campaign cost \$100,000 and was run through an advertising agency. The main message is that, in these days of elections and decision-making regarding the future of Israel, 13 million passengers had already voted that the railways are their choice of transport. (Incidentally, it is hoped the 2001 figure will reach 17 M.)

f). Vacuums Abhor Nature.....

Another tender has been issued - for supply, installation and maintenance of a vacuum system for emptying toilets on rolling stock at the new Lod depot. Implementation within 6 months (what happens before then ?) and bids have to be by 04/04/2001.

g). Beit Shemesh Developments.

Sybil Ehrlich writes: "In connection with building work on a new shopping mall at the entrance to Beit Shemesh, right next to the railway station, the area has been cleared and flattened, and it is now possible to approach the station buildings from the other side (south). I went up there a couple of weeks ago - a very sunny day after several days of torrential rain, and it was like a bog - but I was able to go into some of the old buildings, which still have their plumbing arrangements intact - Turkish toilet (a hole in the ground and two footstands) - in addition to an ordinary toilet. Yes, bogs of all kinds... I also went UNDER the water tower. The access road to the station is apparently going to be a dual carriageway, and there will be lots of parking in the area. It looks like they are not touching the station buildings."

h). Campaign for Modi'in Rail Link

Aharon Gazit has sent a cutting from 'Ha'aretz' of 21/02/02 regarding the increased demand for some planned transportation in the Modi'in region. (he himself lives there !). The SPNI called a meeting on 20/02 to discuss the problem, whereby car-bound commuters require up to an hour and a quarter to get into Tel Aviv. "At the meeting they learned that the fate of the rail line to Modi'in depends on the decision regarding the Jerusalem-Tel Aviv line. At least, that is how the Ministry of Finance sees it. 'All of the master plans state that no matter how much we develop the roads, in another few years we'll again be stuck in a traffic jam', says the SPNI's Director-General, Miki Lifshitz. 'We erred by not promoting the issue 10 or 15 years ago.' Modi'in, which was established in 1996, today has 30,000 residents. According to the plans, it will have 240,000 residents. Amnon Cohen, the Deputy Director-General of the Institute for Transportation Research in Israel, said that the topic of the meeting should have been "Train Service for Modi'in - Yesterday". he says, 'It was a big mistake not to build the line to Modi'in when people started moving into the city. But we haven't missed the boat. Modi'in is still young and is expected to grow. The train line to Modi'in is in my eyes top priority because the residents' travel habits can still be changed. Developing a commuter railroad network in the center of the country, such as the lines to Kfar Sava, Rehovot and Rishon Letzion is much more essential than the line to Jerusalem.'" The government has already approved and allocated a budget for laying a track between

Tel Aviv and Ben-Gurion Airport and work on this segment is well underway. According to the Israel Railroad's [note Americanisms ! Ed.] representative at the meeting, Pinchas Ben Shaul, the length of the rail line from Ben Gurion airport to the planned "Modi'in outskirts" station is around 12 kilometres and the distance to the centre of the city, where an underground station is planned, is another five kilometres or so. He says that within a year and a half the process of getting the Planning Committee's approval is expected to end and then, in principle, it will be possible to start working on the project. The cost of the Ben Gurion to Modi'in segment is around NIS 300 million. During the first phase, only one track is planned, which will be enough to allow one train in each direction every half hour. [Aharon Gazit reckons that a half of the route is already essentially ready in the form of roadside reservations within the Modi'in town area. Ed.] Nevertheless, the government does not consider the Modi'in line a separate line, but rather sees it as part of another line. According to the Finance Ministry's representative at the meeting, Ofer Linchevsky, "You have to explain how things really work. Life is a serious choice between alternatives. The central dilemma now faced by the Finance and Transportation Ministries is how to develop the rail corridor to Jerusalem." There are two main plans for the Tel Aviv - Jerusalem line. The one being pushed by the Jerusalem Municipality is based on upgrading the existing track, which goes through Lod and Beit Shemesh. The second is a high-speed line on a new track, running through Ben Gurion airport and near Modi'in. This plan is favoured by the two ministries, Israel Railways and planning and environmental groups, even though it is much more expensive. The deputy head of the Modi'in Council, Yossi Bar David, accused the Jerusalem Municipality of torpedoing the plan for a high-speed line to Jerusalem, in an attempt to prevent its secular population's flight to Modi'in. "It turns out the considerations taken into account concerning rail services are not necessarily economic or relevant", he said. Linchevsky believes that "a Modi'in - Tel Aviv connection will be the bottom line, either via Ben-Gurion Airport or Ramle." However, Linchevsky told the audience at the meeting: "Unequivocally, there won't be two lines between Tel Aviv and Jerusalem. In other words, you are part of the fight to chose the right rail line between Jerusalem and Tel Aviv." "The bottleneck is not in the budget", Linchevsky said, "but in the Planning Committee. I hope the process of getting statutory approval takes three or four years." "If hundreds of objections are

submitted, there won't be a high-speed rail line. The decision-makers will break down and approve a more accessible alternative. That means we must mobilize, look at the big picture and overlook some obstacles or aesthetic damage in the project." At the end of the discussion, two Modi'in residents reacted to Linchevsky's remarks. Aharon Gazit said "Why should the Modi'in line come at the expense of Beit Shemesh? Beit Shemesh, which is planned to become a city of 150,000, also deserves the service. If there are two roads, one via Modi'in and one via Beit Shemesh, why shouldn't there be two rail lines? "..... Others called for focussing the public campaign on promoting a rail link between Ben-Gurion airport and Modi'in separately from the decision on the line to Jerusalem. There is some encouragement in the fact that around two years ago, there was a similar public discussion in Kfar Sava, organised by the SPNI, which was attended by the SPNI Director-General and Linchevsky. Last year, the Tel Aviv - Rosh Ha'Ayin line was inaugurated. This year, work is starting on extending the line to Kfar Sava, for a cost of some NIS 230 million."

[Editor notes - How interesting that Nothing in Israel, but nothing, not even the debate about whether to build a railway line through Modi'in, can be separated from the issue of religious - 'secular' demographics and the special nature of Jerusalem !]

i). Transport Ministers.

"Ha'aretz" also pointed out that the new Transport Minister, to be appointed to the Sharon Cabinet, would be the fifth person to serve in that post in as many years. They include: - Yitzhak Levy: June 1996 - February 1998 (resigned when he was appointed education minister in the Netanyahu government.); - Shaul Yahalom February 1998 - July 1999 (after the early elections of May 1999); - Yitzhak Mordechai: July 1999 - May 2000 (resigned after it was decided to try him on charges of sexual harassment); - Amnon Lipkin-Shahak: June 2000 until the new government makes its appointment. (In fact Ephraim Sneh has since been appointed; his attitude to and knowledge of railways remains at time of writing an unknown quantity.)

j). Purim Spiel.

On Friday 09/03/01 IR operated a special timetable; this was Purim, a Jewish carnival festival, on which many people go with their children to malls, cinemas, amusement parks etc. As a result, 12 trains were added on the Tel Aviv - Haifa line, 4 on the Tel Aviv - Beer Sheva line, and 3

on the Tel Aviv - Rehovot line.

k). Budget Approval.

The Ministry of Finance General Accountant Special Committee approved on 07/03/01 a special budget of \$55 Million for completing rail projects in the Greater Tel Aviv area. This was at the request of Mr. Ben-Zion Salman, the General Manager of the Transportation Ministry. The budget is divided as follows: - \$40 M for building the link to Ben-Gurion Airport, planned for completion in March 2001. - \$8 M. for the revival of Rosh Ha-Ayin - Kfar Sava line, and railway stations at Kfar Sava and Kessem Interchange near Rosh Ha-Ayin. - About \$2.2 million for completion of the new double-deck rolling stock depot already under construction at Lod. The rest of the budget is for various other works.

l). More Tenders.

(i). **TK/KB/03/01** for communication works at Ben-Gurion Airport Link. Works include: laying signalling and communication cable between Ganot Junction (road) and the airport, into a concrete channel, laying telephone cable, earthworks, etc. Works are estimated for implementation within 8 weeks, and last date for bidding is 29/03/01. (ii). **TK/KB/02/01** for signalling and communication works at Mamshit station (on the line to Har Tzin.) Works are similar to the tender above, with the same dates for bidding and implementation. (iii). **HN/KB/07/01**: for building a parking area at Hadera West station. Works include earthmoving, asphalt, concrete, lighting and drainage. There are to be two structures, at the southern and northern ends. Implementation is 4 four months for each structure, and the last date for bidding is also 29/03/01. (iv). **HN/K/04/01**: for rebuilding the base of a railway bridge over the Naaman river at Km. 18.742 (from Haifa) near Akko. Time of implementation: 4 months: bids by 16/04. (v). **HN/KB06/01**: For carrying out various works at the stations of Binyamina, Hadera West and Netanya; To include: fences, lighting, walls, access ramps for disabled. Time for implementation: up to 5 months. Bids by 05/04/01. (vi). **MS/MK/SR/05/01**: For freight feeding services to and from railway stations all over the network, including to and from ports. The contract is for up to 36 months, bids by 17/04/01. (vi). **NO/ER/07/01**. For providing Ticket Selling Facilities on IR. The idea is to provide services for sales stands, automatic ticket vending machines, information stands and stewardesses from time to time as required. The tender relates to the operational zones: Southern: From Tel Aviv University Stn. southwards. Northern: From Herzliyya Stn. northwards. Competitors may offer for one or both

zones. Basic contract is for 24 months, with additional options up to 36 months, Bids to be in by 17/04/01. (vii). **HN/KB/09/01**. For building a pedestrian pathway alongside the Haifa - Kiryat Motzkin line at Hutzot HaMifratz station (currently under construction) - to include earthworks, asphalt, concrete, lighting and a separating fence. Time for implementation, 2 months; bids by 16/04/01. (viii). **ME/RK/2001/6**. Allowance for using a building in the Bnei Barak Station area for commercial purposes. Contract for 36 months, bids by 18/04/01. (ix). **Options for car rental services of various kinds** - private, passenger, pick-up, field vehicles. Contract for 12 months with option extension to 48 months. Bids by 16/04/01. (x). **MS/RK/2001/13**, for using an area within Binyamina station for operating taxi services to and from the station; for up to 36 months, tenders by 25/04/01.

m). Friday Improvements.

IR General Manager Amos Uzani has announced that from 16/03/02 a special timetable will be introduced on Fridays. 20 trains will be added to both intercity and suburban services, whilst two trains will be added on Saturday night (the end of Sabbath.) He explained that with this addition passengers will be able to use trains for general arrangements on Fridays as well as soldiers going home for weekends, thus relieving the pressure on weekends.

n). Ashdod Line Works.

A Press Release on 14/03/01 announced that works on the line would lead to bus substitution of some services over the night 15-16/03, with the last two trains on 15/03 terminating at Lod and the first two on 16/03 departing from Lod.

o). Yet further positive statistics.

In a Press Release of 19/03/01, Amos Uzani announced that in Feb. 2001 1.087 Million passengers had been carried, an increase of 20% over Feb. 2000. From the beginning of 2001 2.19M had used rail, as compared with 1.8M in the first two months of 2000. The increase in passenger traffic compared to Feb. 2000 can be divided as follows: Ashdod - Haifa - Nahariyya: 62,000 = +24%
Tel Aviv - Ashdod: 162,000 = +14%
Tel Aviv - Beer Sheva: 97,353 = +329%
(note this is the only exact figure).

Uzani also announced that Israel Railways will soon put a development programme before the newly-elected Prime Minister Ariel Sharon. This will include the Tel Aviv - Ben Gurion Airport - Modi'in - Jerusalem fast link, as well as a new link

from Tel Aviv to Rishon LeZion West, as well as completing the suburban link from Rosh Ha-Ayin to Kfar Sava. He said that in recent years most of the financial resources have gone into the 'longitudinal' lines from Nahariyya to Beer Sheva; only last year was the first 'transverse' line Tel Aviv - Rosh Ha-Ayin opened, whilst the second 'transverse', that to the airport, is under way. Immediate implementation of the transverse lines can be the only ultimate solution for traffic congestion, from Jerusalem and Modi'in at the eastern entrances to Tel Aviv, as well as from Petah Tikva, Kfar Sava and Rishon LeZion. In addition, connecting "ring lines" will be needed later on. The cost of the three lines Tel Aviv - Jerusalem, Rosh Ha-Ayin - Kfar Sava and Tel Aviv - Rishon LeZion will be around \$835M, including infrastructure development and railway equipment purchasing. Israel Railways believes that Mr. Sharon, who is well aware of the transportation needs - since he was Infrastructure Minister - will support the newly-appointed Transportation Minister Ephraim Sneh (Brig.-Gen. Retd.), who is (hopefully) very much in favour of railways. Mr. Uzani believes that the new government is to decide very soon about the new Jerusalem link, which is considered as one of the most important national projects.

In a later report to the Council of the Ports & Railways Authority, Uzani announced that the IR budget of \$182M for 2001 had been approved and priority projects, hopefully for completion within this year, include: - double-tracking Lod - Rehovot at \$10.8 M. - Acoustic protection on the Tel Aviv - Lod line at \$2.4M. - Hazardous Materials terminal at Beer Sheva at \$12.5M. - The T.A. - Ben Gurion line at \$17.5M. - A third track in the Ayalon Corridor at \$3.6M. - Upgrading the Kiryat Motzkin - Akko line, at \$2.4M. - \$148M on rolling stock and motive power to arrive before Sept. 2002. [Acoustic Protection" normally means sound-walls to buffer the noise of passing trains - since most of the Tel Aviv - Lod line is laid adjacent to a busy motorway and the rest under the flight-path to the airport, it is hard to see where and how such sound-walls would be needed. Ed.] Gad Yacobi, the Chairman of the P&RA, said that "giving national priority to the railways is expressed in budgets, which will give an answer to the growing demand for rail traffic. The more we improve the infrastructures, services and equipment, the higher usage of rail will be seen, thus justifying the investments."

p). Budget Approval.

On the same date, the Transportation Min-

istry issued its own press release regarding promotion of available projects in excess of \$164M, this is addition to the general budget of \$900M already approved. The railway projects included in this additional budget, which has been presented to the Prime Minister's office by the General Manager of the Transportation Ministry, Mr. Ben-Zion Salman, are: Tel Aviv - Rishon LeZion West, Ben Gurion Airport - Modi'in, and Ashdod - Askelon, the latter for freight only. The budget requested for the three lines is \$33.5M. The encouraging point in the Ministry's press release is the fact that, although a lot of money is still to be invested in roads (and we must remember that Mr. Salman was formerly the G.M. of the Israel Public Works Dept. and is essentially a road engineer) they do seem to recognise that even if more roads are to be built, they will never be able to cope with the growth in car ownership, so that Israel can only be saved from a total gridlock by dramatic changes in the rail network.

q). Segulah.

This word means something like "redemption" in Hebrew. But the new station of Segulah at Petah Tikvah was opened on Sunday 25th. March 2001 - without ceremony. The station, which cost \$1.2M, has all the facilities necessary. During the construction period after the line to Rosh Ha-Ayin opened, a temporary platform was used. Already 40,000 passengers use this station monthly. Trackworks associated with the opening meant that there were no services over this line on the preceding Friday 23/3/01. A photo shows a loop at the site, but as yet only one platform. It was announced on opening day that yet another new station is to be built in the Petach Tikva area, at Kiryat-Arye, serving a large industrial zone, as well as a new and rapidly-developing nearby residential area known as "Em-HaMoshavot". The station is to be located near an exit to the Ayalon East highway and will also in the future incorporate one of the Tel Aviv LRV-Metro depots.

r). Double-Decker Arrivals.

On 26/03/01 two double-deck train sets from Bombardier at Görlitz were to be loaded at the port of Hamburg. They were expected to start test running on 10/04/01. Since the depot at Lod is still under construction, the two sets will be based temporarily at Haifa East, but will be operated throughout other parts of the network. (A telephone call from Aharon on 19/4 confirmed that they had arrived and were being 'tried' on runs to Nahariyya.) The intention will be to use

these sets eventually on the Rosh Ha-Ayin line, thus freeing IC3's for their more natural inter-city duties. Aharon Gazit has sent some arrangement drawings - which reveal that they are almost identical to the DB sets currently also built there, but the driving trailer seats 80 instead of 79 and the centre coach has 142 seats as compared to the DB version's 128 - the difference being due to the lack of any 1st. Class on IR, so that all seats are configured 2+2 and there are no 2+1 sections. A 4-car set therefore has a capacity of 506 seated - maybe up to a thousand with standees under crush conditions! The Driving Trailer is 27.250mm long, the centre trailers 26.800mm long. Both versions are 20.000mm between bogie centres, 2.744mm wide and 4.631,5mm high over rail level. An item in "Eisenbahn Kurier" 5/2001 p. 20 shows 3 trailers and a driving trailer/generator coach on a test run from Görlitz behind DB Co-Co 232-644 on 13/3/2001. The livery is the current "DB Red" with basalt-grey roofs and a white stripe (technically 'light grey') at frame level and another between the two rows of windows. The swing doors are also light grey. The strip is interrupted by the grilles in the generator coach. In one photo the destination "Tel Aviv Haganah" can be seen in yellow dot-matrix Hebrew characters, implying that the coaches are fully fitted out with all electronics whilst in Germany. Seating is apparently covered in dark blue with the IR logo in red, and dark blue/black patterned carpets are fitted in both upper and lower deck saloons.

s). Diesel Loco Arrivals.

Four or five of the ten diesel-electric Alstom MEGA locos ordered from Valencia, Spain will arrive in Israel towards the end of May 2001, with the remainder to be delivered within the next two to three months.

t). More Massive Stock Orders?

It is reported that IR is seriously considering the possibility of ordering about ONE HUNDRED single-deck push/pull coaches and 20 power cars / driving trailers to cope with the growing traffic.

u). More Doubling to Beer Sheba.

On 26/03/01 it became known that the new Minister of Finance, Mr. Silvan Shalom, is keen to see the line to his home town of Beer Sheba doubled throughout.

v). Another new Station.

IR have agreed to add a new station at Netanya South, to be built by 'the private sector.'

w). Nahariyya Station rebuilt.

From a press release: On Thursday 05/04/01 the first stage of the rebuilt Nahariyya station was opened. Almost \$1M has been invested in this station, which serves more than 100,000 passengers monthly. In addition, about \$1.2M has been invested in a new ultra-modern control system replacing outdated equipment. The new building is now suitable for modern passenger needs, and includes ticket selling positions, a waiting room, gardens and landscaping, an outer waiting room with canopies, and modern toilet facilities. The former low platform has been rebuilt and is now 50cm. higher to ease the boarding of trains. Mr. Uzani announced that this station is symbolic of the momentum of development which IR has achieved in the past few years. He added that, thanks to improvements, journey time between Nahariyya and Tel Aviv has been cut by 30 minutes to 90 minutes, which has brought a rise of 30% in passenger traffic on the Tel Aviv - Nahariyya route and 56% on Ashdod - Haifa - Nahariyya in the year 2000. At the next stage, to cost a further \$1M, a second platform will be built with a length of 230m., and an underground pedestrian subway to link the two, with elevators for the disabled. These changes will permit two trains to be at the station at the same time, thus enabling an increase in the number operated. (At present there is a second track forming a run-round loop and originally for further freight access northwards to Betzeta.) In a new timetable from the end of 2002 there will be two trains hourly from Nahariyya, one for Beer Sheva and the other to Tel Aviv or Ben Gurion Airport.

x). Kfar Saba Plans.

An item in "City Lights", part of the Jerusalem Post, back on 24/11/2000, noted: "Frustrated commuters from Kfar Saba will be pleased to know that help is on the way. Israel Rail has now issued a tender for railway lines for the new suburban train which is to run from Kfar Saba to Rosh Ha'ayin..... Work is expected to begin in January 2001 and to be completed within 18 months. Benny Naor said..." "Work will begin in the new year when we receive the budget. Kfar Saba's first train station will be Nordau St., with the second, Sokolov St., due to open six months later. The train journey to Tel Aviv will take 50 minutes with stops at Kfar Kassim junction, Rosh Ha'ayin, Afek, Ramat Gan Stadium and University." This is intriguing, as the station names don't match such new stops as Petach Tikvah, Segula and B'nei Berak. Is it a totally new route ?

y). Rehovot Station Rebuilding.

Jeremy Topaz of Rehovot writes: "At the beginning of March, the new station building was opened on the south side of the track at Rehovot, and the old building on the north side was closed. The opening went without fanfare, because this is only the first stage of the planned four-platform station. The old station, which dates from Mandatory times, was then quickly demolished and work has already begun on the larger north-side build-

Continued on page 7



NOTES AND COMMENTS.

a). A Query from the AWM Photo Database.

By Paul Cotterell. Negative Number C03833 in the Australian War Memorial photograph collection raises an intriguing query. The print is captioned: 'Palestine c. 1918. A Rolls Royce armoured car belonging to a British armoured car unit loaded on a flat bed railway wagon'. Not much can be seen of the wagon, just the upper side planks, but all the lettering is clearly visible. The wagon is No. 26, lettered W.O.R., or just possibly W.G.R. - there is a spot or blemish on the photo. What does W.O.R. / W.G.R. stand for? Both the lettering and number are rendered in a bold style, very characteristic of contemporary American railroads. Is it possible that standard gauge freight vehicles were sent out to Egypt/Palestine from the USA in World War I? [alongside the Baldwin 4-6-0's. Ed.] Certainly I don't recall any such shipment, though I know practically nothing of railway affairs in Egypt at this period.

b). Baghdad Bahn Memories.

Prof. Dr. Werner Arnold of the Semitistik Dept. of Heidelberg University is an expert on various Arabic dialects in Turkey and in a recent conversation told me of the Hotel Baron at Aleppo Station; it is run by an Armenian Christian family. Those who come to stay there (and many had to in the days when it stood at the junction of the route to Baghdad) will even now be asked in which room they would like to sleep - in that used by Agatha Christie, or T.E. Lawrence, or..... any of a series of famous travellers of former days! At the Jewish festival of Sukkot it is a custom to wave palm and other branches wrapped together to form a "Lulav". The Jews in Istanbul had no access to such items - the Jews of Iskanderun did. So - for many years, the head of the Iskanderun community, Mr. Selim Mugarbi, would send the necessary palm leaves by train to Istanbul Haydarpasha station, where they would be collected by the head of the Jewish community there! Although the Iskanderun community dwindled to a few families and has now closed, Mr. Mugarbi has sworn to maintain the supply as long as he lives - though nowadays the leaves go by bus, as it is so much quicker!

c). Former WD 2-10-0's in Greece.

Further to earlier comments (e.g. 44:13), an article in 'DGEG Nachrichten' (of the "Deutsche Gesellschaft für Eisenbahngeschichte") Nr. 159 Jan/Feb. 2001, cover plus pp. 4-6, includes 4 colour and three b/w photos of the surviving WD 2-10-0's as Hellenic State Railways Class Lambda-Beta 962 and 964. The article, by Artemis Klonos and Yiannis Zartaloudes, includes a brief

Continued from page 6

ing. It is reported that it will be completed in one year. At present, there are just two platform faces, on the island platform in the middle. This is accessible only through the underground passage that will eventually link the two sides. The platform next to the new building is incomplete and no track has been laid there. There is a parking lot for some 200 cars, plus places for taxis, buses and cars of the handicapped. Access by car is somewhat awkward for those coming from the north (Nes Ziona, etc.) as no left turn is permitted from the main road. When the new section is completed, it will be very convenient for them as well as for drivers using Rehovot's new Eastern bypass. This has just been opened and links the High-Tech industry park, to which the station is adjacent, with the eastern side of Rehovot.

The attached photo was taken just after the opening, but the old line in the foreground has since been removed. It will be refurbished as Platform 1 of the new station.

table of the fates of the 16 locos (all built NBL 1943/44): Lb 951, NBL 25438, WD 73652, Now on North Yorkshire Moors Rly. as 'Sturdee'. Lb 952, NBL 25439, WD 73653, Scrapped 1984/5 in Thessaloniki. Lb 953, NBL 25440, WD 73654, Scrapped 1984/5 in Thessaloniki. Lb 954, NBL 25441, WD 73655, Scrapped 1984/5 in Thessaloniki. Lb 955, NBL 25442, WD 73656, Standing in poor condition at Thessaloniki. Lb 956, NBL 25443, WD 73657, Scrapped 1984/5 in Tithorea. Lb 957, NBL 25444, WD 73658, Scrapped 1984/5 in Tithorea. Lb 958, NBL 25445, WD 73659, Scrapped 1984/5 in Athens. Lb 959, NBL 25446, WD 73660, Scrapped 1984/5 in Thessaloniki. Lb 960, NBL 25458, WD 73672, Now on North Yorkshire Moors Railway, "Dame Vera Lynn". Lb 961, NBL 25460, WD 73674. Stored in poor condition at Archane station, Athens. Lb 962, NBL 25463, WD 73677. Serviceable at Thessaloniki. Lb 963, NBL 25464, WD 73678. Scrapped 1984/5 in Thessaloniki. Lb 964, NBL 25468.

WD 73682. Serviceable at Thessaloniki. Lb 965, NBL 25469, WD 73683. Scrapped 1984/5 in Tithorea. Lb 966, NBL 25470, WD 73684. Stored in poor condition at Thessaloniki.

d). On 46:16. The Ramat Gan Narrow Gauge Line.

Hans Kohut remarks in a letter: "I know the area around Jerisha, the Ten Mills and surroundings quite well, because in 1947 we (i.e. the Haganah) patrolled and defended the banks of the Yarkon River. I remember it well. Our adversaries did not speak only Arabic, but also German and probably Croatian too. Luckily we were able to penetrate their lines of communications, and thereby secured this area. There is a small monument at the end of Abba Hillel Silver Road, next to the stadium, where the Allenby Army crossed the river in 1917. I was transferred in early 1948 to another 'Front', opposite Tel Litvinsky (Tel Shomer today), where the U.S. Army and other Allied forces stayed from 1943 onwards."

e). On 51:7: Hedjaz Forestry Branch.

Sybil Ehrlich writes: "On page 15 you mention the line from Aneiza to Hisheh Forest in Jordan and express surprise that it should be marked on a map published in the 1960s. Well, I've got news for you. It appears on a map published in 1997! The 1:250,000 Survey of Israel map, Hebrew edition, shows it clearly marked as "Lo beShimush" - "not in use". But strangely, the 1995 Survey of Israel 1:400,000 map of Israel and Jordan (English edition) doesn't mark it. I bought this map for my trip to Petra last year. All the stations in Jordan are marked and named (which is one reason why I bought the map!!). Shown on this map is a line from just south of Ma'an (no triangle shown), southwest through Mahattat Samma and Mahattat Lasan Awwal to a terminus at Mahattat en-Naqb. Our route by minibus passed what should have been the station at en-Naqb, and crossed the line at Lasan Awwal. There was nothing there. I asked our Jordanian guide about it and he said it is "old". I remember there was considerable road construction work in the area."

f). More notes on Maps Old and New: Sybil Ehrlich had time one day, standing waiting to be served at the Survey of Israel offices, to look at the various maps on the walls. She writes: "For some extraordinary reason, the physical maps (coloured to show heights of land) show the Jordanian line to the forest, whereas on other maps it is not shown! She ended up writing a letter to a Mr. Baruch Peretzman of the Survey: "I was surprised

to see that the 1:100,000 map, sheet 11-12, dated 2000, shows the narrow gauge railway line to the Beit Shemesh quarries, (ending at grid reference 1519.1300), which was dismantled more than 20 years ago. The map shows the new housing developments in Ramat Beit Shemesh, the Tunnels Road between Gush Etzion and Jerusalem, and the areas under Palestinian Authority responsibility. In those departments it is very up-to-date. When I saw that the dismantled railway line doesn't appear on the 1:50,000 and 1:25,000 map, I rejoiced to think that the Survey of Israel staff had taken note of my remarks on the same subject several years ago, but it seems there is no co-ordination between the different map scales."

g). The Rakevet HaEmek in Israel days.

I received a call from Dror Allon telling me that IR did run trains to Afule - the Station Master there, Gordon, was later transferred to Jerusalem. (He has since also passed away). However, trains never ran beyond Afule - the line had been cut at Beit HaShitta and Beisan, and indeed various Kibbutzim had cut the line and used the rails for various sorts of fortifications.

h). On 51:11 - Sejed. Paul Cotterell writes:

"Ron Shafir and I have talked long and earnestly about Sejed station, and I have no problem with his findings concerning the existence and location of this station. However, I remain unconvinced about the identity of the station in the old photo reproduced on p. 20. Ron has shown me the two copy prints and yes, indeed they are notated El Sejed. Nevertheless, this looks more like the original station building at Deir a-Ban (now Bet Shemesh). Compare this shot with that on p. 21. Why does no station building appear in this second view which certainly does show El Sejed ? Or, reversing the question, why does the large round water tank in the view on p. 21 not appear in that on p. 20 ? It will be further noted that the people in the photo on p. 20 are sitting on the edge of a low platform; the shot of El Sejed on p. 21 shows no platform, while it is known that Deir a-Ban station had just such a rudimentary platform." The controversy continues ! In the meantime, Sybil Ehrlich made a visit in April to check up the remains in the article. She writes: "I walked along the track from Beit Shemesh and sure enough, I found the trees and the stone base of the tower. Since it was the only shady spot on the whole route, and it was soon after 1pm when I got there, it was the perfect place for lunch. There I was spread out all over the track - knapsack, camera, map, water bottle, half-eaten matza in one hand, when I heard a TOOT ! and - what was coming towards me ? I scrambled to get all my belongings (and myself) to safety.- The PW trolley had five or six passengers. I grinned and waved, and they waved back. They didn't stop, so I wasn't able to ask for a lift back to Beit Shemesh - and instead walked up to Moshav Tel Shahar to get a bus. I managed to extract from Mr. Marciano of Lod, who is in charge of the PW trolleys, the information that there is no regular timetable for them, and that this was a one-off trip. So I'm doubly annoyed that I couldn't get a picture. Also he said that they go only as far as Beit Shemesh - nothing goes to Jerusalem."

i). On 51:12 - Lod J&J Junction.

An apology is due.... the illustrations to match this article got mixed up in transit - the Editor sent a Registered Letter with discette and all photos, maps etc., and this arrived in Leeds in the form of a soggy pulp - several e-mails later Steve at CPS Printers had got most of everything sorted out; But one sketch showing the layout of the J&J station appears to have been lost, and the sketch map of the junction was reproduced away from the article.

j). Palestine, Texas.

Reference has been made before to the tourist railway here - a photo appears in CRJ 123.

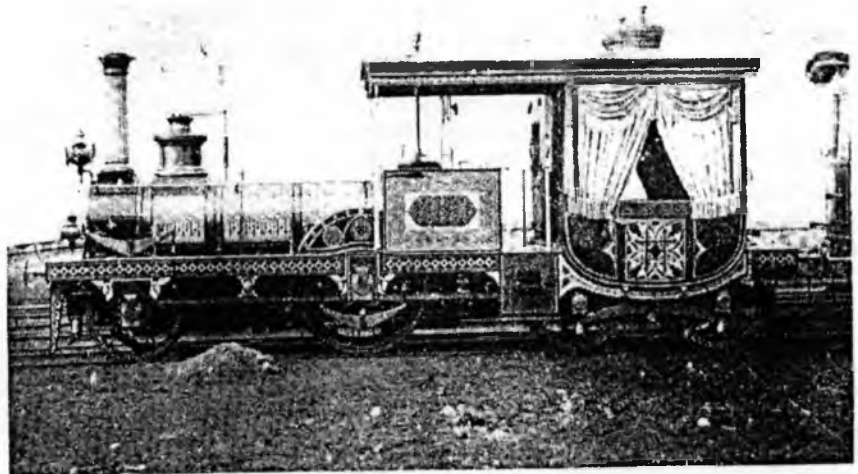
k). Rosh Hanikra.

I have mentioned previously a scheme to improve the educational quality and content

of the Rosh Hanikra site on the border with Lebanon, and a scheme has now been put forward for some government funding - problems include the fact that the local regional Council wants to improve access to beaches by removing the rails, and the northern suburbs of Nahariyya also do not want rail traffic resumed. Uri Osri has asked if any readers have information or materials that might be of interest, photos that can be copied, etc. relating to this Haifa - Beirut - Tripoli line, that they contact him direct at: Kibbutz Rosh Hanikra, D.N. Galil HaMa'arav 22825, Israel.

l). On 49:17: Tirat Yehuda Revised.

Paul Cotterell writes: "It now seems evident that the IR-built branch to Tirat Yehuda did not close "about 1965" as I surmised in 49:17. The evidence is provided by Accident Notice No. 14953/1 dated 4.7.1977, and translates as follows: "Wagon 25.239 (loaded ballast) derailed on two wheels on the Tirat Yehuda branch while on company work. Rerailed by the company with help of Railway gang at 11.30 hours." I assume that 'the company' referred to would be the Tirat Yehuda quarry owners. This would mean that stone was still being brought out of the quarry by IR as late as 1977, if not later. This seems to accord with my vague recollections of the line still being intact, if not actually in use, about the time I left Israel for Canada in 1979. But does anyone know when traffic finally ceased ?



m). Egyptian "Kiosk" Locos.

Further to 49:14 and 50:6, (and a photo of one loco which appeared in the inside back cover of issue 50) Paul has sent a photocopy of an illustration from "Guinness Book of Rail Facts and Feats", described as a "steam railcar built for the Viceroy of Egypt around 1859."

AUSTRALIAN MEMORIALS AND ANOTHER DOSE OF DISINFECTANT.

By Paul Cotterell.

“Previous notes on the ESR disinfectant trains of World War I have appeared in 49:14 and 50:6. The following slight snippet might make one or two pulses race - though not, I hope, for the wrong reasons. I've spent a lot of time lately browsing through the photo database of the Australian War Memorial via the internet (address is <<http://www.awm.gov.au/database/photo/asp>>) It certainly repaid the effort, for there are many splendid shots of Palestine, Sinai and Egypt from both World Wars. Not only can you actually see them on the screen, but you can print them off too, or use the order form to buy yourself quality glossy prints (not cheap). But getting back to the subject in hand..... Negative number H00876 is captioned 'Disinfectant Van at Ismalia' (sic.), being dated vaguely 1914-18. It shows what looks like one of the ESR Franco-Belge 0-6-0STs, with a single covered van in tow lettered DISINFECTOR VAN. A group of embarrassed and bare-assed soldiers huddle around while their uniforms are being de-loused. Incongruously, while they are otherwise as naked as the day they were born, all the men have topees on their heads and army issue socks and boots on their feet. The whole scene is...well.... piquant. Alan Clothier, in particular, may find the above information of use for his forthcoming book on Egyptian locos (if it's not already in preparation). There are other shots of disinfectant trains to be found in the AWM collection, most of them in the Sinai Desert and including some real crackers (ESR Singles and such like.) He might like to know that there isn't a great deal on the ESR in Egypt itself, though Neg. No. H03193 is a lovely (and rare) elevated shot of an inside-cylinder 4-6-0 leaving Alexandria with a troop train for Cairo ca. 1917. H03192 appears to show the same train from a rear angle and features some of those ubiquitous 6-wheel wooden ESR coaches, one of which is now preserved at the IRM at Haifa East. From WW2 is a fine shot (Neg. No. 025210) of an 8F with "A New Zealand ambulance train leaving Burg el Arab for base hospitals in the Nile area with casualties from the Allied advance which started on 1942-10-23." The AWM has some 220,000 photos in its collection. Obviously only a relative fraction are of Middle East railways, but there was enough pertinent material to keep me happily goggle-eyed for days on end. The above notes are meant as no more than an appetiser.”

52:7.

OTHER MIDDLE EAST RAILWAYS.

A. IRAN.

(i). **Railcars.** (See Harak. 51:6:E (i)): According to 'Today's Railways' 62, (2/2001), p. 40, the following nine former BR Class 141 2-car dmu's have been sold to Iran: 141.102, 141.107, 141.109, 141.111, 141.114, 141.115, 141.117, 141.119, 141.120.

(ii). **International - to Turkey and Syria.** On 10th. March 2001 a new international service began linking Tehran and Damascus ! The weekly service leaves Tehran every Saturday and arrives at Damascus on Mondays; the return journey - remarkably - has the same days, implying the use of two trainsets which each spent four days lying idle. The route is Tehran - Tabriz - Van - Tatvan - Elazig - Malatya - Narli - Fevzipasa - Meydan Ekbez - Halab (Aleppo) - Damascus, and trains take 60 hours for the journey of 2244 rail kilometres plus 75km. on the Lake Van ferry. The train conveys seating and sleeping cars from the Iranian Islamic Republic Railways (IIRR) and from Syrian Railways (CFS) - it is not yet known if a restaurant car is attached. Exact timings are not yet available - Herr Rachdi of 'Fahrplancenter News' is endeavouring to find out more.

(British readers will understand the Editor's prayer that the 141's are not used on such a service! See also below under 'Syria'.)

(iii). **International - to Turkey.** The railways of Turkey and Iran commenced a new Tehran - Istanbul service on 12th. March 2001. The weekly service leaves Haydarpasa every Monday at 20.05 and arrives Tehran Wednesday at 10.55. The return journey leaves Tehran every Tuesday (time not known) and arrives at Haydarpasa Thursday at 21.15. (Note again, this requires use of two train sets.) The route is Haydarpasa - Izmit - Eskisehir - Ankara - Kayseri - Yolcati - Elazig - Tatvan - Van - Razi - Tehran, and the journey takes 40 hours each way for 2916 rail kilometres plus the 75km. ferry. The train conveys rolling stock from the IIRR and TCDD and consists of seating, sleeping and restaurant car. Details of fares and intermediate timings are still being sought.

(iv). **International - to Uzbekistan & Tajikistan.** Since January 2001 a direct passenger train is also running weekly from Tehran to Mashhad - Sarakhs (border station and gauge-changing station) - Tedzhen - Charjew - Bukhoro (Bokhara) - Samarkand - Tashkent. The entire journey takes 65 hours including gauge-changing. This train also conveys a sleeper Tehran - Bukhoro - Termiz - Dushanbe (Tajikistan.) At Tashkent connections to and from Almaty (Kazakhstan) are offered four times a week. From Almaty twice-weekly a passenger train runs to Urumqi in China. So the above-mentioned trains are linking Istanbul and Damascus with Beijing in China with only 4 stopovers en route. Timetable details and fares are still not available. Kazakh Railways expects to speed up the Almaty - Urumqi train in about two years with two sets of Spanish-built Talgo trains, ordered in late 1999. A further order of Talgo trains is planned to be placed by 2002 for another two or three sets to operate between Almaty and Tehran.

(v). **Iran to Pakistan.** The Line to Zahedan. Reports indicate that track-laying on the Kerman - Zahedan line is now almost complete on the first 224 km. between Kerman and Bam, the remaining 380 km. to Zahedan may be operational in 2002 or 2003. The international Zahedan - Quetta (Pakistan) train continues to run twice monthly only.

(vi) **International - Iran to Armenia, Azerbaijan and Russia.** There are now plans to reopen the Nakhitchevan - Erevan line for freight traffic, linking Iran with Russia and other parts of Azerbaijan. Azerbaijan officials prefer to rehabilitate the short section from Nakhitchevan to mainland Azerbaijan using only a 50km. corridor through Armeinan territory. A

decision on the reopening of one of the two lines may be taken during 2001 and freight services from Iran to Azerbaijan and Russian should resume in 2002.

B. SYRIA.

A Reuters report from Damascus dated 12/03/01 and published in "Gulf News" also refers to the link with Iran, and other developments. "Syria is planning to expand its railway network and to have rail links with Europe, Asia and the rest of the world, Transportation Minister Makram Obeid said. [Ed. notes - hopefully this refers to indirect links and does not mean that in future Syria's borders will connect to those of America and Australia!] Obeid was speaking on Saturday in Aleppo, some 3509 km. north of Damascus, after the inauguration of the first direct train link between Syria and Iran. The minister said Syria planned to improve and expand its rail services, building on last year's reopening of links with neighbouring Turkey, Iraq and Jordan. Officials said yesterday that Syria would invest some \$500 million in reopening electrified rail links between the Syrian capital and the borders with Lebanon and Jordan and southern Syrian cities and towns in the first stage. They said the rail link with Iran, costing \$35 a ticket, was expected to double the number of Iranians visiting Syria from 250,000 a year. Most Iranians, who go mainly to visit Shi'ite holy sites in and around Damascus, use commercial flights costing nearly \$200 a ticket. The first Syrian train left Aleppo for Tehran on Saturday following the arrival of the first train from Tehran, marking the opening of the regular 60-hour weekly trip, covering 2,500 kilometres through Syria, Turkey and Iran....."

C. HEDJAZ.

(i). **Yet another Tour.** From 20th. - 29th. April 2001, the Railway Touring Company will run yet another trip to Jordan and Syria - for details (and last-minute bookings) contact The Railway Touring Company, PO. Box 1012, Kings Lynn, PE30 3YN. fax. 0870-744-1649. <enquiries@railwaytouring.co.uk>

(ii). **Train Robbers.** A brief note in the Berlin "Tagesspiegel" on 11/03/01 - based on a 'dpa' despatch - indicates that a German agency is organising group trips to Jordan which incorporate "a ride on a train behind a steam loco built in 1908" and "a variety of options during the nine-hour journey, including a hold-up by Beduins on horseback."

(iii). "Great Railways Journeys" book. Marc Stegeman came across a Dutch version (!) of a book "Great Railway Journey:

From Aleppo to Akaba", by Alexei Sayle - a Rainbow Pocketbook. This is presumably the book of the BBC film in which Sayle traversed Syria and Jordan.

(iv). "Enthusiast Holidays" tour. Hugh Ballantyne led a group of mainly British enthusiasts on a tour in September 23000. Notes in the "Continental Railway Journal" No. 125 (Spring 2001) include: p. 155: Syria. The International Train Damascus - Amman was running twice a week, departing Damascus at 08.00 Mondays and Thursdays. On 14th. Sept. 2000 it was powered by diesel loco A-301; Specials were run with 0-6-2T 805 to Serghaya on 15/9 and to Tequieh (on the Serghaya line) on 15/9. Also on 15/9, 2-8-0 160 worked the heavily-laden Fridays Only public train to Serghaya, departing Damascus 08.20. On this day steam locos at Cadem included Hartmann 2-8-0 91 and SLM 2-6-0T 754 by the traverser, apparently requiring minor repairs. 2-6-0T 755 and 2-8-0 90 were under repair in the erecting shop, with the latter said to be nearing completion after many years out of use; Hartmann 2-8-2 260 was dead but serviceable, and 262 departed light engine to Dera'a. The former Haifa line into the Yarmuk gorge is now clear for about 7 km. from the top tunnel - Tunnel 7 - down to Zeizoun, with some relaying having been done where necessary. This reopened section includes three tunnels and three bridges, with the railway dramatically cut into the side of the gorge. Zeizoun station, near km. 136 from Haifa and some 25km. from Dera'a, is abandoned but has a run-round loop. On 13/9/00 Mikado 262 worked a special tender-first to Zeizoun, then chimney-first back to Dera'a; it then worked another special to Damascus. At Dera'a, Jung 2-6-0T+T 66 ran up and down the yard and surprisingly, 2-8-2 261 arrived with a freight from Cadem. On 16/9, 262 worked empty stock from Dera'a to Bosra, and later a special back to Dera'a. p.153f. Jordan. During the same tour, Jung 2-8-2 51, HSP 2-8-2 71 and Nippon Sharyo Pacific 82 were used on various specials north and south from Amman on 10-12/9 and 16/9/00. HSP 2-6-2T 61 was restricted to shunting wagons in the yard at Amman for the benefit of photographers. The RSH 2-8-2 23 was up on blocks outside the loco shed with all wheels removed and is to be repaired. The filming of 'Mummy 2' resulted in the application of much paint to locos and coaching stock. Some of the coaches were treated quite tastefully in dark red and cream, and the former black Pacific 82 is also acceptable in dark red. However, Mikado 71 has an excessive amount of red paint over its front end plus brown cylinders and steam dome, and 2-6-2T 61 has a

garish combination of dark red, blue and gold. Commercial traffic seen comprised A1A-A1A DE 40212 departing Amman on 11/9. with two red and yellow Romanian (sic. - actually Ganz/Hungarian) coaches and a fourgon on the "International" train to Damascus, and a pair of diesels hauling a northbound freight just after 08.00 on 10/9. There are several photos of parts of this tour and the interior of Cadem Works erecting shop in this issue.

(v). **The Czech railway magazine "Draha"** for 11/2000 had what appears to be a good and thorough treatment of the modern-day Hedjaz system on pp. 26-35, including motive power lists for the HJR and the ARC and photos by Gunther Koch and Martin Czerny.

D. LEBANON.

A strange snippet came my way in March, from David Stiffelman: "LEBANON: TRANSPORT MINISTER VISITS RAIL ROLLING STOCK DEPARTMENT. According to Al-Mustaqbal newspaper, in mid-June 2000 Minister of Transport and Public Works Najib Miqati toured the Maar Makhayel A-Nahar Regional Railway Rolling Stock Department, accompanied by Head of Land and Marine Transportation Abdul Hafez Al-Qaissi. Departmental Manager Jamal Karim said that the department employs a staff of 920 drivers and administrative grades, most of whom are close to retiring age. The newspaper notes that the Minister of Transport reported on progress in the planning of the new Tripoli - Homs and Jounia - Al-Jaya railway lines." I suspect the term "Rail Rolling Stock Dept." may be a reference to the sidings filled with rotting and rusting wagons at Beirut. The idea that almost a thousand staff have sat and quietly vegetated for almost two decades awaiting their well-earned retirement from a railway system that has hardly worked in that time is really rather bizarre, and must be worth a novel at some time. Can any reader add more information ?

E. PALESTINE.

Land Links. In an interview in 'Ma'ariv' in March, Dr. Asaf Ashar, a former Israeli living in the USA and working at Washington's National Research Institute, said that only a rail link between the Gaza Strip and the West Bank can reduce tension between Israel and the Palestinians and perhaps lead to peace. Dr. Ashar, an Industry and Management Engineer, specialises in integration between land and sea transportation. Although his idea is not new, the point is that he rejects all ideas of "safe passage" by elevated highways, claiming that in addition to the astronomic

sums of money such will cost, security will be almost impossible. A rail link, in contrast, is not only cheaper to build but viable, as most of it not only exists but is used already by IR and only 10-15km. are missing at each end. In his opinion, such a link is vital for the Palestinians, as it will enable transportation of fertilizers, agricultural products, chemicals and general containers. He insists that rail is cheaper and safer ! Trains could start at each side with a Palestinian driver, and then at the border wither the driver alone or also the locomotive could be changed for an Israeli one. He even reckons that both the USA and Europe would be happy to provide railway material from surpluses that exist in Europe etc. ! We shall have to wait and see. The Editor is reminded of the 'rail corridor' between Germany and East Prussia through Poland during the 1920's and 1930's..... a similar attempt to provide a safe-passage and link through politically-troubled regions.

F. TURKEY.

(i). Preserved locos. According to CRJ 125 p. 156, the Camlik Railway Museum has now been surrounded with a wooden stockade constructed from railway sleepers, and the exhibits cannot be examined unless the Museum is actually open. The entrance fee remains at 500,000 Turkish Lire, equivalent of about £0.50 or maybe 1DM, which represents excellent value. CRJ notes that unrestored locos 46005 and 56917 have been removed; that 2-6-0 34068 carries a plate for Nohab 1950/1935, but this belongs to 2-8-0 45061, probably now scrapped; also that 2-8-0 45132 carries a plate Humboldt 807/1912, but it should have 809/1912. At Selcuk a 2-6-0 34054 (Nohab 1841/1930) is preserved in a garden at the station cafe - well surrounded by trees and shrubbery.

(ii). Active steam situation. (See Harak. 51:6:C (1a).) Also from CRJ, and adding a little more detail to the general grim situation: "At Halkapinar shed, Izmir, 2-10-0 56517 is now dumped, with a damaged firebox. At Usak, 0-8-0 44071, 0-10-0 55043 and 2-10-0 56548 are no longer serviceable. All locos need boiler repairs and the boiler shop closed in June 2000. At Konya, 2-8-2 46052 has been dumped since September 1998 with major boiler problems, but 2-10-0 56009 is serviceable. On 26/9/2000, when working a special from Afyon to Konya, it needed diesel assistance from Aksehir onwards. After overnight repairs to three broken superheater tubes, it performed well the next day from Konya to Aksehir. At Cankiri, 'Skyliner' 56359 is in good working order. Between 28/9 and 1/10/2000 it worked a photographic special from Zonguldak to Irmak with no problems. Izmir and Usak have received orders from Ankara head office to stop all repair work on their steam locos. In 2001, TCDD can offer only two serviceable steam locos for tours, 56009 and 56359, and the future is very uncertain. Ankara is having further thoughts on costs and technical problems, and all the managers who are interested in steam are due for retirement." Nevertheless, a further tour is being (optimistically) organised for 15-23/9/2001, including three days on the Erzincan - Divrigi line. Details from Dietmar Kramer, Roonstrasse 23, D-38102 Braunschweig, Germany.

52:8.

CHARLES FRANZ ZIMPEL.

By Klaus Matzka, & the Editor.

This is a two-part article. Klaus Matzka of Wien has been doing some research on this intriguing character - Part-visionary, part-roogue. From a second-hand bookseller in Cottbus he managed to get a copy of "Dr. med. Zimpel's spagyrisches Heilverfahren", which has some biographical details. He wrote: "We shall probably never know the whole facts - only personal diaries would help, and they were probably disposed of on a rubbish heap in Pozzuoli near Naples when he died there in 1878. This is a port in Campania, southern Italy, on the Bay of Naples, 13 km./8 miles west of Naples; 1990 population was 27,100, and it is apparently shaken by some 25 earthquakes a day, 60% of its buildings are uninhabitable, and an eventual major disaster seems inevitable !" From the Editor's point of view, this person is fascinating because he demonstrates the links between an interest in religion, an interest in Railways in the Middle East, and complete loonyness. Hmmm. Readers are asked not to respond with personal comments.

At first Klaus wrote: "Some of the few known facts about him are: He was a surveyor, engineer, architect and cartographer; he was born probably in Prussia, maybe late 18th. but more likely early 19th. century. He was Surveyor and Engineer to the New Orleans and Carrollton Railroad in New Orleans (today's famous St. Charles Avenue Streetcar Line); while in New Orleans he produced a topographical map of the town, which still exists - he had it engraved in Prussia. He was the architect for four buildings in New Orleans, built in the 1830's. He wrote a book entitled "Das Eisenbahnwesen von Nordamerika, England und Anderen Landern", ("Railway Practice in North America, England and Other Countries") issued in 1840 by L. Förster in Wien. And he wrote a book on the proposal for 'A Railway between the Mediterranean, the Dead Sea and Damascus, by way of Jerusalem', published in 1865." Of this latter I have acquired a photocopy of the first two pages, (thanks to Jacob Wahrman) reproduced below. Klaus would be grateful for any other information that other readers might have ! However, he himself 'struck gold' from an unexpected source: The most complete biography available is an article by Axel Helmstädter on "Spagyrische Arzneimittel" published in the series "Heidelberger Schriften zur Pharmazie- und Naturwissenschaftsgeschichte" - the "History of Pharmaceutical and Natural Sciences", Vol. 3, published Stuttgart 1990, ISBN 3-8047-1113-8. Klaus sent me this - it is quite extensive, fills in many of the gaps, and I shall translate and excerpt this article as Part 2, after Klaus' earlier discoveries. Nevertheless, other readers may still be able to add some nuggets of information.

From: "The Railway Between the Mediterranean, the Dead Sea and Damascus, by Way of Jerusalem", by Chas. F. Zimpel, London 1865.

Opening: "Behold, I will bring them from the North Country, and gather them from the coasts of the earth, and with them the blind and the lame, the woman with child and her that travaileth with child together: a great company shall return thither." (Jer. 31:8.) See moreover Deut. 30:3, Isa. 11:1-2; 43:5, 45:19-25. Jer. 29:14, 31:4; 32:37; Ezek. 11:17, 20:34, 41; 34:13, 36:24, 39:28 etc.

"In the present position of established public conveyances, as Railways, Turnpike Roads, Canals, &c., to discuss to an enlightened nation their relative importance and effect upon the common welfare I consider not only needless, but implying a doubt of a proper judgement in such a nation. I therefore take it for granted that the resources of any people can only be properly developed by them. This must be so much more the case in any country where the word wheel or wagon is entirely unknown, and where no other mode of locomotion is known than one's own two legs or the four legs of an animal, either to reach the distant place or to forward merchandise. In consequence thereof, it seems only to be necessary to take the prevailing circumstances into proper consideration in order to arrive at once at a determination whether any, or what kind of, public conveyance is to be carried into effect. This I will try to do in the following observations.

At the first glance we perceive the Mediterranean Sea as prominent. Its geographical position, as the centre of all public conveyances of three parts of the globe - Europe, Africa and Asia - has led, and justly too, to the political proverb, that the possession or dominion of it secures the dominion of all the world, or at least of the three parts above mentioned. If we furthermore take into consideration, besides these mentioned boundaries, its connection by the Straits of Gibraltar with the ocean; by the Railroad across Suez (from Alexandria to Suez) and by the Red Sea with the great Pacific Ocean at the South; and, finally, by the Dardanelles, the Sea of Marmora....."

The book(let) appears to end on p.31 (there is a note that it was printed by Nelson & Co., Oxford Arms Passage, St. Paul's) - p. 30 is a continuation of calculations of costs and revenues, with the note "According to the experience gained by every prudently and economically constructed and managed Railway, as it likewise is proved in Egypt and between Beyrut and Damascus, the increase of traffic amounts often to some hundred-fold. I will only calculate upon an increase of 75 per cent..."

He proposes a branch from Jerusalem to Bethlehem, which he expected to carry "16,5000 passengers of the 2nd. class at 1½ fr., and 68,000 passengers of the 3rd., class at ½ fr.", providing a total revenue of 58,750 fr., plus Merchandise traffic comprising 20,000 cwts. at 1fr. per cwt.

On p. 31 is a "Recapitulation" of expected revenues: "1. From the principal line - Jaffa and Jerusalem: 1,435,875 francs. 2. From the branch to Bethlehem. 102,375. 1,538,250. Administration or régie, 50 per cent: 769,125. Leaving a clear revenue of 769,125 fr. or, on a capital of £600,000, an interest of 5 per cent. Provided always that the expenditure upon the construction of the harbour at Jaffa would be reimbursed by the Sublime Porte, with the usual interest, like other Turkish State paper; whilst the on the contrary the Revenue would only amount to from 2 to 3 per cent."

The booklet closes with an "Appeal to the English Nation". "Englishmen ! The further existence of the Turkish Empire is in close connection with the construction of this Harbour and Railway. You, no doubt, will smile upon this apparent arrogance, but be pleased to be reminded of the proverb "Who laughs last laughs best". For if you will not open your purses for this enterprise, I have something else in petto which will astonish you much more than this Railway."

Thus far my photocopy from this work. Klaus has also sent some pages from another book:

"Straßen-Verbindung des Mittelländischen mit dem Roten Meere und Damascus über Jerusalem, mit Heranziehung von Bethlehem, Hebron, Tiberias, Nazareth u., mit einem Plane, von Charles F. Zimpel, Dr. Med. et Philos., Früherer Eisenbahn-Baudirektor verschiedener Eisenbahnen in Amerika und Europa, Frankfurt am Main, 1865. zu haben in H. L. Brönnner's Verlagshandlung".

Or: "Road Connections between the Mediterreanean with the Red Sea and Damascus via Jerusalem, with links to Bethlehem, Hebron, Tiberias and Nazareth etc., with a Map; by Charles F. Zimpel, Doctor of Medicine and of Philosphy, former Railway Construction Engineer on various railways in America and Europe."

The following translation is mine, but in fact it appears to be essentially the same text as the work already reproduced above, re-used here for Road rather than railway advocacy:

The opening is again formed from a quotation from Jeremiah 31:8: "See, I will bring them out of the Land of Midnight, and will gather them from the ends of the earth, even the blind, lame, pregnant and those on their beds giving birth, so that they come back in great numbers." See also Deut. 30:3, Isa. 11:1-11, 43:5, 65:19-25, Jer. 29:14, 31:4, 32:37, Ezekiel 11:17, 20:34, 41, 34, :13, 36:24. 39:28 etc. etc."

"The importance and relevance, to an educated public, of contemporary means of communications, such as Railways, engineered roads (Chaussees), canals etc., and their necessity and influence on transport, are so clear that I doubt if I need to stress them here. I assume it to be fully understood, that the economic resources of a country are only to be mobilised through such means - or at least that they are factors of the first importance. It is therefore equally a basic assumption that such means of communica-

tion are of especial importance in those countries where transport links have remained at a level of early primitiveness; where the word "Wheel" or "Wagon" is totally unknown, and one is not aware of any other means of transport than those provided by one's own two feet or the four legs of a creature which can carry oneself and one's wares, such as a camel which walks in a long slow procession from one's point of departure to destination. Analogous to this snail's- or even crab's pace, all other factors are adapted - and therefore there will never be any chance of modern progress. In consequence it is necessary, when considering the usefulness or non-usefulness of a modern land connection, to look at the local circumstances, in order to come straight away to a conclusion. I will attempt to show this in the following pages.

The point of departure is and has to be the Mediterranean Sea due its geographical position as the central point....."

from p.10. "The number of Pilgrims to Jerualem will also increase, as such is always the case when a sensibly-routed Railway is built. With the increase in travellers, all the facilities in Jerusalem will also have to be altered, in order to cope with the flow of goods. Exact description of the amounts involved is impossible under current circumstances with the lack of statistics - even more so when all sources repeat the same vagueness. More details on the current figures on Imports and Exports, that is, not considering the production capacity of the land, which includes Sugar, are in the appendix."

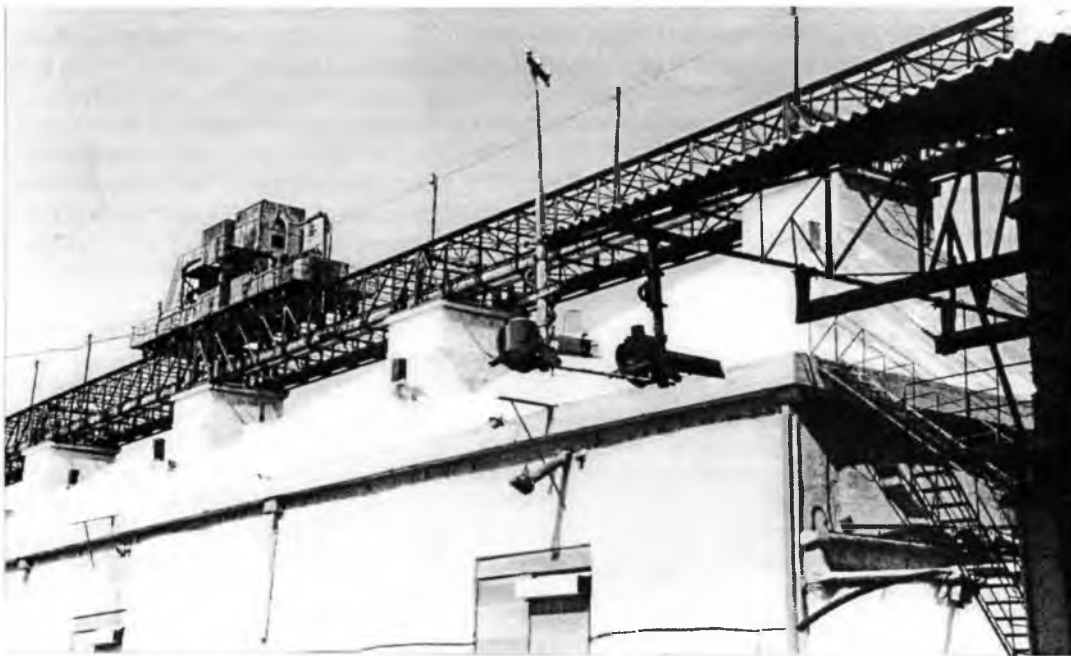
A sketch map in my collection, is noted as "Chas. Zimpel's scheme, Constantinople, Oct. 1864. by "Dr. med. & Philos., Late Chief Engineer of Different Railway Cos. in America and Europe". It shows lines from Jaffa via Ramle to Jerusalem, from Jerusalem southwards to Hebron, from Jerusalem eastwards to the Jordan valley and thence northwards and along the west side of the Sea of Galilee towards (it appears) Rosh Pina, a branch from this westwards to Nablus, another branch westwards from a point south of Samakh to Nazareth., and eastwards from the same junction along the Yarmuk (presumably) and then northwards to Damascus.

Jerusalem is noted as 773.90 m. higher than Jaffa (which was at sea level, of course), and the railway divided into three sections: Jaffa - Ramle 18km., gradients of 1:60 - 1:300; Section 2 Ramle - Artuf 28 km., 1:250 - 1:60; Section 3 Artuf

Continued on page 13



Latest additions at the Israel Railway Museum in Haifa East are the two steam cranes which had been rusting at Qishon Works for several decades. They are seen here at the Museum on 26/01/01, having arrived behind a G12 a few minutes earlier. A month later they had been sand-blasted and painted with two coats of rust-resistant epoxy paint. At right is Cowans Sheldon 3855 of 1918. The runner wagon is Cowans Sheldon 31 also of 1918. At left is ex-ESR No. C-30-1; Cowans Sheldon 9319 of 1950 (though all the axle-box covers show ESR 1949). The crane runner wagon is by Hurst Nelson, dated 1950 but without any works number on the builder's plate. It is thought that this ex-Egyptian crane was captured in 1956. (Photo: Paul Cotterell.)



The only known overhead railway in Israel, and broad (maybe 2 metres or so) gauge at that! It runs atop the sides of Mamgarot & Makhsamim at Bnei Berak station and has a length of about 100 metres. Tanks on wheels can be made out, but the form of motive power is unknown - a cable perhaps. The purpose of this line is also unknown but it might be for fire fighting or even for cleaning out the silos. Also seen are the two unusual starter semaphores for the Rosh Ha'Ayin direction (now replaced by colour lights). These semaphore signals are bracketed out over the track from a conveniently placed adjacent building. (Photo: Paul Cotterell.)

הרכבת

Continued from page 12

- Jerusalem 34 km., 1:100 - 1:46.

Klaus has also discovered a religious tract entitled "Darf der Christ den Tag des Herrn bestimmen?", "Biblisch beleuchtet", by Chas. F. Zimpel, Frankfurt am Main 1866, "In Selbstverlag des Verfassers and und zu beziehen aus dessen Depot in H. L. Brönnner's Druckerei in Frankfurt a.M. und für den Buchhandel durch Chr. Winter" - i.e. self-published and available via the printer. Also known is "Gesundheits- und Sittenlehre", 'von Chas. F. Zimpel, Dr. Med. et Philos., Homöopath, Ars-Spagyrica', published Wien 1871, 'Verlag des Verfassers' - i.e. he had to publish it himself, again. Printed by Wilhelm Köhler, Margarethenplatz 2, Wien.

THE RAILWAYS OF LIBYA: PAST AND FUTURE.

It does not take a geographical genius to point out that Libya is technically a part of North Africa rather than the Middle East. But I have until now included it in "Harakevet" for the simple reason that, from a railway point of view, a lot of what happened there happened during the Second World War when the standard-gauge lines were built as an extension of those from Egypt, (i.e. there was a physical link), and even the narrow gauge lines were repaired and operated by Allied Engineers (Indian, New Zealand, British) who also worked in Egypt, Palestine, Syria etc. Tobruk and Benghazi appear in memoirs of several Royal Engineers. But I think the rest of the Maghreb area (Arabic for "The West", as in Hebrew "Maarav") such as Tunisia, Morocco, Algeria etc., fall outside the scope of this magazine. There is no Present railway in Libya, but there has been railway activity in the Past and it seems there will be in the Future.

A. THE PAST.

I have recently acquired a book "Railways of North Africa" by E. D. Brant, published by David and Charles of Newton Abbott in 1971 (ISBN 0 7153 5254 7), part of a putative series of "Railway Histories of the World". In the Introduction the author points out that, in relation to the developed and busy systems in Algeria, Morocco and Tunisia, that of Libya had already ceased to exist, and he includes his notes (as "Part 4, Chapter 13") more out of a sense of completeness. There is only one illustration of an Italian-built 0-8-0 tank loco, and no map. (This in contrast to the extensive material on the other countries.) The following should therefore be read in conjunction with Tourret's "Allied Military Locomotives of World War 2" Chapter 22 "Locomotives of the Italian North African Colonies, pp. 69 - 74.

RAILWAY HISTORY OF LIBYA.

"Although they are now wholly abandoned, short lengths of railway were open for public traffic for nearly fifty years in Libya. Railways were first built for military purposes to assist the Italian army in occupying the country and bringing about its cession to Italy from Turkey in 1912.

Some form of land transport was urgently needed and the choice was considered to lie between a Decauville type of 75 cm. gauge with very light track and a somewhat heavier type of construction with a gauge of about 1 metre. The latter was preferred for Tripolitania, and the Italian Ministry of War sought the assistance of the Italian State Railways, which agreed to supply technical assistance and equipment, comprising track materials and rolling stock of the 95 cm. gauge, already in use on certain railways in Sicily operated by the State Railways administration. The arrangements were given official sanction in Royal Decree No. 1376 of 28 December 1911. Action followed rapidly and the first consignment of track material arrived at Tripoli on 14 January 1912. Other shiploads came in quick succession, the first two locomotives, each weighing 37 tons, being landed on 7 February, together with some wagons.

TRIPOLITANIA.

Work started as soon as the first shipment of material had been received but progressed somewhat slowly until the arrival of the rolling stock. On 17 March 1912, exactly two months after the specialised railway labour had arrived at Tripoli, the first train steamed into the camp at Ain Zara, 11.4 km. from the military landing stage in Tripoli harbour where the locomotives and wagons had been unloaded. This represented the highly creditable construction rate, having regard to the absence of local resources and the need for making surveys, of 200 metres per day. Meanwhile, attention was being devoted to a line running westwards along the coast from Tripoli, the first section to Gargaresc (8.5km.) being opened on 20 April 1912. A further section to Zanzur was started on 15 August and completed a month later, the average construction rate being 300 metres per day, which was regarded as very satisfactory, as it was achieved despite what the Italian official report refers to as 'continuous interference by enemy outposts'. At the same time construction was proceeding eastwards from Tripoli. This line branched off from the Ain Zara line at Fornaci and extended to Tagiura, a distance of 10.8 km. It was not built to meet any immediate military necessity but to facilitate the carriage of supplies to the

fort at Tagiura, and was opened to traffic on 27 July 1912. The next line to be built ran inland from a junction at El Ghiran (13.9 km. from Tripoli) on the line to Zanzur, to Suani (opened on 14 January 1913) and El Azizia, a distance of 41 km. from the junction, which was completed on 12 February 1913. Surveying for the extensions to these lines continued, but the purely military phase came to an end shortly afterwards in Tripolitania and the system was handed over to civilian administration at the end of April 1913, after the 'pacification' of Tripolitania had been largely completed. The railways of Libya then became part of the Italian State Railways and so remained until 1922 when they were transferred to the Italian Colonial Department.

Construction in Tripolitania was resumed in 1913 with the extension of the coast line first from Zanzur to Ez-Zauia; the final terminus of Zuara, 120 km. west of Tripoli, was reached at the end of 1915. Towards the end of 1913, a start was made with extending the line southwards from El Azizia. Progress was slow as the local labour employed, being mostly nomads, was ill-suited to regular work on railway construction. Additional labour had to be brought in from Italy and the line was completed to Bir Cuca (12.5 km. from El Azizia) by 30 November 1913. What was to be the terminus for a considerable time, Henshir el Abiad, was reached early in 1915 and the Italian labour force was then transferred to the coastal line. Plans were prepared for a further extension, over difficult country involving steep gradients, to Garian.

Rolling stock for the Tripoli railways was at the outset the same as that used on the 95cm.-gauge secondary lines of the Italian State Railways in Sicily, the only modification being the provision of screens over the upper portion of the passenger carriage windows. The passenger carriages were all mounted on bogies to facilitate negotiation of the sharp curves to be found on all the lines; they comprised two classes of accommodation, first and third, the standard of the former being approximately that of second class in Italy. A fourth class was provided for soldiers and the native population; it consisted of covered wagons in which wooden benches

were installed. Freight rolling-stock was all four-wheeled and resembled a scaled-down version of Italian standard-gauge stock of the period. Centre buffers with screw couplings were used and all vehicles were vacuum brake fitted. The first locomotives were twelve 0-8-0 tanks built by Schwartzkopff in 1908 and transferred from Sicily to Tripoli in 1912; originally numbered 201-212, they later became State Railways R401-12. Tank wagons were coupled on longer runs to provide an additional water supply. Nine further locomotives were recorded as awaiting shipment from Italy in June 1915 but statistics suggest that only three were sent.

Traffic in the early years was comparatively light, amounting to 277,000 passengers (of whom about one quarter were military personnel) and 157,00 tons of goods in the year ended 30 June 1915. The lines were, of course, all single track, and were not heavily used, the average number of trains per day in Tripolitania being only thirteen. The original station in Tripoli, known as Tripoli Smistamento (Tripoli yard), was found to be inadequate, and because of its situation incapable of extension. Plans for a new station with improved rail access were approved and work was started in 1914.

CYRENAICA.

The railway system of Cyrenaica was similar in origin but never reached even the modest size of that in Tripolitania. The first line was a purely military railway of 75 cm. gauge, built in 1911 from Benghazi inland to El Benia, and made available for civilian use from 20 September 1914. A further 10km. eastwards from El Benia to Er Regema were opened in 1916. After 1918 the system was converted to 95 cm. gauge, four Italian-built 2-6-0 tank locomotives of 1914 being transferred from Sicily to work it, replacing the six 75 cm. gauge engines listed in 1915. New construction began again in 1923, the original line being extended to El Abiar in 1926 and to its final terminus at Barce, 110 km., from Benghazi, in 1927. The only other non-military line to be built in Cyrenaica was opened in 1926 and ran due south from Benghazi to Soluch (56 km.). There was also a short harbour branch at Benghazi. Further construction beyond Barce to Derna was contemplated, but no work was carried out until early in the 1939-45 war, when some 40 km. of earthworks were built and two more 2-6-0 tank locomotives were obtained from Sicily. The railway was used considerably in the 1930's for the colonisation of the Barce plain.

Passenger fares on the Tripoli and Cyrenaica railways were relatively low, being the equivalent of nearly one penny [1971, Ed.] per kilometre for first class, the other classes being respectively one half and one quarter of the first-class fares; Return tickets were issued at 50 per cent above the single fares in first and third class, and at slightly less in the fourth class. Freight rates, on the other hand, were high compared with those charged in Italy, because of the low traffic density and consequent high cost of operation per unit of traffic. Charges for rail transport were, however, lower than those for the only alternative at the time, the camel. The charge for carrying one ton over a distance of 100 km. by camel is given in an official Italian report of the time as 75 lire [then about £3 sterling.] compared with 60 lire in the highest rail-freight class and only 10 lire in the lowest class. Journey time would be over three days by camel as compared with one day by rail.

In the period between the two wars improvements were made to track and station buildings on both systems and the southern line of the Tripoli Railway was extended to Garian. Plans existed for extensions from Tagiura to Homs, from Ain Zara to Castel Benito, from Zuara to Pisida and from Garian to Tegriana, but only the last was commenced. Six 2-6-0 tank locomotives were sent to Tripoli from Sicily at the outbreak of war, but meanwhile a start had been made with diesel traction as the poor water supplies made steam operation expensive and difficult. A joint order was placed by the two railways for eight Fiat diesel railcars, each with twelve first-class, twenty-three second-class and twenty third-class seats and powered by two 115 hp. engines. These arrived in 1938 and introduced faster schedules, the railcar time to Garian (100 km.) being only 3hr. 45 min. against a best time of 4½ hr. with steam. In the year ended 30 June 1939, the Libyan railways conveyed 716,550 passengers and 264,493 tons of goods, using fifteen steam locomotives, seventeen passenger coaches, 151 goods wagns, and the railcars. There were also twenty-two water-tank wagons.

In 1940 the Cyrenaica Railway received four BoBo 500hp. diesel-electric locomotives built by Tecnomasio Italiano Brown Boveri for Eritrea but diverted because of the war. During the military campaigns in North Africa both railway systems were extensively damaged, and one of the four Cyrenaica diesel locomotives was destroyed. After the Allied advance into Libya in 1943, repairs were carried out by the military, particularly

around Tripoli, so as to facilitate the dispersal of stores and supplies brought in through the port. Difficulties arose from the existence of the 95 cm. gauge, as rolling-stock built to that gauge was not readily available. Two locomotives and some rolling-stock were ferried along the coast from Benghazi, but this was not enough and much of the line from Tripoli to Zuara was converted to metre gauge. Steps were taken to extend this line, with material lifted from the Garian line south of El Azizia, further westward to support the military advance into Tunisia. Reconversion to the original gauge followed a little later and in June 1944 the military Directorate of Transportation reopened this and the other lines in Tripolitania to civilian use.

Western Desert Extension Railway.

During the second world war the Western Desert line which had reached Mersa Matruh in Egypt was extended for military purposes over the Libyan frontier as far as Tobruk, with a frontier station at Capuzzo; its further extension to Benghazi was surveyed. This line of some 100 km., which was the only standard-gauge railway ever built in Libya, was closed to all traffic beyond Sollum on 20 December 1946 and the Libyan portion was removed.

Post War Fate.

The Cyrenaica line was worked from 1943 by the British Army, who transferred to it four Mallet 0-4-4-0 tank locomotives built in 1933 for the Eritrea Railway, also 95 cm. gauge. The railway was kept busy with military traffic until September 1946, but was then temporarily closed until reopened for civilian traffic in March 1948 under British Government auspices, with a mixed train four times weekly on each line, pending transfer to the Public Works Department of the Cyrenaica government in 1949. A diesel shunter was delivered in October 1950, and the use of steam locomotives ceased in November 1951. To improve passenger services, a diesel railcar was obtained in 1953 from Walker Bros. (Wigan) Ltd., powered by a 107 hp. Gardner engine and resembling closely the railcars built by the same company for the County Donegal and West Clare (C.I.E.) railways in Ireland, save that it provided two classes of accommodation and had a half-width rear driving cab for reverse running.

After creation of the independent kingdom of Libya in 1951 the whole economic situation in the country came under

examination by a United Nations technical assistance mission which reviewed inter alia the transport situation. In Tripolitania, the railway system was carrying about 22,000 passengers, 200 tons of baggage and 4,000 tons of goods a month, employing some 370 persons and giving rise to a monthly deficit equivalent to £2,000. The United Nations report expressed the opinion that railways were 'probably the most clear cut example of premature development in the past'. The report went on to say: 'At this stage of development, Tripolitania does not need a railway. All the lines mentioned run alongside very good roads; it would be far more economical to divert traffic to these roads. Not only would the capital needed for maintenance and the deficit incurred by the operation of the railways be saved, but the roads would be more efficiently used. The present use of the roads is not intensive, and is out of all proportion to the invested capital and costs of maintenance. The only recommendation that can be made is that the Tripolitanian railways should be systematically abandoned. The normal deficit is too high to be supported for much longer and it would hamper development itself. No new plant or rolling stock should be provided. However, the existing lines should be used as long as possible, the less productive lines being abandoned first. The connection with the harbour should be maintained with the existing means, and some repairs to buildings must be carried out.'

The situation in Cyrenaica was somewhat similar. Abandonment of the line to Barce which ran parallel to a good road was recommended. That to Soluch could be kept open with the existing equipment if its operation did not prove too expensive, but in the view of the author of the report 'if this connection is important, it would probably be better to connect the two towns by road.' The recommendation of the UN mission were acted upon within a comparatively short time in Tripolitania, where the southern and western lines closed down completely in 1960. The Tripoli-Tagiura line and its branch to Ain Zara (later Wheelus Air Base) remained for a

time, but the last train ran in February 1962. Operation continued somewhat longer in Cyrenaica, where the line to Soluch was the first to be closed, followed at the end of 1965 by that to Barce. The rapid economic development of Libya caused by the finding and exploitation of considerable oilfields came too late to save the railway system. It is not, of course, certain that, even if drilling for oil had begun immediately after the war, the railways would have been retained, and even less so that they would have been extended. They did not serve the oilfields and could not therefore be used to carry equipment for the oilfields and the oil pipelines as was the case in Algeria, where railways already ran fairly close to the areas where oil was found. Moreover, the minerals and agricultural crops, which were the mainstay of the railways in the other countries of the Maghreb, were absent in Libya. Unless there is some development of which there is at present no hint, Libya is likely to remain one of the few larger African countries without railway facilities of any kind."

Appendix 9. p. 219. Motive Power of Libyan Railways. TRIPOLI RAILWAY. (95cm. Gauge).

No. of Units.	Numbers.	Wheels.	Builder.	Works. Nos.	Built.	Year in Tripoli.
<u>Steam Locos.</u>						
12.	R401.1-12.	0-8-0T.	Schwartzkopff.	4007-18.	1908.	1912.
5.	R302.10-13/20.	2-6-0T.	Ing. Nicolo Romeo.	662-5/72.	1922.	1939.
1.	R302.42	2-6-0T	Off. Mecc. e Navale Naples.	123.	1927.	1939.
2.	?		?	?	?	1943.
(transferred by British Army from Cyrenaica.)						
<u>Diesel Railcars.</u>						
6?.	801-6. (?)		Fiat.	-	1938.	1938.
<u>CYRENAICA RAILWAY. (95cm. Gauge)</u>						
<u>Year In Cyrenaica.</u>						
<u>Steam Locomotives.</u>						
2.	R301.21-22.	2-6-0T.	Ansaldo.	1101/3	1914	1918
1.	R.301.33	2-6-0T	Off. Mecc. Milan	613	1914	1918.
1.	R301.??	2-6-0T	?	?	1914	1918.
1.	R302.22	2-6-0T	Ing. Nicolo Romeo	674	1922	1939.
1.	R302.35	2-6-0T	Off. Mecc. e Navala Naples	116	1927	1939.
4.	WD 70637-40.	0-4-4-0T	formerly Eritrean Railways	441.106 (Maffei 2643/1907), 441.101 (Maffei 2641/1907), 441.201 (Ansaldo 912(1911), 441.204 (Er. Rly. ?)		
Transferred by British Army from Eritrea.						
<u>Diesel Locomotives.</u>						
4.	DE 201-4.	Bo-Bo.	Brown Boveri, Milan.	4217-20.	1940.	1941 (?).
<u>Diesel Railcars.</u>						
2 ?	?		Fiat.	-	1938	1938.
1	?		Walker Bros.	-	1953	1953.

The Sources include: Benjamin Higgins, "The Economic and Social Development of Libya", document of United Nations Mission in Libya A/AC/32/TA 16 of 1 July 1952. & Ministry of Colonies of Italy. "La costruzione e l'esercizio delle ferrovie in Tripolitania ed in Cirenaica dalla occupazione al 30 giugno 1915. Rome 1917."

Eric Stuart visited Tripoli in 1966, and writes: "I managed to find the station there. it looked as though most of the rolling stock of the line had been dumped there and forgotten. There were a couple of Fiat railcars and tons of other stuff that, in my youth, I could hardly guess at. If only I'd taken photos !"

If only, indeed. But we can all say that..... and now to:

B. THE FUTURE.

In "Fahrplancenter News" No. 33, p. 12f., is an article (Editor's translation) entitled:

"Libya: Construction Begins at Last ! "For more than two decades the Libyan government has been repeatedly announcing the construction of a railway network. Sometimes Hungarian, sometimes Russian, sometimes Indian or Italian partners were to have helped. But every time there was some problem or other, which led the commencement of

construction to be indefinitely delayed. A few bridges over dried riverbeds and roads, between Tripoli and the Tunisian border, are silent witnesses to the first attempt. Also the works on a line, announced a few years ago, from Egypt towards Tobruk (Tubruq) were never really properly begun, even though Egypt offered to provide workers and machines. In Autumn 2000 an information conference regarding railway construction in Libya was held in Britain, during which several astonishing facts came to light: The western line from Ras Ejder (near the Tunisian border) via Tripoli to Surt is actually under construction. The building works are progressing with what is for North African conditions some speed, and the formation and stations are taking shape. Also on the eastern line from the Egyptian border to Tubruq construction work is under way. However, in this region land-mines from the Second World War need to be removed first, which is significantly slowing building progress. Here the original formation is being largely followed, although in places re-graded and widened. The two lines will be linked from Surt to Tubruq via Egdabia, Banghazi and Al Bayda only at a later date, not yet announced. From Surt a line will also head southwards via Waddan and Sokna to Sabha, with a branch to the mining town of Tarot. The project is being publicised nationally and internationally under the title "The Great Step into the 21st. Century", certainly influenced by political considerations, for President Khaddafi has to be certain to retain at least his influence and reputation at home, since internationally his image is already severely weakened and the first signs of opposition are already becoming noticeable within the country. But whatever the political situation and whatever the reasons for starting, it is high time that the 1,860 km. long Libyan rail gap in the North African railway system should be closed. Now Tunisia especially will be challenged to construct the missing section from Gabes to the border, a project which Tunisia allowed to lapse, citing the lack of progress on a Libyan link.

[NB - but is this part of the Tunisian system not metre gauge ? Ed.]

The system outlined will total 3,170 km. The sections involved are:

- El Sollum (Egypt) - Er Mesaad - Cambout - Tubruq 80 km. (6km in Egypt.)
- Surt - Al Haisha - Misrata 256 km.
- Misrata Zlitan - Al Khoms - Tajura - Tripoli. 217 km.
- Tripoli - Az Zawiyah - Zwara - Ras Ejder 165 km.

Of the former narrow gauge formations, west from Tripoli, only a few short sections near Zwara are to be re-used, the rest of the route will be straighter than the narrow gauge was. In the area of Banghazi (formerly Benghazi) the former route will also be used only for short sections, and the other routes will mostly be built alongside existing roads. Details exist for the entire new system: All lines will be single track, and standard gauge (1435mm.). Minimal radius of curves will be 1,600 metres, steepest gradient 0.6%. The formation will be 7.2m. wide. There will be 96 stations on the system, 554 bridges and 1,205 culverts (mostly over wadis, normally-dry riverbeds.) 115 million cubic metres of earth will need to be moved, 370,000 tons of rails of 54kg. per metre for sidings and 60 kg. per metre for main lines will have to be laid on 6.8 million concrete sleepers. 1.6 Million cubic metres of stone will form the ballast. 10,000 workers will be needed for the construction, and the railway will employ 25,000 personnel once in operation. Although the lines will be laid out for top speeds of 160 km./h., passenger trains will normally travel at 120 - 140 km./h. and goods trains at 80 - 100 km/h. Operations will be carried out with 244 diesel locos, and a total of 8642 passenger and freight vehicles. Operation will be purely by radio, nothing is known otherwise concerning signalling systems. Pointwork will all be to UIC standards. Exact dates for opening the first sections are as yet unknown, but should be between 2003 and 2005. Railway administration will be based at Al Khoms.

At some later time an extension of the Sabha line into Niger is also planned - the Niger border is only some 450 km. away. The Libyan railway will therefore also form a route into Africa - and so the former dream of a "Trans-Sahara Railway" may yet be revived."

52:10.

MEMOIRS OF THE END OF THE MANDATE.

By CAPTAIN J.
MAPSTONE. R.E.

of 2 Rushmere Way, Northampton. NN1
5RW. 01604-231151.

Mr. Mapstone was interviewed by the Editor in Berlin (on his holiday) 28/5/2000; this account also incorporates prior e-mail correspondence. His very personal account is terribly revealing about the situation in 1947/8, with poor morale, chaos and corruption everywhere. At his request I have omitted a couple of more personal references, and hope that what is here published will not be considered too damaging to anyone now living.

General: I felt that most of the British troops in Palestine were essentially more pro-Jewish than pro-Arab; this may have had to do with cultural differences, such as the way the Arabs treated their women - third in priority, after Camel and Donkey ! - but Jewish atrocities changed this.

Overview of Military Career. I joined up in May 1943, as a volunteer, aged 18, straight from school; but then I had to wait six months, and became a Pupil Engineer with a town Council, while waiting for my acceptance. In the end this occurred only because I was accepted as an Officer Cadet for a future Commission. I went straight into the Royal Engineers, and spent my whole time in the same unit, even though it changed its name. I was commissioned in Jan. 1946. Initial training was at Preston (Lancs.), and Officer Cadet training at Newark-on-Trent; the cadets were sent to college at Northampton for engineering training, and training was completed at Chatham, the R.E. HQ. Then I went straight out to Palestine, in early 1947. Via the Canal Zone, then to Fayed, then by train to Jerusalem. I had two days there, and was put up at the Syrian Orphanage (which was overlooked by surrounding buildings, so one could be observed whilst eating etc. - an insecure and vulnerable billet, I thought) - and was then sent down to Gaza to the CRE, then north once more to take command at El Majdal. I was in "65 CRE" - ("Commander Royal Engineers", the R.E. equivalent of a Regiment, commanded by a Lieut. Col. and with three or four Companies.) Like Transportation Troops, they did not come under the District Command but under the

HQ in Jerusalem. At first "Stores" was just a section of 65 CRE, but was later formed into an independent unit, the "1295 Stores & Workshops Coy." BESD means 'Base Engineer Stores Depot' - at the end, this was the railway's main customer.

Later on I suffered from Stress and, as the M.O. could find nothing physically wrong with me, I was sent to the main Middle East Convalescent Depot at Netanya (Nathanya) for a while. I had been shoved into a hectic job, placed in command immediately after getting a commission, which was not normally allowed - so I almost collapsed. I was only skin and bone by the time I got to Tripoli. Normally older, experienced Quartermasters would have handled this sort of job.

I was demobbed "by mistake" from Tripoli - I had determined to stay on as a Regular, and had an appointment within a few days with the Divisional Commander regarding Promotion. But I was sent away, and when I got on the troopship discovered I was actually being sent to be demobilized !

El Majdal.

I was here for a year. This was the first station north of Gaza. There was a siding, and from this diverged another siding into our depot. The R.E. Stores Depot was on the east side of the line. We weren't big enough to have our own engine, so as each truck was filled we pushed it (with Arab hand power !) out into the station track to be collected by the northbound goods train, which came by always in hours of darkness, at night or very early morning, when we weren't there. This wasn't a problem though, as the line was dead flat. The goods train loco would normally shunt the wagons in. [NB: In the 1944/5 WTT, the northbound pick-up goods No. 158, dep. Kantara 17.30, is timed to be at Majdal 08.19-08.39. Regular Goods Trip 150A was dep. Rafa 12.20, pick up Majdal 16.59-17.25.] There were only three British there; I was in command, as a 2nd. Lieut.; there were two N.C.O.'s (at one point a Staff Sergeant and a Corporal), and all the Clerks were Jewish, bussed in from local Jewish settlements. All the Storekeepers were Jews or Arabs, whereas all the Labour was formed of local Arabs. Guarding was done by Arab Supernumary Police. There was no accommodation at the Stores, and so we lived at Beit Jerza, about 7 or 8 miles towards Gaza, and commuted every day - we were short of vehicles by this time, so we had to do this commuting by motor cycle, which could be risky in Palestine in at that time, as wires were sometimes strung across between the orange groves."

From September 1947, 1295 Stores & Workshops R.E. were tasked with evacuating the stocks of Engineer Stores from El Majdal and Al Jiya Stores Depot, mainly by rail from the El Majdal Station, from which a siding ran into the depot. Being very busy and under considerable stress, it did not occur to me at the time to query why we were instructed to send most of our stock to 10 BESD (Base Engineers Stores Depot) at Beit Nabalab, when that depot was itself closing and clearing out its stocks, with a lesser amount to 4 BESD at Haifa, which was placed convenient for shipment from Haifa Port, but none at all southwards to the Suez Canal Zone. With hindsight I can see the reasons. 10 BESD was staffed by Jews, with a Jewish Commanding Officer and I have good reason to believe that little, if any, of the large tonnage of stores that we railed them, ever arrived at the depot, though we received back the issue vouchers signed and stamped as received. We loaded goods wagons at the sidings within our depot, and full wagons were pushed out into the station siding late afternoon for collection by the northbound goods train later that evening, and Issue Vouchers were posted immediately. One afternoon I was needed to visit the Arab Station Master and happened to notice

that all the military labels on the wagons loaded that day had been removed and new labels addressed to a contractor at Petah Tiqvah - Faber I think - had been substituted. By this time almost all our stock had been cleared. A few days later, the last wagon from our depot was loaded with tools, pushed out to the siding, and Issue Vouchers posted to 10 BESD. Local Arabs who worked in our Depot knew the value of the tools. The northbound goods train was unable to pick up the wagon due to being fully loaded, and the locals ransacked it. Receipt Vouchers, properly signed and stamped, were received from 10 BESD for all the tools a few days later.

Was the train really already fully-loaded ? Or was this a bit of jiggery-pokery by the Arabs, to persuade the Station Master not to have the train stop to pick it up ? [The 1944/5 WTT indicates trains on this section could load 600-800 tons, depending on loco. How much material was being transported northwards from Egypt at this time ?] "You couldn't be sure that anything there was what it looked like. Corruption was endemic to the railway administration during the last 6 - 9 months of British administration."

There was obviously collusion between the staff of 10 BESD, railway staff and Jewish contractors to misappropriate all, or most of the British Army stores. Several convoys of Army lorries manned by Jewish civilian drivers collected stock of barbed wire and picket, of which 1295 Stores & Workshops RE held a major stock. I was later informed that all this was distributed to vulnerable Jewish settlements, although 10 BESD acknowledged receipt.

I soon realised that as a mere 2nd. Lieutenant I could do nothing about the racketeering, as when I placed a driver under arrest for flogging a lorry load of cement, he was given just a nominal fine in Tel Aviv Court, without even calling for our evidence. In January 1948, when I was in hospital at Bir Yaacov, I discovered that my bed at Al Jiya had been occupied by a female Haganah officer, civilian clerk at 10 BESD, who had a sexual liaison with the other RE officer at Al Jiya. This RE officer, after further suspicious actions, was placed under arrest, where he remained when I and 1295 S&W/S left the Middle East.

Later on - 193 Coy. RE came to dig up the siding and lift the rails. Much later (see below) Solel Boneh came and replaced the siding in a slightly different alignment - presumably all the old sleepers had vanished by then.

Al Jiya.

We took over half of Al Jiya (pronounced "Jaia"). This was "a rather decrepit sort of camp". There was no siding into the Engineer Depot or the Ordnance Depot; when we wanted to send anything by rail, it had to be taken by road first to El Majdal ! The only siding(s) was into the Petrol Depot.

It was a dangerous camp, since the main line ran right through it, between the Ordnance and Engineering depots. I nearly got killed one night - by that time, Beit Jerza had closed and we were living at Al Jiya, despite the primitive conditions there. To exit the camp, a road left the compound, past some Arab Legion units there for our Security, (a man got shot at the living area of the Petrol Depot), then there was a sharp turn over the railway line, through the Ordnance camp, and out to the main road. Late one night I got a call that some Arabs were raiding the stores at El Majdal - so I went out with a small lorry and some men to raid them, had to do a right turn to the crossing, and suddenly there was a goods train thundering down towards me with no headlight on ! I saw the sparks from the firebox, and stopped the lorry just in time. I wasn't expecting that train at all.

Rafa

Eventually we moved down to Rafa, and there we had a small argument - it was clear that one Stores Unit would have to stay on in Palestine, and the question was whether it would be 1295 or 1296. We won the argument, so 1296 stayed. So we were only a very short time at Rafa.

Immediately on taking command at Rafa - the day after I arrived - I was instructed to place my predecessor as O.C., Lt. Geoffrey Huddart, under arrest. (I was also only a Lieutenant - I never pushed for promotion.). He had been at Beit Nabala, and had come down from there to Al Jiya and then Rafa. It was discovered that the Arms Register had never been kept up to date, and the whole Unit Administration was a shambles. The suspicion was that his main interest had been flogging stores to his Jewish friends, not looking after his unit. When we left, he was still under arrest in the Canal Zone. I don't know what happened to him. The Colonel had said to me "We don't want trouble with that bloody man - let's send him on leave to Palestine, and hope he doesn't come back." But he did come back - as he was clearly of no further use to the Haganah. So he returned two or three days before we left for Tripoli.

The previous O.C. at 10 BESD Beit Nabala, Lt.Col. Hulme, was also taken into custody; he had come out to Palestine in 1938, as a Sergeant. He was Jewish, and 10-12 years later had risen to Lt. Col., working his way up in a surprising manner spending all his time in RE Stores ! When the police arrested him they found £30,000 on him, for which he could not satisfactorily account. Everything there was a mess. Corruption was rife, and he must have known of and been involved in it. They had to check the books, and found that two Caterpillar tractors, two Graders and twelve Mobile Tar Boilers were missing. They were on the books, but they were not to be found ! Since the Arab labourers could not have walked out with them hidden under their robes, I reckon Hulme flogged them. A whole lot was missing, but the excuse was always "it must be a book error". But I realised later what had happened - during the pull-out, all proper book-keeping was scrubbed, except at Majdal. I recall just one exception: At Majdal the Arabs came one night and dismantled the wooden buildings and took everything inside - including an old typewriter. No-one bothered about anything else, but an RASC unit in Port Tewfik which kept the Register of Typewriters pursued me on this matter as far as Tripoli, demanding a Court of Enquiry for negligence and insubordination, for loss of a Typewriter ! I had to ask them if they had any idea what was going on in Palestine at the time. I reckon at least £2M worth of Stores was written-off.

Two Examples: Our only vehicle at 1295 Coy. was a Canadian Chevrolet. It wanted only a diaphragm for the petrol pump - and we couldn't get one. The LAD of the Life Guards lashed up a repair but it wouldn't hold. But there were no Dollars, and the clerks in Jerusalem wouldn't authorise purchase of spare parts. So for the sake of a one-dollar part, we ended up having to leave the whole vehicle behind, near Gaza - at Nuseirat, the R.E. HQ for the District.

When I got to Rafa, we had to cross the Sinai - but there were no vehicles. The Regulations were that trucks could not cross in groups of less than three, with at least three men in the front vehicle, and three in the rear, and at least two in any intermediate ones - so the minimum possible convoy was three trucks and eight men. But we had none ! An RASC Company had been disbanded, and had used American Dodge trucks. These were all lined up at Rafa, on the sand dunes - maybe 150 of them - therefore I had to go along one night and take three of them, a Half-Tonner and two Three-Tonners. Officers were not meant to drive, but I was the

only one with a valid driving licence ! (Two others could also drive). We had eight men. so just enough to get out. The other 147 lorries probably just stayed there and would have been taken by the Egyptians.

There were many other cases of such waste. Further up Palestine it was probably not so bad, but south of, say, Sarafand, was Arab territory, and they knocked down every building to pieces and carted it all away, bricks and all, on their camels and donkeys. For our last three days at Al Jiya we had no water - the well was outside the camp (probably the perimeter had shrunk with withdrawals), and Arabs had taken away the pipes ! At El Majdal, the water came from a well situated in orange groves on the other side of the tracks. It was decided (by someone) that the Arab owner was charging too much for the water, and so the clerks wouldn't authorise payment; therefore, for a year, a tanker of water had to be driven from Al Jiya almost every day - at much greater cost than just paying the owner the few extra pence.

Regarding the blowing up of the troop train in February 1948 - one point has particularly worried me. Normal procedure, which I had regularly observed from our depot at El Majdal Station, had been for an armoured car on rail wheels, manned by men of the Life Guards, to precede this train. But all the combatant troops in South Palestine, including the Life Guards, had been evacuated to the Suez Canal Zone a month before the outrage, so presumably the armoured car was not in operation on the railway. Although I understand that a dead donkey stuffed with explosives was detonated by remote control just as the First Class coach containing officers passed over it, if the armoured car had preceded the train, surely the dead donkey would have been investigated. All troops in Palestine had been drilled to regard with the greatest suspicion any objects on rail or road. It seems to me that all combatant troops were withdrawn before the Sappers, leaving us unprotected. Fortunately the Arabs, whilst happy to rob us of anything, did not wish to injure us."

Tripoli

I travelled by troopship "Empress of Scotland" from Port Said via Haifa, Saloniki, Piraeus, to Malta, thence (because the harbour at Tripoli was still largely blocked by sunken ships) in a smaller shuttle ferry, the "Empire Peacemaker" (known colloquially as the "Empire Sickmaker", a Liberty Ship without a keel, it rolled all over the place....) to Tripoli in Libya.

Tripoli harbour was still partially blocked by German ammunition ships. One boat was halfway across the harbour entrance, and was still full of ammunition, and they were trying to work out how to clear it.

There were no other Engineers in Tripoli at this time (April/May 1948) apart from 1295 Coy. and a couple of Movement Control officers for the harbour. Therefore we had to arrange for ourselves how to move things from the docks to our Depot at Kassala. When we got to Tripoli the railway line had been abandoned; it ran now only from Tripoli Docks to Kassala Barracks, about 25 km. and was used only by 1295 Stores & Workshops Coy. R.E. The rest had been abandoned - and the Arabs had lifted almost all the sleepers. At Kassala the camp was between the main road and the sea; the railway was about a hundred yards on the other side of the barracks. So a curve was built to bring the tracks into Kassala depot, since the rest of the line wasn't needed. On arrival, we found a lot of stuff we had ourselves loaded up in Palestine - including a mountain of Bailey Bridge units. They were of no use in Tripolitania, but we heard they were later used in Cyrenaica. Once a week, or maybe once a fortnight, when a ship came in, loaded with stores (mostly from Palestine), we worked a train.

Every one had to convey a goods wagon loaded with sleepers to replace on the spot those that had been stolen by the Arabs since the last trip ! The local Arabs would block the line to hold up the train and climb aboard when it stopped, for thieving. I stopped that - I got a Bren Gun mounted on the Guard's Van, and when the train was stopped, just fired a burst along. That cured that ! The train was civilian-manned, probably by Italians. Our only interest was in the trains for our kit - we weren't actually running the line. I think the only trains they actually ran were for our RE stores.

(Around ten years ago a friend went to look at the line, as at this point a project was being discussed to reactivate it by the Libyan Government. But he couldn't find it ! It had been removed and built over. I reckon that if he had been asked he could probably have found the remaining traces.) [Note: R. Tourret, "Military Locomotives of the 2nd. World War", p.70f, mentions the 95cm. gauge 'Tripoli Military Railway', operated as such by RE staff under MEF from 1/6/44, then later as 'Tripolitanian Railways' - the terminus now being El Azizia on the former Garian branch. Operations ceased totally in 1962.]

Later Personal Career

: I possessed two passports - British and South African - to assist in travelling around the Middle East, in the engineering profession. I am an expert in pre-stressed concrete, working on my own behalf, mainly on water-supply reservoirs. The National Water Carrier in Israel included 96 concrete domed reservoirs, designed by an American Jewish firm. 88 of them needed to be repaired due to corrosion ! It was a poor design. So I worked as an advisor for Mekorot. About 15 years ago I went to work with Mekorot on a tendering project - following the withdrawal from Sinai the Americans were financing a new airbase, and this needed pre-stressed concrete tanks for fuel. But Solel Boneh got the job, not Mekorot. I was friendly with one of their senior engineers, Solly Snyder, a former South African, and had known him in South Africa. I went back to Majdal and was surprised to find the perimeter fence, which had been dismantled by the Arabs when I left, had been erected again. In fact, Solel Boneh was using the old BESD site for their construction stores site, building Ashkelon. Later I worked in Kenya 3½ years, and South Africa 10½ years, and also Abu Dhabi, Singapore, Eritrea, Kuwait, Uganda. I worked in Water Engineering, and she had Government jobs as District Surgeon.

Family.

I met my wife, Bridget Noone. (known as 'Bernie', short for Bernadette), en route to Tripoli, at Malta. She was a Doctor, an M.O. in the RAMC (Royal Army Medical Corps. Most of the Medical Officers there had come from Palestine - via troopship from Egypt via Haifa to Tripoli, to the BMA (British Military Administration) in Tripoli in Libya. There was a German Prisoner Unit - the men were always smart, saluted, and kept the ambulance that they drove spotlessly clean; They were however replaced by a British RASC soldier - who was lazy and scruffy. (There had also been German prisoner drivers in Port Said.) She had been posted from the Canal Zone to an Artillery Brigade, the 1st. Guards Brigade at Tripoli - but they were expecting a male, as no-one had remembered to put "Miss" by her name, and had assumed the name 'Noone' meant 'No one' ! They refused to accept a female M.O., so she got a post instead at the British Military Hospital at Tripoli, dealing with the smaller units. There was no female accommodation available, so they gave her a private ward until the Colonel moved into Married Quarters, and she then - as a mere Lieutenant, later Captain - moved into the Colonel's quarters. We are now active in the SSAFA, and she advises on War Pensions and as Medical Adviser Our son is in the Army also, and has seen service in Bosnia - he was educated in South Africa, and needed a university degree to join the R.E. - he is now in the Logistics Corps.

52:11.

MILITARY SUPPLY TRAINS IN PERSIA DURING WORLD WAR 2.

By Uri Ben-Rehav.

In numerous issue of 'Harakevet' (most recently 51:13) mention has been made of locos and wagons transferred to Persia during the Second World War - I shall try in this article to shed some light on their deployment there.

When "Operation Barbarossa" started on June 22nd. 1941 (the German invasion into Russia), German armies in the initial stages made rapid advances. One of the reasons was the lack of military hardware for the Red Army. The Western Allies tried, unsuccessfully, to supply the hard-pressed Russian arsenal. (The convoys from Britain to Murmansk started only on August 22nd. 1941 and were at first of insufficient quantity.) Other routes were under consideration, for example by ship to Vladivostok, but as a blockade by the Imperial Japanese Navy was feared, this plan was discarded. Out of sheer desperation a route through the North-West Passage to northern Siberia was considered, but climatic conditions made this impracticable. Only when the pro-German regime under Rashid Ali al-Gailani in Iraq collapsed, and the strong German infiltration into Afghanistan was smashed (Dr. Schulze-Holthus, chief agent of the German Abwehr in Afghanistan, in close co-operation with General Zahedi, Commander of the garrison in Esfahan, and other highly-placed officers and politicians, were laying plans for a pro-German uprising in Afghanistan) could other steps be taken.

On 4th. Sept. 1941 Churchill sent a message to Stalin, stating that all preparations were made for concentrating all necessary locomotives and wagons and to despatch them to Persia. The aim, according to the initial plan, was to move two trains daily in each direction in summer 1941, building up to 12 trains in each direction by summer 1942. The final result of this operation was that - by 1944, when the operation was terminated - four million tons of war materiel had been hauled, including weapons, ammunition, clothing and food, plus over 150,000 vehicles and 3,500 airplanes - all went by rail from Persian ports to Russia. As just one example of the importance of this help, the famous "Katyusha" rocket launchers were mounted on trucks made by the now-defunct US firm of Studebaker. Nearly all of this giant undertaking went by rail, on three routes - from the main port of Bandar Abbas (or Bandar Shahpur) on the Shatt-el-Arab, on the Persian Gulf, and from there via Ahwaz - Qom - Teheran to Bandar Shah. At this port on the Caspian Sea it was transferred to ships and these transported the loads to three Russian ports on the Caspian - Krasnovodsk, Baku and Astrakhan.

Another, secondary rail route was from Teheran to Karvin and from there to Tabriz - the end of the Russian railway from Baku and Tiflis. In 1942, because of the military situation, the port of Rostov and the northern shore of the Black Sea was under occupation, the only trans-Caucasian railway line into Russia was that from Baku to Astrakhan. The Ger-

mans, fully aware of the extreme importance of this life-line, made strenuous efforts to paralyse it and eventually forward units of the 16th. Infantry Division reached it and severed this connection into Russia. However, after a month of bitter fighting the advance units of the Red Army took possession once again and reopened it for traffic. A third, minor route existed, only partly by rail. The starting point was at Karachi (not to be confused with the city in Pakistan) to Nokkundi in Baluchistan, from there to Zahedan - the end of the railway. Here the stores were transferred to trucks and went by road (1,500 km.) to Meshhed, again by train to Ashkhabad. This eastern Persian route reached a monthly capacity of 2000 tons. There existed yet another means of transport, but it was limited - by constructing emergency airstrips it was possible to move extremely important goods by airplane; but due to the technical development of transport planes at that time, loading capacity was very restricted.

52:12.

"In consequence of the efforts of the Turkish forces to reach the Suez Canal in the earlier part of the recent campaign, the employment of a considerable number of British troops became necessary, and owing to the lack of proper roads transport difficulties east of Kantara became insurmountable. It was therefore decided to construct a standard gauge railway from the east bank of the Canal in the direction of Romani for the purpose of ensuring the regular despatch of supplies as well as to enable troops to be moved quickly to the forward area in the case of emergency. The construction of the line began early in 1916, and fairly rapid progress was made as far as Romani (41 kilom.), which was reached in July. On the 4th. August, the Turks carried out an attack on the British forces near Romani, but soon had to retreat with heavy losses. This action delayed the laying of the line, but as soon as it was considered safe for the construction parties to go out again, the work continued without interruption, and El Arish station (155 kilom. from Kantara) was opened in January, Rafa (200 kilom.) in March, and Belah (219 kilom.) in June 1917. The determined resistance put

gauge line from Ludd to Jerusalem, and this work was completed in a very short time. It will be seen from the foregoing remarks that the railway was built at tremendous speed, and although it sufficed for military purposes, it could not be considered as fit for permanent civilian traffic. The severe winter of 1919-1920 sorely tested its strength, and it will be remembered that communications with Egypt were practically cut off for a period of three weeks. It became apparent that to make the line fit to handle the traffic of Palestine it would be necessary to consider a very large programme of reconstruction. This included the building of bridges and culverts, the lifting of the line over a large area, widening of cuttings, clearing of drains, and stone ballasting of the line throughout. Estimates were got out for this work, but no money was forthcoming until the arrival of the High Commissioner, who, immediately he arrived, sanctioned a sum of £ 100,000 to cover the initial expense of protecting the line from further washouts in the principal areas, and the extension of the broad gauge line to Jaffa. This work was immediately put in hand, and I am glad to say twelve

bridges and twelve culverts have been built, and 37 kilom. of track well ballasted; also considerable quantities of earth have been handled in widening cuttings and

clearing drains and raising banks above flood level, and it is hoped the line will withstand this winter's rains. Prior to the armistice in 1918 it was practically impossible to undertake the handling of civilian traffic owing to the heavy military demands on the railway. Subsequent to the armistice, however, through booked goods consignments were accepted in unlimited quantities. It must be borne in mind that before the end of 1918 the line was operated practically throughout by soldier personnel, who became available for demobilisation within a short period after the cessation of hostilities, and in consequence of instructions issued by the War Office, were due for early return to the United Kingdom, as the railways in England were badly in need of their staff who had joined up for service. It became necessary therefore for the soldier personnel to be replaced by civilians, and great difficulty was experienced in obtaining men who had previous railway knowledge. There was a certain amount of material offering, but it unfortunately meant that the majority of the staff engaged, although decidedly willing, had to be taught the work, and this proved to be a serious drawback to the progress of the railway. Furthermore it was not possible to obtain the services of highly technical personnel from other railways, as the Military Administration was not prepared to offer contracts

MINUTES AND HOURS.

On 12th. February 1921, Sir Herbert Samuel sent to Earl Curzon a set of Minutes of the fifth meeting of the Palestine Advisory Council, which took place on Wednesday 9th. Feb. The Minutes (found in the PRO at ref. FO 141/442, thanks to Alan Clothier) give an intriguing insight into the concerns of the inhabitants of that time, and provide quite a contrast with the current situation!

"Present were: Mr. J. L. Barron, Mr. M. Beirut, Mr. N. Bentwich, Mr. I. Benzwi, Mr. H. E. Bowman, Mr. W. H. Deedes, Mr. R. H. Harari, Mr. G. Heron, Colonel R. Holmes, Ismail Bey Hussein, Mr. H. M. Kalvarisky, Sheikh Abdel Hadj El Khatib, Sheikh Freih Abu Middein, Mr. H. A. Smallwood, Mr. R. Storrs, Mr. G. S. Symes, Suleiman Abdul Razzak Tukan Bey, Mr. D. Yellin. Suleiman Bey Nasssif and Dr. Habib Salem were unable, owing to illness, to attend." Max Nurock was the Secretary to the Advisory Council.

"A Memorandum by Colonel Holmes on the Palestine Railways was then read to the Council." (This is printed in the original on p. 4 as "Enclosure No. 2" "Memorandum on the Palestine Railways." but I shall place it here first. Ed.)

up by the Turks at Gaza resulted in the construction of the line being held up for several months, and in the meantime the line from Rafa to Shellal was built for strategic reasons and was eventually extended to Beersheba. When the situation permitted the construction work to proceed beyond Gaza the line was quickly pushed forward to Ludd, and when the final rout of the Turkish forces took place in the latter end of 1918 it was decided to make Haifa the terminus of the railway. Haifa (412 kilom. from Kantara) was opened for traffic in January 1919, and it has generally been accepted that the rapid construction of the railway was an exceptionally fine feat. In addition the line had been doubled between Kantara and Rafa. The narrow gauge between Jaffa and Ludd had been pulled up by the Turks for use on the Gaza front, and a 60 centim. line was laid between these points for the transport of supplies for the British forces. The line from Ludd to Jerusalem was also destroyed in several places and the bridges were blown up. In addition considerable damage was done to the rolling-stock and other plant belonging to the old French railway company. In consequence of the heavy military demands, it was found that the narrow-gauge line, after it has been thoroughly repaired, could not cope with the traffic to be handled, and it was decided to extend the broad

in excess of six months, and the insecurity of tenure would not induce suitable men to leave other permanent employment and accept temporary positions with this railway. The lack of proper passenger rolling-stock has been realised all through, and in December 1919 the War Office was requested to authorise two complete hospital trains, consisting of twenty-three coaches all told, to be converted into passenger coaches. Sixteen of these coaches have already been placed in service, and the work on the remaining coaches, which has been held up owing to the scarcity of fittings, &c., is now in course of completion. In consequence of the railway not being hitherto provided with proper rolling stock, it has been necessary to retain a number of Egyptian State Railway coaches which were supplied during the war for the movement of troops and are of an old type. The conversion of the Ludd - Jaffa section to standard gauge has proved to be of considerable benefit in the handling of goods consigned to and from Jaffa. The ballasting of this section will be sufficiently completed within the next three or four months to allow acceleration in the time table. Jerusalem station is now three times the size it was prior to the war, and apart from increased booking facilities being provided, modern lavatory arrangements and electric lighting are being installed. The work of strengthening the bridges on the Jerusalem line to carry a heavier type of locomotive is now in progress, and it is anticipated that, after the end of February, it will no longer be necessary to have to change engines at Artuf, and that a slight reduction in the time taken for the journey between Ludd and Jerusalem will be possible. A standard gauge line is being laid from a point off the Jaffa line to the site of the Surafend cantonment for the purpose of handling the army traffic for the troops that will be stationed there in the future. A short line will be constructed in the immediate future from Kafr Jinnis to Beit Nabala for the purpose of conveying stone from the quarries at Beit Nabala for rebuilding the roads. A line will also be constructed from Ras-el-Ain to Petach Tikvah to serve the requirements of the colony there, the cost being provided from private sources. It is also intended to lay a short line from Mejdal to Askalon in connection with the work of the Antiquities Department, and also to cater for the future tourist traffic. There has been a decided increase in the passenger traffic, and it is confidently expected that a large increase in the goods traffic will follow as time goes on and the country gets properly opened up. Six locomotives of a special type had been ordered for work on the Jerusalem line on account of the heavy gradients and the sharp curves. In February of last year a service of dining and sleeping cars was inaugurated and these have proved to be a decided acquisition to

the comfort of the travelling public. [sic]. A daily train service was instituted between Palestine and Egypt in November last, and it is intended as soon as further stock becomes available and if the traffic justifies the expense, to run an extra train later in the day on three days a week from Haifa to Ludd, and vice versa, in order to avoid passengers for Jaffa and Jerusalem lines having to proceed by the 5.15 a.m. train. That train will continue to run, otherwise passengers for Egypt would be obliged to spend the night at Kantara. An arrangement has been made with the International Sleeping Car Company to provide a further number of dining and sleeping cars, and this will permit of the extra passenger train, which was put on in November last, having a dining and sleeping car attached to it, and if it is found that the traffic on the Jaffa - Jerusalem line warrants it, a dining car will be put on to this service. It is also expected that next winter the railway will be in a position to cater for the tourist traffic in far greater numbers than has been possible this year. Considerable alterations are being made to the Ludd station in the shape of the construction of two island platforms with overhead cover. There has been a shortage of first-class accommodation on the narrow gauge lines, and this has been entirely due to the fact that the passenger coaches captured from the Turks were in a very bad state of repair, and it has been extremely difficult to obtain the necessary materials to put them again in running order. It is expected, however, that first-class coaches will be available for both the Acre and Nablus services within the next few weeks. In order to promote the exportation of oranges from Palestine to Egypt a considerable reduction has been made in the freightage rates. The El Hersh railway bridge at Kantara has been taken out of use at the end of December at the requirement of the Suez Canal Company, and since that date through booked consignments have been handled by means of the truck transporter which is satisfactorily coping with the traffic. Consequent upon the decision for the removal of the railway bridge, it became necessary to build a new passenger station on the east bank of the Canal, and this involved the laying of 3 kilom. of line. Although the fate of the bridge was not finally known until the end of November, the new station was brought into use on the 30th. December, and is within 2 minutes' walk of the Egyptian State Railways' station at Kantara West. The length of track operated by the Palestine Railways (including the Kantara - Rafa section which is being operated on behalf of the army), is approximately 1,000 kilom. The sections are as follows: Kantara - Haifa. Rafa - Beersheba. Jaffa - Jerusalem. Haifa - Acre. Haifa - El Hamme. Afule - Tulkeram. Messudieh - Nablus.

In order to economise in cost, arrangements are being made to discharge all colliers for the railway at Haifa and local labour is being employed as far as possible. It is intended to remove the locomotive workshops and stores from Kantara to Haifa in the near future, and this should afford considerable employment to Palestinians. The provision of proper station buildings and goods sheds and accommodation for the staff is expected to be taken in hand at an early date, and orders will be placed for sufficient passenger rolling-stock to meet future requirements."

"Tukan Bey pointed out that fares were recently increased because of the high cost of coal. The people of Palestine did not like this increase and were now in many cases using carts for transport of goods, and preferred themselves to travel by automobiles which were cheaper than railways. Railway rates before the war were 2 millièmes per kilom.; they were now 5 millièmes, and in view of the fact that the price of coal had decreased, the Administration should reduce railway rates to the previous level. Tukan Bey also asked that the railway line between Messudieh and Nablus, and Nablus and Haifa should be put into better order. The trains used between these places were in a very bad condition; the carriages had no windows, and during cold and rainy weather passengers were exposed to the elements; the carriages were without lamps, and travelling by night was very inconvenient. Particularly uncomfortable were the various stations where passengers had no waiting rooms, and often had to stand for hours in the rain and cold. He suggested that 1st. and 2nd. class carriages be introduced, as at present between Messudieh and Nablus there was only one class of carriage. He also asked that if possible a statement be made as to how many Palestinians were engaged as engineers and in other capacities on the railways, as he had heard that there were very few Palestinians so employed. Mr. Berouti raised three points. There were at present three large administrative departments at Haifa, Ludd and Kantara. Would it not be possible to concentrate the three into one department at Jerusalem? Secondly, contracts were being given out without notice to, or knowledge of, the inhabitants of Palestine. All tenders for the railways should be given out through District Governors at least one or two months in advance. Fares were very high; for instance the return 1st. class fare between Jaffa and Jerusalem was 206 piastres, whereas under the old régime it was only 76 piastres. Goods transported from Egypt to Palestine cost half the rates charged upon goods sent from Palestine to Egypt. Furthermore, when the rates were increased the price of coal was £18 a ton,

but it was now £5 per ton. Mr. Yellin said that from the statement it was clear that the Administration and its officials are doing their utmost to improve travelling facilities in the country. Trains, however, should be made more comfortable; buffets, such as have already been opened on an inadequate scale at Ludd, opened at other stations; and dining cars attached to trains requested to cater for the special culinary needs of Moslems and Jews. The deplorable congestion at booking offices might be obviated by issuing 1st. and 2nd. class tickets from one office, instead of issuing 2nd. and 3rd. class tickets from the same office, as at present, if it was not possible to provide three separate booking offices. Ludd was the junction of the Palestine railways, yet there were provided no sign posts indicating the various platforms from which trains left for all parts Palestine, a defect which caused confusion to travellers. The names of the stations had not yet appeared in Hebrew. Mr. Yellin asked, in view of the extent of railway traffic at Rechovoth, that the station now serving passengers be enlarged to cope with freight also. Under the existing arrangement goods were sent by road to Ludd, to be entrained there, and vice versa. The revenue from Rechovoth station was estimated at from £12,000 to £15,000 annually, but a much greater revenue might be obtained if trains were run more than three times a week, and if facilities for goods traffic were established. Mr. Yellin also drew attention to the bad state of the roads between Rechovoth and Richon-le-Zion. This road had been built by the Turks, but owing to the heavy traffic after the occupation, had been seriously damaged. If repaired it would help the people very much in bringing their goods to the station. The following question was submitted in writing by Suleiman Bey Nassif:- Could it be arranged to run a train from Haifa, at least two or three times a week, to meet the Jaffa-Jerusalem train at Ludd, and thus enable passengers moving between Haifa and Jerusalem and Jaffa to do so during daytime?

Colonel Holmes answered the various points raised. The freight rates on the Palestine railways were exactly the same to and from Egypt. Passenger rates had been increased to meet the actual running expenses of the railway, and were not any higher than the rates prevalent in Europe. The railway, judging by the revenues for January, would barely cover its expenses, and an immediate reduction in fares could not, therefore, be promised, but as soon as the effect of the reduced price of coal became perceptible every effort would be made to reduce them. The statement that the majority of travellers used motor transport was not borne out by the figures of the latest returns, which show that passenger traffic had increased. The increased cost of running the railways

was not only due to the cost of coal but also to the cost of living and the increased wages now being paid, and labour was three times dearer now than before the war. With regard to the question of the Nablus - Messudieh line, which had been dealt with in the memorandum, there was undoubtedly much room for improvement. It was difficult to supply lighting for the carriages on that line as the globes for the lamps had been made in Germany and Austria, and it had not been possible so far to obtain a fresh supply. An effort was now being made to secure a stock through the Crown Agents, and a consignment was expected shortly. All the stations of the Palestine railways had been badly damaged during the war, and the military authorities would not sanction the repair of these buildings. The High Commissioner had now approved certain capital expenditure, and repair to old stations as well as the building of new stations would now proceed. It was not correct to say that the railways had large administrative offices in three centres. All railways must have district offices. However, the workshops at Kantara were now to be removed to Haifa, where all administrative work of the railways was being concentrated. It was always necessary to have the workshops at a port and not at such a mountainous place as Jerusalem. All contracts of any importance had always been published in the press in Palestine and Egypt. A buffet had just been opened at Jerusalem station, and a large buffet and restaurant are included in the new plans for Ludd station. It was also proposed to open a buffet and rest-room at Haifa in order to deal with travellers coming from Syria. The list of the names of the stations in Arabic and Hebrew was still under the consideration of the Government, and until it was approved they could not be put up. Restaurant cars were run by a private company. Three new restaurant cars were on order, and would be ready at an early date. It was intended to put one on each through train and one on the Jerusalem service. Mr. Yellin's suggestion would be transmitted to the company. It was not quite correct to say that there was no goods station at Rechovoth. There was a siding specially erected at the request of the colony for goods traffic. It was the very best that could be done at the time.

The receipts from Rechovoth station in October were only £249, in November £516, in December £1,535, in January £1,042. When it was noted that the receipts were increasing the question of a station was considered, but the management of the railways must wait some little time to see if these receipts were merely due to the orange trade before it could ask the Administration to sanction the cost of a building a station, which could be £5,000. With regard to the question of Palestinian labour on the railways, the figures could not be stated

off-hand. Mr. Kavarisky said that the promise made by Colonel Holmes that daylight trains would leave three times a week from Haifa, beginning on the 1st. March, would be hailed with great pleasure by those using the railways. He asked whether it would not be possible for people to take goods from the smaller stations between Ludd and Haifa instead of having to convey them by road to the principal stations which was a source of great inconvenience and expense. Mr. Ben Zwi asked what was the condition of the workers employed on the railways, and what wages they received in the various grades. The memorandum of Colonel Holmes mentioned the difficulty of securing skilled workmen and experts, and it was known that formerly there were accidents which happily had not been repeated. The development and progress of these technical branches of the railway administration depended on a suitable wage being paid to the workmen. Colonel Holmes said that there was no difficulty in sending consignments of goods from any one station in Palestine to another, but passengers could not expect to convey freight by passenger trains. In answer to Mr. Ben Zwi, Colonel Holmes said that casual labourers employed on the railways received 15 piastres a day, and skilled labourers up to 90 piastres per day. The average for skilled labour is about 35-40 piastres, foremen receiving up to 90 piastres per day. The clerical staff was paid at the same rate as in other Government departments. With regard to the question raised at the end of the last meeting of the Advisory Council by Dr. Habib Salim that a station be provided at Anebta, Colonel Holmes stated that since the 1st. of January an arrangement was in force whereby trains stopped to pick up and put down passengers at this village. In conclusion, Colonel Holmes said that he wished members would inform the public that the railway administration would always be glad to receive any complaints they have to make, and every effort would be made to deal with and remedy such complaints."

(A fascinating document! It would be wonderful to learn more of the redoubtable Colonel Holmes and the means he took to transform a run-down military supply route into a civilian railway. His 'Memorandum' contains many surprises, including the proposed line for archaeologists to Askalon; that the Beit Nabala quarries were intended mainly for road stone rather than railway ballast; that locos were changed at Artuf for the 'mountain' section to Jerusalem; or that Kantara East was only a matter of a few minutes' walk - not swim! - from Kantara West! Editor).

MIDDLE EAST DIARY. 1917 to 1956.

COLONEL R. MEINERTZHAGEN.

Colonel Richard Meinertzhagen (CBE; DSO) was a British officer of Danish background, non-Jewish and in some respects anti-semitic but pro-Zionist; he served in the Middle East for several years and his Diary (published by The Cresset Press, London, 1959) covers the period listed above. His book, though repetitive at times, is a valuable source for what various people at the time - Jews, Arabs, British Colonial figures and others - were really thinking at the time. In a whole section covering pages 27-43 several entries concerning T.E. Lawrence are gathered.

10.12.1917. Rafa. "What Lawrence is doing in Arabia is not having the slightest influence on Allenby's main campaign. Lawrence regarded Allenby's right flank as his particular province and resented any intrusion.... I told Lawrence that the Arabs were just looters and murderers, they were well understood by the Turks who refused to enlist them in combatant units....."

p. 33f. 8.4.1919. Peace Conference, Paris. "I have been seeing a good deal of little Lawrence and have got to know him well. He is a complex character.... We lunched together and later took a walk in the Bois. The poor little man is intensely depressed. He is writing a book on his Arabian exploits, and admitted to me that though it purports to be the truth, a great deal of it is fancy, what might have happened, what should have happened and dull little incidents embroidered into hair-breadth escapes. He confesses that he has overdone it and is now terrified lest he be found out and deflated.... He hates himself and is having a great struggle with his conscience. His self-deception filled him with bitterness. Shall he run away and hide, confess his sins and become completely discredited - or carry the myth on into the limelight in the hopes of not being exposed. Poor little man, he's in a ghastly mess and I wish I could help him. I have strongly advised him to

write a straightforward account of his Arabian exploits - I cannot call it a campaign - omitting all glorification and embroidery. He says it has all gone too far and that others are pushing him into the limelight. He also excuses himself by saying that none of his exaggerations can be checked or verified - that seems rather ingenuous. He blames Hogarth, Lowell Thomas, Storrs and many others....."

p. 35f. 20.5.1935. London. "Poor little Lawrence died yesterday morning after a week of fears and hopes for his recovery, following on a commonplace motor accident. ... The last occasion when I saw him was only last year when he suddenly appeared at my house and we had a long talk about old times and the future. On that occasion I saw a side of his nature which had never before revealed itself. he got down on his knees and played with my children, making railways and blowing up trains just as he did in 1917 in Arabia...." p.39. "Whenever he came to see me in London he would play trains with my children. Anne may remember him, the others were too young. With a bag of flour he would blow up and derail a Turkish train and make a foul mess of the drawing-room. No trouble was too much for him. On one occasion when the children were out he waited until they returned, and spent his time arranging the trains, placing loot in the wagons, so that he could demonstrate how he would loot a train....."

p.57. 4.11.1919. Cairo. "I had a long interview with George Picot, the French Haut Commissaire. He is the local fountain-head from which all French evil springs in the Near East.... At the interview which mainly concerned the Railway strike, he seemed very tired and uncompromising, but he eventually gave way and I hope the strike will be over tomorrow. The reason of the strike was that a particularly offensive French official had insulted and imprisoned some

Syrian employees. I have now secured the dismissal of the Official."

p. 91f. 11.7.1920. Cairo. Great changes have occurred....Herbert Samuel is installed as the first High Commissioner of Palestine, Bols is dethroned and sent home and Waters-Taylor has received his demission and is now in Cairo looking for a job. (Note: When Samuel took over from Bols they met on the railway platform at Jerusalem; the taking over was simple. Bols handed Samuel a slip of paper on which was written: "Received, one Palestine in good order"; Samuel signed it, but added "E.& O.E.". Bols had to ask Samuel the meaning of these letters; "Errors and Omissions Excepted.")

p.114. 19.12.1921. London. "A conference in the Colonial Office to discuss future military arrangements in Palestine and Mesopotamia. Those present included Churchill, WorthingtonEvans (War Office), Henry Wilson (C.I.G.S.), Montagu (India), Freddie Guest and Trenchard (Air Ministry.)

The second point was a proposal that the War Office should retire from Palestine and hand over defence to the Colonial Office. The War Office agreed in principle but wished to be relieved of responsibility for the Kantara Railway from the Canal to Palestine. To this I demurred. The railway is not vital to Palestine and I advocated that the Egyptian Government should be approached to take over that part of it which lies in Sinai and that Palestine take over that part lying within Palestine. Haifa is quite capable of dealing with military stores for the Palestine garrison and it is most desirable that it should do so and develop itself on sound lines. At present Egypt is acting as middle-man for Palestine, much to the advantage of the former and to the disadvantage of the latter. It was decided that I should discuss it with the War Office on the above lines."

PR STANDARD GAUGE COACH WITHDRAWALS.

By Paul Cotterell.

The following list has been compiled from three sources which are shown at the foot of the listing. Nothing is presently known of withdrawals post-1955.

<u>Coach.</u>	<u>Withdrawn.</u>	<u>Source.</u>	<u>Notes.</u>
77 LSWR Pay Coach	B		Stored 1954. (*1)
79 LSWR 'Ambulance'	1942/3	A	
90 ESR Service	1947/8	A	
91 ESR Service	1946/7	A	
92 ESR Service	1934/5	A	
93 ESR (?) Service	B		Stored 1954.
95 MR Saloon	B/C		Stored 1954, in service 1955.
97 B'ham. Saloon	B		Stored 1954.
98 B'ham. saloon	B/C		Stored 1954, in service 1955.
99 MR Saloon	1942/3	A	
100 MR	C		In service 1955.
101 MR 1st.	1946/7	A	
102 MR	C		In service 1955.
103 MR	C		In service 1955.
104 MR	C		In service 1955.
105 MR 1st.	1938/9	A	
120 B'ham.	C		In service 1955.
121 B'ham.	C		In service 1955.
122 B'ham.	C		In service 1955.
123 B'ham.	C		In service 1955.
124 B'ham.	C		In service 1955.
125 B'ham.	C		In service 1955.
127 B'ham.	C		In service 1955.
128 B'ham. 2nd.	1942/3	A	
129 B'ham. 2nd.	1947/8	A/B	Still in store 1954.
220 Metro.	C		In service 1955.
221 Metro.	C		In service 1955.
222 Metro.	C		In service 1955.
223 Metro.	C		In service 1955.
224 Metro	C		In service 1955.
225 Metro	C		In service 1955.
300 MR	B/C		Buffet, stored unserviceable 1954.
301 MR	1946/7	A	
302 MR	1946/7	A	
393 MR	1946/7	A	
304 MR 3rd.	1946/7	A	
305 MR 2nd.	1938/9	A	
306 MR	B		Stored 1954.
307 MR 2nd.	1946/7	A	
308 MR	B		Buffet, stored 1954.
309 LSWR 3rd.	1946/7	A	
310 LSWR	B		Stored 1954.
311 LSWR 3rd.	1938	A	
312 LSWR	B		Stored 1954.

<u>Coach.</u>	<u>Withdrawn.</u>	<u>Source.</u>	<u>Notes.</u>
313 LSWR 3rd.	?	-	Nothing recorded in any source.
314 LSWR	C		In service 1955.
315 LSWR 3rd.	1936/7	A	

316 LSWR	C		In service 1955.
317 LSWR 'Ambulance'			1936/7 A
318 LSWR	C		In service 1955.
320 B'ham.	C		In service 1955.
321 B'ham.	C		In service 1955.
323 B'ham.	C		In service 1955.
324 B'ham.	C		In service 1955.
325 B'ham.	C		In service 1955.
326 B'ham.	C		In service 1955.
327 B'ham 3rd.	1947/8	A/B	Still in store 1954.
328 B'ham.	C		In service 1955.
329 Clayton	C		In service 1955.
330 Clayton 3rd.	1947/8	A	
331 Clayton	C		In service 1955.
332 Clayton	C		In service 1955.
333 Clayton	B		In store 1954.
334 Clayton	C		In service 1955.
335 Gloucester	C		Buffet, in service 1955.
336 Gloucester	C		In service 1955.
337 Gloucester	C		In service 1955.
338 Gloucester	C		In service 1955.
339 Gloucester	C		In service 1955.
340 Gloucester	C		In service 1955.
341 Gloucester 3rd.	1947/8	A/B	Still in store 1954.
342 Gloucester	C		In service 1955.
343 ex-GIPR (India)	?	-	Nothing recorded in any source.
344 ex-GIPR (India)	?	-	Nothing recorded in any source.
345 ex-GIPR (India)	?	-	Nothing recorded in any source.
346 ex-GIPR (India)	?	-	Nothing recorded in any source.
400 Metro. 1st/3rd.	1946/7	A	
401 Metro.	C		In service 1955.
402 Metro.	C		In service 1955.
403 Metro. 1st./3rd.	1947/8	A	
500 Metro.	C		In service 1955.
501 Metro.	C		In service 1955.
502 Metro. 3rd./Brake.	1946/7	A	
503 Metro.	C		In service 1955.
504 Metro.	C		In service 1955.
505 Metro. 3rd./Brake.	1946/7	A	
550 Metro.	B		Postal/Parcel coach, stored 1954.
551 Metro.	B		Postal/Parcel coach, stored 1954.
552 Metro.	B		Postal/Parcel coach, stored 1954.
556 LSWR Brake/Parcels/Luggage	1938/9	A	
1774 Wagons-Lits Sleeper	B		Stored 1954.
2351 Wagons-Lits Diner	B		Stored 1954.

Sources:

A - 'Israel Railways Capital Accounts as at 15/5/48: Report by P.C.J. Baker.'

B - IR Annual Report 1953-4.

C - IR Annual Report, 1954-5.

Coaches withdrawn up to 1948 shown with classification on withdrawal (with possible exception of LSWR coaches listed as "Ambulances"). Coaches which entered IR working stock became classless, but some converted to Buffets as shown.

It is hoped that the above will answer numerous outstanding queries about PR coaches, and provide an outline guide to their fates. Much more research is needed to fill-in their histories."

continued overleaf.....

The Editor adds:

The PR WTT No. 3, to operate from 1st. May 1944 "and until further notice" has on page xvii "Standard Gauge Saloons, Passenger Coaches, Ambulance Coaches, Brake Post & Luggage Vans".

Here the "Four Passenger Coaches 3rd. Class. I.S.R. (Indian type)" are listed - i.e. from Iraq, not India - as Nos. 305, 311, 315, 317, to which someone has added in ink in my copy "343-346" as their new numbers - though these were then also crossed out. 83-90 seats each, 70' 2" long over buffers (the longest on the system), 48' 0" between bogie centres, tare weight between 37,250 and 38,600 kg. (this also the heaviest on the system.) Maybe they had been brought initially from the GIPR to the ISR, (and regauged) and then transferred for military traffic to Palestine.

Pay Coach 77 had 4 beds.
Saloons 97 & 98 had six berths.
128 is marked "out of service".
Service Coach 90 is 4-wheeled

(the only such coach on the system) and had one bed. 91 is 6-wheeled with one bed, 93 is 6-wheeled with 2 beds. Ambulance Coach 79 has 22 beds but is "out of service". MR bogie Saloon 95 has three sleeping berths.

Sleeping Car 1774 had 16 berths, Nos. 1777 and 1778, also 2072 and 2168, had 18 each. (These last three are not in the IR list above.)

From Paul Cotterell, a photo of the new large exhibits building of the Railway Museum, as seen from the new footbridge, December 2000. There is a ramp for disabled visitors to the left of the steps. To the right is the mobile concrete bunker No.001 "The Hillmens Pride" dating from "The Disturbances" mounted once again on a flat wagon as in the 1930s.



AN ARMY TOUR OF THE SOUTHERN HEDJAZ.

From Brian Baxter of the REME Museum I have received a clipping from a Service publication, a magazine called "The Wire", of August 1998., p. 353. It is a non-specialist description of a part of the route not often traversed in recent times:

SANGCOM PROJECT TEAM. "Winter is normally a time for hibernation, or at least a period when things slow down, but not in Saudi Arabia where it is really the only period of the year when it is possible to get out and do things. With a team of almost entirely new members, there has been an effort recently to keep the military skills up to speed, especially with the increased tension with Iraq. Contingency plans were dusted off and Lt.-Col. Jo Fletcher instigated a programme of training. This consisted of a battle field tour and a desert driving course, and yes, or should that be no, it was good fun.

The Battlefield Tour aimed to visit the sites of the attacks by Sir Lawrence of Arabia [sic.] on the Hijaz railway that went from Tabuk in the North down to Madina in the South. The railway was built to service the expanding Turkish Empire, although the public reason given was to ease the problems of the pilgrimage to Mecca. As this was very much a strategic route, it was heavily defended, and as it was to prove, it was to be a most enlightening tour. The tour teams consisted of Col. Richard Holmes, Lt. Cols. Jo Fletcher and Kim Parsons and Maj. Nik Hammett (plus the ladies) who were travelling the railway from the South and Maj. Des Jepson and a few civilian friends who were travelling from the North. The Expedition was planned for over the 'Eid el Fitr' holiday, which is the Islamic equivalent of Easter

where, after the period of fasting known as Ramadan, things go wild for a few days as everyone over-indulges. It was decided that this would be a good time to avoid being in Riyadh where time between traffic accidents is measured in seconds. The whole trip lasted just less than five days and consisted of a 800km. drive to the start of the railway and then a 150 km. journey along the route of the railway. In places this was a route that followed along the embankment and in other places the sand had covered the route of the track and the route was on a compass bearing (GPS) across the sand dunes.

This proved to be a most spectacular journey with basalt block houses along the route with water towers and other station buildings still in excellent condition. At the start of the journey we came across a complete repair train sitting in what used to be a siding and except for the wooden parts of the train (taken by locals for firewood) it was still in good condition.

At other points along the track there was evidence of the railway being attacked, with trains on their sides, some with clear signs of being hit by artillery. It was classic ambush territory, with a track that snaked its way through the hills that overlooked and dominated the track. An area almost impossible to defend and not the type of country to be an engine driver in, where life expectancy would appear to be quite short. Also dotted along the route were Turkish forts, again in surprisingly good condition and sited in dominant positions. Re-supply was the only obvious problem.

Despite a very arduous journey the only vehicle casualties in the North bound tour were a flat tyre suffered by Lt. Col. Kim Parsons and a broken steering pump pipe on the Fletcher's vehicle 5 metres from home - this following a 2,500km. drive. Unfortunately the Jepsons were not quite so lucky and their Discovery had serious indigestion, losing at least four cylinders. A borrowed vehicle from Maj. Gavin West, the LO for the Western Region saved the day, and allowed the vehicle to be recovered at a later date. For those of you reading this and hoping for a posting to the desert, this is a trip that must be put on your list of things to do. It is a journey of immense interest (trainspotters especially) and of outstanding views in an area of a world that is still very much untouched by modern civilisation."

AN ARMY TOUR OF THE SOUTHERN HEDJAZ.

From Brian Baxter of the REME Museum I have received a clipping from a Service publication, a magazine called "The Wire", of August 1998., p. 353. It is a non-specialist description of a part of the route not often traversed in recent times:

SANGCOM PROJECT TEAM. "Winter is normally a time for hibernation, or at least a period when things slow down, but not in Saudi Arabia where it is really the only period of the year when it is possible to get out and do things. With a team of almost entirely new members, there has been an effort recently to keep the military skills up to speed, especially with the increased tension with Iraq. Contingency plans were dusted off and Lt.-Col. Jo Fletcher instigated a programme of training. This consisted of a battle field tour and a desert driving course, and yes, or should that be no, it was good fun.

The Battlefield Tour aimed to visit the sites of the attacks by Sir Lawrence of Arabia [sic.] on the Hijaz railway that went from Tabuk in the North down to Madina in the South. The railway was built to service the expanding Turkish Empire, although the public reason given was to ease the problems of the pilgrimage to Mecca. As this was very much a strategic route, it was heavily defended, and as it was to prove, it was to be a most enlightening tour. The tour teams consisted of Col. Richard Holmes, Lt. Cols. Jo Fletcher and Kim Parsons and Maj. Nik Hammett (plus the ladies) who were travelling the railway from the South and Maj. Des Jepson and a few civilian friends who were travelling from the North. The Expedition was planned for over the 'Eid el Fitr' holiday, which is the Islamic equivalent of Easter where, after the period of fasting known as Ramadan, things go wild for a few days as everyone over-indulges. It was decided that this would be a good time to avoid being in Riyadh where time between traffic accidents is measured in seconds. The whole trip lasted just less than five days and

consisted of a 800km. drive to the start of the railway and then a 150 km. journey along the route of the railway. In places this was a route that followed along the embankment and in other places the sand had covered the route of the track and the route was on a compass bearing (GPS) across the sand dunes.

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52:17.

THE V60 CLASS DB DIESEL SHUNTERS.

An anonymous article on this series of locos (many still in service, some after various modifications for radio control etc.) appeared back in January 1990 in "Eisenbahn Journal." Although obviously concentrating on the German historical relevance, the article (pp. 38-44, plus 2-page centrefold, plus p. 49 on HO models) is entitled "The First Standard Shunting Loco of the DB", and excerpts read:

"For decades the Prussian Type T13 bore the main burden of medium-heavy shunting; with around 500 hp. these locos were quite capable of performing the duties demanded of them. The same applied to the 98 machines of the Baden Class Xb and the 42 Bavarian R4/4, with tractive efforts of 500 and 570 hp. The former Deutsche Reichsbahn had already decided to replace the T13's through new Standard Locos, and construction of appropriate locos had begun. As well as the light Class 80 with 575 hp., of which 39 examples were built, there was also the Class 81 - although Hanomag managed to build only ten machines of this 860 hp. type. [before the war effort intervened. Ed.]

By the end of the Second World War many shunting locos were elderly or damaged. The Deutsche Bundesbahn had a difficult inheritance. Once Reconstruction had begun and the new

traffic network been established [i.e. to cope with the altered political and geographical situation. Ed.] it was clearly necessary to order large numbers of new rail vehicles. An especial shortage was in the area of shunting at the large goods yards. After initial thoughts on a new series of steam locos, the DB decided to develop a motor-driven loco. In order to reach series production as soon as possible, the Bundeszentralamt München formed an "Arbeitsgemeinschaft V60" (Work Group for the Diesel-60 Type), in which the firms Deutz, Esslingen, Henschel, Jung, Krauss-Maffei, Krupp and MaK (Kiel) were represented. Initial calculations indicated a saving of 40% in personnel alone, and also that the costs for maintenance and operation would lie well below those for the Class 92.5. The demands which had to be met included a reasonable purchase price, a robust construction, a top axleload of 16T and the provision of reasonable reserves of fuel.

At this planning period there were already diesel locomotives in operation in which the mechanical transmission occurred through direct gearing. However, there was little experience of use of this method during heavy and rough shunting work. It was therefore decided to produce a class with heavy stiffened frames and for transmission via a separate Blindwelle (wheel), the effort to be transmitted thence by coupling rods to three axles. In order to ensure smooth running and avoid heavy wear, all parts were generously proportioned, carefully measured and built to exact specifications. The results can be seen in the success and long service life of these machines.

Especially good has been the quality of the 12-cylinder diesel engine of the GTO 6 and GTO 6A from Maybach, with a quoted power of 650 hp. at 1400 rpm. The pre-series locos, in which several different motors were tried, also reached 6,000 operational hours with this drive system, with no troubles worth mentioning.

Krupp, Krauss-Maffei, MaK and Henschel each built one of the first four pre-series locos V60 001 - 004, which entered service in 1955. The series engines, which were built from 1956, differed slightly with a higher running board. By the end of production in 1964 a total of 942 locos had been built, by eight manufacturers:

384 from MaK, 250 from Krupp, 151 from Henschel, 51 from Krauss-Maffei, 40 from Jung, 36 from Esslingen, 27 from Deutz and 3 from Gmeinder.

Withdrawals (apart from accident damage) did not start until 1982, and withdrawn locos were either scrapped or sold - including to railways in Italy, Yugoslavia, Norway and Turkey. New locos that matched the original specifications were also built for the state railways in Algeria, Belgium and Greece."

Noticeable is the omission of any reference to the 20 locos built by Esslingen for Israel, although this is why this item is included ! Cotterell (p. 136) shows these to have come in three batches: works 5143-5147 (1955, despite what is printed.); 5200-5204 in 1956; and 5230-5237 in 1958.



A Gm-EMD GT26W #615 at Lod old depot. The new one can be partially seen on the left. To be noticed is the ability of the loco to operate both with buffers and screw couplers and with automatic couplers only. Here the second option is applied with buffers lifted!



2 Generations at the new Lod Locos Depot: a veteran GM EMD G-12 #113 behind an Alstom series 900 new diesel - electric shunter powered by an MTU motor, identical to the shunters sold to SBB (except the airconditioning).
Both above photos: Aharon Gazit