

HaRakevet

ISSN 0964-8763

Series 16
Issue No. 62 September 2003

הרכבת

A Quarterly Journal on the Railways of the Middle East
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62:1. Baghdad Central Station in July 2003.

EDITORIAL.

This quarter has seen some major changes on I.R. - some long foreseen, some unexpected, such as the sudden sacking of the General Manager not so long after the changes in political influence became manifest! I.R. is now "Israel Railways Ltd.", although 'limited' is not the word one would use to describe the construction and development works under way. Does one dare to believe that the new plans for the "Peace Line" to Nablus and Jenin, or the Red Sea link, will at least make their way from the drawing board and the dreams of idealists, to well-ballasted concrete and steel reality?

Alas, the world speaks still only of a "Road Map", not a Railway one. Not that much progress appears to be being made. In Iraq, the railways are now being restored with American assistance, and we are privileged to have an initial brief report - hopefully there will be more.

Enjoy!

The Editor.

62:3. Photo. 2. A P.R. 4-6-2T lies on its side after a sabotage attack, several PR steel vancs can be seen crumpled in the background.

Exact date and location unknown. Photo courtesy Major M. Williamson.



62:4.

NEWS FROM THE LINE.

(a). JERUSALEM LINE SCHEMES: UPDATE.

(i). The Ministry of Transport decided on Friday to proceed with the upgrade of the Jerusalem-Beit Shemesh railway, while simultaneously accelerating development of the high-speed A1 route through Ben Gurion Airport and Modi'in. The unanimous decision was taken at a meeting between Minister of Transport Avigdor Lieberman and ministry and Israel Railways officials.....

...The survey found that 43% of Beit Shemesh residents work in Jerusalem, and would like a faster commute by train, rather than road. Israel Railways plans to operate one train an hour each way on the route.

The following appeared on Globes [online] - www.globes.co.il - on June 8, 2003:-

"Transport Ministry to build 2 railways to Jerusalem . by Gal Nissim."

"The existing track will be upgraded alongside the new high-speed A1 line.

The Ministry of Transport decided on Friday to proceed with the upgrade of the Jerusalem-Beit Shemesh railway, while simultaneously accelerating development of the high-speed A1 route through Ben Gurion Airport and Modi'in. The unanimous decision was taken at a meeting between Minister of Transport Avigdor Lieberman and ministry and Israel Railways officials.

Sharp criticism has been levelled at upgrading the existing line to Jerusalem. A professional report concluded that only 4% of passenger traffic between Tel Aviv and Jerusalem would use it. The report estimated travel time on the upgraded route at 82 minutes.

The decision to continue work on the upgrade was based on a passenger survey that found a potential of 330,000 passengers a month. A more pessimistic survey by Israel Railways of 515 Beit Shemesh households found a potential of 140,000 passengers a month between the town and Jerusalem. Israel Railways submitted the survey to Lieberman. The survey did not cover Jerusalem residents. The survey found that 43% of Beit Shemesh residents work in Jerusalem, and

would like a faster commute by train, rather than road. Israel Railways plans to operate one train an hour each way on the route.

Lieberman told "Globes", "If we were at the starting point, we probably wouldn't launch this project, certainly not with the current priorities. Two years ago, it would have been worthwhile changing the decision, but there's no point now in cancelling it. The project has reached the point of no return: we've invested over 60% of its cost. We were surprised by the high demand for the railway among Beit Shemesh residents. The high-speed line through Ben Gurion Airport to Jerusalem is strate-

gic, and I've instructed Israel Railways to shorten the timetable, so there'll be a high-speed train to Jerusalem by 2008."

In 1994, then-Minister of Transport Israel Kessar decided the A1 route was better. Opposition by environmental groups to the existing route along the Soreq River led to the A1 route being chosen in 1996. In 1997, then-Minister of Transport Ariel Sharon ordered a re-evaluation of the alternative high-speed lines, including a northern route. In 1999, then-Minister of Transport Amnon Lipkin-Shahak decided to upgrade the existing track, and ordered work to be begun the following year.

A senior Ministry of Transport official said, "Had we begun working in 1994, Jerusalem would already have a high-speed railway line. The Jerusalem municipality constantly placed obstacles in way of the project."

Senior Municipality sources said, "The Minister of Transport's decision is odd and surprising. The Ministry of Transport will again waste public

money, because it didn't carry out a survey. Israel Railways has now begun detailed planning, even though the route hasn't been approved. The attempt to prove that upgrading the existing line is profitable is ridiculous."

Israel Railways stated in response that the decision to go ahead with both lines simultaneously indicated that they were not alternative, but complementary routes."

(ii). THE MOSCOW UNDERGROUND EXTENSION.

A Press Release of 04.06.03 (i.e. four days earlier) noted: that Avigdor Liebermann had instructed the Chairman of the Israel Railways Managing Board, Moshe Leon, to speed up this project.

The new line will be 40km. long from Ben Gurion Airport to Jerusalem, but the length between Daniel Junction (from where the line to Modi'in already under construction deviates) will be 35 km. nett. Construction is planned (at present) to be completed by 2009. It will be double-tracked, electrified, with a service speed of 160 km/h, gradients up to 3%, a total length in tunnel of 20km., including one of 11km., and bridges totalling 5km. The new station of Jerusalem will be located at the entrance to the city, with platforms 80m. under ground level, accessed by fast elevators. Journey time Jerusalem - Ben Gurion would be 18 minutes, frequency of service would be four trains per hour in each direction; forecast traffic is 6M passengers p.a.

Due to the high percentage of tunnels on this line, I.R. specialists travelled this week to Moscow to check new techniques for boring tunnels - these may help to cut the time of construction by up to a year, thus permitting completion by 2008.

(iii). BETH SHEMESH LINE.

At the same meeting noted above, on 04.06.03, some further details regarding the rebuilding/refurbishment of this line were given. The line from Na'an to Beth Shemesh should reopen on 15.09.2003, to be followed a year later by the remainder of the upgraded line to Jerusalem. Journey time Tel Aviv - Beit Shemesh will be 30 minutes, Tel Aviv - Jerusalem eventually 65 minutes. The forecast initial frequency will be 17 trains in each direction, and the annual traffic forecast is 1.7M passengers p.a. A survey made by the 'Markets Panorama Institute' led by Dr. Yossi Dana indicated that Beth Shemesh residents currently make 430,000 monthly journeys to/from Je-

rusalem, and that rail should be able to capture - as noted above - 330,000 of these.

(b). RISHON LE ZION OPENING PLANS.

From a Press Release of 08/06/03, Ministry of Transport. The line from Tel Aviv to Rishon LeZion (Rishonim) station should be opened from 15.09.2003. This will enable a journey time of 20 minutes between the two cities rather than the current 45 - 60 minutes by car or bus during rush hours. Initially the frequency of service will be one train an hour in each direction, while from March 2004, with more rolling stock entering service, the frequency will rise to 2 trains hourly; the cost of building the line is \$16M; as already mentioned, the line will diverge from Beer Yaakov station, on the Lod - Rehovot - Ashdod line, and will link Rishon LeZion to the national rail network; the new station at Rishonim (Roses Garden) road junction was planned by the same architects as those responsible for Kfar Sava, opened in April 2003, and is almost identical - both are elevated to ensure grade separation from the adjoining roads. The main difference is that the road at Rishonim is one of the most congested in the area, whereas that at Kfar Sava is not so bad. The new station has two side platforms, each 200m long, special elevators for the disabled, and escalators for passengers, and large park-and-ride facilities. Transport Minister Liebermann said that "he sees the new line to Rishon LeZion as one of the most essential lines in Israel, since it will bring an enormous relief to the daily heavy congestion on the access roads leading to the southern entrances of the Greater Tel Aviv area."

In July a proposal was aired, by Arie Bar, the General Manager of the Ayalon Roads Company, to build 3km. or so of this line, which will be in the median of the Ayalon South highway, as cut-and-cover underground route, (along with the road itself), thus reducing noise for local inhabitants and enabling the area so covered to be used for commercial purposes. A feasibility study is to be carried out.

(c). OFFICIAL STATION OPENINGS.

As well as Rishonim and Beth Shemesh, on 15.09.2003 two additional new stations will be officially opened though they are already in operation - Rosh HaAyin North (Kessem) and Ashdod Ad-Halom.

(d). MODI'IN LINE NEWS.

The Denya-Sibus Company, belonging to the Africa-Israel Group (which is participating in the Jerusalem LRV project) has won the Railways' tender for building a section of the line to Modi'in. Works include: earthworks and paving for track alignments in the median of a new road No. 431 also under construction; a bridge over the road, two tunnels at the line's intersection with Highway 1 (Tel Aviv - Jerusalem), concrete retaining walls and supporting walls. The project will be finished within 14 months at a cost of \$33M.

Ramet, a local engineering and construction company, well experienced in the construction of large bridges, has won the tender for building the infrastructure of the line to Modi'in, including two tunnels of a length of over 500m and 180m respectively, as well as supporting walls and two bridges, 420m and 108 m. respectively; total cost will be \$33.6M., the project to be completed within 18 months.

(e). LAND ISSUES.

The Railways and Lands Administration was due in June to sign an agreement of principles, which will generally arrange the ownership and rights on thousands of acres owned by the railways. The only point remaining to be resolved was the amount of compensation the railways may receive in cases of large construction projects taking place in future on areas of land formerly owned by the Railways. The most distinctive sites are Tel Aviv Savidor station, the area near Bnei Berak station, and the historic old station at Jerusalem (known now as the 'Khan station' because of the old Khan, now a restaurant, facing the station building). These areas are worth hundreds of millions of dollars. At the Savidor station alone there are plans for construction of residential, business and office accommodation over an area of a million sq metres! The railways was thought probably to receive a compensation of 25% of the land's value, similar to the compensation paid out to farmers.

A Later Report from Mid-July:-

PROPERTY DEVELOPMENT COMPENSATION.

On 29.06.03 it was announced that it had been decided that IR will receive from the State compensation amounting to 2% of the incomes from any real-estate projects to be carried out on the lands surrounding various stations; IR retains full rights at the station sites themselves, as well as a com-

mercial area amounting to 1,500 sq. m. at each station. Exceptions are the stations of Tel Aviv Savidor, Tel Aviv Darom (South) and Bnei Beraq, where the Railways will have full rights over 3,000 sq. m. The overall area of commercial land allocated to the railways is thus several thousand square metres, which will bring in annual revenues of several millions of dollars. The approval of these Lands agreement is vital for the railways' development plans, hand in hand with the change of status to Israel Railways Ltd.

Although 2% compensation on the above-mentioned lands is considered low in comparison with that paid, for example, to farmers (27%), these are prime sites and it will nevertheless improve the cash flow significantly. At Tel Aviv Savidor, for example, the Lands Administration is promoting a plan for building of offices, commercial sites and residential accommodation, from which the Administration will receive \$1 Billion, and from this the railways will receive \$20M. There are also large building development planned at several other stations.

(f). AYALON TRIPLING - UPDATE.

The Ayalon Insurance Co., the fourth-largest of its kind in Israel, has won the contract for insurance of the works on adding a third track to the Ayalon railway line, which itself runs within the Ayalon highway! The works will cost \$12M.

(g). ALL'S FARE.

For the first time in its history, IR is going to introduce differential fares based on rush hour periods or the direction of travel on certain lines, the General Manager announced on 24th. June. He added that the idea had first been floated towards the Ports Authority, who currently own the railways, but since the Railways are soon to become a separate Government Company the idea's implementation will be postponed until then. The intention is to introduce reduced fares for non-peak periods, as well as in the peak but on those directions with low passenger traffic - for example, outwards from Tel Aviv to Kfar Sava in the morning peak, and vice versa in the evening. Another idea is to sell bulk discounted tickets to large

employers, on condition they are used "against the peak flows".

(h). SALARY DEVELOPMENTS.

The 1,550 Israel Railways workers will each receive in July a bonus of \$8,817 as a result of the change of the railways' status; all their social rights will be secured, as well as all the agreements made heretofore between the Unions and the Government; and the only question remaining open by mid-July is a request for a 5% raise in salary; the negotiations seemed to be taking place in a good atmosphere, and the status change was due by the end of July.

(i). ISRAEL RAILWAYS LIMITED

On 01.07.2003, during a Press Conference, the former Israel Railways, belonging to the Ports Authority, ceased to exist, and the new entity known as Israel Railways Limited came into existence; this is under the Ministry of Transport, but is treated as an independent company, which is to raise \$4 Billion within six years, of which \$1.3 Bn. will come from the external private market, both in Israel and abroad, according to the New Deal approved by the Government. This was the reason for the creation of the new company structure. 150 of the existing employees are to retire, either on time or early, as agreed with the Unions, but to meet expand-

(m). FUTURE INVESTMENT PLANS.

On 10.07.03 further plans were released of investments planned by Israel Railways Ltd. The 2003 Budget totals \$580M (at a rate of \$1 = NIS 4.3), of which \$395M will be obtained from the State and the rest from other sources; it should be mentioned that the former budget was "only" \$279M. According to Yossi Snir, (at this point still the General Manager), plans envisage an expansion of the system from 700 to 1100km of route, not counting double tracking.

The Projects have been listed as follows:

<u>Project.</u>	<u>Cost (\$M).</u>	<u>Completion (year/quarter).</u>
1. Tel Aviv - Rishon leZion (Rishonim) line	9.3.	3/2003.
2. Shapirim - Ben Gurion Airport link.	29.3	1/2004.
3. 3rd. track on Ayalon line.	54.9	4/2004.
4. Freight line to Ramat Hovav terminal.	16.3	2/2004.
5. Kfar Sava (Nordau) - Sokolov extension.	13.9	4/2004.
6. Upgrading old line to Jerusalem.	88.6	4/2004.
7. Double-tracking Ashdod - Ashkelon.	49.5	2/2005.
8. Doubling & Upgrading Pleshet-Ashdod.	21.0	4/2003.
9. Ben Gurion Airport - Modi'in line.	252.3	4/2005.
10. Upgrading Beer Sheva - Dimona line.	39.8	1/2005.
11. Tel Aviv - Rishon (Moshe Dayan) line.	154.0	4/2008.
12. Moshe Dayan - Rishon LeZion West Line	165.8	2/2008.
13. Doubling Tel Aviv - Kfar Sava line.	117.0	3/2006.
14. Doubling Kiryat Motzkin - Nahariyya line.	55.6	4/2005.
15. Doubling Lod - Naan line.	47.2	2/2005.
16. Doubling Naan - Beersheva line	214.2	2/2007.
17. Ashkelon - Beer Sheva line.	211.6	2/2008.
18. Akko - Carmiel line.	219.3	2/2008.
19. Raanana to Coast line link.	266.4	2/2008.
20. Linking Moshe Dayan line to Pleshet Line.	107.2	4/2007.
21. Haifa - Afule - Beit Shean (-Jordan).	209.3	3/2007.
22. Modi'in - Jerusalem (A1 scheme fast link).	744.2	2/2009.
23. Electrification.	372.0	2010.
24. Freight infrastructures.	99.6	2007.
25. Maintenance, rolling stock & Infrastructures.	116.3.	2007.
26. Security & Safety.	23.2	2007.
27. Improvements to control systems	27.9	2007.
28. Development & Upgrade of Communications	46.5	2007.
29. Level crossings, Grade Separation.	16.3	2007.
30. Rolling stock purchases.	581.4.	2007.
31. Future Projects design.	23.3.	2007.

It should be noted that work has already started on Nos. 1 - 10. No. 31 refers to the Red Sea and 'Peace Line'; schemes. However, it appears that there will be plenty of news for 'Harakevet' to report for the foreseeable future!

ing service needs new employees will be hired.

(i). NEW G.M.

Just one day after the change of the railways' status, the Chairman of the newly-created Directorate, Mr. Moshe Leon, fired the General Manager, Yossi Snir, with effect from 01.07.2003!!

He will actually remain for two more months at work, parallel with the newly-appointed successor; as at 15.07 there were rumours of up to five candidates, including two women, but at this point it was unclear whether the honour of cutting the ribbons to open the four new stations on 15.09.03 would be given to him or to his successor.

(k). PLANS FOR NEW TIMETA-

BLE.

The new timetable to be introduced on 15.09.2003, as well as seeing the opening of the new stations currently under construction, will also provide additional trains on weekends further to those originally planned, due to a higher demand foreseen.

(l). AIRPORT CITY STATION.

Yet another new station, to be called 'Airport City', is to be built soon on the Lod - Rosh HaAyin line, adjacent to and east of the Ben-Gurion airport, to serve the new high-tech and business area bearing the same name. It will have a parking area for 10,000 cars and will serve the nearby villages of Shoham, El Ad and others. [This is presumably near where the former Wilhelma station was. Ed.]

(Section (m) appears on previous page in order to fit tabbed layout)

(n). THE "LINE FOR PEACE".

Meantime, Avigdor Lieberman, the new Transport Minister, has instructed the Railways to start planning a new line between Kessem Junction (Rosh haAyin North) and the town of Ariel, located 29km. eastwards, and in the future for extension to Nablus and Jenin, later to be linked to a planned Haifa - Jordan line, now at a progressive design stage; the line to Ariel and other cities will be designated the "Line for Peace", and the Palestinian people will be able to use it between Gaza and the West Bank, instead of using private cars. [It is not clear whether this means using special or normal service trains..... a form of 'corridor' traffic as used in several parts of Europe.]

The "Jerusalem Post" of 11.07.03 commented: "Lieberman

stressed the importance of immediately constructing a rail route from the capital of Samaria to Israel's principal business centre. Aside from the anticipated heavy traffic, Lieberman made no secret of the political implications of a Tel Aviv - Ariel connection, and told the powers that be at Israel Railways to make the project top priority. Meanwhile, there seems to be no progress on reviving the railway connection between Jerusalem and the rest of the country. The Jerusalem line was suspended exactly five years ago."

(o). RED SEA LINK.

Another initiative announced by Minister of Finance Benjamin Netanyahu is a further study of the possible worth of construction of the long-awaited 175km. link to the Red Sea, between Nahal Tzin (phosphate works) and the city of Eilat. The explanation is that more shippers are avoiding the Suez Canal, due to the restricted size of ships permitted through it, and instead sending their cargoes around Africa; so the (old) idea of a railway Land Bridge between the Red and Mediterranean Seas might yet have advantages.

(p). PASSENGER STATISTICS.

From an IR Press Release of 08.07.2003: The rise in passenger traffic continues and in June 2003 1.65M were carried, 11% more than in June 2002. From the beginning of 2003 this makes a cumulative total of 9.1M, 11.6% more than the same period in 2002. Mr. Snir said that "the forecast for 2003 is a total of 20M, thanks also to the opening of the new line to Rishon leZion and the upgraded line to Beit Shemesh."

The rise can be broken down as follows:

Rosh HaAyin- Kfar Sava line
96,000, = + 44%.
Beer Sheva - Tel Aviv line.
234,000, = + 24%.
Tel Aviv - Nahariya line.
223,000, = + 13%
Ashdod - Tel Aviv line.
270,000, = + 11%.
Haifa - Nahariyya line,
138,000, = + 9%.
Ashdod - Haifa/Nahariyya,
108,000, = + 9%.

[When one thinks that the Beersheva line has reached such figures from a 'standing start' only a few years ago, this is all the more remarkable. Ed. For some guidance, here are excerpts from the new population figures as of July 2003:

"The total number of people in

the country (excluding the estimated 250,000 foreign workers) at the end of last year was 6.63 million, for a total annual growth of only 1.9%. This compares with a growth rate of 2.2% in 2001, and 2.6% in 2000. The only area that showed an increase in growth was Yesha, which increased by 5.7% - mostly in the 'haredi' towns of Kiryat Sefer and Beitar Illit. Beit Shemesh grew by a speedy 8.6%, and now stands at 53,400 residents. Even more impressive was Modi'in, which grew almost 12% to 34,700.

The seven largest cities in Israel are:

- Jerusalem - 680,400 (up 1.6%)
- Tel Aviv-Jaffa - 360,400 (0.7%)
- Haifa - 270,800 (down 0.5%)
- Rishon LeZion - 211,600
(up almost 1.8%)
- Ashdod - 187,500
(up more than 3.5%)
- Be'er Sheva - 181,500 (up 2%).
- Petach Tikvah - 172,600 (up 1.1%)"

On 05.08.03 a further new record was set, according to a press release. In July 2003 18% more passengers were carried than in July 2002, making 10.95M since January 2003, a 12% increase. R o s h HaAyin - Kfar Sava line: 108,000, + 57%.

Tel Aviv - Beer Sheba line: 252,000. +29%.

Tel Aviv - Nahariyya line. 254,000. +19%.

Ashdod - Haifa/Nahariyya line: 123,000. +19%.

Tel Aviv - Ashdod line. 282,000. +13%.

(a). WORKMEN'S TRAIN.

From Paul Cotterell: Train 407 (06.51 Nahariyya - Hof Carmel) is probably the closest thing to a workmen's train as you're likely to find on IR. It even stops at Haifa East station to set down office workers. It returns as empty stock from Hof Carmel to Haifa East, and has usually been made up of three or four old coaches top-and-tailed by a pair of G12s. In early July 2003 Alstom JT42CW Co-Cos began appearing, single-headed and running round at Hof Carmel. Seen so far have been 702 and 706.

62:5. TENDERS.

(i). Tender BN/KB/09/03. Construction of Tel Aviv HaHaganah station stage 2. Time for implementation, 14 months, bids by 10.07.2003.

(ii). TM/KB/04/03. Outline agreement for manufacture and supply of buffer stops made from rails. Works include: loading of rails and timber sleepers onto lorries equipped with cranes and transport of same from the railway stations of Lod, Kishon Works at Haifa and Haifa East, to the contractor's works, manufacturing of the buffer stops including painting, and transport back to the destined stations. Contract is for 12 months with optional extension up to 36 months. Last date for bids: 01.07.2003.

(iii). TK/KB/03/04. Electrical works and increasing electrical connections at the Ashdod classification yard. Works include: moving of existing electricity and generator container; installing a new control board, and changes to the existing one, installation of underground piping for electric and communication cables for new supply to existing buildings. Time for implementation, 3 months; Bids by 30.06.03.

(iv). Construction of Car Parking facilities at Ashdod Classification Yard. Works include: preparation, earthworks, roadbeds, exploratory manual excavations, concrete foundations for supporting wall, concrete wall, edging stones, dismantling and removal of structures, building roadbeds and infrastructures, asphalt works, painting and installing signs, preparing infrastructure for parking lighting, supply and installation of lighting, power feed lines and additions to the control board. Time of implementation: 45 days. Bids by 02.07.03.

(v). SN/SR/16/03. Offers for Sales Promotion services and production of various special events for IR. The contract is for 12 months with optional extensions up to 36 months, bids by 14.07.03.

(vi). HN/KB/13/03. Upgrading the eastern track on the Haifa - Tel Aviv line on the section Shefayim - Herzliya (km. 82 - 84.) Works include: Earthworks, raising and adding to roadbeds by a geogrid, supplying, laying and tamping ballast. Time for implementation: 3.5 months. Bids by 21.07.03.

(vii). BN/KB/06/03. Construction of buildings for cleaning parts and washing of freight wagons at Haifa, Qishon Works.

Works include: Concreting, locksmith works, and various electrical

works for low voltage, preliminary development works. Time for implementation: 3 months. Bids by 15.07.03.

(viii). MT/SR/11/03. Maintenance and Repair Services for In-Motion Weighing Systems. The weighing systems (i.e. weighbridges that may be used by trains in motion) are located at Haifa East marshalling yard, Ashdod classification yard and Dimona station, and will be presented to the winner of the tender in a working condition. Works include: Preventive maintenance, periodical treatment and repairs as required, in response to telephone calls.

The preventive maintenance works will be carried out by the winner, using materials and spare parts provided by him at the three sites. Contract is for 24 months, with optional additional extension of 36 months. Bids by 24.07.03.

(ix). TK/KB/05/03. Laying Main Communication Cables on the section Naan - Kiryat Gat. To include: Preparatory works, paving of alignment and marking, excavation of channels, supply of main communication cables (optical and copper), and tubes, supply and installation of concrete ducting, implementation of cable connections, including supply of systems and electrical checks on the cables. Time for implementation: 4 months, Bids by 14.07.03.

(x). MS/RC/2003/27. Permission for removal and sale of scrap items from the railways' property. Contract for 12 months, with optional extensions of up to additional 48 months. Bids by 27.07.2003.

(xi). HN/MT/09/03. Frame agreement for NDT on rail welding and rails. The contract is for 3 years with optional extension of up to 6 years in total. The pre-conditions for bidding for the tender is that at least one of the bidder's employees is authorized at Level 3 for the NDT as per "A.N.S.T." or "ISRACERT". Bids by 24.08.2003.

(xii). MS/RC/2003/6. Provision of mobile kiosk for fast food and drinks at Tel Aviv Savidor station. Contract for 13 months with optional extensions up to total of 24 months. Bids by 02.09.2003.

(xiii). BN/KB/12/03. Construction works for Service Bridges at Haifa East IC3 depot.

Works include: building suspension bridges, external stairs leading to the bridges, a monorail track, reinforcement of the existing construction, and changes to the existing stiffening horizontal system. Time for implementation: 3 months. Bids by 25.08.03.

62:6.

TEL AVIV LRV/METRO NEWS.

(a). The General Manager of NTA, the Tel Aviv/METRO project, Mr. Yishai Dotan, has recently given an interview to Ma'ariv, one of Israel's two main newspapers. In this he presented his concept for the traffic situation in Tel Aviv, explaining that if the LRV/METRO system is not built, the entrances to Tel Aviv will soon reach total gridlock.

Dotan finished his service in the army as Chief Engineering Officer with the rank of Brigadier-General in 1992, having an extensive record in civil and military engineering. He then entered a Hi-Tech company called Amdox, where he worked for 8 years in a senior post, and some months ago joined NTA as General Manager, succeeding Mr. Zvi Leshem.

According to Dotan, the construction works on the Red Line are to begin during 2005, and operations should commence in 2010. He emphasises that the Tel Aviv LRV project is much more complicated than that of Jerusalem, due to the fact - amongst others - that it will run partially underground, as well as due to the much higher expected traffic volumes. The people involved in the project are very serious, and he therefore believes that the project will be kept to schedule; the four competing groups that passed the pre-qualifying stage are satisfactory; any actions taken which may weaken one of these groups, which also include the Egged and Dan bus operators, could therefore damage the entire project.

After explaining the advantages of an LRV scheme over a 'full' metro, he added that financing remains a problematic issue, and he therefore has asked for formation of a common team between the NTA and the Ministries of Finance and Transport, in order to deal together with banks and financial institutions. The State will guarantee the winning concessionaire, similarly to the system suggested

for the toll road Highway 6 across Israel, and the Jerusalem LRV project, but Dotan suggested also using some of the guarantee credit funding from the USA.

According to NTA assessments the LRV system will cause the public transport share in Greater Tel Aviv to rise from 8% to 10%. The Red Line is expected to carry between 100 - 130M passengers annually; it is estimated that 10 - 15% of the commuters currently using their private car will transfer to the LRV, according to surveys carried out, which show that good accessibility and availability and low prices will attract the commuters. The fares are expected to be similar to those of the buses, and controlled by the Ministry of Transport. Finally, Dotan said that "though the high-tech sector is the main source of economic growth, investments must be made also in infrastructures in order to enable prosperity."

(b). RAIL COOPERATION.

Meanwhile, during a Ministry of Transport visit to the railway facilities at Lod station and the link to Ben Gurion Airport now under construction on 27.05.03, the Minister called for the promotion of common efforts and unification of work forces and resources between the Railways and the three LRV projects in Jerusalem, Tel Aviv and Haifa, which are currently at various stages of design and implementation. He cited some examples, such as driver training, with the driving simulators which the railways have purchased at a cost of \$4M (and which the three LRV systems could use), the maintenance facilities etc.

Aaron Gazit adds: It should be noted that, unlike earlier periods which were marked by mutual suspicion, the co-operation today between the railways and the various light-rail projects is excellent.

(c). RED LINE ALTERATIONS.

The committee for designing the main projects has recently approved a change of alignment of the Tel Aviv LRV Red Line, at the point where it crosses Jerusalem Ave. in Jaffa; the tracks will be built on each side of the island, leaving one lane free each side for motor traffic, instead of the original plan whereby both tracks were to be on the eastern side of the Avenue, leaving the western side for cars. In this way the NTA company team has both respected the requests of the people of Jaffa, and contributed to the maintenance of the present character of the Avenue.

62:7.

NOTES AND COMMENTS.

(a). A STEAM CRANE QUERY by Paul Cotterell.

File 135/5, 'Rolling Stock Emergency Units', in the IRM Archives throws up a question relating to the little understood subject of steam cranes on PR. It is noted [*inter alia*] that "At Haifa the 'Wilson' 20 ton steam crane used by the Mechanical Department for local shop purposes will, in the event of emergency, be ordered out by arrangement with the Chief Mechanical Engineer". I do not remember coming across the name Wilson before in connection with cranes. Was this the manufacturer and, if so, can anyone provide background information?

(b). On 61:9. GRAF ISOLANI. From Hans-Henrik Landsvig.

"Regarding the story about Baruch Katinkes's book 'Me'az v'ad Hena' it seems that the German joke about locomotive names is not confined to the Middle East. An old cutting from the Danish newspaper "Politiken", presumably from around 1960 (I was not even a teenager then, and not smart enough to note the date) describes some memories from the narrow-gauge railways on the island of Als, which became part of Germany in 1864 and was returned to Denmark in 1920.

According to that story the engines there were named: "Luther", "Galileo" and "Schiller". The reasons stated for the two first names are exactly the same as described by Katinke. Regarding "Schiller" "Politiken" refers to Friedrich Schiller's drama "Wallenstein" where the German general says: "He will be late. But he will arrive."

I must admit that I don't have a complete collection of Schiller's works handy, so somebody else will have to check future tense against past tense, but it would appear that we are close to solving the riddle. Furthermore 'The Great Danish Encyclopedia' states that Albrecht von Wallenstein lived from 1583 to 1634, so he was in fact a contemporary of our new-found friend Graf Isolani.

So I'm just left with yet another riddle, but this one surely beyond the scope of 'Harakevet': According to all available literature the railways on Als started their life with four steam-engines, and never had less than that. I

wonder what they called the fourth one..."

(c). On 61:15. EGYPTIAN LIGHT RAILWAYS.

Bert Dyke has been stimulated into some more World War 2 reminiscing. "Old lines have always stirred me; even 70 years ago Dad and I were going out together finding moribund branch lines and remote tramways all over the U.K. Of course I found the Fayoum lines, and the 2'6" Krauss tanks at Barrage, and a look at the lanky lines at Luxor. The 2' 6" lines at Barrage had a very endearing complimentary bonus, trollies which were hand (or foot) propelled over Barrage itself, known as the "Arabiya fil binti" for ladies crossing the bridge at the centre (or opening bridge). I had a go to save a walk back, being clutched to the bosoms of a huge lady, who sold oranges ('bortoganis'). I have a photo of her, and the trolley on the narrow gauge line. Not all my journeys were on locos!

There were passenger vehicles on the Delta lines, but on the the Sugar lines there seemed to be only wagons and jam-packed "guards' vans" - a Ghaffir's vehicle at the rear. The bulk of my labour at Kilo 40 Wharf (El Kantara) were Saidi from Luxor and Komombo in particular - the happy people - and they said sugar work and wages were "zae zift" - "lower than the road". I saw Krauss, Fowler, Vulcan, Bagnall, and an O&K locos on these lines, and all were OLD. The 1950 2-8-2 Bagnall tender engines were after my time. There were 2' 6" gauge lines around Safaga and I know these have been vastly extended as part of ESR. I wonder if any of the Delta lines are extant - labour costs were negligible, of course; unskilled labour paid 1 Piastre per hour, 9 Piatres for an 8-hour shift if completed punctually - and landowners paid less, depending on where they were located. And the treatment - our foremen all used whips, but we only allowed them to hit men who were dressed in robes, whereas in the Delta gross landowners hit (and kicked) stooping labour. Many a barney I've had with a fat effendi mistreating labour - and animals. Well, I hang my head in shame, having refused point-blank to fine a poor devil of a stevedore three days' pay for nicking a bit of tea or sugar. I then did it MY way! I had a 9-inch teak truncheon on quarter-inch square elastic up my left arm, and having cursorily searched the gang leaving (finding a bar or tin tied on to the upper groin), I'd bonk him on the

neck, uttering my well-known "Rookh fil dihaya", and he'd grin, leap in the air, and hare off down the rail spur, "running to the devil" as requested. It didn't work that way either, but they seemed to like me, and chaired me all round the Dock when I was sent back by S.I.B. [Special Investigation Branch] to tidy up the South African Docks mob. Never a dull day there.

I preferred the suburban ESR line Cairo Bab-el-Luq to Helwan - I used to shuttle to El Maadi for the sheer joy of such an intensive Sentinel Railcar service, strengthened by the (then) modern 2-6-2T's, what patronage, it seemed not to be possible for the line not to be profitable, but fares were so cheap.

I had a case of a young widow, her husband was killed in a fight on Kilo 40, so it was either back to the tribe, or work as a "sharmoot" - I bought her a ticket home to Komombo; it was 60 piastres - work that out - about 11-12 miles a Piastre. She couldn't believe it - but my 300 labourers all came to my little hut to shout to Allah about a 'Nazrani' - good job too, they didn't have a monopoly of a little kindness."

(d). A HEDJAZ QUERY. From Paul Cotterell.

From File 153/80 at IRM Archives (dealing with Amman station, TransJordan) in letter dated 26/10/1928:

"Some years ago there was a short dead end near east facing points of [Amman] station to enable wagons for Royal Air Force to offload at the bottom of the Cliff Railway, (Decauville), worked by wire rope. This siding, of a length sufficient to hold two oil tank wagons, still exists and requires only a turnout and a scotch block to be brought into service".

Hmm, interesting, very interesting. What was that Decauville Cliff Railway?

(e). CARMEL STATION. From Paul Cotterell.

Re 57:8. This featured a diagram (dated 1927) and short article on Carmel Station. PR drawing T.M.75 of 12/11/1935 entitled "Wiring Diagram, Electric Light Installation, Yard Lighting" shows Carmel Station reduced to the single standard gauge main line only. No sidings whatever are indicated at this later date.

(f). BUS PROBLEMS.

Not directly related to railways, but an indication of the problems of urban transport in Israel - from the "Israel

Line" of 29th. July - "The Beersheva municipality and the Transport Ministry have decided to transfer the city's bus service to private hands, Israel Radio, KOL YISRAEL reported. The municipal bus company is currently losing hundreds of thousands of shekels a month. Company employees were on strike today to protest the fact they have still not received salaries for the month of June."

(g). On 55:12 - "GENERAL MOTORS SNIPPETS".

David Young of St. Louis, another respected railway historical journalist, has sent the following belated note (on receiving some back numbers.). It covers various surprising elements that emerge once one starts scratching at the surface of history! :-

"On Issue 55, January 2002 General Motors Historical snippets. There are a number of histories of Electro-motive around including a brief historical treatment I did of their relationship with the St. Louis Car Company in my book "Quality Shops, the history of the St. Louis Car Company," Howell-North Books, 1978, Berkely CA (now out of print). However, there's a major Jewish connection here. The Meissner family who ran St. Louis Car at that time were/are Jewish; Reform Jews originally from Poznan (father) and Paderborn (mother) who came to Milwaukee in the 1880s. Edwin, one of several children, had to leave school at age 14 when his father died in 1898 or so, and took a job with The Milwaukee Electric Railway and Light Company as a pageboy. He continued at night school, however, and grounded himself in accounting and the business "arts."

He caught the eye of multi-millionaire John Irvin Beggs, a self-made "Scots-Irish" chap (a Wesleyan Methodist) who rose from poverty via the brickfields of Philadelphia. Beggs was at that time running TMERL on behalf of the North American Company, a utilities holding company in the J. P Morgan portfolio. Beggs himself had a huge proportion of North American and TMER&L stock. By 1905 Meissner was Beggs personal assistant and by 1910 was running St. Louis Car which Beggs had bought. Meissner turned it around, brought it back from the dead and made it immensely profitable.

By the early 1920s, Meissner was negotiating to buy it from Beggs, which he succeeded in doing by 1925. Always on the lookout for new products with potential, he ran the plant almost as a one-man band (very out-of-fashion these days) and would

take risks on charlatans and crackpots as well as promising new inventors that today's corporate institutions, with their infinite layers of management and bureaucracy, would never take. That's how he got St. Louis Car involved in Electro-Motive and even after GM took over EMC, St. Louis Car Company got orders for bodies. Indeed, they had a small line of diesel railcars/locomotives of their own with other power plant suppliers, at least until the market dried up in 1939/40, by which time PCC and subway cars, trolley buses and military vehicles had filled the plant to overflowing.

Meissner was a philanthropist of the American kind; for example, the Jewish community here benefited from a new and architecturally noteworthy building for Congregation Shaare Emeth in 1932 and the wider local community also benefited from the family's gift-giving. Shaare Emeth was one of the first 5 Reform congregations in North America, established 1869 and one of those that subscribed to the 1886 Pittsburgh platform. Its first Rabbi (Sonnenschein) was a charismatic and learned man, but was hobbled by self-inflicted marital problems due to his roving eye (and hands), and a drinking problem. His wife was an early Jewish feminist. He eventually was accused of turning Unitarian and had gone from the congregation by the late 1880s

The 1932 building was paid for out of Car Company profits - it was (and remains) the family's congregation - (it moved again by 1982 - the 1932 building now being a music education centre and chamber-music concert hall) it was and remains pre-eminently a congregation of German rather than East European shtetl Jews.

Meissner's son ran the company after his father died in 1956, sold it to General Steel industries in 1960 and eventually closed it down in 1973/4 - he's still around and remembers much of the EMD/EMC venture which happened when he was a boy and a teenager. I've known him for about 30 years."

OTHER MIDDLE EAST RAILWAYS.

(a). IRAN.

German Coaches. This topic continues to fascinate the Editor. In "Eisenbahn Magazin" 3/77 (March 1977) p. 5 is a note "DB has sold 140 passenger coaches to the Iranian State Railways, which have reached Persia via the land route through Turkey. The deal involves passenger coaches of older and newer types, which have become superfluous on DB due to rationalisation measures". No details of types, numbers or ages are given.

The same issue, one page later, has an article on DB reducing the age of its stock fleet - "in the year 1977 delivery is planned of 100 1st.-class coaches of the "Eurofima" type (500 of which were ordered together by a consortium of several European railways), over a hundred new 2nd-Class Express train coaches, ten buffet-cars and 22 Express Baggage Vans. By the end of 1977 180 bogie and 450 six-wheel coaches of older types plus 80 four-wheel and bogie baggage vans should have been withdrawn."

From these two news items it is not clear if the sale to Iran involved coaches withdrawn in 1976 and therefore not included in the later measures, and therefore also not clear if the withdrawals were of pre-war DRG or of postwar types. Does any reader have more information on this matter (there were several such sales of DB stock)? What stock is still in use in Iran?

(b). EGYPT.

A note in CRJ No. 134 is based on an October 2002 visit:

"Cairo Railway Museum. This Museum still remains closed on Mondays, being open the other six days. When it is closed, the large exhibits can be observed from the platform of Rameses station, behind the museum. Locomotives on display are: 2-2-4WT 30 (RS 1295/1862) with compartment for the Viceroy; 0-6-0 986 (earlier 142) (RS 1720/1866) in an adjacent building, and 4-4-2 194 (NBL 16886/1906) which has been sectioned."

"Luxor. On 28th. Oct. the overnight train from Cairo to Luxor was boarded at Giza, with departure a few minutes late on the advertised 22.20. However, arrival at Luxor was punctual at 07.00. The shed here held four locomotives thought to be the Henschel type, and three GE. Across the Nile on the west bank, the narrow gauge sugar

lines of the system based on Amant were noted at several points. The permanent way appeared to be well engineered and in good condition. The tourist guide immediately volunteered the information that there are six such systems in Egypt, and that the Sugar Harvest Season commenced on 15th. December. When travelling north by road on the east bank to Qerna, many narrow gauge tracks were encountered. This system looked much more roadside, dilapidated and similar to those in Java. One small diesel was noted on a works train of two wagons."

(c). IRAQ.

Gordon Mott, former NRPC Officer for CSX, (and before that with Burlington Northern) has been invited by the U.S. Government to go to Iraq and help reinstate Iraqi rail service. As "a friend of a friend", I contacted him, and he wrote the following:

"7th. August: I will be happy to report periodically on the situation at the Iraqi Republican Railway. I have only been here for about ten days, and most of that has been spent in Transport Ministry activities rather than directly at the railway. So there is really not a great deal that I can tell you at the moment, but that should start to change shortly.

You mentioned the Chinese locomotives. I have attached a photograph of one from when I was at the Central Station some days ago. [See Cover.] They are about all that are running at this moment, save a few shunting locomotives at places like Umm Qasr port, and at least one "flame-proof" shunter at one of the oil refineries. Only about half of the 50 Chinese locos are currently serviceable, the main problem being lack of spares and also lack of tools and machinery resulting from the looting and vandalism following the fighting. Spare parts for the GM/Henschel locos are coming, so I expect that some of them will return to service in due time, and perhaps some of the Alsthoms also. The first of thirty new Russian-built mainline locos are due to begin to arrive shortly — an order placed before the conflict under the auspices of the UN Oil-for-Food Program.

The railway is currently open throughout with the exception of the very tip end of the line to Akashat and also

the line between Bayji and Karkuk, in both cases because of a damaged bridge which has not yet been repaired. There is currently a daily passenger train in each direction between Baghdad and Basrah, Baghdad and Mosul, and Baghdad and Al Qaim. Freight has just begun to again move cross-border to Syria and also to Turkey (this involves a 30km transit of Syria). The only active passenger coaches that I have seen have been what I assume must be the DDR-built ones to which you referred (actually I was glad to learn from you that they are from the DDR — I recognized them as being from Eastern Europe, but had not made further inquiries. Incidentally, I was Advisor to the Director General of the Polish Railways [PKP] in 1993-4). Negotiations are currently under way to resume passenger service to Aleppo from Iraq."

62:9

EILAT DREAMS OF 1963.

Paul Cotterell has sent copies of a couple of newspaper items which shed some light on a long time ago:

From "Haaretz" of 2nd. May 1963. "Almogi: RAILWAY TO EILAT SOON". By the 'Haaretz' correspondent in Haifa.

"To me, a railway to Eilat is no dream, but fact that will soon be taking shape" - so said the Minister for Housing & Development, Mr. Yosef Almogi, in Haifa. These words were spoken at a reception held on Tuesday evening at the home of Mr. M. Savidor, General Manager of the Railways, in honour of Prof. Edgar Salin, Head of the List Research Institute, Basle. The List Institute has recently recommended the construction of a Beersheba - Sdom - Eilat line. Mr. Almogi added that a railway is vital for the consolidation of Eilat and its port and for the development of the Negev quarries.

In his reply, Prof. Salin said that the economic value of the railway to Eilat could not be measured by the profitability of the line itself, but essentially by its contribution to the development of the quarries and the impetus it would give to the economic growth of the factors that it would serve in the Negev.

From "News Digest" No. 91 of 2.7.1963 - translated from "Davar", "Lamerhav" and "HaBoker". 62:11.

"COMMITTEE OF DIRECTORS-GENERAL RECOMMEND RAILWAY TO ORON.

The Directors-General Committee for the "Eilat Railway" will recommend the building of a railway from Beersheba to Oron, but the postponement of an extension to Eilat - this decision was arrived at at a meeting of the Directors-General Committee held at the Ministry of Transport in Jerusalem yesterday. The execution of the recommendation in regard to the line from Beersheba to the Phosphate plant at Oron will require an investment of nearly L 25 Million, and with the addition of rolling stock - engines and wagons - the investment is liable to climb to L 30 Million."

62:10

ESR AMBULANCE COACH QUERIES.

By Paul Cotterell.

The discovery at the IRM Archives of four blueprints of ESR ambulance coaches raises some queries which I hope Alan Clothier or another Egyptian expert may be able to answer. The coaches concerned are as listed below, with details lifted from the blueprints:

Bogie Stretcher Cars Nos.1901 & 1902. (Diagram No.350).

Built by "Metropolitan Amal.[gamated?] Co." in 1905-6. Converted [to ambulance?] at Boulac in 1936. Originally 3rd Class Nos.732 & 717 to diagrams Nos.94(6) & 94(1). [The 'stretchers' were those used to carry the wounded].

Bogie Stretcher Cars Nos.1903 & 1904. (Diagram No.349).

Built by "Metropolitan Amal. Co." in 1905-6. Converted at Boulac in 1936. Originally 3rd Class Nos.724 & 726 to diagram No 94(2).

Personal Car No.1910. (Diagram No.350(2) [*Could this be "Personnel car? Ed]*)
Built by Birmingham in 1908. Converted at Boulac in "1927-28-29" [obviously the conversion was carried out in one of these years, along with at least one other of the type - see below]. Reconverted at Boulac in 1936. Originally 1st Class from series Nos.1-20 to diagram No.1. [What did the 1936 'reconversion' involve I wonder? And what exactly was a "Personal Car"? - the diagram of the interior strongly suggests a saloon and shows a "Doctor's Room"].

Kitchen Car No.1911. (Diagram No.350(1)).

Built by Birmingham in 1908. Converted at Boulac in "1927-28-29". Reconverted at Boulac in 1936. Originally 1st Class from series Nos.1-20 to diagram No.1. [This coach included a compartment labelled "pharmacy"].

All six coaches have wooden matchboard sides and are shown with a cross in a circle at each end of the body above the inner bogie wheels. In addition Nos.1910 and 1911 have a large cross on the middle of the roof. I have the feeling that these vehicles were intended for operation together as a complete hospital train.

The blueprints are annotated 'ESR Locomotive Carriage & Wagon Department'. However, they were turned up by Chen Melling in a roll of drawings (series X.X.) which seems to have originated with the PR Mechanical Department. Did these ambulances run over Palestine Railways at one time, maybe during WW2? The fact of the blueprints being found among PR records, and their being notated with the Mechanical Dept X.X. series identification, seems to suggest that the coaches were at least passed for working in Palestine.

ACCIDENTS TO P.R. MINESWEEPERS.

By Paul Cotterell.

And I always thought that mine-sweepers were only to be found on the high seas. It transpires, however, that PR referred to the single-axle pony trucks, fitted to some of the motor trolleys during The Disturbances, as "Minesweepers" (see, for example, Plate 55 in 'The Railways of Palestine and Israel'). At least that is how they are recorded in Accident Reports of the period. This name is certainly logical for that was their purpose. They patrolled the lines ahead of trains, providing protection from anything nasty placed on the track ('riding shotgun'). PR numbered the trolleys separately from their accompanying minesweepers, as will become evident from the following reports. These may help anyone wishing to compile partial lists of these vehicles, for I have never come across a complete run-down on them.

Not surprisingly, these trolleys were frequently involved in accidents. The following listing covers a period of just a few months in the north of Palestine (mostly on the HR). Presumably similar things were happening elsewhere around the country, but I don't have any Accident Reports to hand for other areas. The accidents described below are set out in chronological order.

[Ed. notes - clearly there were major problems with the operation of Military vehicles over Railway tracks - the different levels of training in railway operation, Rules etc., or the different areas of responsibility when things went wrong, must have created many headaches. In addition, one suspects that the drivers of the steam locomotives, hauling heavy partially-fitted freight trains a matter of yards behind their escorting trolley, must have been always on the alert lest their "helper" become a hindrance.]

25/4/1939: "HR Armoured Motor Trolley No. 12 sustained a broken axle and derailed at Kilo 80 HR at 09.05 hrs. It was re-railed by the trolley crew and driver of train No. 103, which train the trolley was piloting, and moved to

Samakh Station, arriving there at 11.05 hours. In consequence of this derailment train No. 103 was delayed 71 minutes and train No. 23, 30 minutes."

28/4/1939. "At 05.25 hrs.... Minesweeper "G" attached to Military Motor Trolley "A" Armoured No 16 derailed over the facing points of Kafr Samir Station. Minesweeper was thrown clear off track and will [be] salvaged today by [train] No. 76. 3 points rod rollers were damaged and the points rodding bent."

11/5/1939: Trolley No. 16 in more trouble but with different mine-sweeper. "At 13.40 hours.... Mine-sweeper "D" attached to Military Armoured Motor Trolley "A" No. 16 derailed over points No. 108 joining Line No. 3 to Haifa Quays [at] Haifa [East] Station. The driver did not advise any of the Station Staff of his intention to proceed to turntable, nor did he look whether the points were correctly set."

14/5/1939: Yet more grief for Trolley No. 16, with different mine-sweeper again, when its driver passed a disc signal at danger. "At 09.21..... Armoured Motor Trolley No. 16 running in front of Military Armoured Trolley "A" No. 25 derailed over the points connecting lines No. 2/1 Hadera end of Tulkarm station due to points incorrectly set. An occupant of the trolley..... from Anebta Village (a prisoner) was injured and taken to hospital at Tulkarm. Mine-sweeper L attached to trolley 16 was bent."

16/5/1939: Trolley 16 was a jinxed machine at this period. "At 11.25 hours.... minesweeper G attached to Military Armoured Motor Trolley "A" No. 16 derailed over the facing points at Kafr Samir."

20/5/1939: There were two embarrassing incidents in quick succession on this date involving the same trolley: "Military Trolley "A" No. 20 was sight piloting Train No. 76 and was preceded by "Hostage" Trolley No. 34. Trolley No. 34 stopped at Kilo 10.730 owing to shortage of petrol and trolley No. 20 ran into it, causing severe damage to itself and to Minesweepers "B" and "H". The crew on Trolley No. 20 were mainly to blame". [I assume that Trolley No. 34 was carrying local Arabs on its mine-sweeper against the possibility of mines on the track. No mention is made of them in the Accident Report so presumably they escaped unhurt.]

Hardly had Trolley No. 20 be-

gun to make its way north for attention than the second incident occurred: "Military Armoured Motor Trolley 'A' No. 20 was standing on the loop line at Kafr Samir waiting to proceed to Haifa. Drewry Car proceeded over the facing points through the main line towards Atlit and before the Signalman could set the points and lower the starting signal for trolley No. 20, the Military Driver of this trolley moved forward over the trailing points, which were set and locked against him. The trolley jumped the points and all wheels were derailed. Train No. 2 was delayed forty minutes at Kafr Samir."

23/5/1939: "HR Motor Trolley 10 with Mine Sweeper No. 3 attached left Samakh Loco Shed for the purpose of piloting a train. The Minesweeper went over a set of points incorrectly set and became derailed. The beam was bent. The Permanent Way Inspector confirms that the cause of this derailment is due to the points having been wrongly set by the Driver, a member of the Trans-Jordan Frontier Force."

27/5/1939: "At 10.55 hours.... Mine sweeper "G" attached to Armoured Motor Trolley No. 7/10 derailed over the facing points whilst entering Zikhron Yaaqov Station. Mine Sweeper is being worked to Haifa per Goods [Train] No. 76." Excessive speed was suspected.

5/6/1939: Evidently measures were taken to weigh down these mine-sweepers in an attempt to reduce derailments. [Or set off more mines. Ed.] "At about 11.50 hours Trolley No. 1 with minesweeper "E" attached was proceeding from Atlit to Haifa preceding the Military Trolley. At Kilo 9.900 the minesweeper derailed, with the result that the trolley [No. 1] ran into it and derailed all wheels. The driver did not observe any obstruction but he thinks that one of the big stones which were being carried in the box of the sweeper fell out, causing the sweeper to derail."

10/6/1939: But not all mine-sweepers were ballasted apparently: Trolley No. 17 with Mine Sweeper "I" attached was piloting Train No. 1, after passing the Cabin at Kafr Samir when going over the points the mine sweeper was derailed. The driver stopped and lifted it clear of the track and proceeded to Atlit. No damage was done to the points."

11/6/1939: "At about 11.26 hours Minesweeper "Y" attached to

Military Armoured Trolley "A" No. 29 sight piloting [train] No. 76, derailed at the facing points Atlit."

16/6/1939: At about 11.00 hours Sweeper "M" attached to Armoured Motor Trolley No. 18, sight piloting [train] No. 76, derailed at K. 9 and was thrown clear off track."

26/6/1939: "HR Trolley No. 11 was sight piloting Train No. 23 (to Samakh). At 11.45 hours the driver saw a large stone on the line at Kilo. 71.400 and before he could pull up the mine sweeper [No. 1] struck the stone and derailed. The train was delayed five minutes."

29/6/1939: Military drivers of these armoured trolleys sometimes played 'silly buggers' aboard them. "At 05.25 hours Military Armoured Motor Trolley "A" No. 17 sight piloting Train No. 75, 79 and special Goods collided with armoured trolley No. 29 at K. 3.200 Main Line [Bat Galim]. Mine Sweeper "Y" attached to Trolley No. 17 derailed and was thrown clear off track."

There seem to have been an awful lot of trains and trolleys in the one section at one time, and I'll leave it to the reader to try and sort them out in his mind. The NCO in charge of Trolley "A" No. 17 provided a degree of enlightenment as to the cause of the collision: "Mine Sweeper "Y" became damaged through careless driving as at Kilo. 3 we had the cause to stop to pick up the prisoners for the leading trolley, when the front trolley stopped the rear one ran into same causing the mine sweeper to become derailed. Instead of the usual driver driving the trolley he had allowed one of the escort to drive his trolley." Nothing else was noted about those prisoners.

30/6/1939: Just occasionally, nobody was to blame: "Light Trolley No. 9 was preceding Train No. 1 to Lydda. When entering Qaqun Station the front stub axle left hand broke with the result that the wheel came off. The trolley was lifted off the track by the crew and the Jewish Supernumerary's. [sic]."

6/7/1939. "At 08.35 hours Mine-Sweeper No. 3 attached to H.R. Motor Trolley No. 10 sight-piloting [train] No. 26 derailed at the points entering Ein Harod station and was thrown clear off track."

11/7/1939: "At 12.05 hours leading axle of Military Armoured Mo-

tor Trolley "B" No. 18 sight-piloting [train] No. 75 derailed over the turntable at Tulkarm whilst being turned." Does this mean that double-unit trolleys were occasionally separated and run as independent single-units ?

22/7/1939: Trolley drivers could not be blamed if they felt paranoid from time to time. "At 05.35 hours Mine Sweeper 'G' attached to Military Armoured Motor Trolley 'A' No. 12/26 derailed at the Bat Galim Road Level crossing Haifa due to obstruction on the line. The barriers at Bat-Galim Road Crossing were hit and broken by a motor vehicle and bits remained on the track. This happened as the Military Armoured Motor Trolley was approaching the Crossing..... The driver of the road vehicle is being sued." The trolley identification 12/26 might suggest that permanent double-units were sometimes split up, with one of the units then being paired with a 'strange' trolley.

10/8/1939: "H.R.T. Military Motor Trolley No. 11 was proceeding from Jisr El Majami to Beisan sight piloting train No. 26. At Kilo 74.700 the minesweeper attached thereto (No. 4) derailed due to stones on both sides of the line fouling the line. These stones were placed there by act of sabotage. This is confirmed by the District Engineer."

21/8/1939: "During shunting operations at Samakh Station the shunter signalled to the driver of Motor Trolley No. 10 which was standing on line No. 3 for its admittance to the shed, but the driver of CFH engine No. 261 [Hartmann 2-8-2] relative to train No. 707/502 which was standing on the same line as well, heard the signal and thought it was for him. He, therefore, worked his engine but before the motor trolley could draw back one of the four low-sided wagons which were attached to the engine collided with the minesweeper No. 2 with the result that the bar of the minesweeper was bent. Minesweeper was sent to Haifa for repairs per train No. 26 same day."

1/9/1939: A bad day for trolleys.

(a). "At about 05.25 hours minesweeper 'O' attached to military trolley No. 5 derailed at Outer Home Signal, Haifa Central Station, and was thrown off track for its subsequent despatch to Haifa [East]. Cause of derailment unknown."

(b). "Mine Sweeper "H" attached to Military Trolley No. 29 piloting Train No. 76 from Lydda jumped the rails at

Kafr Samir, was detached there and sent to Haifa for repairs. Derailment was due to small stones placed on the rail by act of sabotage."

11/9/1939: At about 07.30 Minesweeper No. 4 attached to HR armoured trolley No. 12, which was sight piloting [ie. patrolling ahead of] train No. 103, derailed on the level crossing at Km. 49.770 [between Tel Yosef and Shatta]. The minesweeper was thrown clear of the track and "will be salvaged per [train] No. 104". The trolley driver discovered "some ballast placed on the track and it is presumed that this was done by the cattle boys", but the Permanent Way Inspector thought that stones had been "jammed between the check and running rails as a result of a ploughing machine, the property of one of the neighbouring Settlements, passing over the crossing, a little earlier."

31/10/1939: At 06.17.... Mine Sweeper 3 attached to H.R. Armoured Motor Trolley No. 11 sight piloting [train] No. 103 derailed at the level crossing Km. 26.750 [at Kfar Baruch] due to stones on the line. Mine Sweeper was lifted clear of track and will be worked to Haifa per [train] No. 104." Once again it was suspected that stone wedged between the running and check rails had been dragged there by "a ploughing machine".

20/11/1939: Not all trolleys were fitted with minesweepers, and No 12 had evidently not had its sweeper replaced from the previous mishap (see 11/9/39 above) before its next accident on this date. "At 11.20 the leading axle of HR Motor Trolley No. 12, sight piloting [train]. No. 23, derailed at Km. 80.000 [just north of the first Yarmuk bridge] due to broken leading axle." There was no engine available at Samakh so the breakdown gang was sent by road Motor Trolley 12 was loaded on to a push trolley and taken to Samakh. Train 23 was delayed 249 minutes and train No. 28 - the return working - departed Samakh 90 minutes late.

27/11/1939: "At 07.25 H.R. Armoured Trolley No. 11 - with minesweeper No. 1 attached - was sight piloting train No. 26 - Samakh to Haifa. At Kilometre 72.600 [between Bet Yosef and Jisr el Mejamie] - up hill - stones were seen on the track and the driver - of the Trans-Jordan Frontier Force - was unable to pull up in time. The N.C.O. [Non-Commissioned Officer] in charge of the trolley reports that the stones were placed on the line purposely to cause damage. The matter is being followed-up with the Police Authorities." Mine-

sweeper No. 1 was lifted clear of the track and "will be worked to Haifa per [train] No. 28".

14/12/1939: It seems that the standard gauge minesweepers were lettered rather than numbered: "At 11.00 Mine Sweeper 'H' and leading axle of P.P.R.D. [Palestine Police Railway Division ?] Armoured Motor Trolley No. 22 derailed over the turntable at Hadera". The PPRD driver reported "I was instructed to proceed to Qaqun. I put the engine of the trolley in reverse to move off from the turntable. When the front wheels arrived at the points they jumped off the line. After half an hour the wheels were back on the line and the trolley in running condition. no damage was caused."

3/1/1940: Then again, designations for the standard gauge trolleys and minesweepers suddenly become more complicated. "At about 05.30 Minesweeper 'Green' attached to armoured military Motor Trolley "A" No. 24 derailed at Kilo 13 [south of Kafr Samir/Hof HaCarmel] owing to a small obstruction on the line. The trolley was making the morning sweep from Haifa ahead of goods train. The shaft was bent and the minesweeper was detached and subsequently sent to Haifa for repairs." For some unknown reason "the incident was not reported until 12.45 hours on the 5th." [Unless I'm much mistaken, Motor Trolley 24 was one of the double-unit armoured vehicles, and the "A" prefix would refer to the leading unit.]

12/3/1940: The last report in the file deals with a rather more serious accident, again involving Trolley No. 12 (still minus minesweeper) on the Hedjaz Railway section in the Jordan Valley. Trolley No. 12 was sight piloting ahead of Train No. 28 between Samkh and Jisr el Mejamie at about 15.30 hours, when it approached the level crossing at Km. 77.300. A motor lorry had halted at the crossing for the trolley to pass when another lorry overtook the first and drove across the tracks, The motor trolley was unable to stop on the 1.5% down grade and collided with the second lorry. The trolley was derailed and damaged, and two occupants slightly injured. The line was cleared at 16.32 with Train 28 being delayed 50 minutes and train 25 by 10 minutes.

Because this accident involved a non-railway vehicle on a public road a Joint Enquiry was held, but beyond blaming the lorry driver and absolving the trolley driver of blame, it was not able to make much in the way of constructive suggestion.

NAQB ASHTAR STATION.

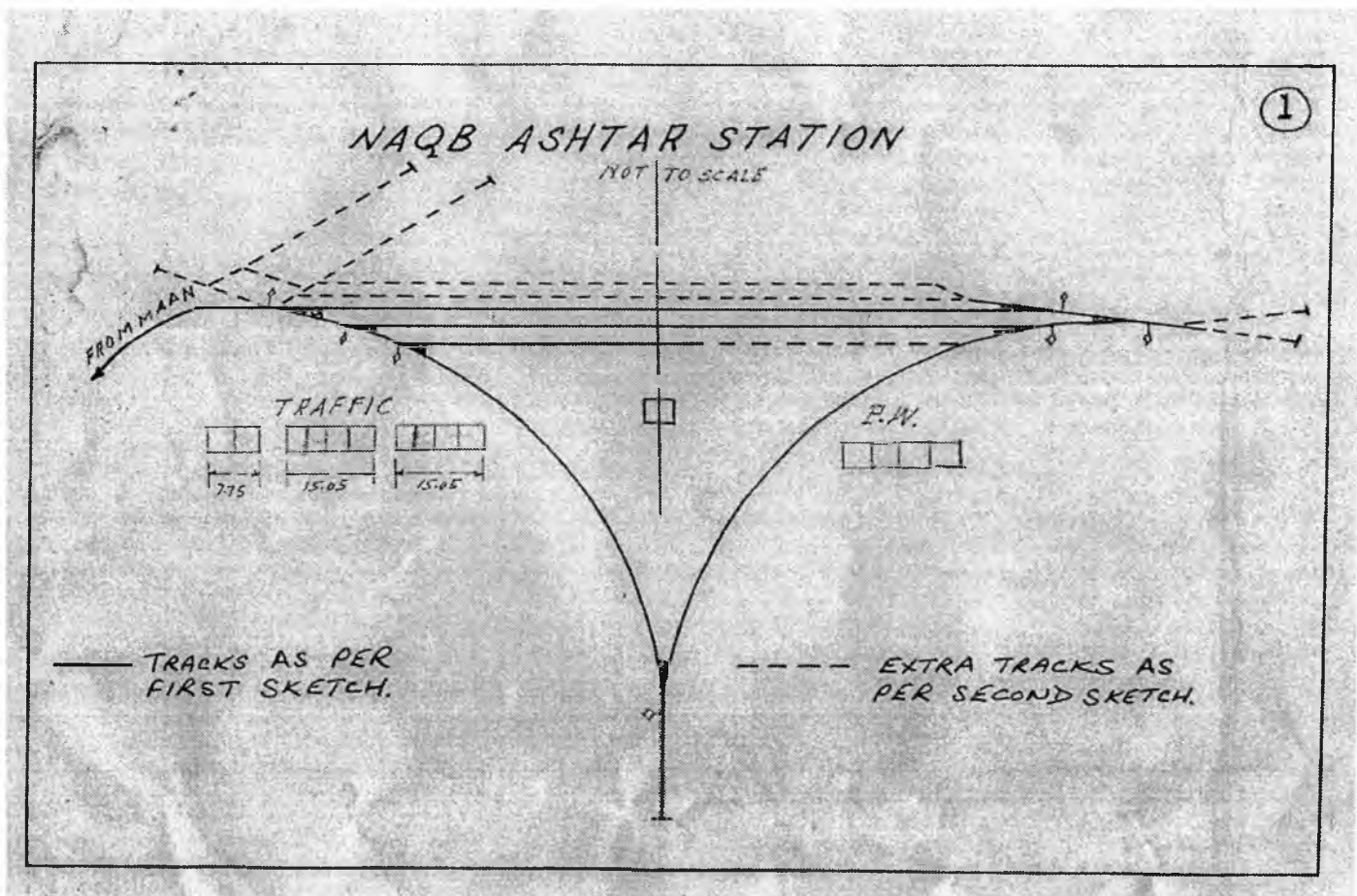
By Paul Cotterell.

The 105cm. gauge line laid between Maan and Naqb Ashtar in Jordan did not have a long life, being laid in WW2 for purely military purposes (see 'Hedjaz Railway' and past issues of Harakevet for details.) It is hardly surprising, therefore, that very little documentary and photographic evidence appears to survive, but three layout diagrams of the terminus have surfaced at the IRM archives.

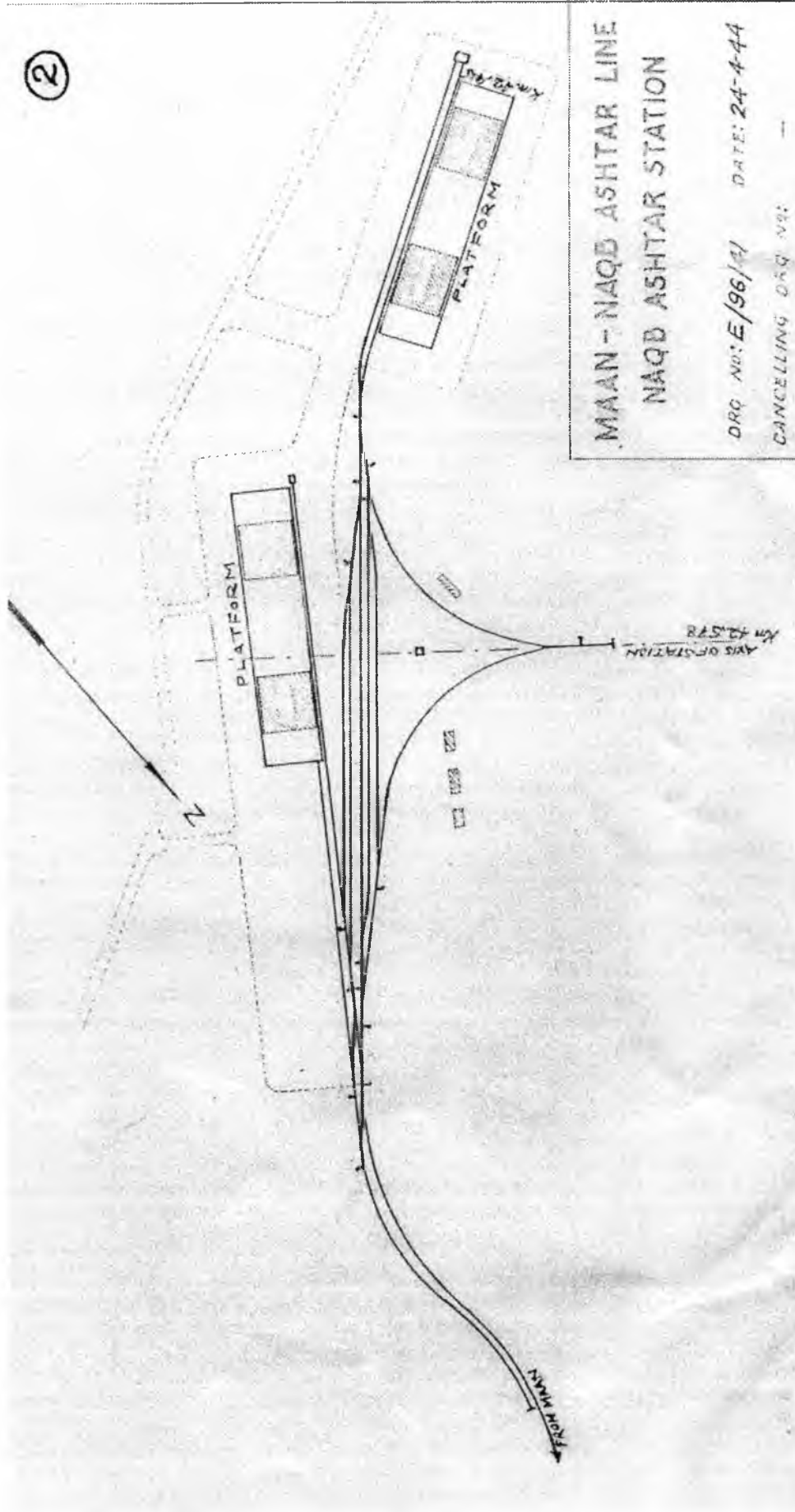
The first diagram presented here is actually a composite of two of these drawings. Both are rather crude sketches, presumably made when the line was being planned or, perhaps, already under construction (neither are dated). The first sketch only shows a partial layout of the tracks, the second shows a more extensive series of sidings (here marked in dotted lines). As it happens, both of these sketches were overtaken by events.

The second diagram reproduced here is a PR official and a much more reliable guide as to how things eventually came to be built at Naqb Ashtar. Dated 24th. April 1944, it shows two large loading platforms both of which have a pair of freight storage sheds. Length of the line to the farthest buffer stop is given as Km. 42.915.

I am unable to add anything more on the subject, but wonder if any relics might yet remain among the desert sands.



2



THE "PALESTINE WEEKLY"

This newspaper seems to have been founded in 1920. Some excerpts have appeared already in Harakevet 30:14, 35:19 and 52:12. Both the Editor and Sybil Ehrlich have been digging in archives, and the following is a composite of our work - extracts dealing mainly with the Railways, but giving a fascinating insight into the manner in which Palestine was developing in this early and optimistic part of the Mandate period, covering the period till the end of October 1924. Though lengthy, this item is presented in full to ensure continuity.

from "Palestine Weekly", April 30, 1920

"An aftermath of the riots is the vigorous search now being made of all civilian luggage at Jerusalem station. The procedure is often a lengthy one with the result that unfortunate passengers are crowded in an exasperated mass at the exit and before the last trunk is examined and the last bundle undone a full hour elapses. The only redeeming feature of the dim lit platform is the presence of good-humoured bantering Tommies, ever ready with a helpful hand or a kindly jest."

"Palestine Weekly", September 24, 1920
CORRESPONDENCE
Railway Travel

To the Editor, The Palestine Weekly, Jerusalem.
"Sir,
During the last few months very great improvements have been made in the Railway System of Palestine and many projects, it is stated, are under consideration.

The thanks of the travelling public are due to the Administration and Authorities for what has been accomplished in so short a time. A day or two ago I travelled from Samakh to Haifa arriving at my destination at eight p.m. For a considerable portion of the journey it was dark, and the scenes at the railway stations en route, and the confusion which prevailed, suggested to my mind that a comparatively small expenditure made now, whilst the larger projects are under review, would add considerably to the comfort of passengers, and aid the officials in their duties.

I would suggest that you advocate in your publication the following:-

- (1) All Railway Stations to be lit during darkness by two or three powerful lights for one hour at least before the departure of the train.
- (2) Railway officials to wear distinctive uniforms for purposes of identification.
- (3) An official to be deputed for duty outside each booking office to compel order, and make intending passengers pass in sin-

gle file before the ticket office.

(4) Names of stations to be shown in the three official languages.

(5) Reliable timetables to be displayed at Railway stations.

There will probably be a large influx into this country during the next few months of immigrants and tourists, and I feel sure if minor improvements of the nature indicated above could be at once carried out, they would be an aid to a smooth and economic system and be very helpful to the travelling public.

Yours faithfully,
ENGLISHMAN

Grand New Hotel,
Jerusalem, 15th September 1920"

"Palestine Weekly", October 15, 1920
JAFFA

"Opening of Jaffa-Ludd Railway Celebrated — The inauguration on October 6th of the new broad gauge line between Jaffa and Ludd may be taken as an augury of the gradual but complete fulfilment of Sir Herbert Samuel's programme. In the course of his Pronouncement on July 7th, the High Commissioner announced that one of the first steps looking to the development of the Palestine railways would be the broadening of the narrow line, thus connecting Jaffa with Jerusalem and Haifa. In less than three months after this promise the opening of the line was celebrated, Sir Herbert himself driving the engine as it puffed its way into the Jaffa station.

The little station formerly known as Saronna, but now called Tel Aviv, was decorated as was all Tel Aviv where flags were flying in anticipation of the High Commissioner's visit. Promptly at eleven o'clock the big train arrived and the High Commissioner, dressed in a white tunic covered with soot and coal dust, was seen at the wheel. A salvo of seventeen guns was fired as he descended from the platform and a military guard of honour presented arms. The Mayor in greeting the High Commissioner thanked him on behalf of the inhabitants, after which Mr. Dizengoff delivered a speech of welcome in the name of Tel Aviv.

In acknowledging the warm greetings, Sir Herbert said his driving was merely ceremonial and that thanks were really due to the labourers and engineers who worked so diligently for the speedy construction of the line. Continuing, the High Commissioner pointed out that the Government cannot do more than lead: the common tasks must be performed with the cooperation of the public.

"I trust," said the High Commissioner, "that Palestine will soon attain to a high stage of progress. More and greater improvements are in store — improvements which will speed up the development of the country, especially the Port of Jaffa which should become an important Mediterranean port."

from "Palestine Weekly", November 12, 1920

THE FUTURE OF THE RAILWAYS

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

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

In fairness it must be admitted that under its present chief the railway administration is striving to improve things. Special services are putting the trains more at the disposal of the agriculturalist and businessman.

There is a much improved through service to Egypt, the journey to which in the last few days has been appreciably reduced in time. Of course there is still much leeway to make up. But the railway administration is not unconscious of the defects and when new engines arrive the ground for many present complaints should disappear.

One thing among others the railway authorities could do even now to increase the comfort of travellers is to introduce a body of authorised porters with fixed tariffs, and to exclude from the railway stations all other porters. At present the porters are often incompetent, undisciplined and piratical.

The High Commissioner in his speech opening the Advisory Council announced that the Palestine Government is to operate, without owning, the line between Kantara and Rafa. It is understood that this section was originally offered to the Egyptian State railways, but refused by them, doubtless because of the heavy loss involved in operating it. As the Egyptian Government has no financial interest in this section, and as the Palestine Government likewise has no financial liabilities on its account, it is natural to conclude that the Imperial Government retains financial responsibility for the

Kantara-Rafa section. That would be perfectly just, because not only did the Imperial Government build the railway for strategical purposes, but those strategical reasons still hold good. Now that the British Garrison in Egypt is to be withdrawn to Kantara and the Canal Zone, the maintenance of the railway connection between Kantara and Palestine stands out as a strategical necessity.

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

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

There are some good authorities who doubt whether the Palestine railways can ever be made an economic success in the hands of the Government, and who think that in the end it would be good for the finances of the Government and for the people if the railways were handed over to a private Company, to be run of course under state supervision. The time has not come to discuss this question, but it is important enough to be mentioned even now, and should the pessimists turn out to be right it will have to be threshed out."

from "Palestine Weekly", February 18, 1921

PALESTINE RAILWAYS

Read at Advisory Council Meeting, Feb. 9, 1921

[NOTE: this is the second part of an article, the first part of which appeared in the previous issue, February 11, 1921, and which was published in "Harakevet" 52:12. This comes after "Subsequent to the armistice, however, through booked goods consignments were accepted in unlimited quantities." (two-thirds of the way down the right-hand column on

page 21) — s.e.]

"There was a certain amount of criticism of the Palestine Railways at the Advisory Council, just as there has been elsewhere, and the Railway department has taken the sensible step of issuing a memorandum explaining its difficulties and what has been done to overcome them. We hope that all government departments will take the taxpayer into their confidence, and we are sure that that will be good for all parties. Including the Kantara-Rafa section, which is administered by the Army, the Palestine Railway department is responsible for 1000 kilometres of line. That is quite a fair amount for a country the size of Palestine and in this part of the world. A certain number of small branch lines are building for special purposes, such as the Army line from Ludd to Surafend, the Petach-Tikvah line, and a line near Tel-Aviv. [? — s.e.] We ought not to expect any considerable expansion of railway building for some little time, and it is probable that the next period will see the building of electric tramways, although as these must wait upon the provision of electricity on a large scale we shall have to wait for them. Still it is well to bear in mind that electricity rather than coal is likely to have a big word to say in connection with the future of our transport.

Not only has British administration brought the country a vastly improved railway system, but it is in the way to revolutionise road transport. On the whole motor transport has not developed quite as fast as might have been expected. It is used a good deal for passenger traffic between Jerusalem and Jaffa, but freight is still in its infancy. Palestinian roads are of course very hard on motors, but then motors are very hard on Palestinian roads, and indeed the whole finance of motor transport is peculiar. A railway buys the land for its road, builds its road, and maintains its road, and all these costs are duly shown in its accounts. Your motor finds its road built and maintained for it by the community, upon which it throws the burden of building and maintaining specially expensive forms of roads. Would motor transport pay if these road charges were put to its account as they are in the corresponding case put to the account of the railway? We very much doubt it. Not, of course, that that decides the issue, but it does bring into prominence certain considerations which are commonly ignored.

The immediate task of our railway department is to improve the rather dilapidated estate it inherited from the War, — to put a badly built line into decent running order, to substitute good for outworn rolling stock, to build adequate station accommodation, to accelerate services, and to increase the security and comfort of travellers. Any candid mind will admit that the Department is grappling seriously with the task, and if many of its achievements are not of a character to hit the eye they are not the less solid. Of course like other departments it has been hampered by shortage of funds, but somehow or other enough money has so far been found for quite a fair amount of work. There

is one might say in passing, a curious quality about Palestine finance so that it never turns out as bad as it looks, and there always manages to turn up some fund or other to help the Government out of an anxious place.

The shifting of the centre of gravity of Railway administration from Kantara to Haifa is a matter of some moment. The memorandum points out that it will incidentally mean the increased employment of Palestinian labour, but anyhow Kantara was an impossible seat of the Palestine railways. We wish the Department would tell us why it preferred Haifa to Jaffa. Haifa is the junction for the Damascus railway, and it is the port of the future. It is probable, too, that the valley of Esdraelon and the country on either side will prove to be the chief industrial region of Palestine. But all that is the music of the future, and indeed there is rather too much of that sort of music about Haifa. It is a young man with most beautiful prospects and a vast lack of ready cash. Meanwhile Jaffa is showing signs of vigour. A Jaffa harbour, on a small scale it is true, is much nearer decision than the grandiose plans which so many of us are dreaming for Haifa, and it is at Jaffa that industrial development is actually taking place.

The Railway Department are careful to point out that they are optimistic as to the future of the railways, because they are optimistic as to the economic future of the country. That is the right spirit. Railway management requires imagination and vision, and it will not succeed if it is content not to move beyond the narrow calculation of the immediate piaster. This consideration should be borne in mind in examining the problem of electrification. It is an open secret that the Railways have been looking into the economics of electrification in connection with the large electricity scheme. One argument one hears is that the capital cost of electrification is so large as to render it uneconomic for so small a country and system as ours. Whether this be right or wrong is a technical matter for the experts, upon which the layman's opinion is not invited. But the success of a railway depends upon the prosperity of its clients. Suppose that electrification means a vast industrial and agricultural development for the country, that must mean a vast increase of traffic for the railways, which would thus get compensation, though they might have to wait a little for it. It is in the same spirit that the Canadian Pacific Railway was launched into uninhabited wilds, and justified its economics, adventurous as they were, so handsomely."

From "Palestine Weekly", July 8, 1921

"An accident took place this week on the railway between Ludd and Jerusalem. We quite understand the possibility of accidents on railroads; this can happen in the best organised railway systems. In every country, however, no train is allowed to leave the station before the line is declared clear after the accident. This is not the rule in Palestine. We learn that the next day another train left

for Jerusalem, and was held up for about four hours, in a waterless barren area, without means of procuring refreshment or food, greatly to the discomfort of the passengers. If they had been advised beforehand they would have either postponed their journey or taken measures for a short stay in the wilderness. But may we enquire from the Railways Administration whether the train could not wait at Ludd until the line was repaired, and then leave the station, and may we express our hopes that such things will not happen in future?

Touching railways, we should like to repeat the following remark made to us by a Moslem gentleman: In all Moslem countries, he told us, there is a special compartment for Moslem ladies, but our State Railway has not thought of this courtesy. Many Moslem ladies who journey by rail, especially when they desire to keep strictly to the law of the Prophet Mohammed, feel very uncomfortable in the presence of gentlemen. If sometimes it happens that among the passengers some lack politeness, he continued, the position of the lady is aggravated. It would therefore be desirable that the Palestine Railways management should provide a special compartment, bearing the inscription, which appears on European trains, "Ladies Only". "

[I remember Ladies Only compartments on the London, Tilbury & Southend line in the 1960s. Sybil]

From "Palestine Weekly", July 15th. 1921.

NOTICE: PALESTINE RAILWAYS: As from 11th. July BENJAMINA STATION (Ex Caesaria Military Station) situated at Kilo 371.100 between Khudeira and Zikhron-Jacob, has been opened for Passenger and Goods traffic.

From "Palestine Weekly", September 23, 1921

Extract from AN INTERIM REPORT ON THE CIVIL ADMINISTRATION OF PALESTINE, during the period 1st JULY, 1920 - 30th JUNE, 1921.

"IX. DEPARTMENTAL WORK.

Railways. : All the railways of Palestine have been brought under the control of the Government. In addition, the Palestine Railway Department operates, on behalf of the Army, the Sinai Military Railway between Kantara, on the Suez Canal, and Rafah, on the Egyptian-Palestine frontier. The total length of the entire system is approximately 1,000 kilometres.

Within the limits of the funds available many improvements have been effected during the last twelve months. The main line between Rafah and Haifa, hastily constructed during the campaign, has been strengthened and protected. As a result, the interruptions which were frequent during the rainy season of 1919-20 were absent last winter. The line from Jaffa to Ludd Junction was of nar-

row gauge, involving the transhipment of all goods carried by railway between the port of Jaffa and other parts of Palestine and Egypt. This railway has now been broadened. Three small branch lines are in course of construction. Stations have been improved and new stations opened. Sleeping cars and dining cars are run on a number of the trains. It has been necessary to raise passenger fares, and with this addition to their income the railways pay their way."

From "Palestine Weekly", October 14, 1921

under COMMERCIAL SECTION

"THE PALESTINE RAILWAYS

The Palestine Railways, although in the early years of infancy, have made excellent progress in every way. No one who travelled by train in Palestine some years ago can now fail to notice the great improvement made in the punctuality and cleanliness of the trains.

The line joining Egypt to Palestine was built as a military measure during the advance of the British Troops from Egypt and of necessity, lacked all modes of comfort and the security usually afforded by railways to the Public. The conversion of this military line into a civilian concern, the provision of up-to-date trains with Dining and Sleeping cars, the excellent services and connections maintained with branch lines and the training of subordinate staff in their duties in so short a time, are features on which the Railway Authorities must be heartily congratulated.

Greater improvements are yet in store. We are informed that several new cars for this Railway have been ordered in Europe and are expected to arrive in the course of the coming year. These cars, which provide accommodation of all classes, comprise the latest and most up-to-date improvements and luxuries afforded by European railways. Powerful locomotives have also been ordered and it will not be long before the inhabitants of Palestine, who before and during the last war had no better mode of travel than on camel or donkey back, will enjoy travel by luxurious trains which cannot be excelled even in Europe."

"Palestine Weekly", October 28th. 1921.

"BEIRUT: Within the last three months two works of importance have been accomplished - the building of a broad-gauge railway joining up Tripoli with Homs, and the establishing of a wireless station at Nebi Yunus, near to Sidon. The railway will be a thing of immense economical value and bring about a revolution in the commercial life of Tripoli, bring it forward as a port, and ensure its speedy development. In addition to this, the French Government is contemplating the linking up of Beyrout and Tripoli with a similar broad-gauge line; and plans for this are to be ready by December. Thanks to these transport facilities and the new Customs Treaty between Syria and Palestine, Beyrout need no longer fear the danger of

competition with Haifa."

"ELECTRICITY.

"When the water resources of Palestine have been harnessed, electrical energy will be available and with that will come electric railways and trains. A great outcry was once raised at the mere suggestion of tram-cars in or near Jerusalem. It is to be expected that in due course there will be trams running to Hebron, Ramallah, Ein Kerem, Kolonia, etc., though of course it would be undesirable and indeed impossible to have tramlines within the City or in places where religious susceptibilities might be offended.

Reverting to the question of Surveys for new road construction between villages and towns, owners of land sometimes object to the proposal to cut through their property or raise other difficulties with a proposed alignment. General Grant believed that the old Turkish rule was that compensation ought to be paid for a new road through private property but that in practice it was always held that the new road bettered the conditions of the property and this was considered sufficient compensation for the owner, so that he received no money. Without knowledge of the Turkish idea of justice we can imagine that many owners were content to receive the word of the Government that they required no compensation other than the cut through their land, where they lost by it or not. But nowadays the great advantage of having a public road passing through or near a village and incidentally through private land, is more generally recognised. Rishon, for example, would welcome a road through the colony, past its wine-press to facilitate the transport of wine to Jaffa for export."

From "Palestine Weekly", November 18, 1921

(NB:- Paul Cotterell had queried the date of opening in his book.)

PETACH TIKVAH

"On the 11th inst., the Petach Tikvah Ras-el-Ain railway branch was inaugurated. The Jewish colonists of Petach Tikvah have been impatiently awaiting this connection with the main railway-line Kantara-Haifa. Until now all goods and produce of the colony had to be transported to Jaffa by animals or carriages. They will now be able to forward all produce by rail.

As is well known the colony has helped in the laying of this line to the extent of LE. [Egyptian Pounds. S.E.] 20,000 which was given to them as a loan by Baron Rothschild and the Jewish Colonization Association. There was no official ceremony. A representative of the railways, Mr. Axler, and a representative from the Jewish Colonization Association and from the Colony, examined and confirmed rates of transport of goods and determined the means to be taken for the repayment of the loan. It is to be regretted that the prices agreed upon will be very high. It is estimated that the exports of the Colony will amount to 6,300 tons and

the imports to 10,000 tons annually. For the present the new line is not altogether satisfactory, nor does it diminish the expenses of transport as regards the produce of the Colony.

Simultaneously with the laying of the line we have also opened a new telegraph service in our Colony. From now onwards the colonists of Petach Tikvah will no longer be obliged to proceed to Jaffa to send off a telegram. The existing telephone leaves much to be desired, since the telephone line between our Colony and Ludd is usually out of order."

From "Palestine Weekly", March 31, 1922

PALESTINE RAILWAYS

"In our issue of March the 10th we published an interesting statement by Colonel R. Holmes, General Manager of the Palestine Railways. This described the situation as it was two years ago, before being taken over by the Civil Administration, and the present condition, and it detailed the phases through which the railway system passed and the difficulties that had to be surmounted before even it reached its present degree of questionable efficiency and comfort.

Complaints during the last two years against the railway management, whether of incompetence or of wastefulness, have been incessant. Like all the other Departments the railway administration too has not yet had time to reach perfection, and we can realise that many reasons stand in the way of its reaching the smoothness of working and satisfactory service which we associate with European railway management. Lack of skilled labour and absence of efficient or experienced officials are bound to produce but a feeble result. But the General Manager urges that with the means at his disposal his results are comparatively good. "The total length of the railway opened to traffic" says Col. Holmes, "is at present approximately 1,450 kilos [sic] of which 800 are standard gauge as against roughly 1,000 kilos in October 1920, when the Civil Administration took over the railways. Therefore in a little over twelve months the railway administration has increased its responsibility by 450 kilos of line to be operated."

We can only congratulate the railway management on this important increase, and we are glad to notice that their efforts do not stop there. We have had an opportunity of seeing the new timetable which starts from tomorrow. Unquestionably there is a great improvement. Many complaints have come from travellers at the unconscionable early hours at which certain trains leave. To get to Egypt, or even to Jaffa or Haifa, one must get up by five o'clock in the morning to catch the six o'clock train. From Haifa it has been even worse. It is good to see that in the new timetable the Traffic Manager has exercised compassion and now we can catch the same train at the slightly more civilised hour of seven or half-past. We also notice

that trains will be much faster and that we can get to Haifa an hour or an hour and a half quicker.

There is also a marked reduction in time between Jerusalem and Jaffa. Another improvement of importance is that the service to Jerusalem, Haifa and Kantara East remains invariable from day to day. Till now three times a week for no obvious reason, passengers have had to waste a night in Kantara East, instead of going immediately to Ludd. We could never see the point of this, but now the anomaly is to be abolished we need not waste time in criticising it.

In the matter of comfort there is an attempt at improvement. We have seen the fine new coaches which recently arrived and which are to start running from tomorrow. They reach the European standard of comfort and cleanliness and will serve to mitigate the horrors of Palestinian railway journeys. We have also seen the new engine; now that our engine-drivers have a little more experience and have learnt the value of care, breakdowns should not be so monotonously frequent as of old.

We have spoken with many tourists and tried to find out their ideas about our railway service. Normally they have been quite satisfied, and especially those who have passed through Italy or other countries where the rolling stock and other material are still war-worn. They agreed that the railway system here is not bad and that they could report to would-be tourists that in the matter of railway travel, at least, there is no serious cause for grumbling.

So the General Manager, Colonel Holmes, his direct assistants and the Traffic Manager, Axler Bey, who have seized the chance and profited from the tourist season this year to give Palestine a good name, are to be congratulated. We are assured that they will continue in their efforts to improve what needs to be improved; and they will be the last to deny that there is yet vast scope for improvement - and that, with the least possible delay. The railway system is the sine qua non of economic life of any country, and here especially, where so much depends on quick and direct communications with the neighbouring countries.

There is one most important point still to be raised: fares and freight are at present excessively high, and this both hinders freedom of travel and contributes towards the high cost of the necessities of life. We suggest to the authorities of the Palestine Railways that they turn now their attention to this side of things. If they will only apply their intelligent industry to the elimination of waste and the hundred and one little foolishnesses which in their totality bring about these swollen rates, we are convinced that they will not lack success and justify their position as servants of the Palestine public. We are not unreasonable. We do not expect the change in a single night. But we should all be greatly encouraged and cheered if we could have persistent, though no matter how slight, proof that the Department is working

steadily on towards reducing the heavy charges now inflicted on the long suffering public."

*Well, why shouldn't "kilo" be an abbreviation for kilometre as well as for kilogramme? — s.e.

from "Palestine Weekly", May 19, 1922

Letters to the Editor

(following one complaining about the PW's drama critic!)

"Sir, - Being a frequent traveller on the Palestine Railways, I have some remarks to make on the above subject, at the various Railway stations. About a fortnight ago, travelling from Tiberias to Haifa, at Semakh Station, it was impossible to approach the booking-office to get a ticket owing to the pushing and thrusting of the great rabble. As far as I could understand, the sole cause of all this pushing is due to the fact that tickets are not being sold until about a quarter of an hour prior to the departure of the train. The steam boat from Tiberias reaches Semakh at half past two, and if arrangements were made for the booking office to open immediately upon the arrival of the boat at Semakh, I am convinced that all this pushing could easily be avoided; thus eliminating scuffles between the various people endeavouring to get ahead of one another. I personally intervened at Semakh a fortnight ago, when an Arab and an Israelite commenced wrangling, each making efforts to reach the booking window first. Had the booking office opened daily at half past two o'clock immediately on arrival of the steam boat from Tiberias, this would not only obviate unnecessary thrusting and struggling, but would greatly facilitate the duties and the efficiency of the clerk.

[It would help if the writer stated what time the booking office actually opened, and when the train left! — s.e.]

At Semakh, not being in a position to approach the booking office, I asked one of the waiting passengers already near the window to obtain a ticket for me, and Thank Goodness, I was then in possession of a ticket.

An interesting narrative is to be related about the booking office at Jaffa. There apparently seem to be some new regulations in force at that station re the issue of tickets. About two days ago on entering the station wishing to buy a ticket to Ras-el-Ain, and having found it impossible to approach the window, I likewise asked one of the waiting passengers near the window to get a ticket for me, which he consented to do. But unfortunately, when asking for two tickets, one for Jerusalem and one for Ras-el-Ain, the booking clerk refused to issue two tickets to one person, saying that one passenger is not allowed to purchase two tickets at a time. This statement was also corroborated by the native policeman keeping control, who of course is not of much use. Now, if the booking clerk only had a bit of common sense,

he surely ought to issue two tickets to one passenger, which would avoid pushing, etc. I think it is the duty of our able General Manager, Mr. Holmes, to take this matter into consideration and bring the booking clerks up to the modern standard of efficiency. Yours truly, — HARRY WHITE."

from "Palestine Weekly", July 25, 1924

PALESTINE RAILWAYS

"We have referred previously in our columns to the efforts the Railways Administration was making to remedy the several defects in the service, to which attention had been drawn from various quarters. In order to enable our readers to get accurate information as to the activities of the Railway authorities, we asked our Haifa representative to inquire further into the matter. The following details, which are of interest, were obtained by him.

On May 23rd, the bookings for the Feast of Nebi Saleh, which took place at Ramleh, totalled 3,706 as against 2,420 for the previous year.

Every available coach was placed in service to deal with the large increase of traffic, and it was not possible to attach more than one coach at Lydda for the Rehoboth passengers, who are usually few in number. As a matter of fact, only 10 tickets were issued from Rehoboth on this date, and 150 persons turned up to travel to that station by the evening train.

On June 6th, it was not possible to increase the ordinary third class accommodation on the train leaving Jerusalem, in consequence of the reserve coaches having been withdrawn to accommodate a large party of naval men proceeding from Jaffa to Jerusalem by special train.

The Railway is very often obliged, practically without any notice, to accommodate large parties and the following instances which occurred during the last fortnight are given in support of this:-

June 11th, 129 persons Lydda to Lydda Junior [sic, Junction? — s.e.]
June 16th, 230 persons Lydda to Ramleh
June 18th, 144 persons Lydda to Ramleh
June 19th, 135 persons Ramleh to Lydda.

On June 16th, accommodation was reserved for a party of 150 persons travelling ex-Jerusalem. The party, however, did not travel until the 18th, and the number was increased to 232 without any notification having been received.

In order to have a larger reserve available in future, six coaches which were formerly used for transporting hospital patients are now being converted into third class passenger coaches.

With regard to the statement that the time-keeping of trains has been somewhat irregular of late, it is desired to say that a decided improvement has taken place since April 1st last, on which date the reorganisa-

tion of the Traffic Department was effected.

For the three months ending March the average daily delay to trains on the Jaffa-Jerusalem line was 19 minutes, whilst for the three subsequent months it was reduced to 10 minutes.

On May 29th, the main line train was several hours late, and this was unavoidable, owing to the breakage of an axle of an Egyptian State Railways truck on a night goods train between Kantara and Rafa, thus causing the line to be blocked.

During the last few weeks the vegetable traffic has been exceptionally heavy, and growers are taking full advantage of the facilities offered for the despatch of their produce by the passenger trains. Ramleh, in particular, has been loading large quantities of vegetables, and delays have been caused there on this account. In order to relieve the passenger trains as much as possible of this work, a goods train has already been scheduled to leave Lydda for Jerusalem shortly after the departure of the last passenger train and this in addition will facilitate the despatch of ordinary goods traffic arriving there from the Kantara, Jaffa and Haifa lines.

A revision of the passenger train services is at present under consideration and it is proposed to effect a considerable curtailment in the length of time at present taken on the Jaffa-Jerusalem line.

A suggestion has been put forward that an automatic machine be installed at Jerusalem for the issue of third class tickets. The numbers travelling from Jerusalem are hardly sufficient to justify the installation of such a machine which, apart from being costly, would on account of its complicated nature be found somewhat difficult to operate. A machine is already installed at Jerusalem for issuing platform tickets in order to relieve the congestion at the booking office, and third class tickets are also obtainable at the office of the Palestine Express Company here.

"Palestine Weekly", September 12, 1924

JAFFA AS A COMMERCIAL CENTRE

The work of the delegation that recently proceeded to London for the purpose of bringing the desiderata of the commercial community at Jaffa before the Colonial Office has apparently borne fruit to some extent. The report submitted by Mr. Dizengoff, the Mayor of Tel-Aviv Township, to the Municipal Council on his return from London indicates that the commercial and industrial future of Jaffa as the principal centre of Palestine is not likely to be overshadowed by that of its rival, Haifa. From the long negotiations conducted in connexion with the port question it became apparent that the inclination of the Home Government, in the Colonial and War Offices, as well as in the Admiralty, was to show marked preference to Haifa as the principal harbour of this country. It was the purpose of the delegation that

proceeded to England to lay the case of Jaffa before the competent authorities and to obtain from them an assurance that the interests of that thriving port would not be entirely neglected. It is gratifying to note that the delegation was given a favourable hearing at the Colonial Office. No definite promise, so far as we are aware, was given to Mr. Dizengoff and Mr. Rokh, [sic — Rokach presumably], the members of the delegation, on the question of the harbour proper; but it was recognised that Jaffa could not be allowed to drift for itself, or collect sufficient funds to build a harbour of its own.

Incidentally, another question which had been under consideration for some time was reopened. We refer to the transfer of the railway junction from Lydda to Jaffa. It should be explained that the construction of the main railway junction at Lydda, a point which is neither a geographical nor a commercial centre, was not based on a preconceived policy. The position was selected during the war for strategical reasons only. It followed directly from the construction of the line through the Sinai desert from Kantara during the war in order to enable the British troops better to organise the advance through Palestine from the south. When the Civil Government succeeded the Military Administration, it was considered much more economical to improve the junction at Lydda than to transport it bodily to some other centre. Moreover, even at that time, the construction of a harbour at Haifa was seriously contemplated. It soon became apparent, however, that the position of the principal railway junction in Palestine is calculated seriously to handicap the development of trade in the country. The transport of goods from Egypt to Jaffa, as well as the importation of goods from abroad through Jaffa, caused a considerable amount of delay through re-transportation and the duplication of work at Jaffa and at Lydda.

The question was first put before the Government by the business community as a whole at the Conference of the Chambers of Commerce which was held at Haifa in November 1921, under the chairmanship of the High Commissioner. Questions were then put by the representatives of the Jaffa and the Jerusalem Chambers of Commerce as to why this project was not given more attention. The General Manager of the Palestine Railways stated on behalf of the Government that the scheme was quite feasible, but that it would cost about one hundred and eighty thousand pounds. This was calculated to dampen the enthusiasm of the exponents of the scheme. As a matter of fact, nothing further was said on the subject for some time afterward. In the meantime, the Government expended considerable sums on improving the Lydda station, including the change in its official designation from Ludd to Lydda.

Previous to the representations made by the Jaffa delegation, persistent rumours circulated to the effect that the Government was contemplating the transportation of the Lydda junction to Jaffa and running the line further north, to join the present line some-

where near Kalkilieh or Tul-Karem. The tremendous success of the small suburban line between Ras el Ain and Petah Tikvah gave the new scheme great possibilities. The great progress made by Tel-Aviv during the past three years, and considerable areas acquired by the Jews to the north of Tel-Aviv and the vicinity of Petah Tikvah, made it reasonable to believe that the projected line would prove a much better commercial proposition than the present line.

We have not the slightest doubt that it would. Land at Jaffa, Tel-Aviv and along all the stretch of country between Jaffa and Kalkilieh is very much in demand at present, and prices are going up by leaps and bounds. Buildings are going up by the hundred at Jaffa and Tel-Aviv, notably in the latter town, and usually let before the outside walls are erected. Several important companies have started operations for settling many thousands of people, most of them people with means, on the area between Jaffa and Kalkilieh. Altogether the area in question is bound to become in the very near future by far the most important business centre in the country. In the circumstances the Government stands to gain considerably from a line passing through this district. The capital outlay on the realisation of the scheme, transporting the principal railway junction to Jaffa and running the line north to Kalkilieh or Tul-Karm, will be amply justified. We will go as far as to say that it will doubtlessly amortise the sinking fund together with the interest in less than forty years. The experiment of the short Ras el Ain-Petah Tikvah line is proof enough. Whether the money necessary to carry this project into effect will be forthcoming from the Government is another matter. But we have no doubt that if the scheme is studied carefully and found sound commercially, capital will be found to make it a reality.

Mr. Dizengoff, in his report, mentioned also that steps are now being taken to hasten the creation of an important mortgage bank, which will render assistance to prospective settlers, notably those in the area we have mentioned, viz., that between Jaffa and Kalkilieh. Many of the recent arrivals to Palestine have brought with them quite appreciable sums which can go a long way to enabling a person with moderate tastes to build up a farm. What is necessary to ensure his success is a loan at a low rate of interest and long terms of payment. Mortgage banks have very seldom failed when properly conducted, and there is therefore every indication that the scheme now in contemplation will speedily materialise. The existence of a mortgage bank whose business it will be to watch over the welfare of new settlements in the Jaffa-Kalkilieh area will constitute another security to the Government when it comes to consider the prospects of the transportation of the railway junction from Lydda to Jaffa.

"Palestine Weekly", October 24, 1924

RAILWAY EXTENSIONS

"A report has appeared in the Egyptian and Syrian Press to the effect that the negotiations for the construction of the railway from Beirut to Haifa are progressing satisfactorily, and that the necessary capital will shortly be available. The idea of supplying this missing link in the chain of communications between the coastal region of Syria on the one hand and Palestine and Egypt on the other, has been under contemplation for a considerable time past. The carrying of this scheme into effect will fill a long-felt need. The construction of the line from Kantara to Haifa with branches to Jerusalem and Jaffa, and the connecting through Haifa and Samakh to Damascus, made it obvious that before long it would be necessary to give the benefit of the new line to the port of Beirut without resorting to the roundabout route via Damascus and the Lebanon. As a matter of fact, the commercial community of Beirut have experienced the effect of the line from Kantara to Haifa to their detriment. It was realised by merchants at Damascus and the hinterland of Syria that to transport goods from Egypt via Haifa was more economical and quicker than by bringing their goods by sea through Beirut. Possibly, from a purely Palestinian point of view, this was matter for congratulation. At the same time, it was realised even in Palestine that this mode of transport was abnormal. When such a big centre as Damascus has to get a very large portion of its supplies through a foreign port, with its own port scarcely one hundred and twenty miles distant, it becomes obvious that some remedy ought to be found. The best, in fact the only remedy was to connect the port of Beirut with the terminus of the line connecting Egypt with Palestine.

But aside from the benefit to Beirut which the construction of the Beirut-Haifa line is bound to give, there are other important considerations which make the plan still more desirable. If we take any country with a long coastal line, it will be seen that one of the essential lines of communications that its government established was along the coast. From a strategic point of view, a railway line along the coast is the best protection against raids from an enemy country; from an economic point of view, railway connexions between the ports, a vital factor in the development of the ports and hence of the country as a whole, demands that the ports should be connected by rail as far as possible in straight lines. The contour of the coast from Kantara to Beirut makes it possible to run the line close to the coast without making it necessary to create wasteful curves. As Palestine was supplied with such a line for strategic reasons early in the Occupation, it becomes doubly necessary for the French Government to supply such a line to the Syrian coast. It is indeed surprising that France, which has not been so sparing in expense in Syria as was Great

Britain in Palestine, should have taken so long to realise the importance of this line to the strategic needs of Syria.

It should also be borne in mind that the line from Haifa to Beirut, when completed, will pass through Tyre and Sidon, which were once upon a time the chief ports of the Mediterranean, but which fell into obscurity solely through lack of communications with other centres on the Syrian and Palestinian coast. Both Sidon and Tyre afford great facilities for the construction of modern harbours, which in their turn can afford great assistance in the development of the hinterland of the Southern Lebanon and the "Pocket" limited by the El-Kasimiyeh on the north and the Palestine boundary on the south and east. Here again the fertile regions have suffered mainly through inadequate communications. The small number of sailing vessels which visit Sidon and Tyre can scarcely count as a means of communication between these ports and the others along the eastern coast of the Mediterranean.

The construction of this line will bring into prominence another issue which has been discussed for some time in French and British political circles. The "Drang nach Osten" of the Germans with the resultant Baghdad railway was substituted after the War by a similar movement in Paris and in London. So far the French have had the benefit of the larger portion of the Baghdad railway through their section of the railway running from El-Hamme through Damascus to Aleppo. It was understood that the French Government had contemplated for some time the construction of a line from Homs or from Hama to Ed-Deir on the Euphrates, thus to create a sphere of influence to the north of the British zone in Iraq. Now that the whole Mosul area is under dispute and it is conceivable, if not probable, that the fertile vilayet of Mosul will come under Turkish rule, the importance of the connecting link from the Damascus-Aleppo line to the Euphrates, with Beirut and Damascus as feeding centres, economically and politically, cannot be overestimated. This importance will be appreciated still further when Beirut, as principal port, will be connected directly, almost in a straight line, with Egypt.

This move on the part of the French will serve to re-awaken a scheme long contemplated by the British Government, viz., of constructing a line across the Syrian desert from British Iraq to Haifa, which was fixed upon as the main naval base on the eastern coast of the Mediterranean. What was considered before only as a desirable project will become an absolute necessity as soon as the Haifa-Beirut and the Homs-Ed-Deir lines are brought into being. In view of the latest developments in Egypt and in the Arabian Peninsula, Great Britain can ill afford to leave its main spheres of influence in the Middle East, the Suez Canal, Egypt, the Sudan, Palestine and Iraq, disjointed and difficult of access from one another."

ACCIDENTAL ESSLINGENS.

By Paul Cotterell.

Those who labour among thorns and on stony ground are more likely to suffer scrapes and bruises. So it is with the humble shunting loco. Minor accidents with the Esslingen 0-6-0DHs have featured previously in these pages - here are a couple more from the IRM Archives.

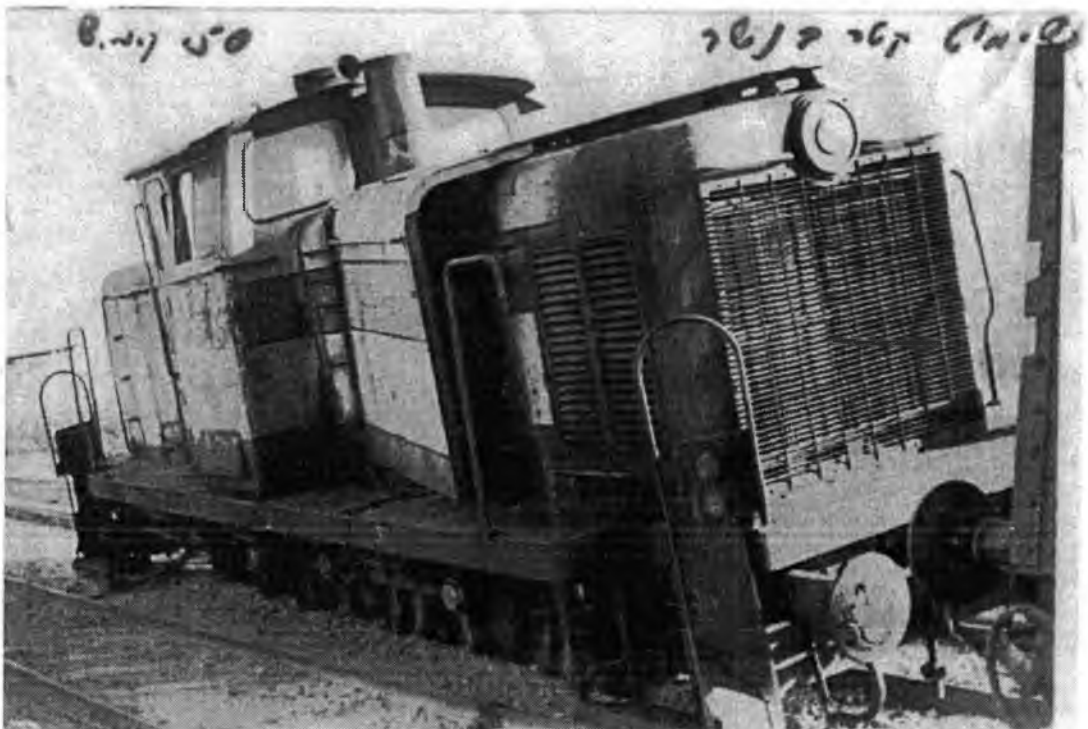
The first two photos appear to have been taken on the same occasion, and show 217 off the road at Nesher, near Haifa, with a string of World War 2 vintage 35-ton box cars built

in the USA. (See Figs. 87 and 89 in 'The Railways of Palestine and Israel'). This was on the former Hedjaz Railway, this stretch having been dual-gauged in 1925 and then standard-gauged by IR following the closure of the HR line. The photos are undated, but I rather think they were taken some time in the 1960's or early 70's. One print has the name Haim Moreh pencilled on the reverse, and the other has been annotated "50 k.p.h.". I used to travel a lot with Driver Haim Moreh, particularly on T44 (131) when that loco was being used on main-line passenger trains. Putting two-and-two together, I can only conclude that Haim had been indulging in a spot of speeding in his younger days and bit the ballast with 217.

Something similar has happened to Esslingen 216 in the third photo (next page). This is also undated but is approximately contemporaneous with the other two, I think. No location is given either, and I'm by no means certain where it was taken. What little can be seen in the background reminds me of the severe curvature at the old Tel Aviv South station, but this is not much more than a guess. It will be noticed that 216 is in overall grey, without the broad maroon-coloured stripes lined in black. At least one of the SAFB



Bo-Bos is also known to have run in this simplified livery in the 1960's. Such variations are extremely difficult to keep track of, but do provide an easy out for any lazy potential model makers.



SOME NOTES ON 'ABDUL NASSER'.

By Paul Cotterell.

Practically nothing is known about the ESR Jung 0-6-0 diesel No.4239, captured in 1956, during its service on Israel Railways. 'Abdul Nasser', as it was nicknamed on IR, was used, apparently intermittently, for shunting in and around Haifa, but seems to have kept a very low profile indeed. I have the feeling that it was probably looked upon as more trouble than it was worth, and the following extracts from two documents in the IRM Archives hint at recurring problems which would have exasperated those who had to maintain the loco.

1). On 21.2.57 the loco's "oil radiator" [sic - see Note a] was leaking and sent to the "Michael" garage for repair and was returned on 25.2.57.

Between 5.3.57 and 5.5.57 the radiator had to be stripped on six [!] separate occasions for repairs to leaks "by us" (ie. at the Haifa diesel depot).

On 27.5.57 the radiator, leaking

once more, was sent to Qishon Workshops for repairs and returned on 18.6.57. On the same day, and immediately after the loco was started up, it began leaking again!

On 3.7.57 the radiator was received from Qishon again and fitted.

On 10.7.57 it was leaking again, was stripped and sent to Qishon.

"In light of the above details", it was wearily remarked by the diesel depot to the CME, "I suggest that a new radiator be fabricated with a period of warranty [guarantee]".

2). There were more troubles with the "oil cooler" [sic - presumably radiator]. In September 1957 it was reported by the Economic Department Manager that "The Shilumim Corporation in its letter of 27.8.57 informed us that it had contacted the delegation in Koln with a request for an urgent estimate for the purchase of the above oil cooler. On 4.9.57 we received an estimate from the firm of Langerer [?spelling] und Reich for the supply of a cooler at the price of DM859 FOB. Delivery time 4-

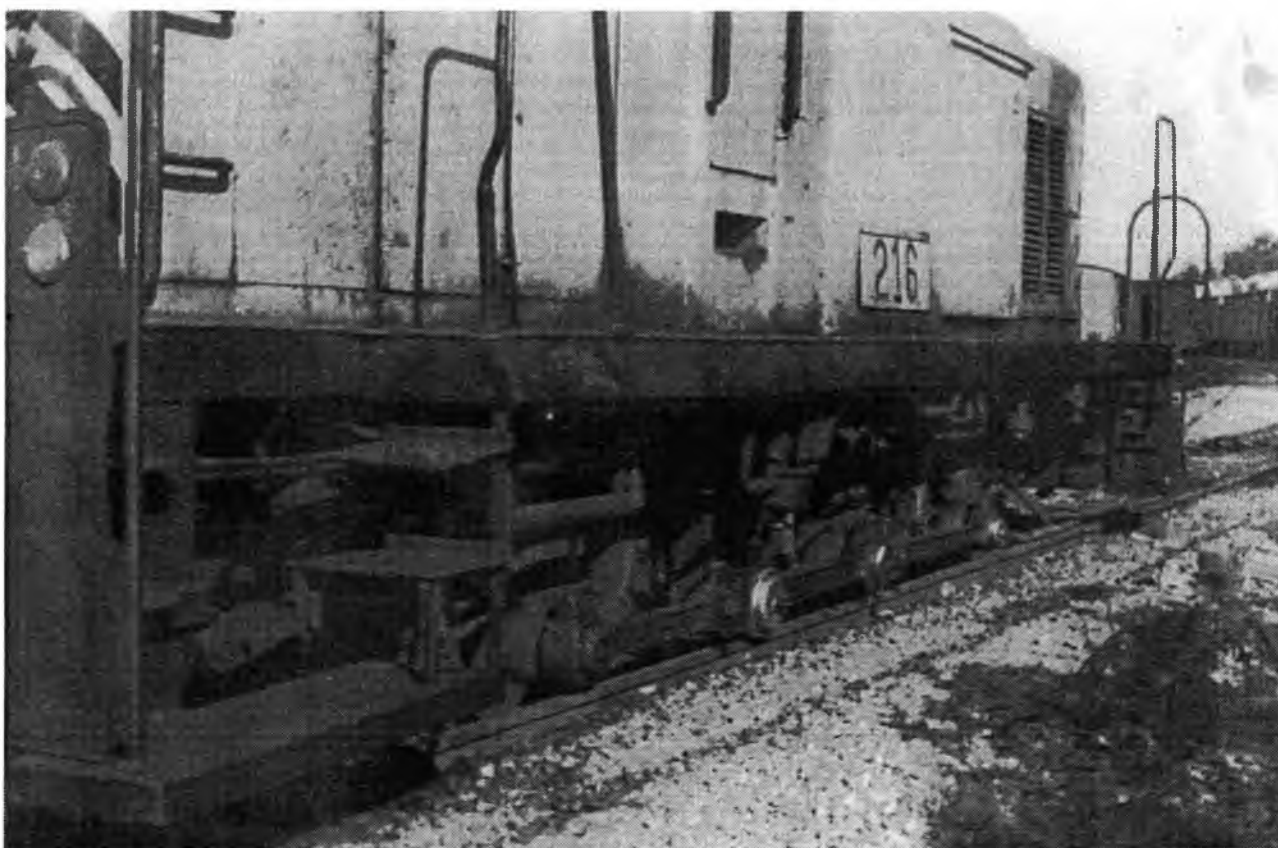
5 weeks. The estimate was forwarded for checking by the Chief Mechanical Engineer. After receiving his verbal approval I sent a telegram on 9.9.57 to the delegation to place an urgent order for the cooler as per the above estimate".

Notes:

a) Confusingly two Hebrew terms are used in both items 1 and 2. I'm fairly certain they both refer to the radiator.

b) Shilumim is Hebrew for reparations. These were the reparations paid to Israel by Germany for the genocide of Jews in World War Two.

c) Despite any dislike by the maintenance people it is obvious that 'Abdul Nasser' was very much needed at this period, otherwise all this time, energy, cash and frustration would not have been expended on it. I imagine that completion of delivery of the Esslingen 0-6-0D shunters the following year would have considerably lessened the need for it.



FORGIVE US OUR TRESPASSES.

By Paul Cotterell.

The issue of trespass on railways in Palestine and Israel has not been noted before in HaRakevet. Nowadays, with much higher speeds and fencing along much of the line, it is taken a wee bit more seriously; though I can't recall anybody being prosecuted. In PR days there was no fencing at all (except here and there in built-up areas) and many people looked upon the railway line as a convenient footpath. About the only expression of any real concern about trespassing was from the Engineering Department of PR and, even here, I have only seen one reference to the matter. It is contained in File 151/459 ('Monthly Officers Meeting, December 1944') at the IRM Archives, and was written on 28/3/1945 by the District Engineer, Lydda, to the Chief Engineer: "Trespassing is, to this branch, a far more serious matter than thefts and pilfering and, as such, should have more attention paid to it by the police. The line from end to end is every day covered with people and masses of animals causing an enormous amount of damage. The situation is, every year, becoming worse because more intensive cultivation reduces the amount of grazing available, with the result that the railway line is considered the only available grazing ground. Branch employees are rounding up animals but they do not have much support from the police and they are often in difficulty because the herdsmen and shepherds immediately bring counter accusations of assault and the police in some cases appear to be more inclined to listen to the complaints of the herdsmen than to the evidence of the railway staff".

The Chief Engineer evidently thought the matter serious too, for he sent a full copy of the above to the Deputy Superintendent of Police, Railway Police Division, at Haifa "for [your] information and necessary action". He also brought up the subject at the next monthly officers meeting, but did not get an enthusiastic response. The General Manager merely "considered that little could be done to prevent trespass, other than such control as could be exercised by permanent way staff". In the circumstances he was undoubtedly right.

MEMORY OF 169 RAILWAY WORKSHOPS R.E.. SUEZ,

Bob Crane has written a brief memoir for "Black Eight", which appeared in No: 113, p. 11.

"At 1945 at the end of hostilities in Europe I was posted to Ismailia, Canal Zone, then to G.H.Q. Cairo Signals Office. Believe me, working in a room full of A.T.S. girls is not all it's cracked up to be, and was not my idea of soldiering. However, all was not lost; one morning a signal came through-marked-"urgent". "Experienced Foundryman needed at 169 Railway-Workshops ^ Suez"

Grabbing the signal I took it to the Officer in Charge and asked him, (no, begged him'), could I be posted? After being told he did not know whether to grant my request or have me certified, he said he would let me know. A short while later I was called to his office and given my posting orders and told to report to the R.T.O. at Cairo Main Station the next morning for onward transport to Suez.

At Suez station I was met by a driver from 169. Arriving at the camp I was taken to the R.S.M. who allocated me a bed in the tent near the sidings which was to be my home for the next two years. I was told to report to company office Workshops Officer - walking through the sidings to company office, it was a schoolboy's-dream-come true. I was really on a high- here were wagons and trains everywhere, some trains under steam, some dead and the rest cannibalised for their parts and left by the track side. Captain Christie took me to-see Sgt Bett who washing home on demobilisation in a few days so he could not help me much and I was more or less thrown in the deep end.

The Foundry! Well, after saving my time in high tech aero foundry this was like going back a hundred years, a sort of foundry I read about in my school books, but never thought I would ever see. In January-1946 orders came from company office that as many locomotives as possible were to be refurbished up to working order ready for shipping home or wherever.

For the next two years we worked flat out with e help of the German prisoners, three shifts 6 to 2, 2 to 10 and 10 to 6. Our small foundry 100 feet by 100 feet approx. was, at its peak, producing 4 tons of ferrous and 500 lbs of-non-ferrous castings a week

Although our main purpose at 169 Coy. was to service and repair locomotives we also made Anything from church bells to small ships' propellers plus-dockside parts. With the help of the British, German and Egyptian engineers there was not much we could not do. Only one thing ever beat us, we never found out how to get manure from a wooden horse, but that is another story.....

Whatever time I spent at 169 I do not regret, for I was doing what I was best at and working and living with a great lot of mates."

rear cover.

Iranian State Railways "Prima" diesel loco on a freight train "somewhere in Iran".

