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RAILWAY AND CANAL HISTORICAL SOCIETY

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FOR LOCAL GROUP SECRETARIES SEE PAGE 95.

## WRITING RAILWAY AND CANAL HISTORY

By Charles Hadfield

(Based on an address to the 1961 Annual General Meeting)

This short article describes how I organize my own writing. There may be ideas in it which will help others not to get bogged down in their notes, but to publish their results.

### Taking Notes

Notes are the basis of research, because most of the material to be consulted is at the B.T.C.'s Historical Records or in libraries. Therefore it is well to get a routine going at the start, and then to take all notes in the same form.

I use quarto flimsy typing paper. As long as I am working on a single subject, such as one canal, I give each page the index

letters of the Historical Records or other library volume that I am using, plus my own serial number. In this way I know to what canal the notes refer and from what volume they come, and can check should any sheets be lost. Eventually I clip each group of notes together in serial order. If, however, in the course of working on one canal I come across major material dealing with another, that goes on a separate sheet, to be put in the appropriate file when I get home.

In note taking the following are important rules:

(a) Make sure that you have clearly identified the source of every note you take in usable form e.g. that you have the correct Historical Records reference, or, if a published book, the correct title, author's name and initials, and the page number.

(b) Make sure of the correct date of the source e.g. a newspaper.

(c) Make sure that you distinguish clearly between when you are making a verbatim quotation and when you are summarizing. Verbatims should be exact i.e. mis-spellings, capital letters and all. You can edit them later, but what you have noted should be an accurate transcript.

(d) Make sure that you can understand your own abbreviations, and that they are unambiguous. I caused myself much trouble once by noting references to the W.& B.Canal without realizing quickly enough that there are three canals which those initials. A year or so later I could not be sure which was meant in some cases, and had to do the work again.

(e) Use as many contractions as you like, but watch your handwriting. Nothing is more irritating that the note you can't read.

(f) Make sure that you note everything you are likely to need. It is better to note too much while the going is good than too little. The fact you did not note and cannot find is always the one you finally need.

I use a different system when reading newspapers, where the references to different canals are all mixed up. I write the references one after the other, putting the date and the name of the newspaper in the margin of each, and not allowing any note to overrun the foolscap pages I use if I can help it. Made in this way the notes can first be read seriatim to give a general picture of the order in which things happened, and can then be cut up and allocated to their correct subject files.

Using Notes

In my view, you should do your research right from the start as if the result were to be published in some form, whether as an article in the Journal or a book. Therefore as soon as you have a few facts to string together, make them the necleus of a draft text, even if it is only a hundred wordslong. Type this draft on quarto paper so that there is a very broad margin on the left, single-space, but only using half the page. This method of typing gives you plenty of white space to add additional facts. When you can't see the page for emendations, type it out again - this time it will make two pages set out as before - and so on. Put the sheets in a spring-back binder, which enables you easily to get at any page. Every entry of any importance that you make in this draft text should be given a reference number, serial to each page, and below the text you should type the references. Never put a statement into the draft text without putting the source below it.

There are great advantages in this method. It prevents you accumulating a vast file of notes which every day becomes more daunting to deal with. More, it tells you right from the beginning what you already know about the subject - it is there before you. Again, when you get a new fact you at once have a place to put it. Or you will find that the new fact upsets your draft text because it indicates a new factor you had not known about, and that is very salutary. The disadvantage is the steady re-typing involved, and the careful checking that goes with it. But this is not a high price to pay.

Behind this draft text you will require some other documentation, the nature of which depends, of course, upon how complicated the research you are doing turns out to be. I use:

(a) Two foolscap manilla folders for each main subject - in my case each canal - in which I keep my working notes. One file is for material already included in the draft text, and one for material waiting to be worked on. When the result is fully written up, one is of course empty; this is then used for new material that comes in after publication.

(b) A series of loose-leaf indexes. For these I use little slips 6¼" x 3", 500 of which go in a spring-back binder. They, and the binders, can be bought from Moore's Modern Methods Ltd., 20 Farringdon St., London, E.C.4. The indexes I keep are :

(i) Index of dates. Put on to this index every date of any importance that concerns not only your own railway or canal, but those that surround it or are associated with it. The result, besides being convenient for

quick reference, often throws up a sequence of events that you would not otherwise have realized.

(ii) Index of personalities. This is an alphabetical index, with all particulars I come across about the more important people connected with the railway or canal - shareholders, with notes at regular intervals upon their shareholdings, directors with dates of taking up and laying down office, contractors, engineers, superintendents and so on. Such an index makes it much easier to trace connexions elsewhere of the people in whom you are especially interested.

(iii) Index of odds and ends. Mine includes all kinds of information that is not needed for the draft text but which might come in useful sometime - e.g. rates of wages, rules for navigating boats, details of Sunday observance, the extent of stoppages for repairs, etc.

(c) A pile of small slips of paper, the purpose of which is to carry references to Canal B or C, picked up in the course of studying Canal A. For instance, a delegation from Canal B visits Canal A to negotiate. A slip with the date and source of the reference in the records of Canal A is written out and put in the file of Canal B. It may turn out that Canal B's own records are less informative than those of Canal A.

Writing the Text

A time will come when you reckon that you had better publish. I will not say, when you reckon the job is done, for that time never comes, and to the end of one's life one can hold back publication on the grounds that one has not yet found the laundry book of the engineer's wife, and therefore cannot say whether lack of underclothes contributed to his early death. When you do nerve yourself to stop:

(a) Go through your folder of notes that ought to have been incorporated in the draft text, and see if there is anything that you have missed;

(b) Go through the index of dates, to check the text and see whether you have got the sequence of events right;

(c) Go through your index of personalities for material to fill out your descriptions of people in the text, and to ensure that you have noticed their relevant connexions with other companies and concerns;

(d) Use your index of odds and ends to provide some lighter touches and a few of those little bits of information that bring a text to life and make the subject vivid and real in human terms.

Having done these things, read carefully through your draft text two or three times. Your are bound to find some gaps in the story, and probably some discrepancies. Very well, make a special effort to settle them. But if you can't, do not be tempted to slur them over in the hope that the reader won't notice. That is bad work. Just say that you do not know. You will also be faced with certain information that you have got from second-hand and not original sources, and which you are unable to check. Here you must weigh in your own mind the value of the source, and the likelihood of the statements being right, and then judge whether to use them unreservedly, or to use them indicating that you are doubtful of the value of the source. If in doubt, play for safety.

Your draft text is now as good as you can make it. Cut it down to the length you want it to be. This is a point at which your tears will flow, for to begin with you will be convinced that not a word can be spared. However, it is better for you to tell yourself that 75% can be deleted than for your publisher or the editor to tell you, so do the cutting yourself. Use pencil, so that you do not obscure the full account, which becomes your reference book when people ask you questions.

Finally, when your text is down to the right length, nerve yourself to rewrite the whole thing readably and clearly, so that it seems a good piece of writing and not just a compilation. Then send it to the Editor of the Journal, or to a publisher, and good luck to you.

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## ERRATA

Sept. Journal, p.87. "The Railway to Finchley": line 8 should read "... and did not normally terminate at Aldersgate Street."

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## LOCAL GROUP SECRETARIES

London: J.H. Boyes, 129 Endlebury Rd., Chingford, London, E.4.
North Western: A.W. Brackenbury, Woodlands, Adlington, Cheshire.
North Eastern:
E. Midlands: R. Garton, 7 North Bank Rd., Birkby, Huddersfield.
W. Midlands: J.H. Denton, Marchmont House, Church Rd., Codsall, Wolverhampton, Staffs.

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# THE HOLMWOOD, CRANLEIGH & MIDHURST RAILWAY (1884-1905)

By H.W. Hart

(Continued from p.79)

In spite of the Brighton Company's stated refusal to be in any way officially concerned in the section of railway beyond Cranleigh, interest was taken behind the London Bridge scenes and within a few weeks of the Engineer submitting his preliminary report he was instructed by the Board to produce a plan showing possible routes from Holmwood or Dorking through to Midhurst with firmer estimates for single and double lines of railway. Within two months drawings and sections were ready in respect of the following lines :- (i) Dorking to Cranleigh (ii) Holmwood to Cranleigh and (iii) Cranleigh to Midhurst.

There was little to add further to the first official proposals. On the Dorking section a new station was recommended, located to provide a useful facility at the south-west of the town but if it were finally decided to spring the branch from Holmwood then the station already at that place would meet requirements. At the same time, the existing station at Cranleigh was considered capable of meeting all traffic needs although some £3,000 was estimated as necessary to cover the construction of junction works thereat.

As regards line (iii) the Brighton Company's Midhurst station needed no extensive alterations but it was decided that the existing line from the junction point would have to be doubled with the consequent widening of the 276 yard tunnel between Selham and Midhurst at an estimated cost of £10,000.[21]

Dorking or Holmwood to Midhurst Railway. Sectional Costs.[22]

| Section | Length m. | ch. | Estimated cost as single line railway £ | Estimated cost as double line railway £ |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Dorking to Cranleigh | 13 | 7 | 197,000 | 254,000 |
| Holmwood to Cranleigh | 8 | 4 | 94,000 | 131,000 |
| Cranleigh to Midhurst | 16 | 22 | 220,000 | 280,000 |

Stress was laid on the heavy earthworks which would be involved, especially at the northern end, whilst some deviation from the proposals of the March 1896 deputation was recommended in the vicinity of Lodsworth. It was also recommended that no

station be provided at Lurgashall, thereby reducing the earthworks and economizing to the extent of £15,000. In all, the provision of the line with its lack of sharp curves would bring Cranleigh 11 miles and Midhurst 8 miles nearer London. The costs,[23] upon examination by the Brighton Company's Board were however, considered too heavy for the Company to undertake the work and their opinion was straightway notified to Mr. Rowland.[24]

By this time, the winter of 1896, the Rev. J.H. Sapte, Rector of Cranleigh and Archdeacon of Surrey, had become a zealous supporter of the proposed line and on his being informed of the contents of the Company's letter to Mr. Rowland he petitioned Lord Cottesloe on the general question of improving the Cranleigh to London train service, as provided via Guildford and on by the South Western system, and the existing service was thereupon examined to find if it were possible to meet the applicant's wishes, but they received little satisfaction, it being asserted that the current services were the best that could be arranged unless the South Western Company were prepared to reduce the lengthy margins which existed in certain instances. Admittedly the Brighton Company could have improved the service by putting into operation an additional engine, train, and crew to work over the Guildford to Cranleigh section only, but it was considered that such a measure would result in diverting all London traffic via Guildford to the detriment of the Brighton Company's receipts whilst some £1,500 per annum would be needed to cover the additional operating costs. A final point, stressed to the Archdeacon, was the fact that any tampering with the branch schedules would seriously affect connexions at Horsham and these the Company refused to disturb. Ten months later, in October, 1897 the Brighton Company once again gave serious consideration to the construction of the original line and on 3 November the Board passed the resolution, instituted by Sir Arthur Otway,[26] that they should seek powers in the Company's Bill for the following Session for the construction of the line as from Dorking.

Until this time the proposed railway had received the wholehearted support of the more influential of the Cranleigh residents. The railway now gave the line, or rather the portion to Cranleigh their official blessing and by so doing engendered their own opposition. Foremost among those antagonistic to it was Lord Ashcombe, prominent among the Dorking district landowners. This gentlemen within two weeks of the Board's resolution was expressing to the Directorate his determined opposition to the scheme although had the junction been formed as from Holmwood he would, he informed Lord Cottesloe,[27] have given him any assistance in his power. Another antagonist was Mr. A.H. Brown, M.P., of Broomhall, Holmwood, who held the opinion that any paralleling of the line with the existing route from Dorking to Horsham would be an unnecessary expenditure bringing no gain to the

Company. He also expressed the view that "the distance would be too far from London for that numerous class the daily breaders ... who have to go up and down daily to London. One hour in the morning and one at night make too much of a hole in the day for that class".

The proposed junction point with the Leatherhead - Dorking - Horsham line was at Broadley or Bradley Lane, 30 chains northward of present-day Dorking North station, with a lay-out to enable trains from the London direction to run direct on to the new railway. Taking from this point a south-south-westerly direction the line[28] was routed to cross the South Eastern Railway's Redhill to Guildford line close to their Dorking station and proceeding in a general southerly direction the line was plotted across the eastern extremity of Westcott Road almost at its junction with West Street whence it was to pass on to open country and Lord Ashcombe's estates.[29] The proposals were discussed at a well attended public meeting called by the Dorking Council, early in January 1898 when marked feeling was shown against the L.B.& S.C., the line from Broadley Lane to the area south west of the town being condemned with only one dissentient;[30] the gathering was, however, in favour of the facility if only Holmwood station could be made the junction point.[31]

At this same meeting a resolution was made that the London & South Western Company should be invited to extend their trains from their Leatherhead station to Dorking. This, the meeting suggested could be effected either by running on to the Brighton Company's system at that point and exercising running powers into that Company's Dorking station or "by some other well considered and approved route".[32] This resolution was made in the interests of Dorking residents and had no real connexion with the matter on which the meeting was called but it was doubtless considered good policy to remind the Brighton Company that there were other and competitive railways serving Surrey.

Lord Ashcombe followed up his objection but failed to receive any information from the Company other than that the improvement of Cranleigh's travel facilities could no longer be postponed, whereupon he once more petitioned that the line should start from Holmwood. This opposition, and that of certain other persons, did however have the immediate effect of staying for the time being the Brighton Company in their intentions for no later than 12 January 1898, a Board Minute, after mentioning the opposition of the aforementioned gentleman and others to the Dorking & Cranleigh Railway showed the following resolution :-

> "That the clause referring to that scheme be withdrawn from the Company's Bill of next Session and that the revised scheme be prepared for which Parliamentary Powers are to be sought in the following Session"

Lord Ashcombe and other influential objectors were now informed that the Company had decided to abandon the scheme "for the present year". There appears some slight, perhaps intentional ambiguity of the wording of the resolution when quoted to outside bodies, some being told that it was not the Directors' intention to proceed "during the forthcoming Session", the matter being postponed until "another year", the Company's half yearly report promising a renewal of the Company's efforts in "the following Session".

NOTES

21 B.T.C. Archives
22 Ibid
23 £100,000 was lowest estimate quoted by the Company.
24 17 September 1896. B.T.C. Archives. He was informed "the Directors were reluctantly compelled to abandon the project for the present"
25 B.T.C. Archives.
26 Director, L.B.& S.C.R.
27 18 November 1897
28 "Shown from estimates to be single throughout". Railway Times 26 February 1898.
29 No further mention occurs of the proposed new station at the south western end of Dorking.
30 Dorking Advertiser 8 January 1898.
31 Ibid.
32 Ibid.

(To be concluded)

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From a letter to the Railway Times in October 1845:

"To all appearances the only public conveyance will, in a short time, be 'the Train'. Such being the case, will it not be necessary to have stations at intervals of two or three miles; and, in order that the swift trains may not be impeded, will it not be necessary that a third, or even a fourth course of rails be provided for on the principal lines, on which to run slow trains, which shall call at the intermediate stations to collect passengers, and carry them forward to the main stations (which might be twenty or thirty miles apart) to meet the swift trains. On the slow line goods should be conveyed, also the cheap rate carriages, the price of travelling by which probably will be reduced to less than one penny per mile ere long. The poor and slow goers would be accommodated by the one, the rich and quick ones by the other."

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# THREE GENERATIONS OF RAILS TO SHIPLEY GATE?

By Peter Stevenson

Coal has been worked at Shipley above the River Erewash for a considerable period, giving rise to a whole series of canal and railway promotions. These pits were probably the largest of the group which inspired the "Company of Proprietors of the Erewash Canal" to obtain their Act, 17 George III cap.69, on 30 April 1777. The canal was constructed alongside the river and rose through ten broad locks from the River Trent to Ilkeston when the first nine miles were opened in April 1779. By climbing through another four locks the canal passed below Shipley to reach Langley Mill, 11¾ miles from Trentlock, in the following December. Powers were granted for the construction of feeder cuts only but Farey[1] mentions a few early wooden railways, in particular one above Newmanley's Mill which was disused and removed in 1796. The line must have climbed steeply out of the valley to reach the Shipley pits and it is highly probable that it followed the same course as the later lines here. The mill stands on the River Erewash below Newtorpe Common and a private road continues across the river, canal and railway to Shipley Common.

In search of an easier route, the Shipley and West Hallam coal interest promoted their own canal in 1793 down the Nutbrook Valley which runs on the far side of Ilkeston parallel to the Erewash until it empties into that river at Stanton Gate. Although considerably longer, at 4½ miles, than the tramway, the canal fell through thirteen broad locks to meet the Erewash Canal 4¾ miles nearer Trentlock. Thus, at the expense of another six locks, a distance of about 1½ miles and a troublesome incline and trans-shipment were saved. It was probably this development which lead to the closure of the tramway to Newmanleys Mill in 1796. Sanderson, however, still marks its site on his 1830-5 survey of the "30 miles round Mansfield", although none of the several Midland Counties Railway Plans surveyed during this period make any reference to the line.

On 6 September 1847, the Erewash Valley Railway, already an integral part of the Midland Company, was opened to Codnor Park and branches soon followed to tap many of the now numerous canal tramway feeders. No special powers appear to have been obtained in the case of the Shipley line but in 1879 the 6" Ordnance Survey map indicated that a connexion had been made with the Shipley pits, perhaps over the site of the earlier wooden tramway. It was at that time, however, derelict and without rails although Airey's railway map of the district still indicates its existence in 1884. By this time, of course, the Midland's Nutbrook Branch had been built alongside that canal from Stanton Gate. It was opened to Nutbrook Colliery (one of the Shipley group) on 1 November, 1870.

It is, therefore, odd to find that in 1938 the same Ordnance Map indicates rails to have been relaid on the incline through an existing bridge under the Erewash Valley line and a new one under the Eastwood branch to reach once again the canal wharf at Shipley Lock. The London Midland Region's Bridge Register (Derby North District) records this bridge as having been constructed in 1895 while the adjacent bridges over the river and canal were built about 1846 and reconstructed in 1877. De Salis's survey of canals published by Bradshaw in 1904 mentions the Colliery Wharf and the illuminating fact that the Nutbrook Canal had also been unnavigable since 1895, though schemes for its restoration had several times been mooted. About this time Ilkeston Corporation was disturbed at its proposed abandonment.

It seems clear that the Nutbrook Canal, while originally responsible for the removal of the early wooden tramway to Shipley Wharf in 1796, was finally, in its death throes, responsible for the line's final reinstatement in 1895 for its original purpose to serve the Erewash Canal while for an interim period another line had been laid on the site as a railway feeder only to be itself superseded by the Nutbrook Branch. In its final form the line made a triangular wharf above Shipley Lock with one shunting neck alongisde the lock and another encroaching on to the river aqueduct. Although it is possible that this structure was widened to accommodate the siding, comparison of the two sides leads to the conclusion that, short of complete rebuilding, it was originally built wide enough to carry a substantial farm track as well as the canal and quite fortuitous that it should later be used for the siding. The towing path is on the opposite side here and in the older map (1879) a short side arm occupies the centre of the wharf. The line continued in use until about 1946, locomotives being limited to six loaded wagons below them with all wheels scotched, and derailments were not unknown. Runaways would not have ended in the canal but at the sharp bend under the main line alongside the river!

I am indebted to Messrs. Baxter, Clinker, Robinson and Whitehouse for various information. The reference [1] refers to John Farey's "View of the Agriculture of the County of Derbyshire" surveyed from about 1807 and published in 2 volumes in 1811 and 1813.

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# THE HUDDERSFIELD AND SIR JOHN RAMSDEN CANALS

## Further notes by Neil Fraser

Black Moss Reservoir, from which water can be run into the canal on either side of the Standedge, had for many years a notorious reputation, due to bursting its bank on the Marsden side on 29 November 1810. It was known as the Black Flood due to large quantities of peat carried with the flood water; great havoc was caused and six people lost their lives. The event appears to have escaped mention in the Tomlinson papers, but it is recorded in the Gentleman's Magazine for December 1810. Tunnel End reservoir was also mistrusted; the embankment of this, made from spoil removed from the canal tunnel, gave way when under construction, and a by-wash suffered damage caused by flooding in 1799 and 1822. A torrential downpour on 14 August 1856 caused further concern and resulted in some lengthy correspondence in the Huddersfield Chronicler. A letter on 19 September of the following year from Edward Greenwood was given the final word. He wrote "Considerable improvements have been made to the reservoir and a self-acting tumbling bag has been erected, the embankment strengthened and four extract pipes fitted, and a 3'6" barrel culvert made to cope with flood water when the weir cannot take it ... the flood was unprecedented in the present century ...."

Apprehension for the safety of canal reservoirs was felt in 1864 after the disastrous floods at Bradford and Sheffield. The above-mentioned newspaper dated 16 April 1864 reported that March Haigh and Slaithwaite reservoirs were in poor condition. Greenwood again replied in reassuring terms, and his confidence was proved, although at the time greeted with abuse. The affair turned out to be a close repetition of 1852, when the population of Slaithwaite were in a state of terror after the collapse of Bilberry reservoir. The canal superintendent at that time, Mr. R. Stuart Carter received a newspaper bombardment, later making an inspection of Slaithwaite and Cupwith reservoirs which he pronounced safe. This appears to be an act of courtesy so far as the latter reservoir was concerned, as it was neither owned nor connected with the canal.

In the early years of the present century, Tunnel End reservoir became silted up. This was dredged, and to convey the debris away, a narrow gauge tramway was laid on the tow-path from Tunnel End to Warehouse Hill, three-quarters of a mile distant. Two engines of the L.N.W.R. engineering department were used on the works, which were named "Kitchener" and "Jim Crow". Two reservoirs, one at Diggle of 12,300,000 gallons capacity (completed 1864) and a second at Little Black Moss of 2,206,000 gallons are additional to the list given in the September 1961 Journal. In anticipation of the L.N.W.R. Act of 1875

the company envisaged the making of a further reservoir at Redmire Lee, and a plan was deposited, but not proceeded with. The rainfall on the Standedge is considerable, and figures for 1866 show that 69.9" of rain fell on the Marsden side and 53.6" on the Saddleworth side.

Flooding of the canal is almost unknown, although on 15 July 1872 the River Tame burst its banks and overflowed in to the canal at Royal George Greenfield, where the contents of a warehouse were damaged. The L.N.W.R. were successful defendants at Manchester Assizes in October 1874 in a claim for damages. A drought followed by a deluge lasting 36 hours occurred on 11 November 1901. The previous day March Haigh reservoir was empty, but filled immediately, and the canal and Sparth reservoir at Marsden overflowed.

The Huddersfield Examiner of 30 July 1887 notes "the L.N.W.R. give notice that the canal between Huddersfield and Ashton will be closed to navigation after 30 July until heavy rain falls." Traffic stopped until 2 September, when true to expectations the rain came in torrents.

E.B. Smith, who succeeded Edward Greenwood as canal superintendent in 1877, was observed by the above paper dated 27 February 1886, to have relinquished that position on his appointment as manager of the North Staffordshire Canal. A rare passenger journey was recorded on 14 July 1894, when the Golcar Band of Hope hired the boat 'Gordon' and with a party of 170 children aboard, made a trip to Marsden, "the return journey taking only 1½ hours with no mishaps to mar the novelty of the excursion."

Many of the Huddersfield canal bridges are those originally made, but the most handsome of all is to be found at Queen Street South, Huddersfield, and bears the heraldic device of Sir John Ramsden. At Longroyd Bridge the canal passes under the L.& Y. Railway Paddock Viaduct, where a short spur leading from the canal passes through the middle of the viaduct pier. Two similar spurs also exist at Saddleworth, where a curiosity is a doorway leading into a high wall on the towpath side, and bearing the date 1870.

The renewal of the old Turnbridge on the Ramsden Canal was effected during the first week of October 1865 (Huddersfield Examiner 7 October 1865): "The new bridge called a Locomotive bridge, has been erected by the London & North Western Railway, and is of a very superior kind to the one replaced". Of wooden construction, it can be raised by windlass to a height of 6', and has a total bearing weight of 75 tons.

In a report to the annual general assembly of the Huddersfield Canal on 28 June 1838, it was stated that during the previous winter traffic had been suspended for seven weeks due to frost, and £70.3.3. had been incurred on ice-breaking. Some traffic figures published in the Leeds Mercury of 10 March 1849 show that the Huddersfield Canal carried 169,487 tons of traffic, and the Ramsden Canal 120,207 tons during 1848. The same paper dated 14 July 1849 in describing the opening of the Huddersfield & Manchester Railway notes "at Diggle the canal has had to be diverted for 500 yards".

At the time of writing the Huddersfield Canal is still legally open from its junction with the Ramsden Canal to Engine Bridge, where the third lock was originally sited slightly to the east, and was moved to its present position in 1878 under the Huddersfield Improvement Act of 1871. Powers for the abandonment of this remaining portion together with part of the Ramsden Canal have been sought in the current parliamentary session, and if approved, will see the termination of navigation 26 yards to the east side of Cut Bridge, Aspley, Huddersfield.

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## RECENT LITERATURE

### William J. Skillern

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FESTINIOG RAILWAY in pictures, 1951-1961. 1962. (Festiniog Railway Company, Portmadoc, 2/6)

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## BOOK REVIEWS

THE BIDEFORD, WESTWARD HO! & APPLEDORE RAILWAY 1901-1917: By Douglas Stuckey. 18 pp. 4 pp. illus., 2 maps. West Country Handbooks No.1. Published by Clarion Printers, Scholar Green, Stoke-on-Trent, 3/-.

This little book, obviously written for the general public rather than the historian, gives a necessarily brief, and rather sketchy, account of this interesting and short-lived railway, which was unique in that it was the only completely isolated standard gauge passenger railway in this country (in Ireland there was, of course, the Waterford & Tramore.).

The information as to the train services is not very helpful, apart from the fact that the example given - described as "typical" - is for the period before the Appledore extension. It shows, in July 1906, a service of 20 trains each way, and 4 on Sundays. This was the peak, and the number of trains tended to become less and less as time went on. Moreover, there was a considerable variation according to the time of year, and the Sunday trains did not run in the winter. For example, in May 1909, there were 10 trains and 2 on Sundays, and in the winter of 1912, 5 trains, weekdays only.

The list of halts includes some which were not mentioned in Bradshaw, and omits some that were. A more detailed map of the system would have been helpful.

However, the book provides a useful, if superficial, survey and perhaps one should not expect too much for 3/-. There are 4 pages of interesting illustrations.

M.D.G.

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LONDON RAILWAYS. By Edwin Course. Published by B.T. Batsford Ltd., 4 Fitzhardinge Street, London, W.1. 35/-.

Comprehensive volumes dealing with the railways of the Metropolis are rare; since Sekon's Locomotion in Victorian London, on its especially wide basis, appeared, authors interested in London railway development have confined their attention in the main to the history and development of one particular undertaking. Dr. Course, having studied the railways of South Eastern England comprehensively, has produced a volume ranging widely, although by no means exhaustively, over the London railway scene.

The first railway in the area, the London & Greenwich, receives extensive treatment, and rightly so, because of its impact on subsequent lines in South London. The fascinating

story of projection of the railway from London Bridge to Charing Cross and Cannon Street is well told, and the nearby complex of lines in the New Cross Gate and Bricklayers' Arms area, with the Deptford Wharf branch and its appendage in Grove Street and the three terminal spurs of the East London Railway, is described in detail. A chapter is devoted to Waterloo and its approaches, and corresponding attention is given to Victoria, and the visual impact on the landscape made by the railway approaches through Battersea. Diverting to the East End we are given an account of the London & Blackwall Railway (with a diagram of its cable-operated through coach system) and an account of the North London and Millwall Extension penetrations of the dock area, with vivid description of the origin of what the author calls an "alpine spiral" but which we had prosaically deemed a reversing spur. River approaches from Nine Elms Wharf to North Woolwich merit a chapter; so do the Euston and Paddington entries to the capital - but not those of Marylebone, St. Pancras or King's Cross.

There is a good controversial chapter on slum clearance and suburban development, and Dr. Course, with ready wit, trains his sights on closed stations and the origins of the tube railway, the cost of Victorian apartheid in making class distinctions penetrate even to the refreshment rooms, and the development of pleasure travel, the import of salt water by train and the building up of the traffic in milk from the country. Tickets, track layouts and stations are excellently illustrated; there are also some diagrams which could have done with rather more body in their lines. The author makes generous acknowledgment of the aid he has received from others, many being fellow members of the Railway & Canal Historical Society.

C.K.F.

(See also Correspondence: letter from Dr. Course on errors)

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THE HYTHE-SOUTHAMPTON FERRY including Hythe Pier Railway, by Wm. A. Stearn and B. Moody. Copies available, price 1/9, from Wm. A. Stearn, 46 Wilton Crescent, Shirley, Southampton.

This is a most valuable essay providing a detailed treatment of an unusual subject. In order to fulfil their transport functions piers must be of sufficient length to reach a point at which vessels may come alongside at all states of the tide. At a number of places, including Southend, the length is sufficient to justify the provision of a pier railway, but Hythe seems to be the only place where this runs in connexion with a regular ferry service. While this alone would make the Hythe Ferry & Pier worthy of study, in this case interest is added by its long history, and the authors record the introduction of a steamer as early as 1836. The rather primitive landing place was replaced by a pier in 1880 and the present electric railway was opened in 1922. Second-hand locomotives bought at the time having been

built for use in the Avonmouth Mustard Gas Factory, are still in service. In addition to a full description of the railway rolling stock, the authors give a fleet list of all the mechanically propelled vessels which have operated on the ferry, from the "Forester" of 1836 to the "Hotspur IV" of 1946.

It is always easy to draw attention to things which, through limitations of space, the authors have felt compelled to omit. In this case one misses comment on the geographic and economic background to the ferry and pier. To its advantage must have been the demise of other ferries crossing Southampton Water, and the tremendous post-war growth and industrial development of Hythe and Fawley. The railway route provides little competition but the buses, despite having to go round by Totton, do take a proportion of the traffic. There is a good sketch map showing the actual route of the ferry, but a second, showing its setting in the district with the competing bus route, would have been of interest. But this would probably have meant that the booklet, with its 4 illustrations, could not have been produced for the very low price of 1/9. In fact, the authors may decide that if the interest in their subject is as great as it should be, an enlarged version would be possible. Meanwhile, they are to be congratulated on a successful excursion into a somewhat neglected part of the transport scene.

E.A.C.

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## CORRESPONDENCE

### Huntingdon Beaumont

Sir, - Upon reading Dr. Mackichan's article on Huntingdon Beaumont in the September Journal, I would like to draw the author's attention to recent work on the same subject by Mr. R.S. Smith, Librarian at the University of Nottingham, which has already been noted in the pages of this Journal (Vol.4, January 1958, p.9, and Vol.7, March 1961, p.34)[1] in pursuance of one of the Society's primary aims to disseminate such knowledge: "Huntingdon Beaumont, Adventurer in Coalmines" in "Renaissance and Modern Studies" Vol.1, published by the University in 1957, and "England's First Rails, A Reconsideration" in the same Journal Vol.4, 1960. The document which has hitherto been accepted as the first written evidence of a railway in this country, a coal account of one year ending October is headed 1698 three times. After the Restoration and, presumably, while this date still lay in the future, the family records were calendared by the naturalist Francis Willoughby, and John Ray, and this obvious error was endorsed "40 Eliz" (the regnal equivalent of 1598). It is this correction which appears in the Historical Manuscripts Commission Report, so often quoted since, but there are several reasons for rejecting it (see Mr. Smith's second article) in favour of 1608. Thus

discredited, the document's cardinal importance must be transferred to another dated 1 October 1604, which actually gives the first known reference to Wollaton rails. They were very closely followed by a similar installation at Broseley on the Severn, known to have been in use one year later and any earlier references are solely to boundary fence rails. The interval between his pioneering work at Wollaton and in Northumberland lease of the Bedlington pits being taken in September 1605, now being so reduced, Beaumont would have little time to establish other ventures as Dr. Mackichan suggests. Nor did Beaumont's line reach the Trent. An Agreement dated 15 June 1609 required Strelley coals to be stacked at "Wollaton land end at the new rayles end" where factors had probably collected Wollaton coals for over a century. It is possible that the route was preserved by "Lord Middleton's Ride" across which both the Nottingham Canal and the Midland Railway's Radford-Trowell branch were later driven, but modern housing and industrial developments now obscure much of the area.

PETER STEVENSON

1 These items were entries in "Recent Literature" - Ed.

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## New Accessions to Record Offices

Sir, - I was most interested by Mr. Berrill's article in the September Journal, as I was quite unaware of the publication to which he refers. I must point out one inaccuracy regarding the material in the Leicestershire Record Office. The deposited plan and share register referred to are in fact those of the Melton Mowbray Navigation (otherwise the Wreak & Eye Navigation). The Leicestershire Record Office has a copy of the deposited plan of the Oakham Canal Company but the share register is at present in my strong room, having been very kindly loaned to me by the firm of solicitors who have it in their archives. I gather that the cataloguer did not realize that the Melton Mowbray Navigation and the Oakham Canal were separate undertakings, when he catalogued the accession.

D.H. TEW

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## London Railways - Errata

Sir, - Mr. H.V. Borley, who contributed a great deal to my book on London Railways, has noted three errors which have crept in between typing and publication. On p.112 the closure of Grosvenor Road L.C.& D.R. should be 1911 and not 1922; on p.149 the opening date of the Low Level platforms at Stratford is given as 1856 instead of 1854; and finally, on p.163, the number of L.N.W. representatives on the North London Board was not fixed at 16. Those of use who worked on the book are anxious that it should be used with complete confidence and,

therefore would be grateful if you would draw attention to these points so that readers may amend their copies. We have been unable to find anything else which is incorrect but needless to say, would welcome any comments from your readers.

EDWIN COURSE

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Barry Railway Company's Thwarted Ambitions

Sir, - As the author of the new book on the Barry Railway to which Mr. D. Garnett refers in his letter published in the September Journal, I was naturally interested in his speculation that the Barry Compnay's difficulty in obtaining powers for water supplies may have been a factor in deterring them from building their authorized line into the Sirhowy and Western Valleys. My reasons for thinking that this possibility is very remote are as follows :

1. The object stated by the Barry Company for seeking an alternative water supply to that afforded from the River Ely was "for the purpose of their dock undertaking", requiring large quantities of fresh water for supplying to vessels and for the operation of hydraulic machinery (Western Mail, 26 November 1906).

2. So far as the supply of water for locomotive purposes is concerned, I cannot imagine that there would have been any difficulty whatever in either valley; indeed, the Barry Company's archives relating to the proposed line to the Sirhowy show that the laying of a pipe main through the tunnel was envisaged in order to clear the spring and surface water which would arise.

3. The Company would not have gone on hammering away at the invidious Section 23, right up to the eve of the first world war if they had entertained any fears of engineering or operational difficulty.

I am sorry that owing to most of my library not having been unpacked since I moved to Yorkshire, I am not able to say with certainty how the difficulty with Cardiff Corporation over the dock water supply was resolved, but I do not think it was relevant to the Barry's decision not to build their Sirhowy extension.

D.S.M. BARRIE

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The Aylesbury Railway by E.J.S. Gadsden

Sir, - This is a useful book. It may be added that there was a service between Cheddington and Aylesbury, on Sundays, until the end of December 1916. A Sunday service was necessary on

many branch lines for the conveyance of mails and perishables as well as passengers. Letters were delivered every day in nearly all provincial towns and villages until 1921. The second L.& N.W. station at Aylesbury was actually opened to the public on Sunday morning 16 June 1889.

H.V. BORLEY

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Sir, - Probably a dozen angels have already rushed in to support your reviewer (July Journal p.67): but in case all fear to tread I suggest: (1) There were six tanks, one of which was withdrawn in 1928. (2) The error about remaining in service until 1933 probably arose from the transfer of working and maintenance to G.N.R.(I) from 1 July 1933. (3) The active life of the remaining five lasted, as your reviewer says, much longer: three worked on the N.C.C. during the war, the other two on the D.N.& G. (4) Until 1951, two were in use (at least occasionally) (S.L.S. Journal July 1951 p.192). (5) Mr. Barrie (D.N.& G. Railway p.60) says one was in service to the end (although I suspect it was No. 1 and not, as he says, No.2). i.e. 1 January, 1952. Crewe's first cast iron number plate was carried by D.N.& G. No. 1.

A.St.G. WALSH

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REQUEST FOR HELP No. 1. From Charles Hadfield.

(a) Exact opening date of whole Trent & Mersey Canal, supposed to have been in May 1777, and any account of opening ceremony. (b) Any mention of Lord Harrowby in connexion with this ceremony in particular, or with the canal in general. (c) Opening date of Uttoxeter branch of the Trent & Mersey. (d) Opening date, exact length, and closing date of Sir Nigel Gresley's canal.

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REQUEST FOR HELP No. 2. From Robert Craig, who is preparing a history of the railways of Carmarthenshire.

Any material or information on the following railways: Carmarthenshire Railroad, Llanelly Railway & Dock Co., Carmarthen & Cardigan Railway, Kidwelly & Llanelly Railway, Burry Port & Gwendreath Valley Railway, Llanelly & Mynydd Mawr Railway.

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