



SUMMER 1972

## CHAIRMAN'S NATTER SPOT

It is with a note of sadness I start this natter spot, for as most of you now know, we lost one of our members due to sudden illness.

'Henry' (Mr. Braine) was, to all the members who knew him, one of the world's 'Gentlemen'.

He enjoyed most warm Sundays, driving his Ajax around Mote Park track, carrying the kiddies behind him, with a tranquillity all of his own. Never failing to thank us at the end of the day for, as he put it, 'a very pleasant day'.

You will be pleased to hear that I have had a letter from Mrs. Braine in which she said that she may be going to the U.S.A. for a holiday with a boyhood friend of Henry's sometime this August.

Well members, as I type this we are well into 'flaming June' - I hope the rest of the season will be a little warmer. It sure blows across the park.

I was very pleased to hear of the successfulness of the Southampton trip and wish to thank the members who helped in the organisation.

So far this year we are getting a steady flow of new members which, if we can keep their interest, is very gratifying.

Before the season closes we must look into the old problem of rolling stock. Please give this serious thought so we can get down to a rebuilding project during the winter months.

What we want is a break-down type of passenger truck easy to stow away in the loco shed. We have had some good ideas to date but as yet that is all they are - ideas.

In your last committee meeting it was decided that owing to the increasing high cost of insurance, locos stored in the new loco shed would no longer be covered by the Society's policy. (After the 24th June 1972 expiration). However, the third party liability insurance for members running their locos on the Mote Park track still stands as usual.

I would like to thank our Press Officer for the excellent presentation of our Newsletters. To present a newsletter of this standard there are quite a number of hours consumed, which as you all know too well, time is a very precious thing to us all.

I haven't seen the rest of the articles of this newsletter yet, but I hope you will find something of interest to you all.

Thanks for reading,  
A.H.W. Payne, Chairman.  
(Jack) - 23rd June, 1972.

## FORTHCOMING ATTRACTIONS

Saturday, July 29th -

Visit by Hastings Society.

Saturday, August 5th -

Visit by North London Society.

Saturday, September 9th -

Southern Federation Rally, Bracknell.

Saturday, September 16th -

Visit by Eltham Society.

Saturday, September 23rd -

Entertaining Blind School at Mote Park.

Saturday, October 14th -

New Romney Society visit Mote Park.

## NOTICE

Members interested in what takes place at the committee meetings will in future be able to read through the minutes which will be displayed on the notice board in the Clubhouse.

The next Committee Meeting will be held on Sunday, September 3rd, at 10.30 a.m. prompt.

56 High Street, Eastchurch,  
Sheppey.

Sir,

May I compliment all those concerned with the last issue of the Society's magazine, both the contributors and those responsible for its production. They combined to give us a publication which does credit to the Society. I especially liked the dry humour from the 'Mote Park Ruin' and I hope that further epistles will be unearthed from the rubble to amuse us.

Most of us agree with Joe that the track and engine shed should be modified and in my opinion the sooner the better.

However in respect of the engine shed may I suggest an alteration to the front elevation as it appears in Martin's drawing. I feel that 2 large sliding steel doors would be preferable to the small individual doors shown and for the following reasons -

Security - the 2 large doors could be easier to lock and to CHECK that they are locked when leaving, than the 12 individual doors, -

Simplicity - it would be easier, quicker and presumably cheaper, -

Adaptability - if necessary in the future it would be much easier to alter the racks for engines without having to worry about alignment with restricted access holes.

The racks for engines could be constructed with Dexion or similar to permit easy alteration of track levels to allow for tall engines. The uprights would be arranged from the start with different spaces between them to permit the widest engines possible in 5 inch gauge. The space opposite the existing entrance door would accommodate the existing workbench with its length extended to the rear wall. There would be room between this and the racks to permit working on the bench and also access to the space between the end of the racks and the rear wall. This assumes that the racks would be about 8 feet long, adequate for the longest tender engine or a pair of tank engines. The remaining space could be used to store most, if not all of the coal, notices and similar paraphernalia and I believe that an external elevated traverser would be preferable to an internal one as the latter would perpetuate the present ludicrous waste of space.

Finally, in connection with the suggested new Clubhouse may I suggest that if and when it is decided to approach the Authorities, that an accurate, attractive 3 dimensional and coloured artist illustration is included with the application showing how the structure would blend with its surroundings.

G.B. Baseden

## TRIP TO SOUTHAMPTON

On Saturday, 20th May members, their families and friends gathered at the Wallis Company's premises at 8 a.m. where cars were parked, engines unloaded prior to reloading into the boot of the coach which was to drive to Southampton. Thirty-two people supported this venture and by the enthusiasm shown it won't be too long before another trip will be demanded.

The coach left at 8.30 a.m. and travelled non-stop over the Hogs Back arriving in Southampton at just after noon.

Norman Pendlebury had travelled by car and was already in steam when we got to the track. Members of the Southampton Society greeted us and assisted in unloading the engines and putting them on the steaming bays. •

It was not long before we were all in steam and ten of our engines, accompanied by one of their own member's engines were all on the track.

We had some light rain in the early afternoon but the weather improved as the day passed. The rain helped us all to assess the benefits of steel track in the wet and I think the decision was unanimous that steel track is superior to aluminium. Heavy loads up to 12 adults were accommodated without trouble.

Some of the women folk visited the shops and a cry was heard from the track - their coming back ..... with PARCELS.

At the end of the running some useful discussion took place with members of Southampton and sketches were made of their really super trucks - compensating disc brakes, solid links and sprung side guards between the trucks. We all came away with the feeling that all had learnt a lot, and were grateful for the experience.

We left shortly after 7 p.m. and called for fish and chips to satisfy the appetite which had accumulated during the day, then back to Maidstone, arriving at 10.45 p.m.

To sum up it must be said that the venture was highly satisfactory in every way and it is hoped that when the next visit takes place that more members will be able to come along to enjoy the experience.

F.G.G.

## BADGES

Metal lapel badges will be shortly available. These have been designed by our Chairman and will be most attractive.

The cost will be 25 p each.

NOTE ON SECURITY

Members using the club facilities are urged to check that before leaving they make sure that all items are put away and that all locks are fastened securely.

It is also important to make sure that the gas and electricity are switched off at the mains.

Over the years there have been many references in the railway periodicals to slip trains, i.e. a procedure whereby to avoid stopping the whole train at an intermediate station, the last coach or so is slipped just before the station, the front part of the train going straight through whilst the 'slipped' coaches are brought to a halt in the station by the guard.

The GWR was by far the greatest user of the slip coach and some of their long distance trains slipped coaches at 2 or 3 intermediate points.

The old Great Eastern had its fair share of slip trains and one of these persisted through LNER days right up to the Friday before the last war broke out. I have never seen any references to this train in the railway journals and R.P.J.Allen does not mention it in his history of the G.E.R. which I find rather strange as it was probably unique in being part of an outer suburban train.

The train in question was the 6 p.m. Liverpool Street to Hertford East and was composed of a quad-art set, two bogie coaches and a slip section consisting of 3 six wheelers, the train being headed at various times by N2 or N7 0-6-2 tanks or a J68 0-6-0.

After flogging up the 1 in 70 gradient out of Liverpool Street the train would take a sharp left hand bend at Bethnal Green where the Cambridge and Norwich lines diverged, then over the arches to Hackney Downs and down through the tunnels to emerge on Hackney Marshes.

There would then be a fairly level and straight run along the bottom of the Lea Valley towards Waltham Cross, 13 miles out where the coaches would be slipped.

At Painters Lane crossing, about half a mile from the station, the driver would sound his whistle for the guard to slip his coaches which would then coast into the station whilst the front portion of the train continued through Cheshunt to its first stop at Broxbourne 17 miles out.

Waiting in the goods shed bay at Waltham Cross was a J15 0-6-0 of antiquated appearance which backed on to the slipped coaches and took them on to Cheshunt and Broxbourne. Generally speaking, the slipping took place smoothly every evening, Monday to Friday but there were times when things went wrong. The train might be going faster than usual and the guard a little late in the actual disengagement resulting in the coaches going right through the station and under the road bridge with all wheels locked.

At the other extreme, particularly in foggy weather, the coaches would fail to reach the station and the engine would have to go up the line looking for them.

In the meantime the front portion of the train had left Broxbourne to take the sharp left hand fork for the Hertford branch where after stopping at Rye House would then divide at St. Margaret's 20 miles out, the two bogie coaches going up the single line branch to Buntingford 32 miles and the quad-art set proceeding to Hertford East, 25 miles, stopping at Ware on the way. Although the line to Hertford is double track, it was and still is even after electrification a single line through Ware station with points to bring it back to double track at each end of the platform.

The three parts of the train were rejoined later in the evening, passing through Waltham Cross at about 8.30 on their way to Stratford sidings, where they were probably shunted to get them into the right order.

I have travelled on this train many times and as a small boy, watched the actual slipping of the coaches every evening from my bedroom window.

It was an anachronism even in the thirties and the fact that it was still running was probably due to the high-ups not even knowing it existed.

Ron Heathcote.

## OBSERVATIONS ON THE CONSTRUCTION AND DESTRUCTION OF BOILERS

Gentlemen,

As a comparative newcomer to model engineering I hesitate to write on a subject so controversial and upon which so many books have been written by eminent authors. Recent events, however, within our own Society have given cause for concern to myself and others with copper boilers.

I refer to the premature failure of a large 5 inch gauge and a small 5 inch gauge boiler belonging to two of the regular operators at Mote Park.

Both boilers were made within the last four years by professionals and yet both require complete re-tubing.

Since their failure I have been able to examine both boilers with particular interest. This interest stems from the fact that I also own a large and small boilers of somewhat younger vintage and home construction.

Disregarding for now some of the contributory reasons for failure, i.e. running out of water, no brick arches, not blowing down, to the evils of thrashing the engine generally, etc. may I now put forward a further theory.

The larger of the two failures in question had been returned to the maker several times for a leaking firebox tube plate, before being put into service. It is therefore reasonable to presume that the tube plate, when the boiler was first used must have been liberally daubed with silver solder of some sort or other.

After its subsequent failure, the owner and I cleaned and examined it. There was precious little sign of any alloy on the plate, and what was there could be removed by one's finger nail! The tubes moreover, were flush or less and distinctly wasted in appearance.

The second smaller and slightly newer boiler, though the tubes were fitted differently leaked around the tubes and had a similar appearance.

Feeling sympathetic towards my colleagues and perturbed about the whole affair I carefully examined my own two engines, one of which has had quite a thrashing.

The large new one looked quite happy but the smaller one had patches of greenish powdery crystals on the tube plate and around the stays. I have noticed this in the past but disregarded it. This deposit in the firebox is copper chloride produced by a reaction between copper and hydrochloric acid.

The acid cannot come from the water in the boiler - Mote Park water is hard and alkaline.

I believe the acid comes from the coal in so far as chlorine gas is produced from combustion and combines with the hydrogen in the water content of the coal forming hydrochloric acid. Together with the sodium chloride (salt) and sulphur and ammonia contained in the coal reacting to form further acid and ammonium hydroxide these chemicals constitute a highly concisive partnership.

The copper of the fireboxes in question have a typically pink coloured and pitted appearance consistent with prolonged contact with acid. The flanges of the firebox plate are thinner within the box than at the foundation ring. Also the projecting tube ends are in fact countersunk!

If, as has been suggested running short of water could do the damage why should the lowest row of tubes be affected, and what happened to the silver solder?

I contend that acid ate the copper and the silver solder especially if it contained zinc and the action would be very rapid.

To continue in a more practical vein - if one accepts there is some truth in the foregoing what can we do about it?

Fowlers say choose a fuel with a low chlorine content for copper fireboxes but don't say how or why. I don't think much can be done whilst the fire is alight but a good percentage of the damage seems to be done afterwards in this way - long after the fire is drawn these green crystals are seen indicating the chemical action is continuing. Admittedly if the crystals are dry the effect is minimal, but, a night in the engine shed or any shed and condensation takes place. However slight this may be the crystals absorb the water and corrosive action begins. As the water evaporates next day the acid becomes stronger until it dries out and slows down. This cycle will continue ad infinitum.

Suppose immediately the boiler is cold we introduce a neutralizing agent by painting or spraying the firebox with an alkaline the corrosive reaction stops at once. I sprayed my boilers with a strong solution of sodium carbonate (washing soda) and the green crystals disappeared, harmless soda crystals formed. Any condensation will only activate the soda doing no harm.

I do not pretend this treatment to be a magical elixir which will extend a boiler's life indefinitely, nevertheless, with due consideration to the other factors briefly referred to I think the above treatment worth the trouble.

My own tubes incidently are 17 s.w.g. copper one eighth thro' the tube plate a la J. N. Liversage so they must take longer to get 'gobbled'.

Hoping this saga has been of some interest to members. Those who think I have my lines crossed will doubtless make *their* points in the next edition.

Sincerely,  
L.M.R.

The Chairman has written a very interesting article entitled "The Decline of Hand Made Paper" illustrated with 8 pages of drawings. Rather than serialise this item it is proposed to produce a complete booklet and this will probably be published with the Autumn Newsletter.

## PLEASE WILL YOU HELP

A small group of members have spent a lot of time constructing the guard rail around the track. It is essential that this gets painted and with this in mind you are ALL INVITED to attend (with brush) on Saturday afternoon, 15th July at 2.30 p.m.

This will be followed by an evening run.