

SOUTHWOLD RAILWAY TRUST

NEWSLETTER 52



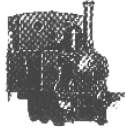
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SOUTHWOLD RAILWAY INCIDENTS 1913 Part 2 ***THE MAY TRACK WALK (WADE)***

PROGRESS ON THE PROJECT. ***DAVID LEE on some of the SR Rules.***

MAY 2007

The Southwold Railway Trust Newsletter



Issue 52 — MAY, 2007

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editorial ramblings...

RE-INSTATEMENT

The Railway has certainly become the main talking point in Southwold and the general locality. As expected, there has been some opposition, much of it characterised by insult - "avaricious developers" and "boys playing with toys" - that sort of thing, plus the usual misrepresentation of what is proposed. David Negus and I attended a largely hostile gathering in Reydon, at which, we were told later, a number of supporters had felt intimidated. You would think we were proposing a new airport or at least a nuclear power station judged by some of the comments being made!

We are being asked for more information both by the Environment Agency and Natural England. We also have the problem that several of the landowners, who were previously either supportive or at least neutral when David approached them, have decided to oppose. It will go to the Suffolk Coastal planning committee on 26th June and Waveney on 4th July. It would be helpful if as many people as possible wrote to the planners in support of the proposal (There were 140 anti letters when I last asked). The main address to write to is:

Planning Department,
Waveney District Council,
Town Hall, Lowestoft,
Suffolk NR32 1HS.

COVER

Adrian Shooter's Sharp Stewart B class at the Hunslet Works. Pictured in Newsletter 51 but worth a cover as it is such a beauty.

NEW WEBSITE.

I am not quite sure how I got the new website wrong but I did. Please note the correct one opposite.

ANNUAL LUNCHEON

About thirty of us gathered for the first Annual Lunch, in lieu of the traditional Annual Dinner, at the Blyth Hotel on 21st April. It was a good meal and a cordial occasion all round.. Thanks to Geoffrey for organising it. The general feeling was that a lunch was better than a dinner so we will do that again next year. Afterwards we repaired to the Electric Picture Palace for a showing of "The Train" with Burt Lancaster. More pictures on Page 5.



FRANK CLARKE

We are very sad to tell you that Frank Clarke, one of our earliest members, died this week at the age of 92. Frank was always a great supporter of the Railway project and until very recently manned the Railway Shop with Bette his wife on Friday afternoons. It was his locomotive that appeared on the cover of Newsletter 51. Frank had left a request that the Railway Trust show the film of the last SR journey at his funeral and to run the little locomotive along a piece of track. We were honoured to do both of these, accompanying the film with a recording of *Slow Train*, by Flanders and Swann. Many thanks to JR and George B for their help in putting this together. Frank's family have generously donated the loco (below) to the Trust and we will have it operating in the new shop window when we install this. He was a really lovely man and a true gentleman. We shall miss him enormously.



Hunslet Works.

I forgot to mention last time that we were all indebted to Nigel Ewens and Chris Phillimore for arranging our invitation to the marvellous event at the above. Very many thanks to them both.

MAY TRACK WALK

Well, it was a little wet underfoot, or should I say, under knee. Duke of Edinburgh's Awards all round. See page 7.

AGM

This is at 4pm on Saturday 4th August. We need 25 members to attend to be quorate. Please let Maureen know if you are coming. It's at the Picture Palace and there will be a railway film afterwards.

CLUB NIGHTS

at 27 High Street, Southwold are Wednesday June 27th, July 25th and August 22nd 7.30pm–9pm.

THE SHOP

Just to endorse Graham's plea on Page 13 for more shop help. At present we are barely covering costs and do really need to keep it open five days a week rather than the three days currently possible.

NEW MEMBERS

A very warm welcome to new members:
Jim Young—Halesworth, **Paul Curson**—Diss, **Frances Franklin**—Southwold, **David Blyth**—Halesworth, **Nathaniel Finbow**—Saxmundham, **Peter Rogers**—Uggeshall, **John Prince**—Ely, **Richard Murphy**—Downham Market, **David Smyth**—Southwold, **David Bunkell**—Wrentham, **S. Moore**—Abbots Langley, **B Harrild**—Reydon, **Simon Roffey**—Witney, **Margaret Laflin**—**Margaret Beckett**—Reydon, **Ian Cliff**—London, **Keith Montague**—Norwich, **K. Lucas**—Woodbridge.

John Bennett June 16th 2007

TRANS SIBERIAN JOURNEY

David Smith

The Feb 2007 Newsletter set out my thoughts on such a journey next year - since then interest has been shown, some initial plans and costings have been made, a meeting of six potential travellers has been held! We would like to get together a group of 10 or 12 for the trip so here's how things stand at the moment - if you want to know more then make contact with me, David Smith, on 01502-478535 or by email at ds@friston.net

We'd leave here by minibus to London then by rail on Eurostar to Brussels in late April: from there a two night journey brings us to Moscow. A two day break then on by Baikal Express (train 10) which takes 4 nights to Irkutsk: there a three day break including a trip to Lake Baikal, the deepest freshwater lake in the world, and a journey on the (very slow) Circumbaikal Railway. From Irkutsk it takes a further three nights to the end of our journey in Vladivostok for a two night stay. The trip takes 16 days - 9 nights on the various trains and 6 nights tourist class hotels (B&B) and includes all transfers by private vehicle plus the tour at Lake Baikal: the cost will be in the region of £1100 with 2nd class sleepers or £1500 in 1st class: personal travel insurance, visas for Belarus and Russia plus other meals are extras. From Vladivostok nothing is planned as a group in advance - you can come home, go to China, Japan or even North Korea - it's up to you. Books to read to whet your appetite:- Trans Siberian Handbook by Bryn Thomas; Trans Siberian Railway (Lonely Planet publication).

As more details are known we'll post them on the SRT website - meanwhile contact me. DS.

ANNUAL LUNCH - MORE PICTURES



DAVID LEE WRITES....

Extracts from the Southwold Railway Rule book

All railway companies, no matter what track gauge, had a set of rules and regulations instructing all staff members their duties with warnings in the event of infringement, the Southwold Railway being no exception. The first edition would have been issued at the opening in 1879 but no copies have been traced so far while a second edition was approved by the directors at their board meeting on October 4th 1918 and issued dated November 1st 1918. All aspects of train working are covered and included registration of the employees' residences to enable contact to be made in case of emergencies. Regulations governing the swing bridge over the River Blyth are an exceptional subject and are quoted here together with examples of rules for enginemmen:

Rule 64

The Engine-Driver and Fireman must frequently during the journey look back to see that the whole train is following in a safe and proper manner.

Rule 92

No train shall be run at a greater speed than 16 miles an hour, and the Engine-Driver is liable to two years imprisonment if convicted of so doing.

Rule 95

Notice shall be given by the Station Master to the Ganger of the length to open the Bridge at the proper time, who must not permit the wedges, bolts, screws or fastenings of the opening spans to be unfastened or taken off until the Station Master is present at the Bridge with the Staff and Key. The Ganger will be held responsible for the proper and securely replacing of the wedges and fastenings as soon as the vessel has passed through.

Rule 96

The Station Master must not leave the Bridge with the Staff until the Bridge is closed, securely fastened and Locked.

The accident at Walberswick in 1921, when wagons became detached and crashed into the rear of the stationary train, was due to the enginemmen and guard not looking back to see that the train was complete. When the bridge was opened it was necessary for the Station Master having the Train Staff which incorporated a key to release the bridge, also station sidings, but of course to ensure an engine on train did not approach the bridge while it was

THE SPRING BANK HOLIDAY TRACK WALK 2007 By Graham Cross

As we came up the A12 in the morning the water was running a foot deep across the road through Yoxford. When we turned off the A12 to head towards Wenhaston the water ran across the road a couple of times.



Six of us met at Wenhaston for the walk to Halesworth. We were (from left to right) myself Graham, Rob, John R, Maureen and John B. (Jane B took the picture). Four others had phoned to say they were not coming due to the severe weather. We proceeded along the north bank of the river Blyth - it was almost to the top of the bank but as we went further along it was in the fields almost to the tops of our boots. We came to a bridge across a small ditch along the edge of a field. The field the other side of the fence was flooded, so we made our way to the road which we walked along till we came to the turning where Corner Farm is with the old Southwold Railway bridge No. 4

known as “Balls Bridge” with the deep cutting. When we reached the river again a seventh member joined us— Charles.

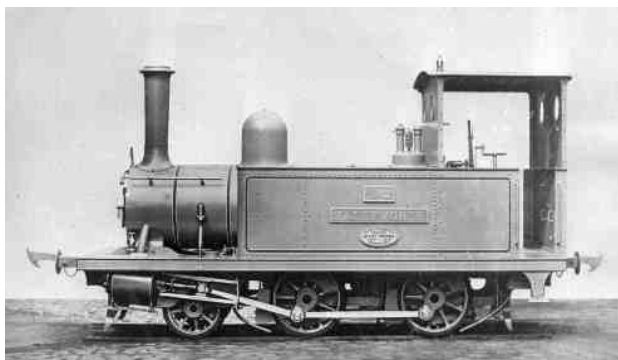


We carried on along the river bank to another hedge and corner of a field with a ditch on the other side. This time the bridge was floating and Maureen and John R got on it. It started to drift. John checked the depth at the other end of bridge—the water was over two feet deep. Maureen moved, then the bridge unit tried to tip over. We helped them off then found a route across the field to an old small-holding. We climbed over the gate and up the drive to join Holton Road again and then into Halesworth to the White Hart pub as the New Cut bar was closed. What an experience! But well worth the walk.





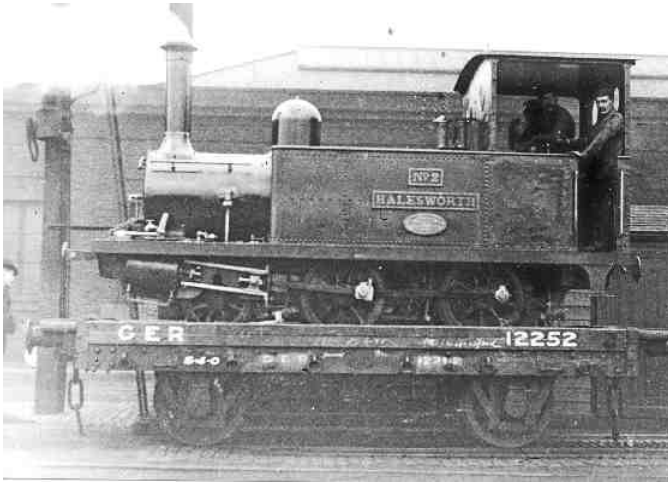
ALAN TAYLOR'S ALBUM



The three original locomotives were built at the Manchester Atlas Works of Sharp Stewart & Co. This is the works photograph of No.1 "Halesworth".



A view of the plates on the right-hand side of No.2. The small "Rebuilt 1901" plate was added when a new boiler was fitted at Southwold.



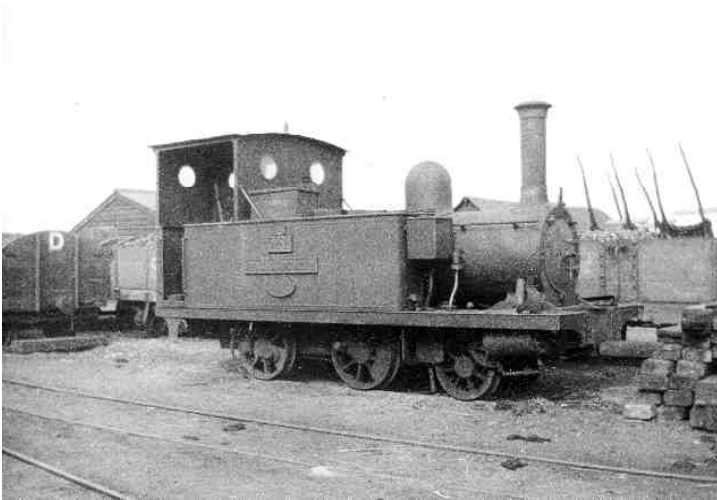
From time to time the locomotives were sent to the Great Eastern Railway's Stratford Works. Most likely taken in 1895 this picture shows No.2 loaded on a standard gauge outside the Works.



This view, possibly taken in the summer of 1911, shows panama-hatted locomotive foreman Jackson at the rear of No.2 which was resplendent in Great Eastern Blue which had been applied when the locomotive visited Stratford Works. A tool box was carried above the right hand tank.



In 1923 No.2 awaits departure to Halesworth at the head of a mixed train. A rerailing jack lies on the tank top. A stay has been fitted between the cab front and the tank to give the former added rigidity.



Jun6. In 1928 No.2 was in need of some repairs so the connecting and coupling rods have been removed. A sand box has been added to the right hand tank (but not to the left hand one) and clamps have been fitted to the front of the smokebox to improve the seal of the smokebox door. Some of the six wheeled wagons can be seen behind the locomotive.



SOUTHWOLD RAILWAY INCIDENTS

in the Year 1913 (part 2)

by Ian Bunting

The Halesworth Times of the 20th May reported that Southwold's Mayor had *'recently attended a conference of the G. E. Railway, and representatives of the coast towns of East Anglia, held for the purposes of securing the better advertising of the attractions of the East Coast... He understood that the officials of the G. E. R. were prepared to suggest to the Directors the desirability of making a grant.'*

The following week the newspaper carried an account of a military exercise undertaken by the Suffolk and Norfolk Yeomanry near Halesworth. *'The general idea was that a Northland invading army had effected a landing on the East Coast at Yarmouth and Lowestoft and was preparing to advance south on Ipswich... The duty of the Norfolk Yeomanry was to hold all the crossings over the Halesworth-Southwold railway.'*

A minor accident occurred at Halesworth on the 3rd June. *'This (Tuesday) morning during shunting operations at Halesworth station a truck loaded with grain missed the points and became derailed, blocking access to the goods shed. By Foreman Ardley's direction it was promptly unloaded, and being taken in hand by ganger Stannard and his men was after two hours' work replaced in position, but having strained an axle-box was*

side-tracked for examination.'

An account of a Southwold Town Council meeting was reported in the newspaper the following week. It was noted that the High Street was to be adopted by the county as a main road, possibly in September, and its tarring had been approved. There was a real need for a museum, the town's collection of artefacts had grown to the point that the Town Council Chamber had insufficient space to display them all. The latest acquisition was the propeller used during the first aeroplane flight in Southwold, kindly presented by the manager of the Deperdussin Company.

Much of the account was taken up with the issue of that competitor of the Southwold Railway, road services. *'Licences were granted to a motor-bus conductor, to Messrs. Petherick and G. Doy for waggonttes plying between the harbour and the town, while a licence for a motor-'bus driver was held back pending further inquiries. The United Automobile Services, Limited, applied for licences for four motor-'busses, and Councillor Pearson presented a petition from a representative section of tradesmen asking that the licences be not granted...till as good a service has been provided as that which the G. E. R. used to run. At present*

which the G. E. R. used to run. At present there was no 'bus to Southwold till 3.25, and that left again at 4.15, so that the service was of no use to the trade of Southwold, and he thought that a 'bus ought to be run from Lowestoft to Southwold to reach the latter place before lunch.' This motion was carried.

On the 24th June the Great Eastern Railway Company announced that its summer service would commence earlier, on the 1st July, rather than as previously, the middle of July. The Southwold Railway likewise brought its summer timetable forward.

On the same date the adult members of Southwold Parish Church Choir had their annual outing to London. They travelled to Halesworth by 'brake' to catch a G.E.R. train to Liverpool Street. They arrived back in Southwold at 4 a.m. the following morning, perhaps explaining why they had not used the Southwold Railway.

The monthly meeting of Southwold Town Council was held on the 4th July. 'The Committee re the motor-car service reported that they had interviewed Mr. Hutchinson, the manager of Automobile Services, Ltd., and that he had put on a car to reach Southwold before lunch, and that the Summer service would shortly commence when there will be ten cars in and ten cars out during the day.'

The Halesworth Times of Tuesday 15th July contained several interesting items. It reported the death in Richmond, London of a brother of the Halesworth stationmaster, Mr. C. E. Jarvis.

It outlined plans for the coming 'Halesworth Horse and Flower Show...to be held on Thursday next... Cheap excursions will be issued by the G.E.R. and S.R.

Railways as usual for the occasion, and the G.E. summer service of trains will enable visitors to leave Halesworth for Beccles, Yarmouth and Lowestoft as late as 10.31, whilst the Southwold railway are running a special train to Southwold and intermediate stations, leaving Halesworth at 10.30 p.m.'

Sadly, there was also an account of a serious railway accident. 'A terrible smash occurred on the Great Eastern Railway on Saturday afternoon [12th July] when the non-stop Cromer express dashed into a light engine just outside Colchester North Station, and was partially wrecked. Three persons were killed – the driver, fireman, and guard of the express... One passenger and a locomotive inspector were seriously injured...five passengers and Driver Fisher, of the light engine, received minor injuries.'

'The traffic on the Colchester line, both up and down, was, in consequence of the accident, held up for several hours, and far into the night trains full of week-end passengers, were waiting on the lines unable to reach their destinations until Sunday morning. The restaurant train due at Halesworth at 7.37 on Saturday evening did not arrive until after 3 o'clock Sunday morning.'

'Our Southwold correspondent writes:- The delay occasioned by the disaster at Colchester was felt by the many visitors who were making their journey to Southwold, but the Southwold Railway did their best to secure the comfort of the travellers by meeting all trains at Halesworth. As a result the train which should have reached Southwold at 8.30 p.m., Saturday night, arrived at 4 a.m. Sunday morning, the passengers being tired out by their wearisome journey.'

A fortnight later the newspaper contained an account of the inquest into the deaths and indicated that the accident was the fault of a signalman.

A 'Suffrage Pilgrimage' started from Yarmouth on the 10th July carrying Yarmouth, Lowestoft and Southwold banners and singing the Suffrage Pilgrims' song as they walked along. *'The programme for Saturday, July 12th, comprised a walk from Wangford through Blythburgh (where an impromptu meeting was held) to Wenhas-ton... A meeting was held on Wenhas-ton Green. The pilgrims then went to Southwold by train. They were received at the Station by numerous supporters, and held a large meeting in the evening.'*

This was followed on the 26th July by an influx of boy scouts, *'on Saturday, when the Ilford Church Naval Cadet Corps pitched their tents on the south east corner of the Common. Arriving by the 2.10 train they marched through the town headed by the bugle band, the banners fluttering bravely in the breeze.'* They were a party of 39 staying until the 9th August. *'Other companies of Boy Scouts are expected to pitch their camp on the Common very shortly.'*

At the time Southwold was very busy, the newspaper reporting on the 5th August, *'Southwold had a big influx of visitors last week and the railway company was exceedingly busy dealing with passengers and luggage. The bookings from Halesworth station were very heavy on Monday, 280 being for Yarmouth, 220 for Southwold, and 40 for Lowestoft.'*

I conclude 1913 with an item from the newspaper of the 7th October. *'The Board of Trade confirmed the Southwold Harbour Light Railway Order 1913 on the 25th ult.,*

and it is understood that the branch line from the Southwold Railway to the Quay will be commenced shortly. This will be completed in good time for the fishing season of 1914 when further developments may be looked for.'

NEWS FROM THE SHOP

By Graham Thurston



As expected, days in the shop vary. Sometimes there are few customers who spend well, other times lots of people mean you do a lot of talking, but don't take much money. On the whole though, business is steady. As well as brisk sales of the Blueprint book, we now have cards for special occasions, and the first of the excellent SRT mugs. These have a picture of Blyth and are made from bone china, so are top quality, essential buying really. We hope to follow this one with the other locos in due course. Thanks go to Stewart Green for arranging these, and also for his continued work cataloguing the second hand books. Incidentally, you can now browse the stock on the website at your leisure. The SRT board has now centralised all activities around the shop, and it is now the registered office. Henceforth all mail will go to 27 High Street for distribution, and plans are in hand to provide office space, together with new sales displays to get the most out of the facility. With the sad passing of Frank Clarke, we are a little down on volunteer numbers, so help would be welcome, and of course your saleable donations are still needed. We have had to restrict our advertised opening times to just three days per week so please ring Maureen if you can do even one three hour shift. **We are particularly stretched during the Model Railway Show on the 4th and 5th August and the Henham Rally in September, so help here would be gratefully received.** As usual we can accept your generous donations, and at the time of writing we have some excellent American outline 0-scale narrow gauge models. Finally, the Blueprint document is selling rapidly - get yours now by calling in, by post or by phone, £7.50 for members.

Letters

From R.A.Castle

Three Foot versus Two Foot

Our purpose is surely to provide a new SR as closely resembling the original as is reasonably possible. This does dictate a gauge of three feet.. There are, as stated in Newsletter No 50, numerous two foot gauge locomotives about, and new ones are sometimes being built. All are so small as to be virtually useless on our new SR except on a very modest demonstration line. Unless we opt for standard gauge (unthinkable) nothing remotely suitable exists. Three foot gauge track involves the extra cost of longer sleepers and wider course of ballast but what else? Costs of new locomotives and coaches depend chiefly upon their size and not their gauge. Our three foot choice requires longer axles and some frame cross members but nothing else causing additional building costs. A two foot gauge 2-4-2T will still be the same size as the originals.

From Mike Bootman

(This is an edited version of Mike Bootman's letter. Full text will go on the website. Ed)

To recreate the railway from Halesworth to Southwold as authentically as possible but within practical parameters. Since this objective was defined there have been a number of alterations to the proposed route and additional stations, changes to the type of fuel to be burnt by the replica steam locomotives and specific use of diesel locomotives, replacing Cleminson underframes by bogies, modern signalling arrangements and additional safety features at crossings, segregation of foot traffic, all to suit the modern world, comply with current legislation and safety standards, in short for many entirely practical reasons; Equally, to provide a useful public transport service throughout the year and a contribution to the local transport system, providing some alternative to motor traffic. In order to achieve this, the operation of services and the capacity of trains must be able to meet the appropriate demands. If a 'park-and-ride' style operation is to be successful it must provide a frequency of service not to deter passengers through undue waiting times, sufficient capacity to cater for peaks to service coach parties, allow for all age ranges but in particular those in the upper age groups, and the ability not only to provide space for hand-luggage but also allow for prams, buggies, bicycles, back-packs, mobility aids, etc; The Pier Station will deposit visitors close by the Pier, promenade and beach but some way from the town where catering and shopping facilities are to be found. Local passenger traffic will only be attracted by convenience to

start and end points of their trips, which are more likely to be for work, shopping, or other local facilities. Access to the route would be convenient for residents of Wenhasston, Blythburgh and Reydon but less so at Halesworth and Southwold for the respective towns. Thus it is likely that the majority of attracted passenger traffic would be visitors, and it follows that the infrastructure, stock and services should be designed predominantly with them in mind.

Summary:

The SR was not the only 3'0" gauge line in England, but it would be the only one if revived and reconstructed at that gauge. This would give rise to logistical difficulties with infrastructure and equipment, and prevent the interchange of any locomotives or stock with other railways. This last is a very successful feature of heritage railway operation, where 'gala days' bring in many enthusiasts and additional revenue;

The operational requirements must be considered carefully and the locomotives and stock be capable of fulfilling them 100%. These will then help determine loading gauge and other infrastructure features. The permanent way should allow for growth in line capacity and weight of trains, heavier rail should be used and this would be another practical compromise from the light weight rail used originally.;

Allowing for the above would increase land take and construction costs if the 3'0" gauge were to be required. These costs could be mitigated, or even offset, by reducing the gauge;

Provided that the 2'0" nominal (1'11½" actual) gauge could cater for the specific traffic requirements then it is to be preferred. The points in favour are well known and the only valid arguments against are concerns over the funding and lack of fidelity to prototype;

A possible compromise would be to construct a 2½ or ¾ size replica locomotive and carriages and run these as a 'heritage special', maybe at a premium fare, you could even retain the Cleminson underframes for full authenticity! A further alternative would be to dual-gauge between Henham and Southwold and construct a full size replica.

In conclusion, whilst I have a place in my heart for the old SR from a very early age, I'm nowhere near old enough to have ridden on it (although my father has). I would very much like the opportunity to ride on (even work on) a revived SR train but I believe it requires the right decisions to be made at this time to form a solid foundation for success in the future.

And finally...

By Geoffrey Crabb

I quite like Dundee. I mean the seaport on the east coast of Scotland rather than the cake although I like that too. It is a bright and breezy city facing south across the broad waters of the Firth of Tay. I have always approached it from the south by train usually from Kings Cross where I was careful to select a seat on the right hand side as most of the major sights on the way are to be seen from there including the cathedrals of Peterborough, York and Durham and the Northumberland and Borders coastline with Bass Rock prominent.

But I have to admit that the approach to Dundee itself was usually accompanied by slight apprehension as the train veered right to cross the two miles of the Tay Bridge which, with unrestricted sea views, gives an impression of flying. In my experience, only crossing the Pontycysylite Aqueduct on a narrow boat, comes closer. The queasiness was prompted by the recollection that on a stormy night in December 1879 1000 yards of the bridge fell 100 feet into the water below taking with it engine, tender, coaches and about 75 passengers and crew. I believe it is the world's only railway accident from which there was not a single survivor.

Thomas Bouch who designed the bridge inevitably got the blame but of course he did not have the benefit of computers to calculate wind stresses and, at 96 lbs per square inch, completely underestimated the effect of side-on hurricane force winds. His career never recovered and although he had already been engaged to design the Forth Bridge this honour was immediately handed instead to Benjamin Baker and John Fowler.

On the return journey south I would select the left hand side which apart from the delights already mentioned provide a grim reminder of the catastrophe. Crossing the bridge, the longest railway bridge in Britain, the narrow and spindly stumps of Boucher's original design, draped with seaweed and covered in bird droppings, are still visible rising from the turbulent water. My slight sigh of relief on reaching the south side was as irrational as the nervousness that preceded it. After all, there was absolutely no danger. But then, those passengers in 1879 assumed just that.

The Southwold Railway Shop
27 High Street, Southwold IP18 6AD

Tel: 01502 725422
(now with answerphone)

Please send any orders to the shop, with a cheque payable to the **Southwold Railway Shop**, and allowing 10% of the cost to cover P&P (min £1). All orders will be gratefully received .

BLUEPRINT FOR A RAILWAY - £7.50 members (otherwise £10)

The details of the Phase 1 proposal— Henham Park to Southwold Pier

SOUTHWOLD RAILWAY & BLYTH VALLEY WALK £5 The well- received guide to walking the trackbed (or adjacent footpaths) with details of the railway, wildlife and a complete list, with locations, of all SR features extant or disappeared.

THE SOUTHWOLD RAILWAY CHILDREN £9.95

Book of reminiscences of people who travelled, as children, on the SR. Many original and previously unpublished photographs and drawings.

BRANCH LINE TO SOUTHWOLD £14.95

The excellent Mitchell & Smith book. Hardback

RAILS TO SOUTHWOLD VIDEO £14.95, DVD £16.95

- the 30 min Hillside film of the SR including early newsreel footage of the line

THE HERONRY PRINT

£15 in a tube- Peter Green's excellent painting on an A2 size landscape format print showing SR train between Blythburgh and Walberswick

JOE CROWFOOT POSTCARDS £9

Set of 18 full colour postcards each containing a charming SRY watercolour

SOUTHWOLD RAILWAY GAME - £12.95

Entertaining SR board game

BACK ISSUES OF NEWSLETTER £2.50

SECOND HAND RAILWAY BOOKS

SRS BADGE £3

NEW!!! - SRT MUGS—£5

The Journal of the Southwold Railway Trust