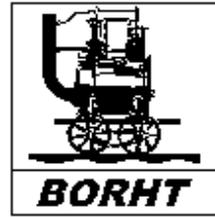


**BRITISH OVERSEAS RAILWAYS  
HISTORICAL TRUST**

**Incorporated 1984**



**GUIDE TO THE COLLECTIONS  
of the  
British Overseas Railways Historical Trust**



**2019**

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## INTRODUCTION

*Probably the most important invention of the Second Millenium was the railway. This was the first form of rapid mass communication and made possible all of the industrial and political changes of the 20th century, which have brought the peoples of the world closer together.*

*For example, the then Argentine Ambassador to the UK, H.E. Mario Cámpora, at the launch of the book "British Railways in Argentina: 1860-1948" said that every child in Argentina is taught that the railways unified the country and that it was Britain which gave Argentina her railways.*

The railway as we know it today was invented in Britain in the early part of the nineteenth century and Britain exported railways and railway equipment to virtually every country in the World. Those railways brought economic growth and political stability to the countries in which they were built. Edwin Arnold in 1865 said, "Railways may do for India what dynasties have never done... they may make India a nation" and they did<sup>1</sup>.

British engineers built many times more miles of railway and overcame far greater civil engineering challenges abroad than here in Britain. Many railways were owned and financed by British companies, not only in the Empire, but elsewhere, especially in South America.

We had lost most of this huge economic enterprise by the 1950's and have almost entirely forgotten it. A very few firms continue to export equipment and our consulting engineers remain to the fore, but on nothing like the previous scale.

In the last thirty years, great efforts have been made to ensure the preservation of items of outstanding historical merit from our engineering and manufacturing industries. Although a great deal of energy has gone into preserving items built for home use, very little has been done to preserve some of our outstanding items for export and materials of a priceless nature are being lost.

The British Overseas Railways Historical Trust was formed in 1984 to bring this past aspect of Britain's greatness to the public attention as an example to present day engineers, industrialists and businessmen.

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<sup>1</sup> R C Majumdar, H C Raychaudhuri and Kalikinkar Datta. An Advanced History of India, 4th edn, page 863.

## **AIMS OF THE TRUST**

- To promote the study of the history of railways in the Commonwealth (excluding the UK).
- To promote the study of the British contribution to railways in other parts of the world.
- To locate and preserve any existing archive material and to make it available to researchers and historians.
- To establish a museum, which will contain a representative collection of locomotives and rolling stock, including, if possible, at least one example from each manufacturer.
- To create a library of relevant publications.
- To work with other groups with similar aims.

All aspects of British overseas railways are covered, e.g. business history, engineering history, biography, equipment manufacturers and exporters, consultants, finance, politics. We also encourage modelling (primarily HO Scale).

The Trust has been set up as a registered charity to protect its collections.

## **HISTORY OF THE TRUST**

The Trust was incorporated in 1984, having grown out of the African Railway Society (founded by John Scott-Morgan) into The British Overseas Railways Historical Society. Incorporation was required as the Trust had been offered a pavilion at Britannia Park. When Britannia Park collapsed financially shortly after opening its first pavilions to the public, the Trust went on to develop a scheme for a museum and tourist railway on the Manchester Ship Canal at Mode Wheel. This had reached the stage that detailed plans had been completed for the museum and two miles of railway (we had built a triple gauge level crossing to maintain the right of way), initial finance was in place and a number of exhibits arranged from overseas railways. However, the whole Mode Wheel project, including the finance, was lost following a hostile take-over of the Canal Company in 1987. Also lost to the Trust as a result was the main Livesey & Henderson archive, which went to the NRM. Since then the Trust has looked at a number of potential museum sites, but none has attracted sufficient finance to be viable. However, following a significant recent bequest, the Trust is looking for better accommodation for the collections, which have out-grown the space at Greenwich.

To date the Trust's achievements include:

- Establishing the archive and library at Greenwich, which are available for research on a limited basis (limited due to constraints of our resources).
- Publishing various books and from 1986 the, now well established, British Overseas Railways Journal
- Assistance with the recovery of the following major items:
  - A GL class 4-8-2+2-8-4 Beyer Garratt for the Manchester Museum of Science and Industry.
  - An SPS 4-4-0 from Pakistan for the Manchester Museum of Science and Industry.
  - A Sentinel steam railcar unit from Egypt for a private group.
  - The archive of the Benguela Railway, deposited at Manchester (paper collection) and at BORHT (photographs)

## **COLLECTIONS' STRENGTHS AND PRIORITIES**

The strength of the present collections is the material related to the Benguela Railway, which represents about half of the total archive material. The remaining material is strong in African and South American subjects. The acquisition of archives will depend very much on what is offered to the Trust as our resources to purchase material on the open market are limited.

The Reference Library is a good resource covering British involvement in the railways in most of the world. Books have been acquired by donation (including review copies) and purchase. For the future, the library will continue to be expanded in all aspects of the Trust's interests and, in the hopefully distant future, we expect to receive the bequest of several members' libraries. Duplicate material will allow the Trust to form a lending library.

The museum collection can only be developed when suitable premises are available. In the shorter term we plan to establish museum displays using models. Several members of the Trust have substantial collections of models of locomotives and rolling stock of British overseas railway interest, which can be borrowed by the Trust for exhibition purposes, including special displays at railway events etc.

## **LIBRARY**

The library contains about 1400 books and pamphlets on railways of all regions of the world relevant to the Trust's objectives. The collection is arranged by continents, Africa, Asia, Australasia, General, North America, Central America, South America and UK and Europe.

Periodicals of which more than 5 issues are held include

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- Locomotive Magazine
- Railway Gazette
- Railway Magazine
- Continental Modeller
- Continental Railway Journal
- NRM Review
- The British Overseas Railways Journal
- Beyer Peacock Quarterly Review
- Harakevet
- Rhodesia Railways Bulletin
- Rhodesia Railways/Zimbabwe Rhodesia Railways/National Railways of Zimbabwe
- Railroader
- Newsletter of the Railway Groups of Rhodesia
- Railways Africa
- S.A. Rail/ S.A. Spoor
- Indian State Railways Magazine
- Indian Railways
- Friends of the NRM/ISRS Newsletters/Indian Steam Railways Magazine
- The Westland
- Railways of Australia "Network"
- The New Zealand Railway Observer

CNR Keeping Track  
Branchline  
Railway Age  
Asociación Rosarina Amigos del Reil - Bulletin  
FMF Boletín de Historia Ferroviaria  
Janes World Railways  
Railway Directory & Year Book

A library list is available in sections, see our website [www.borht.org.uk](http://www.borht.org.uk)

## **MUSEUM COLLECTION**

The Trust has a very small collection of objects relating to India, Africa, South America.

## **PAPER COLLECTIONS**

The following paper collections are held by the Trust:

### 1. Livesey and Henderson Benguela Railway Drawing Collection

This collection contains hundreds of contract drawings of mainly locomotives and rolling stock, mostly on drawing cloth and mostly stored in steel tube containers. They comprise the company's complete collection of contract drawings for this railway. They were donated by Andrew Henderson.

### 2. Livesey & Henderson Peruvian Drawings

Aperture cards (microfilms) of drawings of locomotives and track fittings for various Peruvian Corporation Railways. Donated by Andrew Henderson.

### 3. Henry Richard Stones Collection on British, Argentine and Other South American Railways.

Dick Stones, after training on the LNWR/LMSR, spent his working life in the traffic department of the Central Argentine Railway. He served as a railway intelligence officer in the Far East during the latter part of World War 2. He retired to Eastbourne after the nationalisation of the British railways in Argentina. He was a life long railway enthusiast and author of the book "British Railways in Argentina 1860:1948". The collection includes his research files for some 36 published articles and for his book "British Railways in Argentina 1860:1948", various personal files including correspondence about his war service and a collection of Argentine railway passes. The collection was donated by his wife, Madeline Stones.

### 4. Robert J Money Collection of Drawings of the Dorada Extension Railway.

Robert Money worked as Agent for S Pearson & Son Ltd on the construction of the Dorada Extension Railway in Columbia in about 1905-6. This collection consists of the unsaleable portion of a larger collection of drawings and was donated by Mrs D. Cotton in 1991. It comprises drawings by Robert Money and Arthur D Thomas, the Resident Engineer, covering buildings and structures on the line and the track laying programme.

5. Mr Oury's Letterbooks.

This collection contains four bound volumes of correspondence concerning the Central African Railway, Malawi Railways and the Central South African Railway spanning a period of 1912 to 1918, plus a copy of the Shire Highlands Railway Annual Report for 1918 and a copy of the Lower Zambesi Bridge issue of Modern Transport for 9 March 1935. The letter books are not available for research pending conservation due to their poor condition. <sup>2</sup> This collection was donated by Denis Westerberg.

6. Crown Agents Papers

This is a miscellaneous collection of Crown Agents papers and drawings acquired from various sources and including papers related to the Central South African Railways (locomotive specification), Uganda Railways (contract drawings of NBL Mallet Locomotives) and East African Railways (rolling stock specifications). They are indexed under the names of the railways.

7. The D Donoyou Collection of East Bengal Railway Drawings

This collection comprises Sir A M Rendell's drawings (linens) for Metropolitan Amalgamated Railway Carriage and Wagon Company 5 ft 6 in gauge bogie carriage stock for the East Bengal Railway, Contract No 7685 of 23/10/08. They were acquired and used for many years in teaching engineering drawing by Mr Donoyou. Donated by Mr D Donoyou.

8. Indian Railway Study Group

We hold the record set of the Indian Railway Study Group's publications and circulars. Donated by the Group.

9. East African Railways and Harbours

This is a collection of over 1000 drawings of 24 classes of steam and diesel locomotives and a steam crane and 3 coach drawings. These drawings are mostly dyeline prints with Nairobi drawing office issue stamps dated around 1965-70. Donated by Nick Lera.

10. Madras Railway Company

Fourteenth Report of the Directors and notice of the seventh annual general meeting on 18 February 1859. Dated February 3rd, 1859.

11. Scinde Railway

Engineer's copy of Contract and Specifications for the construction of the Scinde Railway (from Karachi to Kotri opened 1861. The engineer was Thomas Alfred Yarrow (1817-1874)). Bought from "Smokebox", Kingston

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<sup>2</sup> A larger collection of Mr Oury's papers is held by York University and some items are held by Railworld

12. Pakistan Western Railway

PWR Diagram Book Locomotives and Railcars Broad, Metre & Narrow Gauges dated 30/09/64; Pakistan Western Railway since Independence, PWR: 1962; Map of Pakistan Western Railway, 1963; Diesel Electric Locomotive Data, undated. Donated by Grahame Boyes

13. Ceylon Railway Drawings

4-wheeled Covered Goods Wagons, Requisition No 1022/1, Drawing Nos Z5512/1-19, Builders: MetroCammel Carriage, Wagon & Finance Co Ltd, Saltely, England. (Purchased)

14. Nitrate Railways

Blueprints of Yorkshire Engine Co 2-8-0T for back-to-back operation.

15. Costa Rica Railway

Small research file collected by Dr Paul E Waters in connection with Richard Udin's book, Railways of Costa Rica. Donated by Dr Paul E Waters

16. Olot and Gerona Railway

This is a collection of blueprints and one tracing of actual and proposed locomotives for the Ferrocarril Economico de Olot a Gerona.

17. Letterkenny and Burtonport Railway

Side elevation and plan of Andrew Barclay 2-6-0T from Engineering, April 24, 1903.

18. North British Locomotive Company Drawings

A collection of about 150 photographic copies of general arrangement drawings of locomotives from NBL and its constituent companies, Nielson and Dubbs. Most of the drawings are of the products of Hyde Park Works from 1888 to 1904.

19 English Electric

Drawing Register

20. Metrovias S A

Alstom signal diagrams for the resignalling of Buenos Aires Metro Lines B and E in 1999/2000. (17 A3 size paper copies)  
(Donated by Alstom in exchange for copies of photographs of the original installations)

21. Stock and Share Certificates

This collection contains certificates from the Cia Mossamedes, Brazil Great Southern Railway Company, Belgian Eastern Junction Railway, Beira Railway, Beira Junction Railway, The Euphrates Valley Railway, Fayoum Light Railways etc,

22. Alan Elyard Brown Collection

This collection mainly covers the Malaya, Thailand, Burma region, but is not catalogued.

23. Stanistreet Collection on Malaya

J. A. Stanistreet was author of “The Malayan Railway” published by Oakwood Press in 1973. This collection of books, papers and images was his research file. Donated by Stanistreet.

24. Henry Gunston Collection

A general collection strong on East Africa and other places where Henry Gunston worked. Needs weeding and cataloging.

25. Alan Clothier Collection

This is a large collection of material on Egypt, which is not catalogued and is stored off site. Alan Clothier’s other papers have gone to the Robert Stephenson Trust or have been retained by his family.

26. Memoirs of Sidney Blencoe – Buenos Aires and Great Southern Railway

Sidney Blencoe was born in 1879 and died in 1960. From 1906 to 1936 he worked in the Argentine. This item is a copy of a draft memoir of his time working for BAGS and copies of some background papers, e.g. applications for membership of institutions. They were donated by his daughter, Jill Dudbridge. Unfortunately many of her father’s papers were destroyed in 1960 including several unique copies of reports on floods.

27. Family History Files

Files of correspondence concerning individual railwaymen

<b>Name</b>	<b>Railway</b>	<b>Dates</b>	<b>Records</b>
Francis Bell	Buenos Aires Western Rly	1927/30	Yes
William English Brown	Argentina, BA&PR construction ?	1886/7	No
George Frederick Colman	Leopoldina Railway, Brazil	1897 on	No
H C McHugh	BB&CIR	1939/48	Yes
John Miller	São Paulo Rly	c. 1870-80	No
John Pollock	Trans-Andine etc	b. 1878	Yes
Thomas Shakespear	Santiago-Racangua, Chile	c. 1900	Diary 1899-1902

28. Map Collection

The Trust has a small collection of maps showing railways and covering India and South and Central America, including the D Trevor Rowe Collection of South American railway maps

(Donated by D Trevor Rowe). There is also a much larger unsorted and unlisted collection of maps from David Thorogood and Ted Pearson.

## **STILL IMAGE ARCHIVE**

### **1. Benguela Railway Photographic Archive**

This collection comprises several hundred photographs and original and copy negatives from the Company's London and Lisbon Offices. These were donated by the Company and the copy negatives made for the Trust during the project to rescue the Company's archives. This collection is not yet fully listed. The paper archive was deposited by the Company in Manchester and a listing is available at Greenwich.

### **2. Railway Paintings and Prints**

This contains two framed oil paintings of scenes on the Benguela Railway by Stumpf, a framed Benguela Railway poster, a print of a scene in the Crimea with the railway etc.

### **3. South African Railways & Harbours Photographic Collection**

This collection is the SAR&H London Office collection of publicity photographs. It comprises several hundred prints sorted into some 45 subject envelopes, with a contents list on each envelope, covering all aspects of the company's operations together with a few photographs of Rhodesia and Mozambique. It was donated by the Company.

### **4. Basil Roberts Angolan Photographs**

This is a small collection of colour slides taken by the late Basil Roberts in Angola in April 1970, mostly of the Benguela Railway, but also the Luanda Railway and Porto Amboim Railway. They were purchased, with copyright, from his executors.

### **5. Wilfred Simms Collection**

The late Wilfred Simms toured most of the world in the latter part of the 20th Century recording and photographing railways. His collection of railway material is fully indexed via his travel diaries. This is a large collection which has not been unpacked due to lack of space at Greenwich and so is difficult of access.

### **6. David Thorogood Collection**

The late David Thorogood was a BBC studio cameraman and was noted for his excellent cinefilm, much of which is now lost. He also took a large number of slides in various formats of railways in Africa, Europe and other parts of the world. This very large collection is not readily useable as it remains unsorted following a rescue operation. Most of the surviving cinefilm is in the care of Nick Lera.

### **7. Henry Richard Stones Collection on British, Argentine and Other South American Railways.**

This collection contains a large number of photographs collected by Dick Stones for his

Argentine railway research, together with photographs and negatives taken himself in Argentina, Chile, Bolivia and Paraguay. See main entry under Paper Archives.

8. Rhodesia Railway Photographs from Freeman Fox

Some years ago Freeman Fox and Partners had their archives microfilmed and destroyed the original documents. This collection contains a large number of double-sided pages from dismembered photograph albums plus some loose prints salvaged by the microfilmer. The photographs are mainly works photographs of locomotives and rolling stock. It was a time of troubles in Rhodesia and the Company insisted on any photographs which might be of military value being destroyed after microfilming and so the collection contains few views of the railway. They were donated by Kew Bridge Steam Museum.

9. Joe Strahan Collection

This a collection of original and copy negatives and lantern slides of photographs taken by Joe Strahan during his service and travels in the Far East.

10. Andrew Henderson Photographs of North Africa

This comprises copy negatives of photographs of British military railway operations taken by Andrew Henderson during service in North Africa in World War 2.

11. Gloucester Railway Carriage & Wagon Co Ltd Overseas Photographs

This is a collection of large format works photographs of export rolling stock.

12. W G Bagnall Ltd

Collection of postcard sized photo/specification cards.

13. Kerr Stuart & Co Ltd

Collection of works photographs, booklet containing specifications of 5 locomotives and 2 sets of Tuck's "Sepia" Series postcards, "Famous Tender Engines by Kerr Stuart" and "Famous Tank Engines by Kerr Stuart".

14. Miscellaneous Photographs

In addition to the specific collections listed above the Trust has a large uncatalogued collection of miscellaneous photographs, postcards, negatives and slides (including large format lantern slides) covering mainly African and Indian railway subjects.

**MOVING IMAGE ARCHIVE**

The film archive contains commercial videos, listed in the Library List. It also contains a lot of cinefilm made by David Thorogood, see the entry in the still image section above.

**USING THE COLLECTIONS**

There is a small reading room at Greenwich, which is usually open in the evening of the first Friday of the month from 7 pm to 10 pm.

Researchers wishing to access the collections at other times are requested to contact Mostyn Lewis and arrange that a trustee will be at Greenwich to grant access.

No items are available for loan at present, but copying facilities are available on site. Photocopies are 10p per A4 page and prints of photographs can be supplied.

There is little in the way of finding aids as only some smaller collections have been listed in detail.

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