

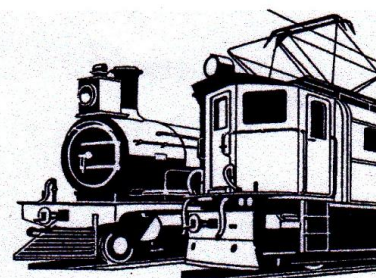
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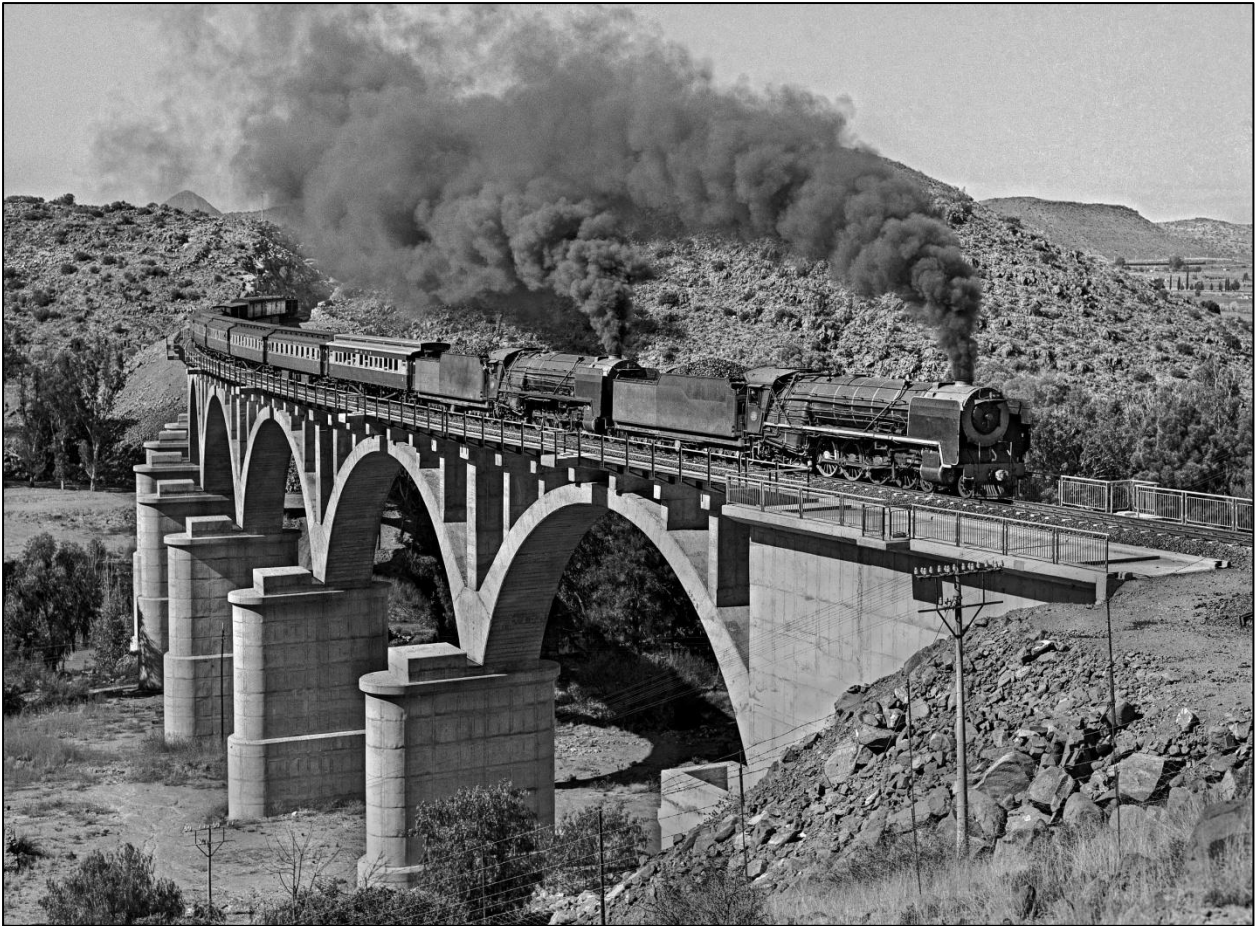


Bulletin No. 111 September 2012



Class 3B at Chiselhurst Station, East London, with the East London – Johannesburg train. Driver H. Saunders, Fireman C. Walker.

Photo: S H Carter via Leith Paxton



Double-headed Class 23s No's 3280 and 3225 at Bethulie, on the Springfontein – Burgersdorp line, on 36-up, in May 1971.
C P Lewis

Editorial

We welcome Piet Conradie and Andrew Heydenrych as new members.

A reminder to those who have not paid subs to please to do so without delay. It is a total waste of time chasing people who have not paid.

A very worthwhile website is to be found at:

<http://steam-locomotives-south-africa.blogspot.com/>

This site is run by Piet Conradie and has a wealth of information on railways in South Africa.

If you are looking for information on S A locomotives, steam, electric and diesel you can do no better than to look them up on Wikipedia at:

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Category:Locomotives_of_South_Africa

This page will lead you to the Class of locomotive that you are looking for. The information, on Wikipedia, was placed there by Col. Andre H Kritzinger, who must have spent thousands of hours on this task.

Hulse Double-Deck Coach

Peter Bagshawe has commented as follows:

I was interested in the first instalment of the article on the Hulse double deck coach. The design does seem similar to some d/d coaches built in other countries, and I wondered if Hulse collected royalties on d/d coaches built overseas? However, at the figures quoted, it just doesn't make economic sense! As well as its extra weight, it was no doubt a good deal more expensive to build than a standard coach. As an example, and subject to platform lengths being sufficient, I would think that seven standard coaches (196 tons/826 pax) would make more sense than six d/d coaches (204 tons/744 pax). Many more people need to be packed into the space to make it worthwhile.

Les Pivnic has written as follows:

I got to know a retired mechanical engineer (John Dunn) who had worked for Comeng (Commonwealth Engineering) in Sydney, due to him requesting assistance with photographs from me of locos and rolling stock built by Union Carriage & Wagon in Nigel. As you chaps will know, Comeng was the Aussie Company that originally set up UCW. This fellow has published several volumes that provide a comprehensive history of Comeng that includes the history of UCW.

I mention all of the above because this very chap was the fellow who was responsible for the basic design work on all the Comeng-built double deck trains that operate around Sydney. I then showed him photos of the Hulse double-decker which in principle uses the same layout - standard level entrance and seating areas embracing a double-deck middle section that is reached by internal steps.

When I told him that the Hulse coach dates back to 1927, he was visibly shaken and expressed surprise that such a layout could have been accommodated on Cape gauge! He honestly held the belief that apart from some early double-deck coaches in Paris, his designs were a world first!

His basic design was in principle, identical to the earlier Hulse design on the SAR.

So while the basic design was not successful on the SAR, it has certainly proved successful in Sydney and surrounding areas.

It goes further - his successful work in Sydney led to several American railroads adopting his design as well - he spent extended periods in the USA detailing his designs for double-deck coaches.

Other Ozzie Companies like Goninan and UTD Group Rail have adopted the basic Comeng design principle and have supplied trains like the Comeng units and the more recent "Tangara" and "Oscar" sets illustrated below.

Recently there has been some talk of new single-deck units on a dedicated new line but in general the Hulse double-deck principle remains supreme in Sydney.

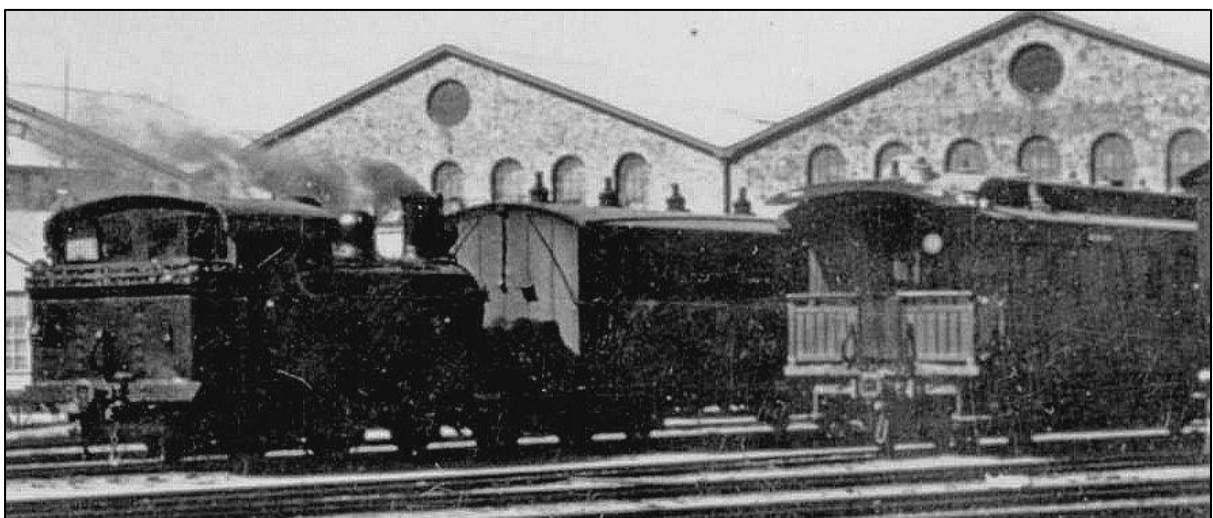
Quite a feather in the old SAR's cap I would say!

Unfortunately, this retired engineer has recently taken seriously ill and my contact with him is now severely limited. His books however, are available in the Australian Railway History book store on Central Station in Sydney.

I thought that the above would be of interest in that it shows how the old SAR was always at the forefront of railway technology even if some of the schemes didn't work for local conditions.



Older Comeng built double-deck coach in Sydney There are striking similarities with the Hulse coach. Les Pivnic



Leith Paxton has commented as follows: I am also sending a photo from the Salt River album showing the coach yard some time in the 1930's. My question is, what is the loco? It appears to be a 4-4-0T or 0-6-0T, but the enclosed cab has me dumbfounded?

The Hulse S-24 Double-Deck Coach

By David Hicks. Published in the Aug/Oct 1999 S.A. Rail
Part 2

FROM PILLAR TO POST

By September 1927 the transfer of the coach to the Reef was being discussed, which provoked the Divisional Superintendent in Pretoria to comment that tests demonstrated its unsuitability and that there was no service in his division where it could be usefully employed. However No. 6704 went to the Reef. After working for just more than two months on the Jeppe - Klipspruit section, the Station Master at Braamfontein reported that efficient ticket examination was difficult, and pointed out the passenger to tare ratio was unfavourable. He noted that the Divisional Superintendent in Port Elizabeth was interested in using the coach and he was only too eager to forward the coach as soon as he might be instructed. The Divisional Superintendent in Port Elizabeth agreed to give the coach a trial on the New Brighton service and it was dispatched from the Reef on 24 February 1928 by goods train and placed in service on 5 March. Its use was confined to the Port Elizabeth - New Brighton through service so as to avoid delays at intermediate stations. After initial reluctance, the 3rd Class passengers were happy to travel in the coach, and the System Manager asked to be allowed to keep it for regular use.



Hulse coach at De Aar. The vandals had commenced their work.

Lionel Penning

However by October 1930 the System Manager reported a decline in 3rd Class suburban traffic due to the competition of bus services and requested that No 6704 be allocated to some other system. And so it went back to the Reef where it apparently stood idle at Braamfontein.

System Managers were not in favour of using this coach and possible options to convert it, either to an ordinary suburban coach, a baggage van, or to scrap the body and use the under frame as a well wagon were considered. Another suggestion was that it might be used for the Agricultural Demonstration Train. Nothing came of these ideas, and as there was a reluctance to scrap the coach, the System Manager in Port Elizabeth was asked in May 1933 if he could not use the coach, but he emphasised the objections previously raised and his unwillingness to use it and suggested that it could be used for 3rd Class weekend traffic in Durban.

And so in November 1933 No 6704 went to Durban, to the dismay of the System Manager there, who suggested that it would be better to scrap it. It was placed in service between Pietermaritzburg and Elandskop over weekends - a journey of 37 miles each way - after it was found to be unsuitable for service in the Durban area or on the North or South Coast. Records show that the coach was still being used for this service during 1953. However, prior to being withdrawn from service in May 1963, it is understood that it was used for a number of years to convey staff between Pietermaritzburg and the loco depot at Masons Mill.

With its withdrawal from revenue earning service the coach was considered as "scrapped", but it was used by the Electrical department as a "platform vehicle" on overhead wiring up until 1971. The sources consulted do not indicate whether this was in Natal or elsewhere. In 1972 No. 6704 was offered to the S.A. Railway Museum and it was dispatched to the Museum Collection at De Aar. Unfortunately vandals caused considerable damage, and being considered a significant part of the Museum collection, it was transferred to Salvokop, which was the site of the old Pretoria mechanical workshops, where vandals almost totally destroyed it. What is left of this unique vehicle is in the Koedoespoort Shops: restoration could in fact entail rebuilding it - at prohibitive cost.



Hulse Coach at Koedoespoort. *No comment needed.*

L Croukamp

OPPOSITION TO THE COACH: PREJUDICE OR DEFICIENCY?

The CME of 1925 was not in favour of double-decked coaches. His Advisory Engineer supplied him with blueprints of the coaches used in Paris, which he himself had seen in use; was his opinion of the Hulse Design obscured by his adverse view of the French vehicles?

The GM, who had appeared to champion Hulse design, suddenly changed the designation of the coach from 1st to 3rd Class. No stated reason has come to light, but it has been suggested that, as a result of the Salt River railway accident in July 1926 where 11 passengers were killed and over 60 injured, the administration was concerned that the 1st Class travelling public would be hesitant to travel in an unusual carriage (which would suggest that the administration might have been more sympathetic to the sensibilities of that Class passengers than 3rd class).

The report of the AGM of 20 August 1927 compares the tare to passenger ratio of the double-decker with a normal 3rd Class Coach. With a passenger complement of 120 (1st Class) and 124 (3rd Class) and a tare of 68080 lb. the ratio is 560 lb. per passenger for 1st Class and 550 lb. per passenger for 3rd Class. For a conventional third class coach the figure is 700 lb. per passenger and 470 lb. per passenger for a conventional 1st Class coach. Clearly, using it as a 3rd Class coach was inefficient.

The coach posed logistical problems: congestion at the door, fare avoidance by passengers. Then there was the problem of poor ventilation, the fact that the coach was not self-lighting and was not provided with a toilet (this latter point was raised, but a toilet is not an essential in a commuter coach over short distances).

Perhaps the most significant factor was the low headroom, which resulted in the soiling of the ceilings and occasioned extra cleaning.

Mr Hulse approached the Administration in August 1928 for a report on the effectiveness and stability of the vehicle, and requested an opportunity to respond to criticisms. The GM replied that there was currently a policy of standardisation of coaching stock (and a quick glance at the coach diagram book confirms a remarkable diversity of suburban vehicles at that time), and that no further vehicles of this type were being contemplated. It should be noted that the Acting CME at the time, Mr. A G Watson, was later responsible for the standardisation of locomotive boilers of all classes, then in service.

Mr Hulse persisted, and in reply the GM pointed out the objections - a distillation of all the objections raised in a variety of reports. Not satisfied, Mr Hulse dismissed these objections as unjustified prejudice on the part of senior Railway officials. The Administration declined to respond further.

This provoked Mr Hulse to approach the Minister of Railways & Harbours in 1929. His letter was referred to the GM who reported back, listing all the previously mentioned objections: the Ministry replied to Mr Hulse that the Administration was not prepared to acquire more coaches of this type. In 1935 Mr Hulse again approached the Minister, alleging that there were those in the higher ranks of the service who opposed the design because he was a "Clerk" and not an "Engineer" Once again the same objections were listed and Mr Hulse was told that 'that was that'.

South African Railways only Sentinel Steam Railcar RM5

By Ray Ellis

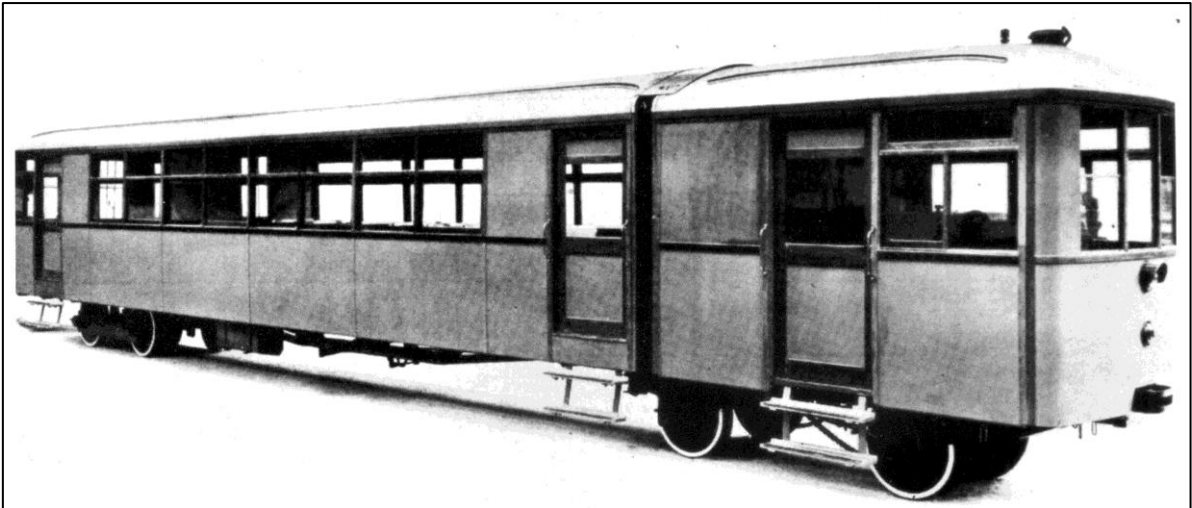
Today I received my copy of the latest issue of "Narrow Gauge", the journal of the UK based Narrow Gauge Railway Society. This issue is a special expanded booklet titled "Pickled Passengers – The Sentinel – Cammell narrow gauge railcars" by Paul Bennett (who also happens to be editor of the Society's newsletter "Narrow Gauge News"). This booklet is the culmination of Paul's extensive research into these cars worldwide, and he is to be congratulated on what he has been able to find. It was a pleasure to be able to assist him with some Sentinel railcar catalogues and photos.

Paul had this to say about the SAR car: "Griffin Engineering Co., South Africa - In August 1924 Sentinel works number 5245 was completed for the Griffin Engineering Company of Johannesburg, South Africa. Mechanically, this car was almost certainly the same as the Jersey cars and it was to the same 3ft 6in gauge." (the Jersey Railway on the Channel Island had two such cars)

From this one assumes that Griffin Engineering was acting as some sort of agent for either Sentinel or SAR. Apart from the later Clayton car, SAR took the steam railcar story no further and soon were into petrol cars. These early Sentinel cars were somewhat flimsy, and had a tendency to break-down. One gathers that on such occasions it was replaced by a loco and passenger car. Later cars were more substantial and reliable, and some had quite long lives.

Paul also wrote to the SAR-L group site, but only elicited one response from Geoff Pethick, to the effect that the car was erected at Durban, and entered traffic on 29th November 1924, boiler no. 1191. Geoff noted there was nothing else on the car in the CME's Carriage Register.

I got curious, and went digging in my files and found that in *SA Rail* for Sept-Oct. 1986 there was an article by S.E. Edwards on the SAR petrol railcars to which the UK based RSSA member, the late Donald Bell, and the Editor (Terry Hutson?) responded *SA Rail* for Jan-Feb. 1988.

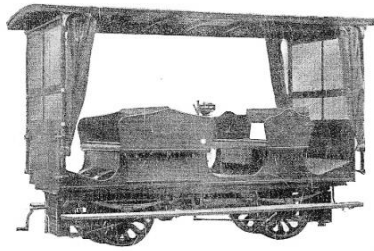


“Further to my letter on Clayton/Sentinel railcars on SAP, I have found there was indeed a Sentinel car, No.5245 of 1924. This was one of the earliest railcars from this builder, the type being first built for the Jersey Eastern Railway the previous year. Where and when was it used on SAR?”

“Ed's note:- Dave Little in a letter to *SA Rail* in Vol.27 No.1, provided details of RM5, the Sentinel railcar. Introduced into SA in 1924/5. This car was tried out initially in the Durban area, later moving to the Vryheid district and eventually Addo-Kirkwood, before presumably being phased out in 1929. A further report on this vehicle, by S. E. Edwards awaits publication in a future issue. Mr. Bell also queried the Clayton steamcar in our previous issue. This car was reported in detail, again via Mr. Edwards, in *SA Rail*, Vol.25 No.6, pages 126/7”.

The photos show the Sentinel works photo for RM5 and a view of the interior. These are from the Sentinel catalogue of July 1925 titled “Sentinel-Cammell Steam Rail Coaches”. Does anybody have any other photos or a drawing of the Sentinel car?

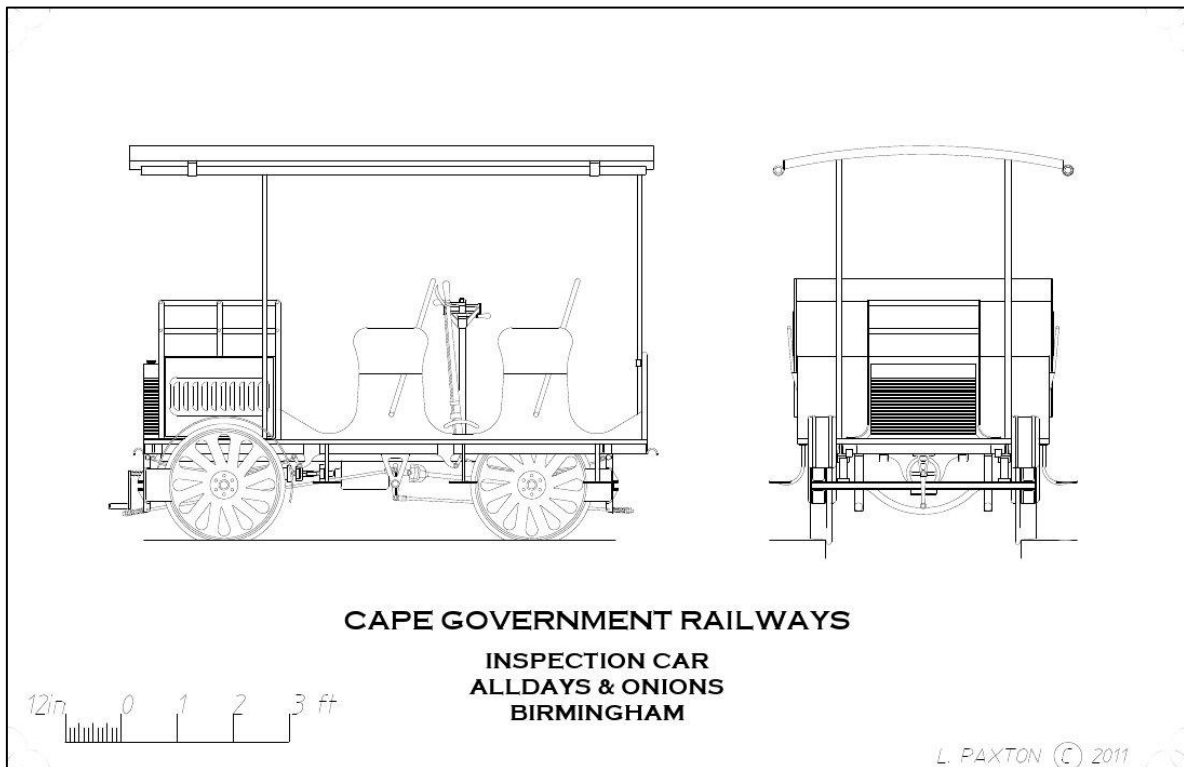




Nine-seater (Back Seat Reversible) for South Africa.
Messrs. Alldays and Onions.

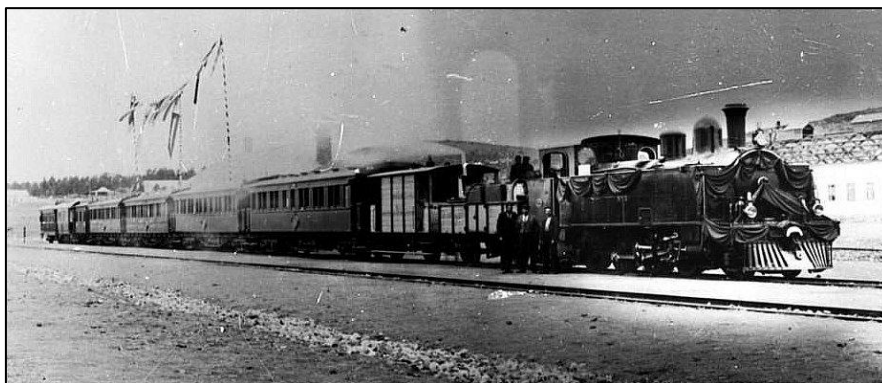
This photo was found in the Science Museum Library, London, by Chris West. It shows an Alldays and Onions Railcar sent to South Africa.

Previously this Railcar was unknown. There are no details as to its destination, in South Africa, or when it arrived.



Alldays & Onions inspection car of the Cape Government Railways. It had an 8hp petrol engine, seated five and cost £220. It arrived in Cape Town on 21 April 1906 and was ready for use on 21 July. At some time in 1908 it was in use on the De Aar-Prieska line.

Alldays & Onions were car manufacturers in Birmingham. They also made Railcars and Inspection cars.



Opening of Pretoria – Pietersburg Railway 31 May 1899. Loco No. 3 built by Beyer Peacock.
Transnet via E Conradie