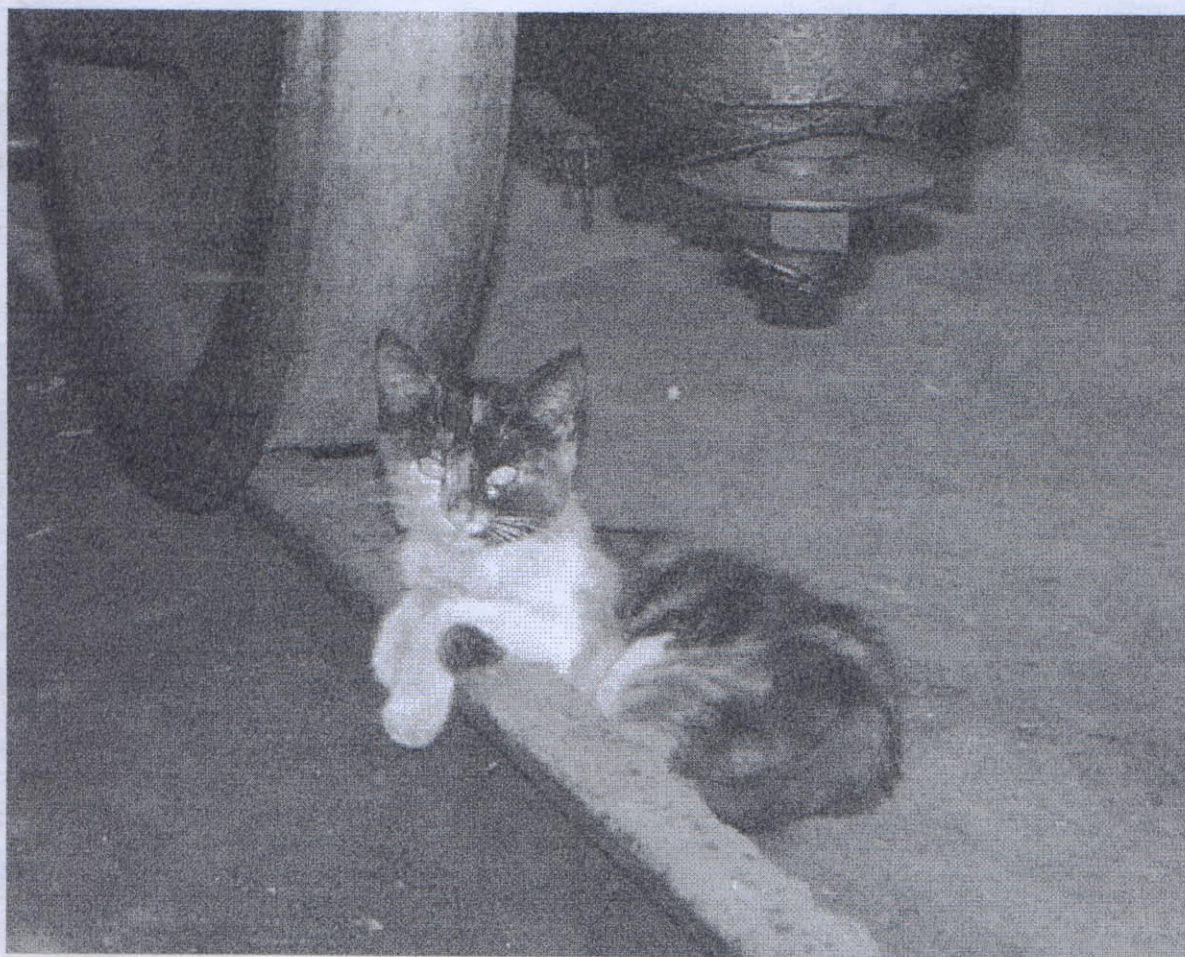


The Cuckoo

№2-2002



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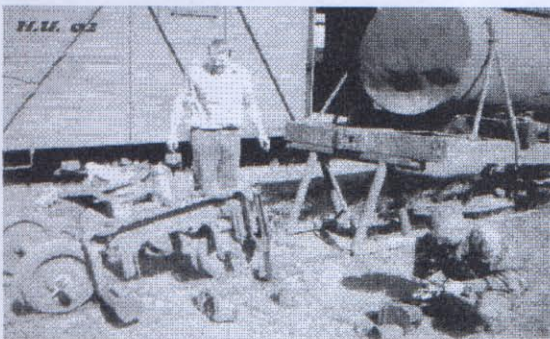
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News in brief



Just found...

- March 25 – 26 saw the removal to Pereslavl Museum of the bogie tank wagon from the railway of Vyksa Iron Works. The riveted tank was installed in early 1910s on the frames of standard short flat wagon, built earlier for military trench railways. Several similar tank wagons were constructed by Vyksa workshops for transportation of larch oil, which was used in local chemical industry. Closer to the end of its carrier, the tank was used for stationary storage of lubricants near Vyksa works main locomotive shed, where it was discovered in a pile of sand during the February 2002 expedition. The transportation of the wagon by road presented little difficulty, except for much time spent waiting for the ferry to cross Oka River near Murom. It is planned to adopt the tank for storage of waste oil, which is used in Pereslavl for firing steam locomotives. The overhaul of the chassis started in early June, but is not anticipated to finish soon, as all work on the tank wagon is done by volunteers when time is available.

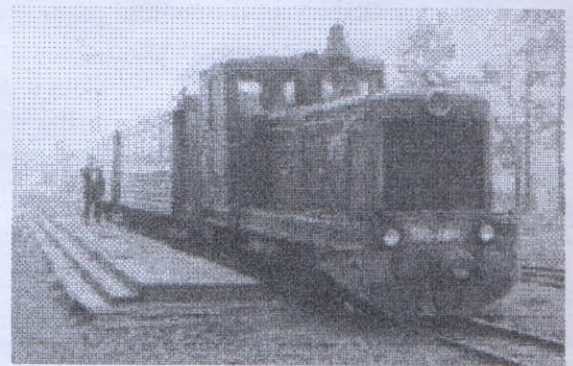


Restoration starts

- According to tradition, formed in several previous years, the Museum was opened for summer on the last weekend of April. As last year, it is planned to keep the site open for visitors until early November on all days except Mondays and Tuesdays from 10 a.m. to 7 p. m. During the holidays of the first decade of May we received up to 400 visitors daily, both individuals and in organised groups, which put serious strain on our group. To mark the Victory Day on the 9th of May a traditional military-historical show was put up in Moscow, with participation of "Red Army" military-historical club members.
- While the staff and several volunteers were busy "fighting" with numerous flocks of tourists in the Talitsy, the group led by Vadim Mironov made an expedition to the remains of Rjazan' – Vladimir railway, described in the previous issue of "The Cuckoo". The expedition was aimed at exploring remains of logging branch near Golovanova Dacha, which had been linked with the railway. The settlement of Golovanova Dacha lies in the very depth of the woods and is linked with civilization only by twice-daily narrow gauge passenger train. As there is no road to the site, the Museum jeep was left at Tuma. As return train left Golovanova Dacha early in the afternoon, Vadim agreed with the head of local maintenance of way crew for the group to be collected back to Tuma by the motor trolley. During the expedition the remains of the logging camp and the railway were traced down, but few artifacts were found, as the logging railway was dismantled soon after the WW2. However, opportunity was not lost to collect several small historical items from the working section of the railway, including parts from switch mechanisms and buffers from an old wagon.

- Meanwhile, when the flow of tourists in Talitsy eased after the holidays, it became possible to continue restoration projects and other work. The newly fabricated driving rod for class 157 steam locomotive was weighted and appeared to match the original one perfectly. This ensures proper dynamics of the locomotive. Thus the work on the running gear was finished. The new regulator handle was fabricated from scratch, using parts of several similar items. However, due to sudden and serious illness of Sergei Ivanovich Zakharov, the chief of the project, the work considerably slowed down in mid June. The locomotive was coupled to her tender, and work on the tender also started. As the tender water tank and coal bunker were heavily rebuilt during the locomotive's working career, plans are developed to look for a replacement.
- The annual June festival was held in Talitsy on the weekend 15-16 June. Sadly, the dry weather, causing severe fire danger in the National Park, did not allow using steam for festival trains. The report of the event is included into this issue.
- The process of taking over the stock of "Veksa" co-operative company started after Alexander Korsakov, an engineer from St. Petersburg, came to work full-time with our team in mid June. The 10-ton rail-mounted wreck crane was the first vehicle to receive attention. The co-operative reported earlier, that vandals had stolen most mechanisms of the vehicle. However, when the crane was towed to Talitsy shed and examined, it appeared that it is in much better condition. As there are plans to use the crane for work on tracks, the repairs started immediately. At the time of printing of this issue the crane was already fully operational.
- The recovery of Kupanskoye – Pereslavl section of Pereslavl railway is planned to start after second specialist from St. Petersburg, Alexey Shyshin, moves to Talitsy. Veksa diesel shed will be taken over then, together with all regular traffic activities. Meanwhile, the passenger traffic

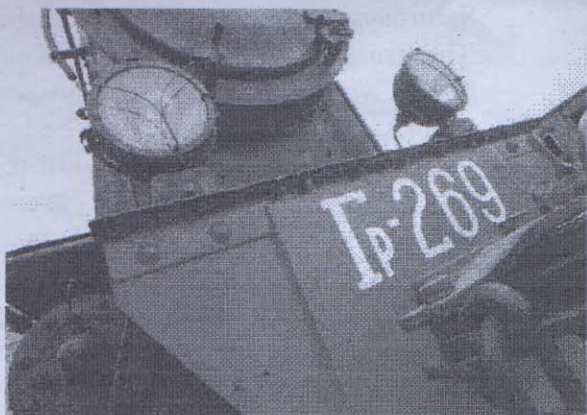
on Kupanskoye – Pereslavl section was raised to three pairs a day on Fridays, Saturdays and Sundays. The traffic to Kubrinsk was not resumed. The Kubrinsk branch was inspected in late April and the condition of track reported to be beyond reasonable repair, not speaking of regular passenger service. While the paved road to Kubrinsk is being rapidly built, there are hopes that closer to autumn the local authorities will permit to officially close the line and lift the tracks. 20 thousand rubles monthly donations are planned until the end of the year within local budget for support of the regular passenger traffic, but there is danger that after Kubrinsk finally closes this money will be lost. So maximum effort should be spent to prepare for the next year's season, as the budget will be very tight.



Regular train at Kupanskoye

The main idea is to organise tourist traffic between level crossing at Veksa junction and Talitsy museum for groups coming by chartered buses. So far the condition of the dirt road to Talitsy Museum did not allow big buses and even minivans in certain weather. At the same time there is much interest from numerous tour operators to include Talitsy Museum and a short train ride into their Golden Ring and Pereslavl routes. In addition, those casual visitors not willing to drive on bad road through forest will receive the opportunity to leave their car under supervision at Veksa and travel to Talitsy by rail. There are plans to run several experimental services this autumn, when tour operators become most active.

1950-es REENACTED



Politically incorrect engine...

The first tourist train on Pereslavl railway ran on the 3rd of June, 1991. This date is considered to be the Museum's birthday, and for several years already festivals are held at Talitsy in the middle of June to mark it. On the festival weekend museum trains are running on Talitsy – Talitsy Razyezd branch, other machinery from the collection can be seen in operation, various displays are organised and all the friends from numerous historical groups and societies are invited to participate.

Usually a steam locomotive is steamed for the occasion and, not surprisingly, becomes the center of activities. However, in 2002 we had to step aside from the steam tradition. The weather, starting from the end of May, stayed very dry and hot, and the risk of fires in the National Park round the lake Plesheyevo raised rapidly. In the middle of June peat fires broke out in the nearby Kupanskoye and Msharovo, and with this situation in mind it was decided to cancel steam. However, the festival had been announced, and the tradition had to be kept. So, after a short brain storm the decision was taken to hold the festival with diesel haulage and to reenact the post-1956 situation on the railways, when steam had fallen out of honor.

The XX Session of the Communist Party of the USSR, held in February 1956, together with ending Stalin's cult brought an end to the flourishing world of Soviet steam,

calling for the complete dieselisation and electrification of Soviet railways. Although virtually all steam locomotive programmes were cancelled immediately, narrow gauge steam engines remained in production at Votkinsk until 1960. In fact, in 1956 there were no industrial narrow gauge diesels capable of replacing steam engines. However, a whole series of light diesel-mechanical locomotives was already in full-range mass production. Though slow and noisy, they were there in 1956 to give an answer to the Communist Party's orders, and many years afterwards provided reliable service on industrial railways. The Museum's main workhorse, MD54-4-1547 diesel-mechanical, built in 1963 to 1956 design, was to get out of shadow this time and become the star performer of the 2002 summer festival.



A group of comrades discussing the future of diesels...

However, the three operational steam locomotives were also towed out of the shed to facilitate photography, and Kp4-469 was lit up without raising pressure, just to make

some smoke for show. The diesel train was planned to run on the Museum branch four times a day, at 1200, 1400, 1600 and 1800. Following requests of visitors, an additional service was organised on Saturday at 2000.

Not surprisingly, the Museum did not close at 1900 as usual, but stayed open until late at night. In spite of diesel haulage, the single coach was heavily packed on all occasions.



1950-es rural fashion

To add interest to the activities, all members of the club and numerous friends turned up in period clothes, this time even the "Red Army" people dressed as civilians. Small "authentic" scenes developed in different parts of the Museum's territory, and, in addition to the hand winch trolley and diesel train, there were other attractions. The chairman of "Red Army" club's motorcycle division Vladimir Kolotovkin,

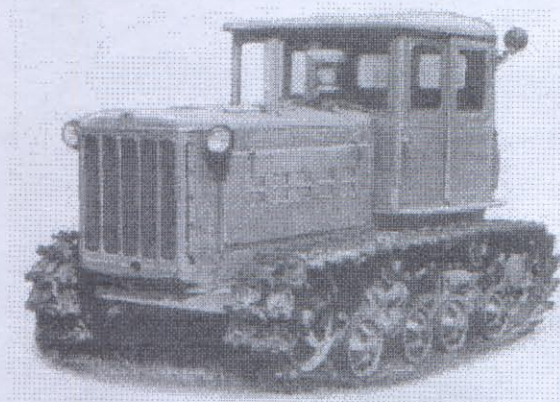
dressed as chairman of local collective farm, gave rides to the willing public on his BMW R35 motorcycle. Members of several vintage automobile clubs from Moscow brought in several lorries and motorcars of 1950-es period. Thanks to their active participation in the show it became possible to fully recreate the period atmosphere in Talitsy, with many historical items moving to great appreciation of the public...



Progressive traction!

LIGHT DIESEL RAIL TRACTORS

When in 1956 the political decision to dieselise Soviet railways caused confusion in the ministry of Ways of Communications, numerous industrial narrow gauge railways were already completely relying on internal combustion power, many not even knowing of steam practices.

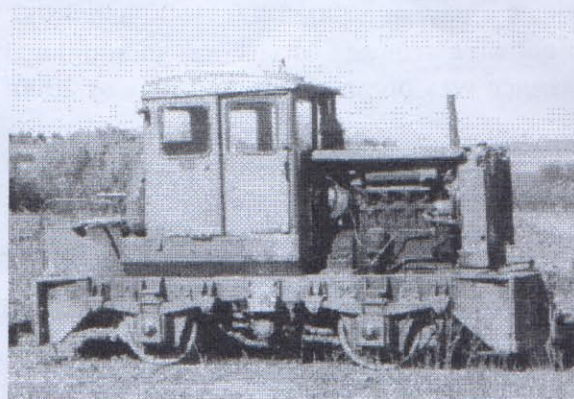


DT54 agricultural tractor

Only year after the end of the WW2, in 1946, the production of new D54 diesel engine for various use started at several Soviet motor works. The D54 was a 54 h. p. four-cylinder engine, based on American design of late 1930-es. In just two years the tractors with D54 engine became the main power in the USSR's agriculture and industry. Following the requirements of the industry and with standardisation in mind, the new engine was soon used to power light narrow gauge locomotives.

The locomotives came in two basic designs. First and most simple, was the complete tractor structure, less wheels and tracks, installed in two-axle locomotive-type frames. The wheels were driven through chains from standard tractor drive shafts. The only modification to the tractor's transmission was installation of reverse mechanism instead of differential. Braking was through standard tractor brakes. The machine received MD54-2 designation, for Motor locomotive with D54 engine, 2-axle type.

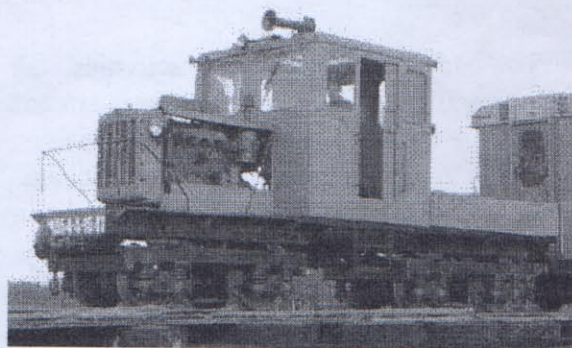
Another was more locomotive-like, with the diesel, gearbox, separate reverse box, spacious cab and freight platform mounted on the four-axle bogie underframe. Accordingly, these received MD54-4 designation. The MD54-4 had mechanical brakes and airbrakes, powered by standard automobile compressor, driven through the engine's fan belt.



MD54-2

As in both designs the engine was positioned at one end of the frame, the additional ballast box was needed on the other end to equal the axle load. The ballast box top was often used for transportation of light loads and tools.

Not surprisingly, with only 54 h. p. engine, the transmission with very high ratio was used to get enough tractive effort. This resulted in pretty low running speeds, the maximum being 22-25 km/h. However, the poor track conditions of most industrial lines often did not allow even such speeds.



MD54-4

Both locomotives were intended for purely freight use, mainly in the logging industry and in the industry of construction materials, where they soon became widely spread. Their construction continued until late 1970-es at several locomotive and mechanical works.

To the early 1990-es, when locomotive preservation began to rise to its feet, both MD54-2 and MD54-4 types were already rarities, being long since replaced by more modern power. Nowadays two MD54-4s survive in museums, and one MD54-2 is still active at remote brickworks in Northern Russia.

THE MOSCOW COMPANY OF SECONDARY LINES

In The Cuckoo-5 we wrote about Ryazan' – Vladimir Railway of the Moscow Company of Secondary Lines. This railway is well known, and its remains are often

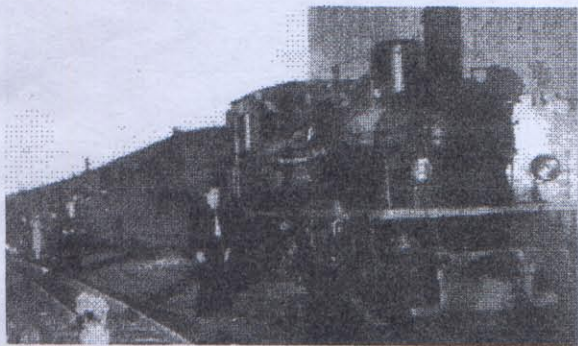
visited by rail enthusiasts. The much less known of the Moscow Company's projects are Tula – Likhvin and Tuma – Kasimov – Yelat'ma railways.



Tula – Likhvin Railway

The Moscow Company of Secondary Lines was formed on March 26, 1892 with the aim of narrow gauge railway construction in Central Russia, namely Moscow area. This was a private joint-stock company.

After success of Ryazan' – Vladimir Railway, the Company ventured to build another similar line, this time in the South, 190 km from Moscow, from Tula to Likhvin. The target was also similar – to link several communities with industrial center of Tula by reliable means of transport.



*Passenger train with Sormovo 157 0-8-0
in Tula, 1930-es*

The 112 km railway from Tula to Likhvin was officially opened on December 27, 1905. The gauge was again 750 mm.

The Moscow Company, together with The First Company of Secondary Lines and Kolomna works has developed a "standard" type of 0-8-0 locomotive and a whole range of freight and passenger rolling stock, which was unanimous for most common-carrier narrow gauge lines in Russia. While Kolomna built the locomotives, the wagons and coaching stock were ordered at various works and mechanical shops according to standards.

On the contrary to Ryazan' – Vladimir Railway, which passed through vast woodland, Tula – Likhvin line was built in the little-forested area, where firewood was scarce. Following requests from the Moscow Company, Kolomna works developed oil-burning version of their standard 0-8-0, class 87, which became the mainstay of Tula – Likhvin locomotive fleet.

For the construction of Tula – Likhvin Railway the Moscow Company transferred from Ryazan' – Vladimir line, Cockerill A.1

0-4-0T of 1892 and Kolomna K.23 0-8-0 of 1903, which opened traffic on the line. Not before long after the opening three oil-burning Kolomna 0-8-0s, K.24 – K.26 were added, and similar K.27 – K.30 raised the stock to nine in 1910. In 1915 Maltsov B.2 0-8-0T of 1898 was transferred from Ryazan' – Vladimir Line.

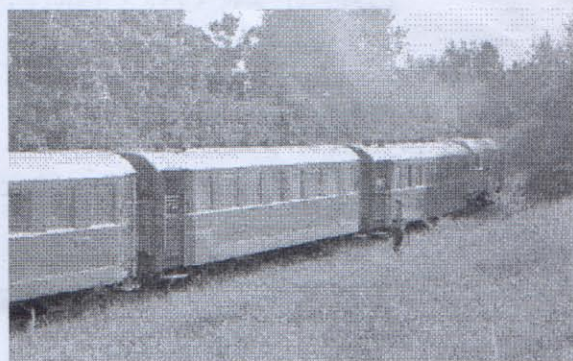
The trains on the line consisted of 11 – 12 wagons and traveled very slow, even though the locomotives were capable of running with speeds up to 30 km/h.

After the Bolshevik revolution of 1917 and following nationalisation the railway fell under the courtesy of the People's Commissariat of Ways of Communications, Moscow – Kursk Railway.

Just prior to the WW2 the broad gauge railway was constructed nearly parallel to Tula – Likvin line, taking most of freight traffic. Soon after 1945 the dismantling of the narrow gauge began from Likhvin end.

Steam vanished from the railway in 1960-es, when standard narrow gauge TU2 diesel electrics replaced all locomotive fleet of ageing Kolomna classes 63 and 87 and more modern Sormovo 157 0-8-0s.

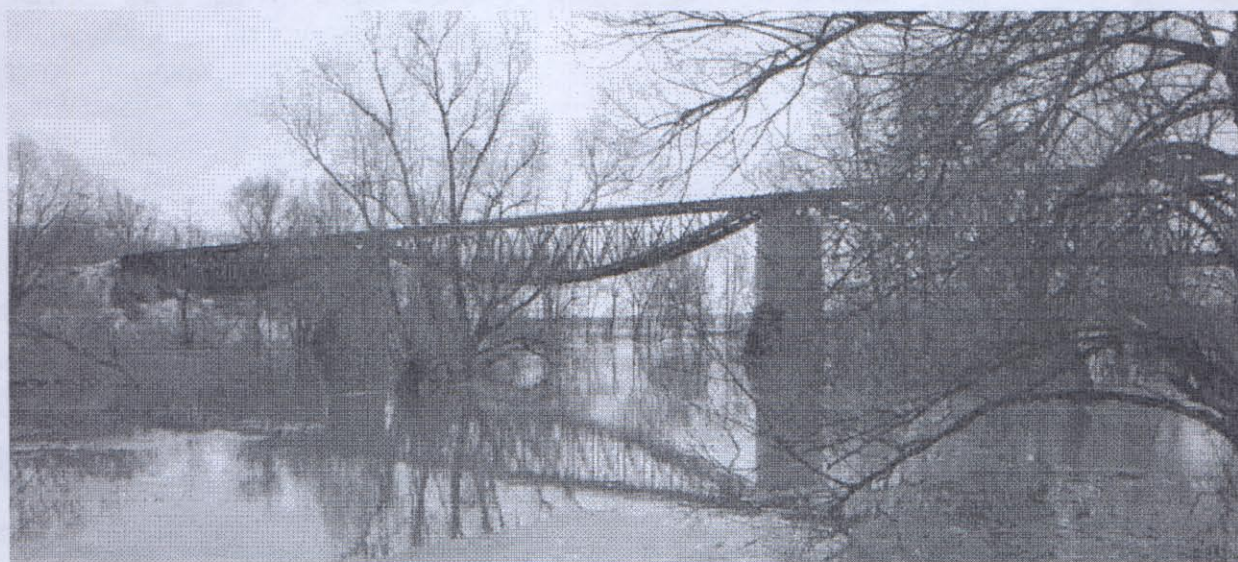
With diesels came more modern all metal passenger coaches, built by Pafawag of Poland and standard freight stock from Demikhovo works.



Dacha train in 1985

However, 20 km long part from Tula end continued operation until early 1990-es, providing commuter service for numerous dacha owners. Closer to the turn of the century winter traffic was discontinued and soon summer service was shut down too, loosing passengers to the buses. Last rails were lifted, and remaining locomotives and rolling stock gathered at Tula station for probable future transfer to other railway or selling.

Little remained of the line, but the huge girder bridge over Upa river still stands, as a monument to the Moscow Company of Secondary Lines and its Tula – Likvin Railway.



The bridge over Upa river



Ryazan' – Vladimir and proposed Tuma – Kasimov – Yelat'ma lines

Following fast development of Meshora, promoted by Ryazan' – Vladimir narrow gauge line, and successful launch of Tula – Likhvin railway, the Moscow Company of Secondary Lines embarked on the third project – Tuma – Kasimov – Yelat'ma line.

This was planned as a branch to Ryazan' – Vladimir railway, connecting Tuma station halfway between Vladimir and Ryazan' with two remaining principal settlements of Meshora – Kasimov and Yelat'ma, both on the Oka river.

At the turn of the XX century Meshora was little developed. Access to this area,

rich with products of agriculture and home industry, was prevented by Oka river, bordering the area from the South and East. Moscow – Nizhniy Novgorod Railway passed through Vladimir, the Northern border town of the area. Moscow – Kazan' Railway, while crossing the heart of Meshora, did not go through any of its centers. So the railway was vitally needed to link the remote Meshora communities with already existing Ryazan' – Vladimir Railway.

The project was developed to build 750 mm gauge branch from Tuma 65 km to the

East to Kasimov, the center of flax-spinning industry. The town also had clothes factory and ship-repair yard. Beyond Kasimov the tracks had to reach the village of Yelat'ma with its extensive home industry. Thus all significant centers of Meshora could be linked together by the system of narrow gauge metals, providing modern and reliable transport.

All was good on paper and the project had bright future. The survey began but was

soon halted by the worsening political and economical situation in Russia, caused by the First World War and revolution.

The priorities of post-1917 turned different, and the project vanished into history together with the Moscow Company of Secondary Lines itself.

Yelat'ma never saw own railway, and Kasimov received rail link only after the Second World war, as a broad gauge branch to Moscow – Kazan' railway.

Locomotives of the Moscow Company of Secondary Lines

Designation	Type	Manufacturer	Branch
A.1 – A.4	0- 2 -0 T	Cockerill 1892	Ryazan'-Vladimir, A.1 in 1904 – to Tula - Likhvin
B.1 – B.2	0- 8 -0 T+T	Maltsov 1898	Ryazan'-Vladimir, B.2 in 1915 – to Tula - Likhvin
B.3	2 - 2 -0	Porter 1898	Ryazan'-Vladimir
K.1 – K.23	0- 8 -0 type 63	Kolomna 1898 - 1903	Ryazan'-Vladimir, K.23 in 1904 – to Tula - Likhvin
K.24 – K.30	0- 8 -0 type 87	Kolomna 1903	Tula – Likhvin / Ryazan' - Vladimir The locomotives were frequently transferred from one line to another and back
K.31	0- 8 -0 type 122	Kolomna 1910	Ryazan' - Vladimir
K.41	0- 8 -0 type 127	Kolomna 1911	Tula - Likhvin

The Moscow Company of Secondary Lines, though operating rural narrow gauge railways, participated extensively in locomotive and wagon development in Russia.

Kolomna works extensively experimented with progressive ideas of steam locomotive designing. The lines of the Moscow Company, both located not far from Kolomna, provided convenient proving grounds for locomotive trials.

In 1910 Kolomna built first superheated narrow gauge locomotive in Russia, class 122 0-8-0, based on standard class 63. For

14 years the locomotive successfully worked on Ryazan' – Vladimir line.

In 1911 another experimental version of class 63 was built at Kolomna. This was class 127 0-8-0 with Stumpf's uniflow engine. After participating in Turin technical exhibition in Italy the locomotive returned to Russia and worked on Tula – Likhvin railway.

After the revolution the railways of former Moscow Company became the field of extensive trials of new Soviet class 157 and 159 locomotives.

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