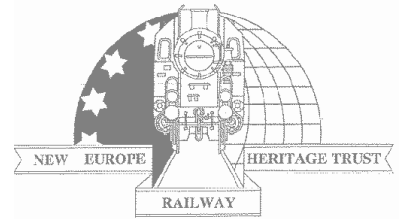


Eastern Star



Journal of the New Europe Railway Heritage Trust,
helping railway preservation in the New Europe



Photo Sergei Palienko

The newly restored Ea 2026 makes an impressive show at
Tsvitkove, Ukraine, October, 2020. (see page 8)

RUSSIA

In our last issue there was a brief mention of a 3ft-gauge passenger car and the Maltsov industrial empire to which it belonged. We are grateful to Sergei Dorozhkov for the extra details and pictures that follow:

Treasure of the Maltsov Empire: Sergei Maltsov and his Railway

The name of Sergei Ivanovich Maltsov is well known to those interested in Russian pre-1917 history. A landowner, trader and industrial pioneer, producer of glass, agricultural machinery, rails, locomotives and wagons, Maltsov was a famous figure of the 19th century. An innovative entrepreneur, he created in Kaluga, Orel and Smolensk provinces a 'state within a state' with its own currency and police, and distinctive educational system. Numerous plants and factories of his empire were connected by a network of waterways. In spring 1877 Maltsov launched construction of his own 3' gauge railway to link the principal settlements, logging camps, mines and industries of his estate. Unlike other narrow gauge railways built in Russia in the third quarter of the 19th century, virtually everything, from rails to locomotives, was designed and produced domestically, within Maltsov's industrial company.

Sergei Maltsov was one of the first in Russia to introduce the 'light railway' concept. [The very first was the Moscow – Yaroslavl Railway, building their Vologda branch to John Fell principles, but it was Maltsov who became real advocate of the idea]. Apart from his railway, which eventually evolved into a complicated 180-mile system, the Maltsov Company assisted construction of the Oboyan' Railway for the local 'zemstvo' (district council) in Belgorod province, and equipped it with locomotives and rolling stock. Maltsov plants supplied rail, steam locomotives and wagons for many Russian railways, from 5' gauge state lines to the private 750mm Moscow Company.

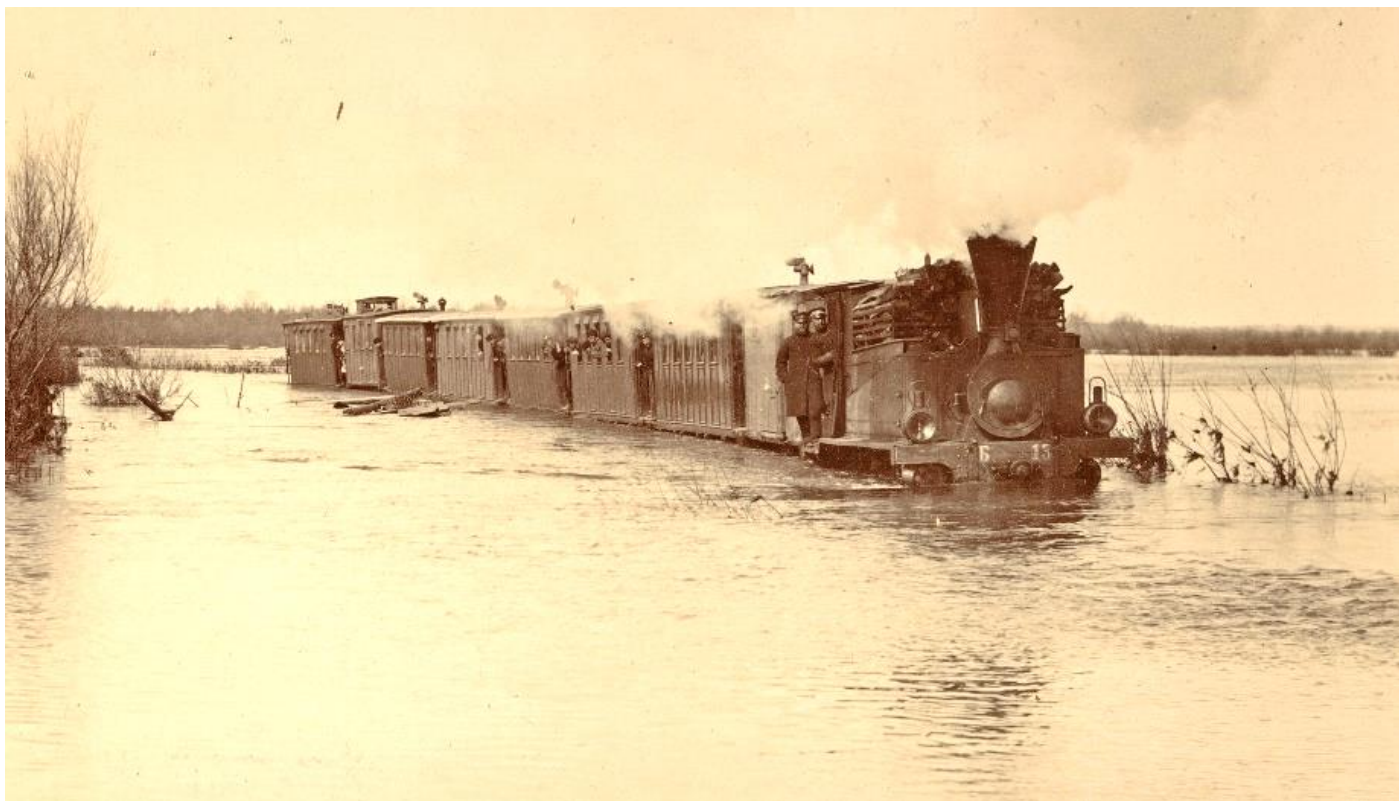
Sadly, the blossoming period of the Maltsov Empire was short. Many of his innovations came ahead of time, while strictly centralised management and the isolated educational system proved incapable of long-term development. In 1884 Sergei Maltsov was forced to retire. Most of his industries continued operation, albeit at a much more modest pace.

The Maltsov Railway survived well into the 20th century. Starting from the 1920s, more important sections were replaced with broad gauge branches. The last 3' gauge rails were lifted in the 1970s.

A 'different' railway

To save on construction and operation costs, the Maltsov Railway was built very lightly, with 10-pound rail. On some branches attempts were made to use even lighter 6-pound rail, spiked to longitudinal wooden planks, thus allowing spaced-out sleepers. However, this extreme practice was soon abandoned, as flimsy rails could not be held in gauge properly.

As the terrain was generally flat, the earthwork was cut to a minimum. At times this could cause flooding problems, but simplicity and robustness of Maltsov machinery (as well as of the administrative system) allowed certain violations of generally accepted principles of railway operation. One of such occasions can be seen on the accompanying photograph of a passenger train, passing a flooded track.



Steam locomotives for the railway were constructed by domestic plant in Lyudinovo, becoming first Russian-built narrow gauge locomotives of serial production. These were simple wood-fired four- and six-wheel side tanks with outside frames and cylinders. The engines were very light, the 0-4-0T weighting 8.2 tons and 0-6-0T 13.4 tons in working order. Both types had 1000mm diameter driving wheels, and could achieve speeds up to 27mph. Theoretically such big wheel diameter was too large for a narrow gauge engine. However, this feature remained one of the mainstays of the Maltsov narrow gauge type for 21 years, until the end of production of 3' gauge locos at Lyudinovo in 1898.



The rolling stock was also 'different'. Four-wheel (see picture) and six-wheel schemes were tried out in the beginning, but gradually were replaced by more versatile bogie designs. At the Nizhny Novgorod Trade and Industrial Exhibition in 1896 the Maltsov Company demonstrated several types of freight wagons on standardised bogie chassis. The frames were built entirely of wood, only bolster beams being an exception. Unlike other narrow gauge rolling stock manufacturers, the frames of the Maltsov wagons had complicated construction, with diagonal braces and truss rod reinforcements. Kolomna, the First Company and most others relied on a much simpler array of longitudinal and transverse braces, which required much thicker beams and raised the tare weight of the wagons.

At about the turn of the century the same frames and chassis, as shown at Nizhniy Novgorod, were used by Maltsov for development of 'standardised' coaching stock.

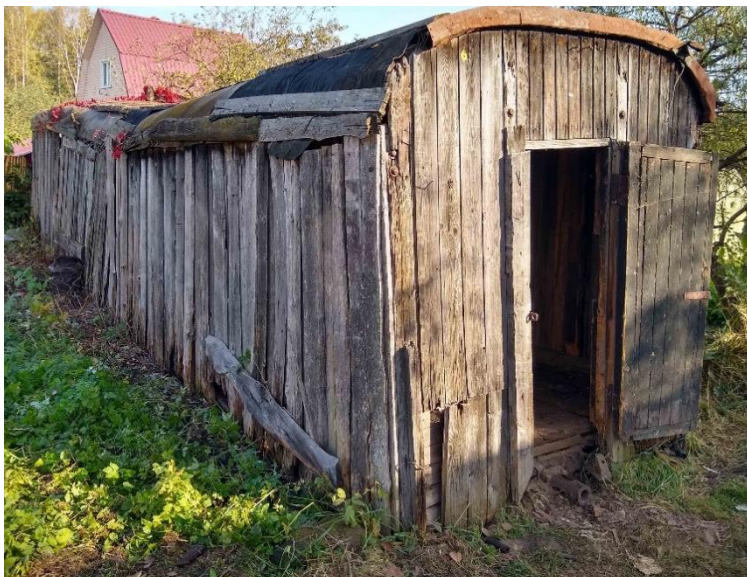
There came versions of different classes, with open or enclosed balconies, and even saloons. Unfortunately, the so-far-discovered photographic and documented evidence is so scarce, that it is immensely difficult to give a more detailed description.

A sensational find

With such a rich history it may seem strange that virtually no physical traces of the Maltsov Railway have survived. This can be partly explained by the catastrophic effect of WW2, heavily affecting the area of the system. In spite of efforts of local historians, very little is known. Several fact-finding expeditions, organised by the Pereslavl museum team, returned with discouraging results. However, persistence was finally rewarded.

In early October last year a colleague from the Railway Heritage Methodological Centre, visiting his elderly relatives, noticed an unusual storage shed in one of the dacha areas near Lyudinovo. The characteristic roof shape betrayed the shed's railway origins, while closer investigation revealed a central buffer, concealed under foliage. This was the body of a Maltsov coach!

An immediate expedition was launched from Pereslavl. Negotiations with the dacha council showed that we were most fortunately in time. The council was going to replace the ageing coach with a new shed before winter. Of course, they were happy to release it to the museum, especially bearing in mind that we were ready to help finance the new construction.



Careful removal

Less fortunately, the coach appeared to be in dreadful condition.

Back in 1958, when it was taken off wheels, it already lacked wall sheathing. When moved to the dachas, the body was sheeted with unedged boards. Put directly onto the ground without sufficient support, the frames suffered from snow, water and rubbish, and in places have rotted through. The initial idea was to save the body in most intact condition, but investigation revealed that the cost of such salvage would have been excessively high. Moreover, the chances for the carcass to travel 500kms to Pereslavl without damage were low. So it was decided to split the remains across rotten areas into several units.



coach were first transported 'to freedom' by a smaller lorry and then reloaded into the trailer.

Archival discoveries

When at home in Talitsy, it became possible to examine the find more thoroughly. As noticed during dismantling, while all centre beams were of oak, the outside longitudinal and transverse braces of the frames were metal. In this the frames differed from the 1896 pattern. Search in the archives revealed drawings for flat wagons, built by Maltsov in 1897 for the metre gauge Sergievsk branch of the Samara – Zlatoust Rly. Frame dimensions and layout of braces were identical to our find, and outside bracing was metal too – obviously due to requirements of the Ministry of Ways of Communications, obligatory for all public railways in Russia. (Sergei Maltsov, a significant industrialist in informal relations with ruling circles, could enjoy certain privileges, including exploiting his own railway with some ‘allowances’. However, products built by him for use outside his estates, had to comply with common standards). Further comparison of various drawings with surviving relics brought us to realisation that our coach initially had wooden outside braces. It was evidenced by the presence of specific cast brackets, intended for attaching metal bolster assemblies to wooden side beams. When around 1930s the coach went through capital repairs, wooden longitudinal and buffer beams were replaced with metal channels, but the inner part of the frames remained untouched. Thus it became possible to presume that the coach had been built in the last decade of the 19th century.

Of course, some years will pass before any restoration can be started. Deeper excavation in the archives is needed to obtain original specifications, extensive research has to be done to find clear photos. However, at long last, the story of the Maltsov Railway began to unveil some pages for us. Fascination continues!

Yaroslavl – Rybinsk Steam Trains

Aleksey Vulfov, the Chairman of VOLZhD (the Russian railway heritage association)



has sent details and pictures of the steam trains working on the 79 km line between the historic “Golden Ring” towns of Yaroslavl and Rybinsk, to the north of Moscow, which began on 16 January. The trains are due to run throughout the year on Saturdays although it is not clear how they may be affected by the Covid-19 situation. This venture was launched by the Northern Railway (the region of Russian State Railways) at the suggestion of VOLZhD, and Aleksey emphasises that these are scheduled passenger trains, rather than tourist specials, replacing the usual diesel trains and giving

members of the public the chance to ride behind steam locomotives for the price of an ordinary ticket. Motive power consists of members of the P36, L, LV and Su classes - including P36-0147 which stood on a plinth at Sharya depot for 20 years before being restored – hauling modern coaches. Crews have been given training in steam locomotive operation at the railway school in Kursk. Apart from the trains, the line has several historic features, including the restored stations of Yaroslavl-Glavny,



Yaroslavl-Moskovsky, Lom, Chebakovo and Rybinsk. The Golden Ring of course is a major tourist destination, with several historic sites popular with both Russian and foreign visitors, and the success of the steam trains is shown by passenger figures which have increased from an average of 100 to 165 per train since the service began, requiring an additional third carriage to be attached for the third trip. Let us hope that national rail systems elsewhere in the world follow this excellent idea!

CROATIA

The Most Rasa Project

The Croatian Railway Preservation Society website is now live and can be viewed at <http://www.croatian-railway-preservation-society.org.uk/> Neil Vlacic, the President, has reported on progress with the scheme to reopen the Most Rasa branch on the Istrian peninsula as a heritage railway. CRPS has now been registered as a historical society and membership is continuing to grow, with people joining from Bosnia, Germany, Irish Republic and the UK as well as from Croatia. There are encouraging signs that the public authorities are becoming aware of the potential of railway tourism as a means of stimulating economic growth. The Croatian government's latest plans for Istria include developing railway tourism, with much-needed repairs to the main line from Pula Divace, while Croatian Railways may restore the Most Rasa branch for both freight and tourist trains. The Istrian Development Agency has decided to support the Most Rasa project and promote railway tourism in the area. Discussions are continuing with the owners of locomotives and stock which it is hoped will eventually be used at Most Raša. CRPS member and railway historian Mladen Zalac recently visited the depot at Cakovec near Varazdin and the border with Slovenia and discovered 'cowboy style' passenger coaches thought to have been scrapped long ago. Built in 1961 for local branchline services throughout the network, these coaches were used on steam-hauled passenger services until replaced by DMUs in the 1980s. The surviving examples were used for filming and after the war of independence Croatian Railways proposed to use them on a summer steam service together with a still-intact buffet coach. However, this never came to fruition and the coaches were dumped at the back of the depot awaiting their fate. They are of the JZ/HZ Baat coaches type, 2-axle non-bogie coaches with wooden interior and wooden benches. Seating capacity ranges from 47 to 70 in three classes. CRPS activists have identified several locomotives which may be available for service on the Most Rasa line, and the most suitable are as follows:

2-10-0 Drb 52 also known as JŽ 33 number 33-042.. World War 2 veteran ("Krieglok") made in Berlin, in active service in Yugoslavia until 1986. These locomotives were seen

all over the former Yugoslav network and are a favourite with enthusiasts both locally and abroad. She was due to be part of the national collection but due to the lack of space available on site she was dumped at a disposal yard. Her number plate JŽ 33-098 was subsequently removed and is part of the now closed museum. It is the aim of the Croatian Railway Preservation Society to have her restored to working order for mainline railtour services.



Photo courtesy of Mladen Zalac



0-6-0T USATC S100 also known as a JŽ 62. Number 62-128. This American-built WW2 class is one of many that served the country during the Yugoslav era. None are currently preserved in Eastern Europe but five are still working in Bosnia and several are preserved in Britain. This picture (courtesy of Merim-Amila Alicic, director of the Rudnik Kreka Mine, which used these locomotives) is of 62-125, which is also likely to be used in the project.

4-8-0 MAV 424 also known as JŽ 11 number 11-062. Locomotives of this class frequently hauled the Orient Express from Vienna to Belgrade. Only three have been restored to running condition.

The Canadian-built diesel EMD G26 (also known as the 2044 type), which was a widespread type at the end of the steam era, may also be used, and there is a shunter of the 'old reliable' Jenbach type dating from the 1960s. The photo (courtesy of Virovitica Voli Vlakovi) shows one of these locally-built 44-ton units awaiting its future at Varazdin.



ROMANIA

Agnita – Sibiu Railway

Prince Charles' letter of support for this line (as mentioned in our last issue) may well have been one of the factors behind the decision to hold a high-level meeting to solve some of the legal and political hindrances which have held back progress on this promising project. First reports suggest that significant progress was made and we hope to report more in our next issue.

UKRAINE

As illustrated in our August issue, the American-built Ea 2026 completed its restoration at the AZIZU depot at Tsvitkove (Tsvetkovo). Together with the recently-restored 0-10-0 Эм 735-72 it was fired up in mid-October and later left the depot for a running-in trial over the Tsvetkovo-Zvenigorodka section (below).



On Railways Day in November it was the turn of Cy 251-86, which turned out for a run on the Taras Shevchenko to Cherkassy section. Due to Covid, however, it could not offer passenger vehicles. (*below*)



(With thanks to Raisa Karchevskaya and Sergei Palienko for this material)

VIRTUAL TOUR OF UKRAINIAN NARROW GAUGE

The position of the surviving Ukrainian narrow gauge lines remains precarious (see ES 80) with passenger services suspended on all routes which until recently offered timetabled passenger services. For many years we in NERHT and others have argued that these lines could and should be developed for tourism, and now our Austrian friend Wolfram Wendelin and Ukrainian preservationists have decided to demonstrate the popularity of the narrow gauge to the authorities by chartering special trains for a virtual tour.

“Passengers” will receive places on the train, with high resolution photos and films taken from drones for 25 Euros; for the higher price 50 Euros, special maps of the lines will also be provided. All photos, films and maps will be sent via Wetransfer to participants’ email addresses. The special train will run from Haivoron to Bershada in late March with the preserved Gr 280 0-8-0. Another special train will run on the Borzhava Valley Railway in April from Berehove to Khmil’nyk with TU2 – 034. Anyone willing to support this venture may obtain tickets and further information from Wolfram Wendelin, emails to wwlok@gmx.net

REVIEW

NARROW GAUGE IN THE FORMER YUGOSLAVIA – Narrow Gauge Album No. 5. By James Waite. Published by Mainline and Maritime Ltd. Hard covers, 23cm x 23 cm. 120 pages. Full page coloured photographs, all by the author, with explanatory text, on almost every page; two full pages of text.

The extensive narrow gauge network of former Yugoslavia was visited by quite a few enthusiasts from elsewhere until all passenger-carrying lines ceased operation by the late 20th century.. Anyone who thinks that the ex-Yugoslav successor states today have nothing to offer in terms of narrow gauge should get this new photo album by renowned railway photographer James Waite (whose pictures have featured in Eastern Star). The best known surviving line is of course the 76 cm gauge Sargan Mountain Railway, now operating steam and diesel tourist trains on the line from Serbia to Bosnia incorporating the famous Sargan 8, the route of which resembles the figure 8 on the map. In addition to industrial lines, some believed to be now closed, the volume includes photographs of locomotives and rolling stock standing on plinths and in museums, including those in the Pozega narrow gauge museum in Serbia which houses one of two surviving 60 cm gauge Pechot-Bourdon double Fairlie-style French army locomotives (the other survivor is in Germany). Several photographs show the Banovici colliery railway in Bosnia, also 76 cm gauge, which still uses steam and may have a future as a tourist attraction. We in NERHT hope to support this project!

Copies may be obtained from Welsh Highland Heritage Railway. The Station Building, Tremadog Road, Porthmadog LL49 9DY . Price £19.95 including postage. Cheques should be made out in favour of Welsh Highland Railway Ltd. (and not Welsh Highland Heritage Railway)

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The New Europe Railway Heritage Trust ('NERHT') is a voluntary organisation established to help railway preservation in the former USSR and the ex-communist countries of Central and Eastern Europe (registered in the UK as charity No 1099229).

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