



**Association
Internationale
d'Histoire des
Chemins de Fer**

**International
Railway History
Association**

**Asociación
Internacional de
Historia
Ferroviaria**

HIGHLIGHTS

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December 2019

Spoilt for choice

This might sound like bad news. I suffer from overchoice, a phenomenon which occurs when many equivalent choices are available. This issue, I do not have to look after copy. We use to call it a luxury problem. We have as usual the president's message, A message that is a bit more stuffed than usual. It is the end of the year and this is a fine moment for our best intentions. Two new books are presented in this issue, together with an overview of the anniversary of the Italian railway line from Naples to Granatello di Portici. Another anniversary should not be forgotten: the building of the Suez Canal and the railways. And at least some news on the exhibition in Train World. Whenever you are out of ideas, see you in Brussels. It is worth the trip

Paul VAN HEESVELDE
Chief-Editor



President's Corner

On the way towards next IRHA railway history conferences

Dear members and partners, dear friends,

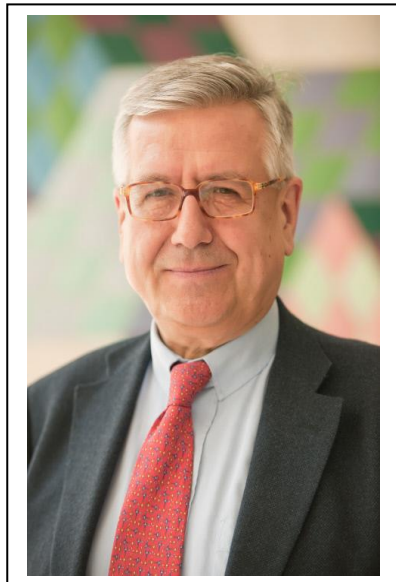
The year 2018 ended for our association with the successful organisation of the 8th Railway History Conference held in Budapest and dedicated to the theme 'Railways in the First World War'.

This international conference prepared by IRHA was supported by the French Railways SNCF and the French 'Mission du Centenaire (1914-1918)', UIC and the Hungarian Scientific Association for Transportation KTE. From 29 November to 1 December 12 panels in plenary or parallel sessions had provided an opportunity for a great diversity of presentations and lively debates among participants. The preparation of the publication of the lectures presented at the Budapest conference is in good hands and currently coordinated by Henry Jacolin, IRHA Honorary President, for the publishing aspects and Andrea Giuntini, IRHA Vice President, who supervises the scientific content.

It is now time to progress on the way towards the next IRHA Railway History Conferences. Initial exchanges among members took place in Budapest followed by discussion in our administration board and general assembly on 23 February in Paris. There was a general agreement on the principle to prepare two IRHA conferences for the years to come, more precisely, the 9th IRHA Railway History Conference probably in 2021 focused on a European theme followed by the 10th conference with global dimension proposed by our Canadian member to be held in Montreal, Québec, possibly in 2023. As the result of first exchanges, this global IRHA conference in Canada could have as a general theme the different approaches and decisions that led to the conception and development of high speed rail transportation systems around the world.

PRESIDENT'S CORNER

Continuation of p. 1



In 2021 we have an opportunity to hold our 9th Railway History Conference on a topic that was not directly handled at previous conferences, the role of railways in the development plans for Europe. According to first exchanges within our association, this IRHA conference could have as a general theme and working title "Railways as an actor of economic and social development of Europe, from the XIXth century to the Treaty of Rome - Railways in the European construction since 1957"....

We face a unique perspective to create a link and possibly fruitful synergies between our IRHA Railway History Conference and the 'Europalia 2021' festival that is currently being prepared in Belgium with the motto "Europe and the Railways". This "Europalia 2021" festival supervised by a committee made of prominent Belgian personalities is developing a very ambitious and attractive program that will offer to the public a great variety of cultural and artistic events all over the country and abroad. UIC and several individual railways confirmed their partnership with "Europalia 2021" dedicated to "Europe and the Railways". Museums such as the Train World, renowned cultural institutions, the Brussels royal Cinematek, the Museum of Europe should be involved in the program.

Our intention is to elaborate a first draft of a IRHA conference and to submit it to the "Europalia' high-level committee to examine together the opportunities for partnership and synergies.

Therefore, as members or partners of our association, you are cordially invited to contribute with first ideas and proposals for the content of the 9th Railway History Conference dealing with Railways' role in the development and construction of Europe. All your suggestions are welcome to help us to define the scope for such a conference (including theories for economic and social development in Europe thanks to railways, the birth and development of transport and railway policies at European level, concrete steps of the creation of a European rail system, etc. ...). A first presentation draft should be available at the very beginning of 2020 to enable us to communicate with our potential partners, institutions and companies.

Thank you in anticipation to all of you for supporting this project with your concrete suggestions, ideas and readiness to cooperate.

Paul Veron

The time for organisation of the 2021 IRHA conference will then be short and we will have to define as rapidly as possible the frame for the organisation, the search for supports and the preparation of the scientific content . Again, I rely on your enthusiasm, expertise and experience to allow the preparation of a successful and attractive conference.

In the meantime, and looking forward to meeting you again in 2020, I wish to you all and your families a beautiful Christmas time and happy new year,

Paul VERON
IRHA President

Railway readings Conferences and other news

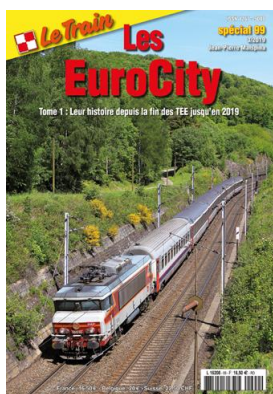


M.-P. Rauzier, F. Schuiten, High-Speed World, 2019, 232 p.

Following the great success of the Dream Stations, the first publication from the "Around the World" collection, the newly published book « High Speed World », edited by Langages du Sud Editions, invites us to discover the formidable human, industrial and technological saga that is the rail adventure of the 21st century. With each turn of the page, the reader lives the journey along high-speed rail lines across all continents, and experiences the challenges involved in the conception, design, and construction of these extraordinary infrastructures.

This fine book clearly unveils the benefits and effects of these highspeed trains, and the new perspectives they create. 21 existing rail lines throughout the world are thus narrated and illustrated, inviting the reader to discover their specificities, extraordinary routes, cities and inhabitants, as well as their impact upon the population and sociology of cities, the evolution of design, and technical prowess. "Storyboards" by sketch artist, scenographer and rail enthusiast François Shuiten are featured throughout the book, underscoring the unique quality of high-speed travel and introducing an incomparably aesthetic dimension.

More information on: <https://www.shop-ef.com/en/high-speed-world>



Jean-Pierre Malaspina, "EuroCity" - Volume 1 - "A history from the end of the TEEs to 2019" in Le Train, Special issue "EuroCity" - Volume 1, 2019.

The 80s mark a turning point in European history as well as in the history of European railways. The most important milestones are first the enlargement of the European Economic Community (EEC) to 12 Member States in 1986 followed by the coming into force in 1987 of the Single European Act that established the free circulation of persons, goods and capital within this community. Later in 1989 was the fall of the Berlin Wall and Iron Curtain that terminated the division of the European continent into two rival blocks.

In parallel the international rail services within this European space were until this period nearly exclusively focused on a network of prestige train services, the Trans Europ Express (TEE) network. They will move towards increased democratisation under the impetus of the International Union of Railways (UIC) through the creation of a system of fast passenger trains offering two classes. A first transition stage has been the extension of the concept of "InterCity" trains as they already existed in several European countries to an international scale. As this evolution proved to be conclusive to counter the competition of road and air, the next phase was the creation of a network of international quality trains with the brand "EuroCity". This new European train offer was launched with the timetable change on 31 May 1987 more than 30 years ago.

Until today no specific work had been devoted to this international train network. It is therefore interesting to publish for the first time the history of "EuroCity" as a special issue of the magazine "Le Train". The next step will propose the detailed inventory of the rolling stock (traction units and hauled rolling stock) and a in-depth description of the most important "EuroCity" trains.

HAPPY ANNIVERSARY

180 years ago in the Kingdom of the Two Sicilies

On 3 October 1839 - 14 years after the inauguration of the first railway line ever built in the world, the Stockton-Darlington line - the King of the Two Sicilies Ferdinand II of Bourbon inaugurated the first railway line on the Italian Peninsula linking Naples to Granatello di Portici. An important event that Italian railways FS Italiane decided to celebrate 180 years later in organizing a commemorative journey in presence of the President of the Italian Republic Sergio Mattarella.



The project for construction of this railway line was submitted in 1836 by the French engineer Armand Joseph Bayard de La Vingtrie. This project related to the first section of the line that the engineer envisaged to extend to Nocera with a branch in the direction of Castellammare. The concession granted by King Ferdinand II on 19 June 1836 for a 99 year term stipulated that the construction cost would be entirely borne by the concessionaire. As a counterpart the concessionaire could benefit from an exemption from customs duties for all equipment needed for the construction and operation of the railway line that was declared to be in public interest. In 1837, Bayard de La Vingtrie, his brothers Ferdinand-Jean and Charles, and Fortuné de Vergès - all three engineers graduated from the Ecole Nationale des Ponts et Chaussées - founded in Paris the Compagnie du Chemin de fer de Naples à Nocera et Castellammare. The construction works that were nearly exclusively financed by the French capital could start in August 1838 and were terminated 13 months later in September 1839.

The inauguration took place in the presence of the King and royal family, senior civil, military and religious dignitaries as well as of a crowd of enthusiastic onlookers standing along the railway line or also on small boats at Anchor from which the railway line could be seen. It took 10-11 minutes to the two trains that had successively left Naples to travel the distance of 7,5 km of the line. Each train composed of 9 coaches was able to carry 250 passengers and both were hauled by the "Bayard" and the "Vesuvio" locomotives respectively, two locomotives built in England after a prototype of George Stephenson. On the same day in the afternoon, the railway line was opened to the public. The passenger records during the first months of operations (over 131 000 passengers until 31 December) confirmed a real enthusiasm for this new mode of transport....

On 5 October 2019 in order to commemorate this event on the line, Sergio Mattarella, President of the Italian Republic, Luigi Di Maio, Minister of Foreign Affairs, Paolo De Micheli, Minister of Infrastructures and Transport, and Gianfranco Battesti, Director General the the FS Italiane Group and President of the Fondazione FS Italiane, boarded the train built by FIAT during the years 1928-1933 and transformed into presidential train in 1947-1948. This celebration provided an opportunity to underline the importance of railways in the development of Italy as well as the essential role currently played by the high speed network that constitutes, according to FS Director General Gianfranco Battisti, "one of the centers of excellence of Italy recognized at international level".

Michèle Merger,
IRHA Honorary President

The Suez Canal and the railways

The cutting of the Suez Canal, inaugurated exactly a century and a half ago, represents one of the most impressive infrastructural works of the nineteenth century. Thanks to it, sea routes were completely redesigned and international trade received a dramatic impact. For its realization, due largely to the French impulse, it was selected the international Gotha of the time: engineers of extraordinary preparation able, after years of study, to find a solution to a centuries-old problem. No less important was the contribution of the thousands of workers called to a work, which still today amazes for the enormous sacrifice and commitment required. The project was rewritten several times and suffered competition, over the long years of its preparation, even of the railways, considered a less expensive alternative to the channel in order to ensure communication between the West and the East. This happened especially in the moments of greatest difficulty of the long way of the channel, when it was thought that the adventure would not have had a good end. So at first a railway line was conceived in connection with the Euphrates river, navigable by the new steamboats, thus crossing a large part of the Russian territory and then the Middle East. Passing by land through Mesopotamia - train plus river - was reputed by some to be cheaper than the risks inherent in cutting the desert. The Euphrates route found an ardent apostle in the artillery captain Francis Rawdon Chesney; in his *The Expedition for the Survey of the Rivers Euphrates and Tigris* in the 1835, 1836, 1837, published in London in 1850 the British military clearly indicated a different direction from that represented by Suez. Another enthusiast supporter of the Mesopotamian direction was William Patrick Andrew, who in the 1861 paper *European interests in the Euphrates Valley route*: a compilation included the railway line in the more general theme of British interests in the area. Crossing Mesopotamia in fact meant for Great Britain to occupy a highly strategic area contended with Russia. In recent years the English actually poured a great deal of international political aims, which also translated into support or not in favor of one direction rather than another for the steam navigation routes. Another reason that pushed for the railway and river option was the perplexity aroused among many with regard to maritime navigation, which was considered less effective than that by river. Moreover, around the middle of the century, it was not yet established that the steam represented the best solution for ocean navigation, when on the other hand the Euphrates gave greater guarantees. Last but not least, the ruthless war that the British Crown made to the Suez project, which the British did not want to leave to the French, should be emphasized. The fluvial experimentation started in the second half of the Thirties did not give convincing results and not even the railway left. In 1836 the Euphrates expedition was ready, but an accident blocked everything: in May a sudden hurricane swept the Tigris, causing the death of 20 travelers who were on board. Chesney was saved, also on the ship, and most of the equipment and essential maps were lost. Chesney returned to England in August 1837, bringing with him a loot that was still too thin to bend the scales in his favor. Even with regard to travel times for mail delivery, the result was not favorable. From the scientific point of view, however, the expedition was essential, as it added a considerable amount of information of various kinds on the area concerned. Another important point was the re-establishment of the old road from Basra to Damascus and Beirut for the desert. But in June 1837 the Commission, appointed by the House of Commons to investigate the best route to India, downgraded the Euphrates route. Chesney himself was put on one side in favor of Henry Blosse Lynch, who took command of the largest ship, the *Euphrates*, which was accompanied in 1840 by three other ships: *Assyria*, *Nitocris* and *Nimrod*. In the same years John Galloway - son of Alexander, who was also an engineer long active in Egypt and died prematurely - at the behest of the viceroy Mohamed Ali, drew up the first project of a railway between Alexandria and Suez, seen equally in competition with the project of channel, sponsored in the 1830s by the Saint-Simonians. In that year, 1834, the British consul in Cairo wrote to Prime Minister Palmerston about the railroad: "It is to be hoped that these plans will be good for his future conduct", obviously alluding to the anti-

French contrast. When John died suddenly, his place was taken by his brother, John Alexander, who continued his work during the 1840s, condensing his hypothesis in the booklet *Observations on the proposed improvements in the Overland Route via Egypt with remarks on the ship canal, the Boulas canal and the Suez railroad*, published in 1844. Four years later the English government made a change to the affair, sending Robert Stephenson, who in the spring of 1850 proposed the construction of a railroad between Alexandria and Cairo with an extension to Suez. Stephenson, who signed the contract the following year, basically represented the British government, clearly deployed to support the line against the canal. The world's largest railway manufacturer promised to complete the work in two years for a wage of 55,000 pounds. The railway junction was practically imposed by London in agreement with Abbas precisely at the time of the greatest stagnation of the canal business. Work began in 1851 under the guidance of Stephenson himself. In 1856 the stretch between Alexandria and Cairo, which the British left in the hands of the Egyptians, was completed; two years later the whole line was completed, reaching Suez. According to the habit in the case of major railway lines, telegraphic wires were also run along the tracks. The use of the railway to transport mail was inaugurated in September 1855; it largely replaced, but not entirely, land and river transport. The complicated, but effective, combination of sea and land remained in operation until 1858, when the railway line between Alexandria and Suez was completed, eighty miles long, at the end of a gestation that had begun more than twenty years before, sending the slow and tiring caravans into retirement. The railway for the British was an alternative to the canal; supporting its realization was combined with the thousands of obstacles that the subjects of Queen Victoria opposed to those who, on the other hand, required the most demanding water infrastructure. Meanwhile, the Euphrates railway was also relaunched, through Persia and Baluchistan, between the late 1840s and the beginning of the following decade, thanks to the efforts of the Anglo-Indian engineer Rowland Macdonald Stephenson, who in 1850 elaborated the great idea of a World's highway. For Great Britain, in fact, the line, whose total cost was estimated at £ 16 million, represented a fundamental penetration axis also to reach India more rapidly than by land. In 1856 Francis Chesney obtained the concession for the construction of the railway for the Euphrates valley, but again he failed. In 1869 the opening of the canal would have further delayed the solution of the question.

Andrea Guintini
University Modena e Reggio Emilia
IRHA Vice President

Conferences

5th International Congress of Railway History and Heritage

“The legacies for our future”

4th Journey of Young Researchers in History and Railway Heritage

Campinas – Brazil - March 25th - 27th, 2020

CALL for PAPERS

The 5th International Congress of Railway History and Heritage “The legacies for our future” (a Railways Section of The International Committee for the Conservation of the Industrial Heritage -TICCIH meeting), and the 4th Journey of Young Researchers in Railway History and Heritage will be held, respectively, on March 25 - 26 and 27, 2020, in Campinas (Brazil).

The 5th Congress aims to promote discussion about the role of railway heritage today, particularly in Latin American countries. The event will feature various themes and looks forward to contributions that point to advances in research, management of the preservation and use of railway assets and the importance of these heritage assets for social development.

Concomitantly with the Congress schedule, the 4th Journey of Young Researchers aims to disseminate the scientific results achieved by undergraduate and postgraduate researchers in railway history, urban studies and preservation of railway industrial heritage. The event aims to stimulate the training of human resources and future researchers in order to continue interdisciplinary studies in this area.

The 5th Congress, directed to researchers, professors and professionals, presents the following themes:

- Theme 01: Education and railway: opportunities to stimulate learning through railway industrial assets.
 - Theme 02: Museums and railways: the culture of transportation as a challenge to the preservation and architectural and museological communication.
 - Theme 03: The management of railway heritage in the territory (housing, railways and constructive work): preservation instruments and models involving public and private civil entities.
- The 4th Journey of Young, directed at undergraduates, postgraduates students or young doctors, proposes the following themes:
- Theme 04: New methodological tools and / or theoretical approaches to identifying material traces and railway memory.
 - Theme 05: New documentary or material sources for the study of urban heritage and the memory of railway work.
 - Theme 06: Multidisciplinary Railway Heritage Studies.
 - Theme 07: Local studies and cross-sectional analyses on the history, architecture and urban contexts of railway heritage.

Proposals will be submitted in the form of expanded abstracts (1,600 to 2,700 words, 3 keywords) in Portuguese, Spanish or English.

The submission of expanded abstracts is from August 15 to December 15, 2019.

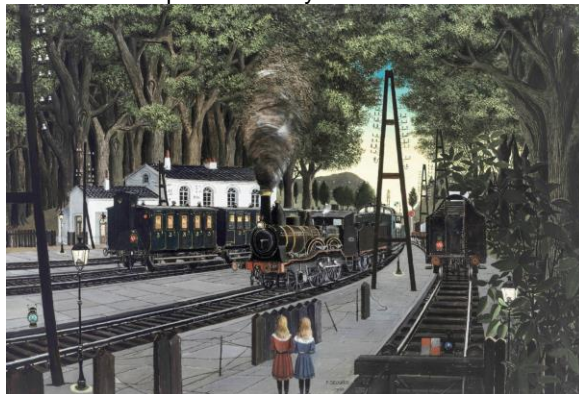
More information: https://memoriaferroviaria.rosana.unesp.br/?page_id=2443&lang=en

IRHA-AIHF is supporting the 5th International Congress on Railway History and Heritage "The Legacies of the Future".

PAUL DELVAUX. THE MAN WHO LOVED TRAINS

A wonderful exhibition in Train World – Brussels Oct. 22nd 2019 to March 15th 2020

Paul Delvaux (1897-1994) developed a magisterial body of work inspired by the world of trains. On the occasion of the 25th anniversary of his death, Train World invites you to dive into his poetic and mysterious universe.



Superbly integrated into the breathtaking scenography of Train World, the surrealist master's paintings echo the unique atmosphere of the museum. During this exhibition, we invite you to experience this magical resonance and discover the work of this man passionate about trains and stations.

The exhibition's itinerary presents the evolution of the painter's work: it begins with the first drawings of the 1920s, continues with the watercolours of the 1930s and culminates in the discovery of with the monumental works of the 1950s to the 1970s. A display of some of the artist's personal possessions reveals his passion for the railway universe.

A breath-taking, unique exhibition

About fifty works are exhibited. The works presented have been lent by the Paul Delvaux Museum at St. Idesbald and private collections. Only very rarely do they leave their homes! Around twenty large-format paintings are on display, including *La Gare forestière* (1960) - one of his masterworks - as well as canvases depicting women in railway surroundings: *L'Age de fer* (1952), *Le Voyage légendaire* (1974) and *Le Tunnel* (1978).

Besides canvases, watercolours and drawings, you can also see scale models of trains commissioned by the artist and watch a film especially made for the occasion.

Although the painter's fascination with railways remains a mystery, this exhibition takes you on a dream-filled and somewhat nostalgic journey.

© Train World



RAILWAY HISTORY
KNOWLEDGE
FACTORY

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Next issue:
Spring 2020
(as I live and breathe)

Do not forget to visit
our website!

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AIHF.COM

Next issue – March 2020
Deadline for copy: March 15th

SEE YOU ONE DAY:

I was struck by the way Europeans see history as something neatly linear. For me, it's not that; it's not some kind of straight railway.

Richard Flanagan