

nected, as were the Yakshanga and Ponazyrevo railways; moreover, only the further connection was actively used: Zeblyaki lumbering enterprise was operating around Sosnovka and Shayma, too, and sometimes it would “hire” Yakshanga crews together with their locomotives. In the 1980s Zeblyaki folks for some purpose frequently rode to Panino.

In the Perestroika times the operations of the log mill declined, also due to the fact that the commodity forests within the reach of the railway were greatly depleted. The passenger traffic grew sickly: in the middle of the 1990s the trains to Panino and Sosnovka circulated only a day, and not even daily. Toward the end of the 1990s the inhabitants of Sosnovka were relocated to Yakshanga, and the demolition of the “Northern Line” leisurely began. To Spring 2004, the rails remained only in 2–3km to the North from the Transsib bridge. It is planned to finally dismantle the “Northern Line” in Summer 2004.

The town of Panino continues to exist (April 2004) due to a roadway from Ponazyrevo. The last section of Yakshanga–Panino railway is mainly used by “Pionerka” (“Female Young Pioneer”) trolleys, and only in the warm season. The management of the half-dead log mill has no plans so far for its dismantling. . .

The railway station located in the Southern outskirts of Yakshanga, looks gloomy. Scrap metal of every kind, coach and car pieces are everywhere. Some track maintenance car (apparently, a crane) was literally torn apart: pieces of it are scattered in the radius of 30m. In the shed there is snow, and wind blows, and the two-story control tower has been destroyed. Only one working locomotive remains (TU8-0209).

Zeblyaki

In contrast to Yakshanga, things are going quite well in Zeblyaki. Of course, this is not the Maradykovsky railways with its five daily pairs of passenger trains, but nevertheless the timber “goes”, and the railroaders optimistically look into the future.

The construction of the Zeblyaki railway began in the post-WWII years; to the middle of the 1950s there arose the logging town of Vasenevo. The extent of the main rail line reached 65 km (to the town of Oktyabrsky at the Vetluga river.) Steam locomotives were used to the middle of the 1960s, then diesel (even **TU2**) and gasoline locomotives started to arrive.

Passenger traffic existed to Vasenevo (one-two pairs of daily trains) and Oktyabrsky (one pair). It became too expensive to haul timber from the distant plots in the time of Perestroika, and the resources were quite exhausted, so the habitants of Oktyabrsky slowly began to resettle. In the middle of the 1990s a working train went to Oktyabrsky only once or twice a week.

In April 2004 the railway works. One–two log consists arrive to Zeblyaki daily on workdays. The working train of three passenger coaches leaves for Vasenevo on workdays at 06.30, stays there to evening and comes back between 19.00 and 20.00.

Rails are lifted off on the last 5km near Oktyabrsky. It is planned to dismantle this section, up to the Nyuryug vilage “whisker” (branch) junction, in 2004–05. This is one

of the main logging areas.

The grade crossing at the intersection with the road Kostroma–Kirov is taken care of and has gates; a TU7 cab is used as a booth. Not far from it, in the northern outskirts of the town, there is a stub track with a covered concrete platform, which was used by the passenger trains. The NG track goes around the town from the North and the East; the station, shed, and log mill are located in its southeastern outskirts.

The volume of track repair work is substantial: at the station, there are piles of new ties, some of them are loaded onto flatcars. Yet, the second track that leads to the “gas station”, practically sinks in the subgrade. That, however, does not prevent the engineers from using it.

There are two separate sheds in Zeblyaki.

Rolling Stock at Yakshanga

TU6	0369, 0780 (0789?), 3046, ????
TU7	2473 (cab only) 2770, 2877, 7058, ????
TU8	0209 (works)
PV40	one half (cab only), 1693, 2852, 6017, 6821, plus 4 whole and 4 halves.
VPR300u	track maintenance machine

Judging by the dates of production, the last large party of rolling stock arrived to Yakshanga in 1987–90.

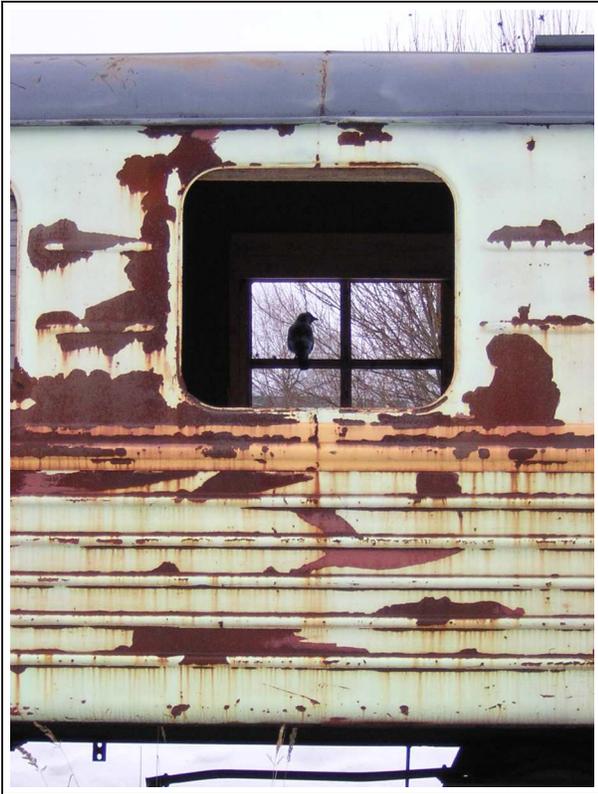
Rolling Stock at Zeblyaki

TU6ST	2037
TU6	3 locos (two cabs)
TU7	3 locos
PV40	030, 2106, 5022, 5442, 5988, 6411, 6723, 6822, and 3 more wholes and 2 halves

In the Zeblyaki shed, according to the railroaders, there are **12** working diesel locomotives. Both railways have a plenty of log cars, flatcars, tank cars, boxcars, and also Björke snow plows (two in Yakshanga and one in Zeblyaki.)



TU8-0209 is the only working locomotive at Yakshanga



Yakshanga: "The spirit of desolation soars above these places"



Zeblyaki station — vista from the log mill



Yakshanga station



Yakshanga. A tank car

FOR YOUR REFERENCE

In years of the V five-year plan, the number of narrow gauge steam locomotives in Kostroma region increased by factor of 1,7, and the number of gasoline locomotives — by factor of 2,7. In 1960 in the region there were 24 NG railways with the overall length of 700km. The maximum extent of all of thirty five NG railways that have ever existed in the region it 1516 km. To year 2004, there were no more than 8 NG railway in the region, with the total length of no more than 380km. — *Ed.*



Former passenger station at Zeblyaki



Zeblyaki shed



Zeblyaki. The track to the gas station

A. Fetisov (Moscow). Text, photo

UGNOV-VLADIMIR-VOLYNSKY FELDBAHN

Narrow gauge (600mm) military field railway Ugnov (Uhnów)–Laszczów–Werbkowice–Gozdów–Hrubieszów–Stryżów–Vladimir-Volynsky (Władimierz-Wołyński) already existed in 1916.

In 1916 it was transferred to the Austrian army (kkHB) and regauged to 760mm. The length of the main line was 104km (the major part of the line was located at the territory of contemporary Poland). The total system length exceeded 200km.

The railway utilized a variety of steam locomotives. For example, locomotives NN1–4 had been “borrowed” from narrow gauge railway Mori–Arco–Riva in Italy. In 1916–17 the railway had three Russian steam locomotives numbered 515, 941, and 1402 (the latter one was later rebuilt by the

Austrians.)

After WWI the line was again transferred, this time to PKP — the Polish railway company. In 1945 the Ugnov and Vladimir-Volynsky branches were abandoned, as they crossed the new state border (by the way, it is not known for sure if the line indeed had reached Vladimir.) The remaining part of the line was regauged to 750mm and was in service until the 1980s. Several kilometers of track near Werbkowice have been reportedly survived (see also page 13), and may be used in the future as a railway museum.

W. Wendelin (Mautern, Austria)

NEWS FROM ABROAD**POLISH NOTEBOOKS**

Normally we do not publish more than one material related to foreign railways in one issue of the magazine. But for D. Fokin's report we decided to make an exception. The territory described in the report has been repeatedly transferred from Russia/the USSR to Poland and back, and at present is connected to the adjacent C.I.S. countries by numerous cultural, commercial and, of course, railway links. Think of this report as of a view on our railways from across the border. — Ed.

It happened so that I spent a pair of my vacation weeks in August 2003 in East Poland, having dedicated significant time to studying the railway peculiarities of the region.

Two small towns became my headquarters: Krasnobród and Kazimierz Dolny, and if the latter one is already well known both in the country and abroad, and it draws tourists not only from Poland, but also from other countries and is famous by its literary and artistic traditions, then in the other town, the tourist boom is yet to come. It is necessary to say that the possibilities of Krasnobród as an ecological and

tourist center are widely advertised and actively promoted at the local and state levels through different development programs of the European Union.

Day One. Hrubieszów–Zamość

After spending several days in Lublin and dedicating almost all of my time to cultural self-perfection (with the exception of one day that was reserved for a trip along the

Semaphores at Werchrata



Nałęczów narrow gauge railway), I relocated my headquarters to Krasnobród, in 120 km to the south from Lublin.

It is necessary to say that a distinguishing feature of Polish roads is not their quality (which is nevertheless improving from year to year), and not the presence or the absence of road signs, and not the traffic code, but... their width! Or, rather, “narrowness”. The majority of Polish roads, even highways, is that they have only one lane in each direction; moreover, only major highways have wide curbs. One additional peculiarity is numerous road signs limiting the speed: thus, for instance, the permitted speed en route from Lublin to Zamość (90km) is not more than 60 km/h practically everywhere (this is due to many villages and towns adjacent to the road; and the traffic penalties in Poland are not small: hundreds of zlotys!)



2M62U-0161 diesel locomotive between Hrubieszów and Izov

One more special feature of Polish roads (a pleasant rule?) — the politeness of drivers. If a driver in the car in front of you detects that you want to pass him, and there is not enough space, then he will definitely reduce the speed and lean to the right as far as possible. The one who passes will always thank him by blinking the emergency lights.

However, let us return to our sheep. After reaching Krasnobród by the noon and checking into the hotel, I decided that I had positively no desire to eat after the horrible gluttony of the previous days, so I skipped the lunch, and immediately went out to inspect the surrounds. Specifically, I planned to spend several days studying the local wide gauge railway, the so-called Sulfur-Metallurgical Line, or the LHS, 400km long, as well as the line Chełm–Włodawa, and some cross-border lines and stations.

The LHS (Linija Hutnicza Szerokotorowa, ex. Linija Hutniczo-Siarkowa) is the longest wide gauge line ever built from the USSR to the metallurgical plants in the East European countries. There were plans to extend this line further to Prague and Leipzig, and not so long ago, in 2001, a project was discussed about making a wide gauge connection to the Czech city of Bohumín.

At present, after the period of relative decline, the line works quite actively, serving about 5 pairs of freight trains a day. Besides carrying ore and coal westwards, the line is

also used to move a sufficiently large quantities of goods eastwards from a number of intermediate terminals (an unquestionable advantage of this mode of transportation is that no transloading is needed at the border).

In the Soviet times, besides ore and cast iron, this railway also carried passengers. There was a train Magnitogorsk–Olkusz (unfortunately, I could not figure out when exactly it was in circulation). The passenger traffic did not last long after the disintegration of the USSR: up to the middle of 1990s, there were trains Olkusz–Moscow and Olkusz–Lviv, carrying “shuttle” traders.

The LHS goes parallel to the standard gauge lines, mostly passing large cities around.

First day, I decided to look around the LHS from the border station of Dorohusk to Zamość, and also visit several small Polish towns.

The LHS begins at border crossing Izov–Hrubieszów, near the border bridge across the Bug. The line crosses the border in solitude, the track is not double-gauged. The transborder trains are taken to the station of Hrubieszów by the UZ locomotives, mostly by 2M62.



Werbkowice station

The passenger station of Hrubieszów is located off the cargo station, in the outskirts of the city. It is interesting that Hrubieszów obtained its city rights back in 1400 from Władysław Jagiełło. The station was clearly built to grow, but it did not happen. At present there is only one passenger train consisting of one coach along the route from Zamość to Hrubieszów.

From Hrubieszów to Zamość the LHS goes in parallel to the standard gauge line through the town of Werbkowice; this station is all but abandoned, but it looks quite impressive, and has a variety of semaphores.

The next station is Międzyń; there is a siding here on the LHS, and the standard gauge station is desolated. Near the station there is an elegant abandoned apple-tree garden. The better part of the fruits was already ripe, and the knock of falling apples could be heard every minute or so.

The LHS goes around Zamość by a wide arc from the north and, diverging from and converging to the standard gauge line, at some point crosses it in one grade. Yet another abandoned standard gauge line also goes around Zamość,

and for the safety sake the turnout is switched towards the alternate route. On the bypass arc, the LHS crosses the abandoned standard gauge line on a bridge. The station in the city is located not far from the downtown.

Days Two and Three. Zamość–Sędziszów

Zamość city, placed by the UNESCO to the list of the world cultural heritage, was built in the 1580s to the money of Great Chancellor Jan Zamojski by the project of Italian architect Bernardo Morando. Zamość is an example of an ideal city. It has a fortress that has never been overtaken by anyone, Science Center, and Eastern Trade Center.



Zwierzyniec station. Diamond crossing

To the west from Zamość, on the LHS, there are located stations Zawada, Szczepreszyn, and Zwierzyniec. In Zwierzyniec, there is a diamond intersection with the line to Hrebenne. The LHS passes these stations, moving away from them by hundred meters or so. After station Teresopol Biłgorajsky there is the large station of Biłgoraj with an oil terminal. The city itself was famous in the XVIII–XIX centuries for the local sieve masters: the city was sending to various countries up to 700 thousand sieves a year.



Chmielnik. The narrow gauge railway bridge

The lines (1435mm and 1520mm) diverge right after Huta Deregowska. The LHS crosses river San on a very imposing bridge. As I was moving further along the LHS, I crossed the partially closed line Tarnobrzeg–Rzeszów after town Nowa Dęba. At the line there were surrealistic remains of station Majdan Królewski.



The San river bridge

In Majdan I ran across one more highway contingency: the route, designated as a regional road of average importance with hard-surfaced pavement, suddenly turned into a gravel road, with all the local road attributes, including road signs and kilometer posts.

Approximately in the middle of the LHS there is located one of its largest stations, Wola Baranowska. One more station on the LHS is Staszów. The standard gauge track at Staszów is electrified, but there is no passenger traffic.

After the town of Chmielnik the LHS is picturesquely crossed by an abandoned narrow gauge railway and “my” highway.

The LHS passes city Jedrzejów from the south; the station in the city is very unremarkable; however, here begins partially active Ponidzijska narrow gauge railway (Jedrzejów–Pińczów–Wiślica). Yet another beautiful place is platform Potok, after Jedrzejów.

The last point of my trip was Sędziszów town, with a large LHS station and a bogey changing station. A consist of empty boxcars stood at the station at this time, ready

to depart. Having waited for the arrival of a working train going into the opposite direction, the consist left to the east.



Sędziszów station. The LHS track is the rightmost one

Day Three. Chelm–Włodawa

In the old, pre-WWII times there existed a meridional railway Königsberg (Kaliningrad)–Elk–Białystok–Brześć (Brest)–Włodawa–Chelm with further connection to Lwow (Lviv). The trains consisted of 1st, 2nd, and 3rd class coaches, pulled by series O11 and Ti4 steam locomotives.

Near Włodawa, the line crossed the Bug river. Włodawa station it was located on the right bank of the river, and the town of Włodawa — on the left bank. After the territorial changes the station and town found themselves to be divided by the border line, and a new station was built at the Polish side. Thus, two stations existed in two different states, but with the same name. During World War II the bridge was destroyed and was never restored. As a result, two stub lines were created, which exist until now: in Belorussia (Brest–Vlodava, where Vlodava station is located in the town of Tomashevka) and in Poland (Włodawa–Chelm). The route across the border can be easily traced on the map.

The line from Brest to Tomashevka was altered to the wide gauge; it has substantial suburban passenger traffic (several daily DMU trains), and active dacha construction takes place around the line. In Poland, the line from Włodawa to Chelm was for passenger traffic in 2003; there remains some irregular freight traffic. At the Belorussian side, little reminds of the line behind Tomashevka. At the Polish side, the picture is much more interesting.

So, let us begin from Chelm city. The city was founded in the first half of the XIIIth century, in the times of Vladimir-Galacian prince Daniil. Besides its architectural landmarks, the city is famous for the chalk caves — a complex labyrinth of corridors and cameras, hollowed in the chalk deposits under the Old City.

Chelm station, the origin of the Włodawa branch, is a large railway junction, where, besides the standard gauge tracks, there is the one wide gauge track to Dorohusk–Yagodin border crossing. The station itself was recently reconstructed, the building is exceptionally convenient and

functional. Here at the station there stands a completely operational steam locomotive O149. The automobile-railway border crossing strikes with its multikilometer line of trailers from Europe to the Ukraine.



Chelm station. O149 steam locomotive

Further from Chelm towards Włodawa there are located stations Ruda Opalin (a small siding), Uhrusk (a much larger station with many siding tracks to the local enterprises; in accordance to the timetable for year 2002, the last year of passenger operations on the line, the station saw 3–4 pairs of daily suburban trains to Chelm and one pair of trains between Chelm and Włodawa), and Sobibór (a siding, where there was a Nazi concentration camp during the WWII).

The terminal station, Włodawa, is located quite away from the namesake city, once an important commercial center. At present, a yearly festival of three cultures, Catholic, Orthodox, and Judaic, is conducted in the city.



Włodawa station

However, the railway line does not end at the station, but continues towards the state border. The rails here, of course, have not been used for a long time, and lie rusty, but the track is in a very good condition, and the mound

was built clearly built to suite two tracks. Finally, the stub line ends, although the high mound, perpendicular to the valley of the Bug, goes further to the river.

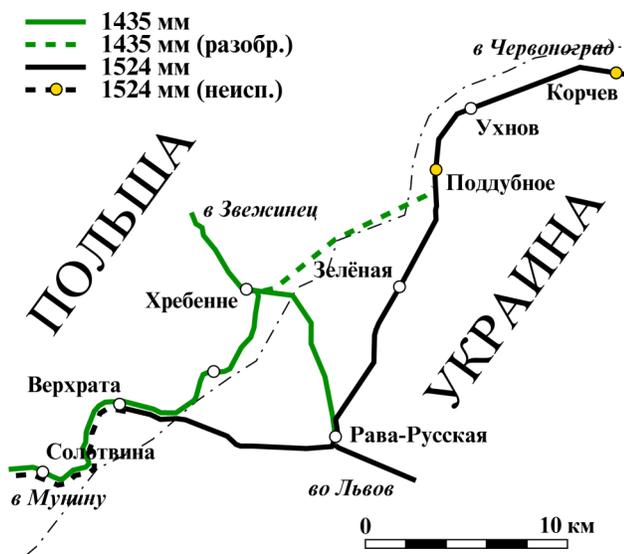
In 300–400 meters, one can see a border post. Near the post, the mound abruptly ends: that was the beginning of the bridge. From the border post to the river, the descent is not very steep, and it is densely overgrown with nut-tree.

After going down to the water line, I see the opposite Belorussian bank and scarce fragments of the bridge in the river. The route of the former railway can be seen at the Belorussian bank through the trees, and one can notice the part of the bank fastened by stone, where, apparently, there used to be the abutments of the bridge.

Days Four and Five. Hrebenne and Przemyśl

The better part of the time during these days was dedicated to leisure, to the enjoyment of the nature of Rostocze (so is called the locality south of Lublin), and to the trip to Przemyśl — one of the most beautiful cities of the south-east of Poland. However, I did not forget about railways. While attending small towns and getting down to the south along the border with the Ukraine, I uncovered several railway sights. After leaving from Krasnobród and passing the resort town of Susiec, where the station looks like those in the Baltic states, and having passed Tomaszów Lubelski with its most beautiful juniper church, I took the road Lublin–Rava-Ruska.

The road environment sharply changes: these are not quiet local roads anymore, but a lively international route with a plenty of trailers and automobiles with the Ukrainian license plates. I note that if the Poles drive according to their own courage (some — according to the rules, and some — against the rules), then the Ukrainians are the most disciplined drivers. They drive close to the curb and demonstratively let other drivers pass.



Hrebenne surrounds © D. Zinóviev

On my way to Hrebenne I stopped at Belzec station on the line Zwierzyniec–Hrebenne–Rava-Ruska. It is the base loading and unloading station for freight trains to and from the Ukraine; there are no large stations closer to the border, but only sidings and passenger platforms.

An interesting incident happened here. Apparently, somewhat earlier there passed a train through the station. Three Ukrainians, a man and two women, went out of the station building. A “Zhiguli” (old Soviet-built car) with Lviv license plates waited for them at the station square. The driver of the “Zhiguli” payed attention to me, when I drove up. I walked around the station and returned to the car. The Ukrainians drove off, me too, in the same direction, towards the border. The “Zhiguli” rode at 50 km/h, close to the curb (and closer to the border the road becomes a four-lane highway with an excellent pavement!) I was driving behind them. . . Then the Ukrainians suddenly turned to a gas station. I passed by and soon came across yet another station, Lubyca Królewska junction, which I naturally wanted to photograph, too. As I drove off from the station, the familiar “Zhiguli” passed me! It came out that, unwillingly, I was “chasing” the Ukrainians again. At this point, I guess, they became quite nervous. They probably thought that they were being followed by the Mafia. The Ukrainians abruptly made a U-turn across the double continuous strip, and drove back on full throttle.



Malhowice station

A usual line of trailers showed up soon closer to the border crossing. The day has been already leaning toward the evening, and many drivers burned their field stoves to prepare food. I felt, that they have been waiting here for several days. Border station Hrebenne consists of a platform and a small building. In summer it sees two pairs of trains Rava-Ruska–Lublin and one one train Wrocław–Zamość. As a matter of fact, there are two lines from Rava-Ruska to the Polish border: one goes north to Hrebenne (standard gauge), the other — south to Werchrata (wide gauge). It looks like two sides of an equilateral triangle, and third side is the standard gauge line Hrebenne–Werchrata on the Polish territory, right along the border. The train Wrocław uses this third line (both ways — at night.) One can drive along this line up to a certain point. There is a nice view at

the crossing from a hillock there.

In 1941, a standard gauge connecting branch was built from Hrebenne to the northeast to abandoned station Poddubcze (village Poddubnoye). We do not know precisely when this branch was dismantled. — Ed.

Werchrata station is located 5–6 kilometers southwest of Hrebenne; however, one cannot drive along the boundary all the way to it, other than on a train. The wide gauge line does not terminate after the transloading facility, but goes further in parallel to the unused standard gauge track. In several kilometers after the station Of Horyniec Zdroj the wide gauge track turns back to the border and, judging by the map, vanishes in the woods.

In Werchrata there is an expanse for the amateurs of **semaphores**, which are here abundant.



Przemysl surrounds © D. Zinóviev

Finally, I came to Przemysl, one of the most beautiful cities of the southeast of Poland, picturesquely located on the high hills on both banks of river San. The city is approximately in 10 km from the Ukrainian border; the largest “Soviet” (and even, perhaps, modern) railway crossing is here located: Mostiska–Medyka. In the old good times they

would process up to 11 million tons of cargo per year here. against 6 million tons in Brest.

Approximately in 20 kilometers to the south of Przemysl, on a high hill, almost on a mountain, there is a sacred place that is very respected by Poles — Kalwaria Paclawska (Kalwaria is the Latin name of Golgotha.)

As I was running out of time, I only managed to inspect the closed line Przemysl–Malchowice–Khyriv. Look at a map: the line Przemysl–Khyriv–Sanok dives into the Ukrainian territory and then reemerges in Poland. The locals say that earlier (in the 1950s) there was even direct passenger traffic from Przemysl to Sanok through the Soviet territory (the standard gauge track exists for the entire length of the line.) Now, there are no trains at all to Khyriv, but there is a passenger one from Khyriv to Sanok.

The line begins somewhat east of the main station, then immediately turns to the south, and is open for freight operations to the station of Pikulice (in the city limits.) This section is electrified, and once there even circulated an EMU train. Now, the line is used to store freight cars.

Closer to the border there was a station or a siding of Stanislawczyk; everything is overgrown here, even the tracks are hard to find.

In three more kilometers, the road becomes completely desert; here is the border line in front! There is no crossing here, but the locals say that, if necessary, the authorities organize the passage of the residents across the border. I did not want to drive up to the gates, but instead made a turn to the town of Malhowice, in order to find the former border station. The station was surprisingly easy to locate. The view here was unusually picturesque, everything was overgrown with partially neglected apple-tree gardens.

The trip to Przemysl completed the first part of my Polish vacations; I moved in Kazimierz Dolny, where my stay was more measured off and culture-oriented. Nevertheless, I was able to visit all stations of the Nałeczów narrow gauge railway mentioned above, which deserves which a separate report.

Relevant Links

- <http://lhs.pl> (Unofficial site of the LHS)
- <http://www.parovoz.com/stories/poland> (Web version of this report)

D. Fokin (Moscow). Text, photo

APPENDIX:

Timetable of train N1351/1352 Brześć–Chelm (yr. 1930)

	09:20	Brześć-Centralny		22:00
09:51	09:54	Stradecz	21:27	21:29
10:15	10:20	Dubica	21:01	21:06
10:35	10:37	Domaczewo Miasto	20:46	20:48
10:42	10:47	Domaczewo	20:36	20:38
11:04	11:04	Przyborowo	20:19	20:20
11:17	11:32	Włodawa	19:53	20:08
11:55	11:55	Sobibór	19:28	19:29
12:16	12:20	Uhrusk	18:59	19:08
12:34	12:37	Ruda Opalin	18:41	18:44
13:00		Chelm	18:20	

PHOTO HUNT**IF THEY OIL RAILS...**

VL11M-321 electric locomotive with a rail oiler, May 2, 2004, Ozherelye (O. Kotov)

**... Then Someone Needs It!**

A rail oiler is a self-propelled mechanism (typically a locomotive or a series RSM rail oiling draisine), intended for oiling the edges of rails at curves to reduce rail and wheel wearing.

Most commonly, rail oilers are built using seria VL10U, VL11M, VL60, and VL80T electric locomotives, as well as seria ChME3 and M62 diesel locomotives.

In Krasnoufimsk, a rail oiler has been built by inserting a TsMV type passenger car with the oiling equipment in between the sections of 2VL60-001 electric locomotive. — *Ed.*

VL10U-040 electric locomotive with a rail oiler, May 2001, Obninskoe–Maloyaroslavets stretch, Kaluga region (D. Sutyagin)