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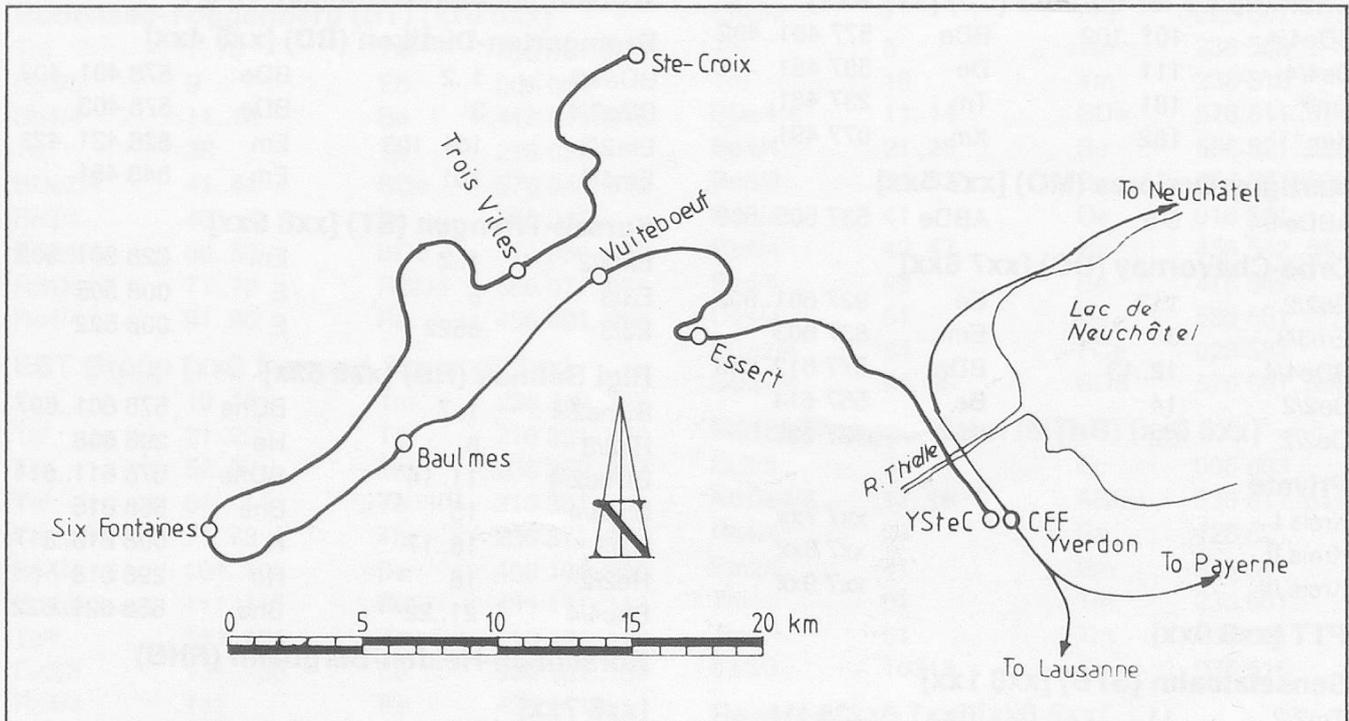
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# The Yverdon-Ste Croix Railway

By A.E.Hauser-Gubser



**The metre gauge** Yverdon-Ste.Croix (YSteC) was built in the remarkably short time of 16 months and opened on 27 November 1893. The principal shareholder, Mr.William Barbey, had provided much of the finance on the condition that, for the first 25 years of

operation, the railway should not operate on Sundays.

The line was originally steam worked with three Mallet locomotives, G2/2+2/2 which were sold in 1920/21 to the Lausanne-Echallens-Bercher (LEB). The line was then worked by a G4/4 locomotive plus three more Mallets, G2/3+2/2, bought from the Rhätische Bahn (RhB) and a further G3/3+3/3 Henschel-built Mallet acquired from France.

Traffic was satisfactory for many years, an important source being the stone and lime works at Baulmes.

The line was electrified during 1944/5, electric traction began on 25 January 1945 with

**Table 1 YSteC Statistics**

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Yverdon altitude	435m
Ste.Croix altitude	1066 m
Length of line	24.16 km
Gauge	1000 mm
Sharpest curve radius	100 m
Easiest gradient	24‰
Steepest gradient	44‰
Current system	15 kV AC
	16 <sup>2</sup> / <sub>3</sub> cps
Bridges	20
Tunnels	5
Longest tunnel	153 m
Passengers 1983	364000
Passengers 1990	822000
Freight 1983	13000 t
Freight 1990	49000 t
Cost/profit ratio 1983	0.55
Cost/profit ratio 1990	0.88

**Table 2 YSteC Stations**

km	Name	Altitude in metres
0	Yverdon	455
5.53	Essert s/Ch.	507
8.53	Vuiteboeuf	590
11.50	Baulmes	631
14.40	Six-Fontaines	705
19.26	Trois-Villes	907
24.16	Ste.Croix	1066

three electric railcars ABe4/4 and two motor coaches ABe2/4, to be followed by a freight locomotive Ge4/4, built in the railway's own workshops. In 1981 three Be4/4 railcars, similar to those supplied to the Bière-Apples-Morges (BAM) cars 11-13 were added to the fleet.

For the rising freight traffic, mainly in agricultural products, the YSteC owns a number of *rollbocks*. The railway workshops and main depot is at Yverdon, with a smaller depot at Ste.Croix.

From Yverdon the railway traverses a relatively flat plain but shortly after the hairpin bend at Six Fontaines it begins its climb up to

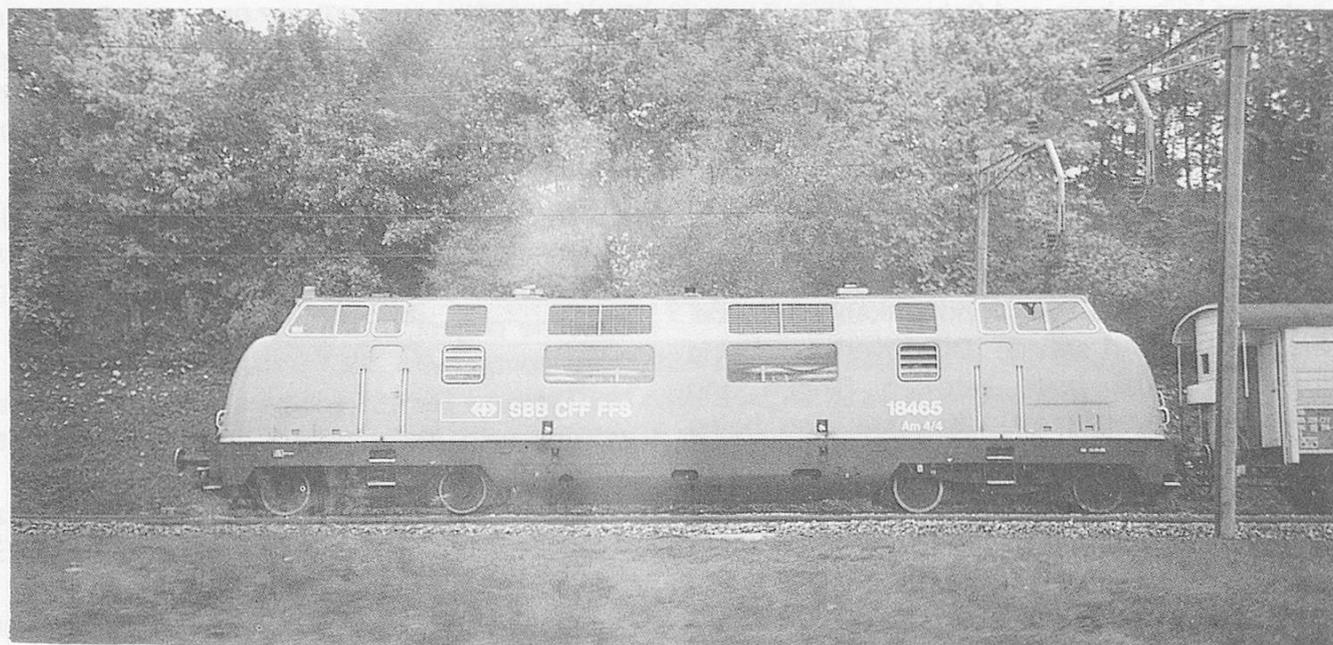
Ste.Croix. The line is renowned for the magnificent views it offers from this upper section over Lake Neuchâtel to the Alps. On a clear day it is possible to see Mont Blanc from across the major part of Switzerland.

If you enjoy hiking or skiing, then I would recommend Ste.Croix as a base. Yverdon, a thermal spa as well as an express stop on the CFF, would also make an excellent base for exploring the line in detail in addition to the lines of Canton Vaud or Canton de Neuchâtel, even those of Canton de Fribourg.

#### Modelling notes.

In my opinion, the YSteC has only one serious snag, there are virtually no models of the stock available, but this provides a fine challenge for the scratchbuilder. The simplicity of the various stations, the sharp curves, the relatively steep gradients and magnificent scenic potential of the upper part and the charming station buildings along the line make for excellent narrow gauge modelling. The terminus at Ste.Croix has just enough complexity to allow interesting operation without making too big a demand on space. Yverdon, on the other hand, with the main depot and the Federal Railway's depot on the other side of the standard gauge tracks, would not only demand a good deal of space, but call for a deal of selective compression as well.

Table 3 YSteC Stock			
No	Name	Class	Built
1	Yverdon	Be4/4	1981
2	Baulmes	Be4/4	1981
3	Ste-Croix	Be4/4	1981
4	(ex No.1)	Be4/4	1945
5	(ex Nos 2 & 3)	Be4/4	1976*
11		Be2/4	1946
12		Be2/4	1947
21		Ge4/4	1950
22		Tm	1971
-		Xm1/2	1957
*Rebuilt from Nos 2 & 3 of 1945 after a collision			



SBB Am4/4 No.18465, ex-DB, on engineer's train at Ostermundigen, Tuesday 20 October 1992

Photo C.M.Greenfield