

NORTH WALES NARROW GAUGE RAILWAYS AND WELSH HIGHLAND RAILWAY (LIGHT RAILWAY) : A STATION CHRONOLOGY

Some confusion exists in various published works about the original and subsequent names of stations during the NWNCR era – particularly the name “Snowdon” – and about when changes took effect, as well as about events in the subsequent WHR period. The following tables endeavour to lay out the best available data for opening, closure and renamings of NWNCR/WHR stations (passenger and goods) and other stopping places. In particular, the tables supersede the details in *Narrow Gauge Railways in South Caernarvonshire*: first edition (1972) pp. 147, 250 and 372, and second edition (1988) Vol. 1, pp. 151 and 260, and Vol. 2, pp. 2 and 120.

Dates are given in accordance with the “with effect from” convention (in the case of closures, the date from which no train ran, rather than date of last train, but bearing in mind Sunday was always a *dies non* for no regular services were scheduled on the Sabbath); the 1936 passenger closure is recorded as from Monday 28 September as the final trains ran on Saturday 26th. Where only a month is given, this may be the first/last appearance in a timetable (such as *Bradshaw’s Guide*), rather than actual date of change. The mileages differ from those given in *Narrow Gauge Railways in South Caernarvonshire*, which – in regard to the NWNCR – appear to have been taken from the Railway Clearing House Official Railway Junction Diagram no. 136, North Wales District, which was for charging purposes and not necessarily reflecting “actuality” (it added 15 chains to the physical distance at Dinas station). The mileages shown here are from WHR working timetables of 1923/4, estimated from Fox drawing A.33395, or (for the Bryngwyn branch) taken from the 1934 lease. Note that Maj. Marindin’s report of 31.7.1877 to Board of Trade gave Quellyn as 4m 25ch from Tryfan Jn and Bryngwyn as 4m 36ch from Dinas (end of line to end of line).

* = mileage from Tryfan Junction. # = estimated mileage. *WHH* denotes references in the Group’s magazine, *Welsh Highland Heritage*.

A. Passenger stopping places: Table 1 deals with the **NWNCR period**, Table 2 deals with the **WHR period**.

Table 1: North Wales Narrow Gauge Railways period

Mileage m. ch.	Original name in NWNCR period	Opened	Closed	Renamings and other observations
0 0	Dinas	15.8.1877	1.11.1916	Formally renamed Dinas Junction on reopening in 1922 (although the suffix was occasionally used before then).
2 0	Tryfan Junction	15.8.1877	1.11.1916	
1 0*	Rhostryfan	15.8.1877	1.1.1914	
2 20*	Bryngwyn	15.8.1877	1.1.1914	
3 60	Waenfawr	15.8.1877	1.11.1916	
4 40	Bettws Garmon	15.8.1877	1.11.1916	
5 40 #	Salem Halt	<i>probably</i> ca.1881	1.11.1916	Unadvertised – <i>initially</i> for quarrymen to Glanrafon (<i>possibly from 14.5.1881, possibly ceased 10.1901</i>) or Bettws Garmon, <i>later</i> general use (<i>WHH</i> nos. 50 and 52)
6 0 #	Plas-y-Nant	-	-	No evidence of it being open in NWNCR era
6 25 #	Quellyn	15.8.1877	1.6.1878	Temporary terminus. <i>There is no evidence to support Boyd’s contention that it was named Quellan: according to company’s opening timetable it was Quellyn.</i>
7 20	Snowdon Ranger	1.6.1878	1.11.1916	Renamed Quellyn Lake 1.1893 <i>Snowdon Ranger</i> was its proper title at opening (<i>even though advertised locally as Quellyn [not Quellyn Lake] during summer 1878</i>)
8 10 #	Glanrafon Siding	<i>probably</i> 14.5.1881	<i>by</i> 10.1901	Unadvertised – for quarrymen (<i>WHH</i> no. 50). Sometimes referred to as Glanyrafon.
9 20	Rhyd Ddu	14.5.1881	1.11.1916	Renamed Snowdon 1.1893, South Snowdon on reopening in 1922

Table 2: Welsh Highland Railway (Light Railway) period

Until the 1933 season, stopping places were open at the same dates as train services over the relevant section of line (unless otherwise shown below).

Mileage m. ch.	Original name in WHR period	Opened / re-opened	Closed	Renamings and other observations
0 0	Dinas Junction	31.7.1922	28.9.1936	renamed Dinas Junction on reopening in 1922 (but sometimes still rendered simply as Dinas , particularly on tickets) ¶
2 0	Tryfan Junction	31.7.1922	28.9.1936	downgraded to request stop from 9 July 1934; during FR operation advertised simply as Tryfan on leaflets but no tickets printed for this station ¶ #
3 60	Waenfawr	31.7.1922	28.9.1936	¶ #
4 40	Bettws Garmon	31.7.1922	28.9.1936	downgraded to request stop 11 July 1927 †
5 40 #	Salem Halt	2.10.1922	28.9.1936	opened ca. September 1922 as request stop (for its prior history see <i>WHH</i> no.50, p.13) – first appeared (as Salem Halt) in <i>Bradshaw's Guide</i> October 1922 (initially only as footnote) and first shown in company's own timetable for 1 December 1922; "halt" suffix dropped from WHR timetables with 9 July 1923 working timetable (but continued to be used in externally produced timetable material and in excursion handbills until 1933); during FR operation advertised simply as Salem ¶ #
6 0 #	Plas-y-Nant	ca.4.1924	28.9.1936	previously semi-official but first appeared in <i>Bradshaw's Guide</i> April 1924 and in company's timetable from 14 July 1924 as request stop ¶ #. <i>Plas-y-Nant was not on the map in Railway Magazine, December 1923, so presumably post-dates that.</i>
6 25 #	Quellyn	-	-	Not open in WHR period
7 20	Quellyn Lake	31.7.1922	28.9.1936	downgraded to request stop 11 July 1927 †
7 55 #	Glanrafon Siding	-	-	Not open in WHR period
9 20	South Snowdon	31.7.1922	28.9.1936	inherited as Snowdon from NWNGR – reopened 31 July 1922 as South Snowdon in local handbills (<i>Bradshaw's Guide</i> used Snowdon until June 1923 and - belatedly - South Snowdon from July 1923); FR had tickets printed as Rhyd Ddu in 1934 but their handbills retained South Snowdon throughout the FR operation (<i>a U-turn before the 1934 season started, perhaps?</i>), although <i>Bradshaw's Guide</i> used Rhyd Ddu from August 1934 to June 1935 ¶
10 24	Pitt's Head	1.6.1923	2.10.1933	request stop †
11 20	Hafod Ruffydd	1.6.1923	2.10.1933	request stop †
13 25	Beddgelert	1.6.1923	28.9.1936	¶
15 31	Aberglaslyn	-	-	Proposed halt – never opened
15 43	Nantmor for Aberglaslyn	1.6.1923	28.9.1936	request stop; renamed Aberglaslyn and made "definite" stop 9 July 1934 ¶
16 25	Hafod-y-Llyn	1.6.1923	2.10.1933	request stop †. <i>Handbook of Stations</i> rendered name as "Hafodyllyn"
17 25	Ynysferlas	1.6.1923	2.10.1933	request stop; renamed Hafod Garregog 9 July 1923 (see <i>WHH</i> no.51 p.5) †
17 77	Croesor Junction	by 8.1923	2.10.1933	available as unadvertised request stopping place – shown as Tanlan on early Conductor's waybill – from <i>at least</i> August 1923 (<i>WHH</i> no.37 p.7 and no.38 p.5); first appeared in public handbill and <i>Bradshaw's Guide</i> 26 September 1927 †
18 27	Ynysfor for	1.6.1923	2.10.1933	request stop † "for Llanfrothen" suffix quickly dropped.

	Llanfrothen			
19 27	Pont Croesor for Prenteg	1.6.1923	2.10.1933	request stop † (even though “Croesor” appeared on leaflet map) “for Prenteg” suffix quickly dropped.
21 18 #	Portmadoc – north platform	20.5.1929	28.9.1936	a supplementary platform of the “1923” station on the north side of the GWR crossing from 20 May 1929; never regarded as a separate “station” nor advertised as such (despite spurious references to (1929), (1931), (1933) station).
21 22	Portmadoc	1.6.1923	28.9.1936	owned by Festiniog Railway, with WHR as “tenant”; opened as Portmadoc’s principal narrow gauge station, intended to supersede the 1865 station; initially publicity and public timetables carried no suffix (apart from “for GWR”); staff returned to Old station and booking office closed September 1928; renamed Portmadoc New “for GWR” 8 July 1929 (although working documents and <i>Bradshaw’s Guide</i> had used “New” from the outset); suffix dropped during FR operation (<i>WHH</i> no. 46, p. 5) ¶ It is not entirely clear what function - other than public access to reach its north platform - that part of the station south of the crossing had during the FR’s lease period (<i>WHH</i> no. 46).
21 51	Junction with Festiniog Rly	1.6.1923	28.9.1936	End of WHR passenger line at High Street - not a passenger stopping place
	High Street Halt	?	?	appeared in <i>Bradshaw’s Guide</i> from February 1929 to September 1930 (but <i>not</i> in the companies’ own timetables) with the wording “Trains between Portmadoc and Blaenau Ffestiniog will depart and arrive at Portmadoc High Street Halt on the Town side of Britannia Bridge” – despite timings being shown only at Portmadoc Harbour; from this, it seems to have had no relevance to WHR services.
	Portmadoc Old / Harbour			Festiniog Railway’s original 1865 station; downgraded, briefly, from 1 June 1923 (<i>WHH</i> no. 46, p. 5) when renamed Portmadoc Old ; station staff returned September 1928; renamed Portmadoc Harbour 8 July 1929; continued in use for Festiniog services throughout.

The Bryngwyn branch was not reopened for passengers by the WHR (although the Railway Clearing House *Handbook of Stations* continued to show both stations as “passenger” until the WHR’s final demise). The railway had an erratic pattern of winter operation after winter 1923/4 – sometimes with parts closed or limited days of operation, particularly south of Beddgelert. Winter passenger services were *entirely* withdrawn after winter 1929/30 and the railway was thereafter seasonal. During the 1926 General Strike and subsequent coal shortage, the whole line was closed to passengers from 4.5.1926 until reopened 19.7.1926. No passenger operation over the GWR crossing from 1.10.1928 until resumed 9.7.1934. WHR leased by Festiniog Railway with effect from 26.6.1934 (seasonal passenger services ran from 9.7.1934 until 26.9.1936). Although there were neither tickets nor advertising during the lease period for the stopping places shown closed 2.10.1933, some do not regard this as evidence of their having “closed” (readers must form their own view). It is questionable to what extent (if any) passenger trains ran south of the Portmadoc *north platform* during the final fortnight of passenger operation.

¶ : Advertised stopping place during FR operation; FR had paper tickets printed (“Bell Punch-type” by Edmondsons) in 1934 for only the following stations – as origin or as destination: Aberglaslyn, Beddgelert, Dinas, Plasynant, Portmadoc [station not specified], Rhyd Ddu, Salem and Waenfawr. (*WHH* no.55 p.10)

† : As they did not appear on local handbills, and no tickets were printed from or to them, it would appear that Croesor Junction, Hafod Garregog, Hafod Ruffydd, Hafod-y-Llyn, Pitt’s Head, Pont Croesor, and Ynysfor were not open during the FR operation (summers 1934 – 1936 inclusive). Bettws Garmon and Quellyn Lake, however – although not mentioned in publicity or timetable material – *did* have printed ticket stock to them from

Dinas, and were duly entered in that station's ticket register; they therefore remained nominally open (although apparently little used). (*WHH* no.55 p.10)

: During the FR operation these locations were advertised on local handbills (some did not appear on the map) but did not appear in *Bradshaw's Guide* until the September 1936 issue – the line's last month of service, as it turned out!

Regardless of what its tickets, *Bradshaw's Guide*, other publishers or the Festiniog Railway may have done, in their own known timetable material the Welsh Highland itself - and the Festiniog during their operation of the line - used the suffix "halt" *only* in respect of Salem, as qualified above.

Nevertheless, the following locations – when open – were served only "on request": Bettws Garmon (from 11 July 1927), Croesor Junction, Ynysferlas/Hafod Garregog, Hafod Ruffydd, Hafod-y-Llyn, Nantmor [but became a "definite" stop from 9 July 1934 when renamed Aberglaslyn], Pitt's Head, Plas-y-Nant, Pont Croesor, Quellyn Lake (from 11 July 1927), Salem, Tryfan Junction (from 9 July 1934), Ynysfor.

For analysis of dates of operation of train services during the WHR period refer to the webpage <https://www.welshhighlandheritage.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/WELSH-HIGHLAND-RAILWAY-OPERATIONAL-CHRONOLOGY-1922---1937.pdf> or to *WHH* no. 57.

B. Goods stations

This table deals with both the pre-WHR and the WHR periods, for – despite what may be suggested in some publications – the predecessor companies continued to operate a goods service during the First World War and until the WHR took over (even McAlpine's contract for refitting the NWNGR and up-grading the PB&SSR required them to afford facilities for goods traffic during that process). However, during the 1926 General Strike and subsequent coal shortage, the whole line was closed to passengers (as mentioned above – and possibly also to freight, to some degree) from 4.5.1926 until reopened 19.7.1926. The railway was also formally closed to all traffic from 12.10.1931 until reopened 2.11.1931. "Goods" will have included less-than-wagonload consignments which may not have required a siding – such as a garage, in kit form, unloaded at Hafod Ruffydd.

Mileage m. ch.	Original name	Opened	by	Closed	Renamings and other observations
0 0	Dinas	21.5.1877	North Wales Narrow Gauge Railways	31.5.1937	Also interchange with L&NWR/LM&SR. Renamed Dinas Junction 1922 (but sometimes still rendered simply as Dinas) G
2 0	Tryfan Junction	21.5.1877		31.5.1937	Siding removed by 1900 (no traffic recorded in 1919, which is not surprising for a site serving principally as a junction). Unstaffed by 1922. <i>Junction facing Dinas.</i> G
1 0*	Rhostryfan	21.5.1877		31.5.1937	G
2 20*	Bryngwyn	21.5.1877		31.5.1937	G
2 60*	Drumhead	21.5.1877		31.5.1937	Top of Bryngwyn incline – interchange with various quarry lines (regarded as part of Bryngwyn station). Those quarries still working had not used the WHR since the end of January 1935. ¶
3 60	Waenfawr	21.5.1877		31.5.1937	G
3 70 #	Dudley Park	29.3.1926		31.5.1937	Granite quarry (<i>WHH</i> no. 62); new facility inspected for MoT on 6.10.1926 ¶
4 20 #	Treflan	1901 (by 5.1902)		early 1930s	Slate quarries: Treflan and Garreg Fawr (<i>WHH</i> no. 48); new facility inspected for BoT on 7.5.1902; siding operable in 1926; Treflan closed ca. 1928 ¶
4 40	Bettws Garmon	21.5.1877		31.5.1937	Also siding connection to Victoria (Hafod-y-Wern) Quarries (closed in mid 1920s – <i>WHH</i> no. 11). Station unstaffed by 1927. G
5 0 #	Ystrad Isaf	1909		13.9.1919	Ironstone quarry (sometimes erroneously referred to as Garreg Fawr ironstone quarry – <i>WHH</i> no. 39); connection lifted by 1926 – possibly in 1922. ¶
5 35 #	Salem Halt	-		-	-

5 45 #	Salem Quarry	?		16.10.1922	Small slate quarry – source of material during railway’s refurbishment (<i>quarry closure and redundancy of pointsman: memo in WHRHG archives</i>). ¶	
6 0 #	Plas-y-Nant	? 21.5.1877		1886	Slate quarry (<i>WHH</i> no. 25). ¶	
6 25 #	Quellyn	21.5.1877		1.6.1878	Limited, temporary facilities with no pointwork, although half-yearly report (<i>Carnarvon & Denbigh Herald</i> , 22.12.1877) stated that it was opened for goods on date shown	
7 20	Snowdon Ranger	1.6.1878		31.5.1937	Renamed Quellyn Lake 1.1893. G	
8 10 #	Glanrafon Siding	<i>probably</i> 14.5.1881		<i>ca.</i> 1928 - 1931	Slate quarry (<i>WHH</i> nos. 8, 15 and 18). Limited use after <i>ca.</i> 1901; siding operable in 1926; no traffic by 1931. This location does appear in the <i>Handbook of Stations</i> – but not as a general goods station. ¶	
8 60 #	Rhos Clogwyn	? 1902		by 1915	Slate quarry (<i>WHH</i> no. 17); a siding existed here at one or more periods but traffic was apparently loaded on the main line in the 1920s. ¶	
9 20	Rhyd Ddu	14.5.1881		31.5.1937	Renamed Snowdon 1.1893, South Snowdon 31.7.1922. G	
10 24	Pitt’s Head	-		-	No goods facilities	
11 20	Hafod Ruffydd	1.6.1923	Welsh Highland Rly	31.5.1937	No <i>declared</i> goods facilities	
	<i>Coed Mawr</i>					<i>See footnote below</i>
13 25	Beddgelert	1.6.1923			31.5.1937	G
15 31	Aberglaslyn					Proposed halt – never opened
15 43	Nantmor for Aberglaslyn	1.6.1923			31.5.1937	Renamed Aberglaslyn 9.7.1934 G
16 25	Hafod-y-Llyn	1.6.1923			31.5.1937	<i>Handbook of Stations</i> rendered name as “Hafodyllyn” G
17 25	Ynysferlas	1.6.1923			31.5.1937	Renamed Hafod Garregog 9.7.1923 G
17 77	<i>Croesor Junction</i>	-			-	No goods facilities. <i>Junction facing Portmadoc.</i>
<i>see note</i>	(Pont) Carreg (or Carrig) Hyllidrem	-			-	This <i>ca.</i> 40ch branch (presumably opened 1.8.1864 or thereabouts and ceased to be used when the WHR withdrew goods service) from Croesor Junction was horse-worked, by contractor, serving a goods station known as Gwernydd and an end-on connection with the non-statutory section of the tramway (which served the various Croesor valley quarries and Croesor village). ¶
18 27	Ynysfor	1.6.1923		Croesor Tramway	31.5.1937	G
19 27	Pont Croesor	1.6.1923			31.5.1937	No <i>declared</i> goods facilities
20 03 #	Farmyard Sand siding (Portreuddyn)	<i>by</i> 10.1926			31.5.1937	Sand pit; new facility inspected for MoT on 6.10.1926. ¶
21 0 #	Gelert Siding	1.8.1864			31.5.1937	Initial Croesor Tramway/Croesor & Portmadoc Railway Portmadoc terminus. Latterly interchange with Cambrian/GWR’s “Gelert Siding” (<i>Handbook of Stations</i> name). <i>Name as stated by S E Tyrwhitt to MoT 28.5.1923 and in memo 19.9.1925. Shown as “Gelert’s Sidings” in WHR 1924 working timetable and as “Gelert Interchange Sidings” on plan supplied for 1926 MoT inspection; often referred to (erroneously) as Cambrian or Beddgelert Siding</i>
21 18 #	Portmadoc – <i>north platform</i>	-			-	No goods facilities
21 22	Portmadoc	-			-	Station owned by Festiniog Railway. No goods facilities at this site. The G awarded in the 1929 <i>Handbook of Stations</i> presumably refers to Gelert Siding which is not otherwise mentioned for the WHR.

21 37 #	various sidings	11.1864	-	After 1937, continued to be served by Festiniog Rly. Flour/corn (Snowdon) mill, Glaslyn Foundry and Gorseddau Junction sidings
21 51	<i>Junction with Festiniog Rly</i>	-	-	Not a goods station. From 1923 replaced direct line to Portmadoc wharves.
22 19 #	Portmadoc Wharves	?1865	-	After 1937, continued to be served by Festiniog Rly. Recorded in <i>Handbook of Stations</i> only as “Dock Extension” – Festiniog Rly.

The section of line from Rhyd Ddu to Coed Mawr (Beddgelert Forest) – originally constructed by the Portmadoc, Beddgelert & South Snowdon Railway (but not opened for public traffic) – was used as a “private siding” by a timber merchant under a 3-year agreement dated 12.12.1912; agreement subsequently extended and arrangement still operative until *at least* 1919. The end of the line was a loop at about grid ref SH570502, just beyond Afon Cwm-Dŷ bridge (short of Hafod Ruffydd), as seen on 6” Mile OS map at <http://maps.nls.uk/view/101606901>.

The reporting to the Railway Clearing House for inclusion in their *Handbook of Stations* seems to have been a slightly haphazard affair: of the “new” Welsh Highland locations only Beddgelert and Portmadoc (plus the renaming of Snowdon to South Snowdon) had appeared by 1926 – the others were later still. The failure to delete reference to passenger facilities at Rhostryfan and Bryngwyn has been remarked on above.

Locations (eventually) recorded in the *Handbook* as open for general goods traffic are marked **G** above, whereas those marked ¶, having no *general* goods facilities and being for specific traders only, got no mention in the *Handbook* (apart from Glanrafon). For more details of these quarry siding connections see *WHH* no 11.

The Festiniog Railway’s (as lessors) formal cessation of commercial goods traffic took effect at the end of May 1937 (variously quoted as 31 May or 1 June: Monday 31.5.1937 has been used above). *Railway Magazine* July 1941 page 295 stated: “goods and mineral traffic was conveyed for the last time on June 1, 1937 and the railway has since closed” but this dating seems questionable. Closure dates quoted later in June confuse closure *to commercial revenue traffic* with subsequent movements to repatriate Festiniog-owned and Welsh Highland-owned rolling stock to their respective lines. Such a movement ran on Saturday 19.6.1937 (C E Lee, *The Welsh Highland Railway*, 1962) (and possibly caused *Clinker’s Register* to give the following Monday 21.6.1937 as the “with effect from” closure date); another movement was needed from Beddgelert to Dinas Junction, apparently on Friday 25.6.1937, which date was the last such movement – but this was not *revenue* traffic. The Great Western’s Chief Goods Manager’s circular R1534481 of 28 June 1937 laconically records that “The above Railway [*WHR*] has now been closed altogether” and goes on to instruct that traffic for the southern area it had served was now to be dealt with by Country Lorry Service from Portmadoc, GWR.

Caernarfon spelling: prior to 1926, the spelling of town and county was Carnarvon. From 2 February that year the town became Caernarvon, the LMS station following suit on 27 March and the county from 1 July. The current spelling was not adopted until well after the Second World War.

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