

WELSH HIGHLAND HERITAGE

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NWNG Gates Possibility

Welsh Highland Railway construction boss, Roland Doyle, has come up with a way in which replicas of the original NWNG cast iron gates could be installed at strategic points along the trackbed. Both tubular and wooden gates have been used at many of the crossing points on the section from Dinas to Waunfawr in order to comply with wider openings and the safety considerations of HMRI. However Roland considers that in selected places a slightly extended and heightened NWNG pattern gate would be acceptable. The idea came from an adjacent landowner who complained at the prospect of wooden gates being installed when the gates elsewhere on his farm were metal. Roland confirmed "that after much lobbying the Snowdonia National Park agreed that metal gates could be installed". The landowner was happy with this but wanted gates taller than the conventional tubular gates. Roland's idea is to build a prototype from steel, riveted and galvanised, then painted a sympathetic colour. The main difference is that the new gates would be built to a metric width. The original NWNG pattern was made from flat cast iron bar and included two spear-



Typical NWNG gate at LC16 between Waunfawr and Tryfan Junction.,
Photo David Allan, - 3rd November 1999

shaped finials on either end of the gate extending from the top bar.

Heritage Group secretary John Keylock welcomed the proposals as "a positive development that will help maintain the character of the original line". The North Wales Narrow Gauge Railway's original gates, which have been recovered following the reconstruction process, have been refitted and painted with Hammerite by the Waunfawr blacksmith. Permission has been given for

some of them to be installed in places where crossings have been abandoned. These are at LC45, Quellyn Lake - to the south of the temporary terminus at Old Quellyn, and at LC36 to the north of Salem Halt.

John Keylock goes on to explain that the history of the

Welsh Highland can be traced through its gates.

"In some places there are three different types of gatepost - from the original NWNG type of slate slab posts, to the Welsh Highland era type where the posts were largely built from redundant rail and which are often fitted inside the slate posts of the NWNG, to the tubular steel posts of the current incarnation. And then there are variations within the type - in WHH No. 11 p5, there is an illustration of a smaller size NWNG gate guarding the quarry line road crossing at Betws Garmon. There is even a pedestrian or wicket gate in the NWNG style, which provides access to a private crossing near Glanrafon quarry (see photograph). Whilst at Pen y Mount, at the Porthmadog end, is a fine example of an original Welsh Highland kissing gate which was recovered from the Beddgelert Forest area by Ian Jolly and a team from the Gelert's Farm staff. So gates have played an important role in the history of the Welsh Highland and they have added their own particular characteristic charm to the scene.

NWNG wicket gate guarding a private crossing to the south of Glanrafon.
Photo David Allan - 31st Oct 2001



A WELSH HIGHLAND LOVE AFFAIR

The Welsh Highland Railway has in many ways played a very considerable influence in my life. Indeed, unusual coincidences go back to the day I was born - the final day of WHR independence. On the following morning, July 1st 1934, the WHR was leased to the Festiniog Railway. I cannot claim infant travel on the line during those last Indian-summer days of operation in 1934/36, but I do know that my very first narrow-gauge train journey was from Douglas to Kirk Michael, on Friday June 25th 1937, and it was in that very week that 'Russell' made her last journey from Porthmadog to Dinas!

By another strange quirk of fate I first gazed down on the line in the Glanrhyd cutting at Dinas from the top deck of a Crosville bus, and this was exactly ten years to the day after that final train laboured over the near derelict line on June 21st 1937.

On June 21st 1947 our holiday destination was Morfa Nefyn, in the Lleyn peninsular. The following day I was to pass over Pont Croesor in a motor car, fascinated to see the rust-covered rails, for of course, the section from Porthmadog to Croesor Junction still slumbered in the forlorn hope of a revival in the fortunes of the slate industry in Cwm Croesor

The WHR continued to bind its spell over me and I walked my first stretch, the rather unexciting length out of Porthmadog, in August 1948, whilst on holiday with my auntie Dilys. The previous day she had consented to us walking the FR from Tan-y-Bwlch to Dduallt, only to regret giving in to my youthful enthusiasm when we were confronted with an altitude problem in gaining the road from the heights around Dduallt station in order to catch the Blaenau bus! We were spending five days in Blaenau Ffestiniog at the home of a Llechwedd quarryman whose mother was known to my aunt. With hindsight we certainly should have forsaken the WHR that day, for this was the very week in



A youthful Michael Davies poses on Glanrafon Viaduct in June 1954. Photo Dilys Davies

which another wonderful Welsh narrow gauge railway closed forever. Corris and Machynlleth seemed a great distance from Blaenau in those days, but in reality it was only 35 miles, and it was just possible to make a day visit by catching the early Crosville bus to Dolgellau, and then to travel on the Corris with the 'Goods'.

A Personal Review by Michael Davies

The Corris ran on Mon/Wed/Fri, and so we should have gone on Wednesday August 18th for that penultimate journey, but all we managed was about 1½ miles out of Port towards Pont Croesor! In October 1948 my parents gave me permission to go youth hostelling with a school friend, and we were able, without adult constraints, to thoroughly investigate both the FR and the WHR. I can still sense the excitement at finding the green-painted bogie stock of the FR languishing at Boston Lodge, including one vehicle still lettered with the magic words 'Welsh Highland Railway'. We stayed two nights at Snowdon Ranger Youth Hostel and of course this time we could walk the spectacular sections of the line. For fifty three years I have watched, wished, and prayed that some

day I might see trains again, but for so many years

this was just a pipe dream. I always thought that the FR might reopen, as there must be hope whilst there is track, but once the track is gone, hope is gone also - or so I felt in 1948.

Every year since then I have returned regularly to the FR/WHR and can proudly claim to have been amongst the very first to work on the FR. On October 23rd 1954 I went by train from Cheshire to Blaenau Ffestiniog, took the bus to Minffordd, and found Alan Garraway and Len Heath-Humphrys shunting wagons at Boston Lodge. I quickly offered assistance and became a regular worker on the FR during those early years of restoration.

To return to the WHR, I had walked every mile of the line by 1950, and came to love the section from Snowdon Ranger to Rhyd Ddu. This was a favourite walk after the evening meal at the Youth Hostel, and there was always the thrill of crossing the high girders of the Afon Treweunydd (Glanrafon) Viaduct, which in those days was still in remarkably good condition. Arriving in Rhyd Ddu we would have a coffee (6d!) in the Min Afon Tearooms before the walk back to Snowdon Ranger, sometimes by the railway, or if late by the main road on which hardly a vehicle would be seen.



Glanrafon Viaduct 46 years later!
Photo David Allan, 12th April 2000

After one very memorable visit to Snowdon Ranger at February half-term in 1950 - the weather was always lovely in those days - we took the Whiteway bus to Waunfawr and went off to investigate the unknown stretch of line to Tryfan Junction, the Bryngwyn Branch, and Dinas Junction. My memory of events is a little hazy but I remember finding the quite substantial remains of Tryfan Junction, and then we went up the 1 in 40 to Rhostryfan. Strangers were rare in those days, especially on local buses, and great was the surprise on Express Motors when three non Welsh speakers booked to Bryngwyn. We investigated the fascinating loop beyond Drum Head on the line to Alexandra Quarry and then made our way back down the Branch and eventually to Dinas Junction station. Here we booked single tickets to Bangor in the

former NWNG office, now so splendidly restored. I often wonder what treasures there may still have been had I the temerity to enquire, but I was still only 15! That was my only use of Dinas station until 1997, as it closed to all traffic on September 10th 1951. So obsessed was I with the two foot gauge that in those far off days, when I should have been working for school exams and the furtherance of my education, I would be planning time-tables for a totally imaginary WHR. I even printed stationery on a crude printing press - *'Welsh Highland Railway - A. M. Davies, Secretary and Manager'* ! Hours would be spent working out running expenses and income from fictitious passengers and goods. I had some knowledge of train running costs from 1951 as they were published by the newly preserved Tal-y-Llyn Rail-

way. Coal was around £4 per ton and ex BR sleepers 5/- each! My driver earned around £5 per week, and p-way men about £3-10-0! We have come a long way since then and the world is a changed place. I joined the embryonic WHR Society in 1961/2, (AGW Garraway strongly disapproved!), but didn't renew as they didn't deliver - or was I too impatient? - And so nearly forty years passed before that wonderful day in 1999 when John Prescott - Secretary of State for Transport, signed the Welsh Highland Railway Order. But June 30th 1999 was not just another milestone in the Welsh Highland saga - it was MY 65th BIRTHDAY!

Before concluding this rather personal narrative of my life and the WHR, may I add one last coincidence, which was perhaps the most remarkable of them all. One sunny afternoon in September 1968, my wife-to-be was looking down on the clear waters of the Afon Glaslyn at Pont Croesor whilst on a walking tour. She knew nothing of the WHR, or that her life was about to change dramatically. A passing local motorist offered her a lift to Croesor and suggested a suitable B&B at a certain hill farm. And at that hill farm a certain Michael Davies was a regular visitor. And so Joan Pugh became Joan Davies on a December day in 1969. The Welsh Highland Railway has certainly had a great influence on my life and I hope we will live to enjoy the journey from Caernarfon to Porthmadog and Blaenau Ffestiniog, surely a journey without parallel on the narrow gauge in these islands.

WHR CHRONOLOGY 1932

23rd March

Letter from Igguledon to Carnarfonshire County Council - 'Depleted bank balance; only sufficient to pay weekly wage bills, £35 needed to renew Third Party Insurance Policy covering accidents at level crossings'.

29th March

Further letter from Igguledon asking for more than the amount of £35 - to pay for coal and the locomotive boiler insurance - £6! - already expired.

12th April

R.T Griffiths appointed Receiver and General Manager.

18th July

Summer service begins, with one train daily in each direction. South Snowdon advertised 'Teas and Refreshments'. Cheap Day tickets and Circular Tours again advertised by the GWR.

9th September

End of summer service.

December

Total tickets sold 4327. No annual return made.

MORE TALES FROM THE BRYNGWYN BRANCH

Nesta has lived in Rhostryfan all her life. Her delightful home was formerly the village smithy. Nesta just remembers travelling on the train from Dinas to Porthmadog, she was probably about eight years old at the time. She recalls little of the journey but she remembers that they had to walk from Rhostryfan to Dinas Junction, walking that distance was a trifle in those days. They went down the pedestrian station steps at Dinas, which were located between the two bridges, and onto the platform. She remembers the train going through the long tunnel in the Aberglaslyn Pass – this stands out in her memory because of the total darkness and she remembers thinking that she had suddenly gone blind and was searching desperately for her mother! On the way back the driver was asked to stop at Wernlas Ddu, which he duly did, and they got off the train and took the footpath back home to Rhostryfan, thus saving a substantial part of the journey on foot! Tryfan Junction was never referred to as such by the local people, it was known simply as Tyddyn-gwydd.



Elen passes on one splendid tale of what today might be referred to as 'on-line' shopping using integrated transport! Elen's mother's brother, Hugh Roberts (her uncle) kept a grocer's shop in Waunfawr. Elen's

*Nesta, with her dog Foxy, leaning against the NWNG gate which still guards the road from the railway at Bryngwyn. The remains of the trackbed can still be seen beyond the gate.
Photo - DW Allan, 26th September 2001*

Nesta Williams Talks to David Allan about her Early Recollections of the Bryngwyn Branch

Nesta passes on some stories she heard from Elen Jones, an elderly resident of the village. This is a first hand account from someone who remembers the railway in operation. Elen recalls how the local boys used to ride on the parked slate trucks by freewheeling down to Tryfan Junction – she didn't know how the trucks were returned to Rhostryfan – she assumed that the train brought them back the next day!

The Sunday School trips from Rhostryfan were looked forward to with great anticipation by the local children. They would catch the train from Rhostryfan to Dinas Junction and from there change to the main line train to spend the day in Rhyl or Pwllheli

mother would make a list of her grocery requirements and then Elen would walk down with it to Wernlas Ddu. Here she would hail a Waunfawr-bound train and clamber aboard. On arrival at Waunfawr the list would be left in the shop whilst Elen returned home on the next train. Hugh Roberts would assemble the order and put it on a Whiteways bus to Caernarfon. The bus driver would leave the order in the premises of D.W. Davies (Printers) from where it would be collected by a Rhostryfan bound bus run by Owen Owens of Tyddyn Canol, later known as "Express Motors". The driver of this bus was named Trefor and, perhaps not surprisingly, he was related to Mrs Jones. Trefor would then duly deliver the completed order to Elen Jones' grateful mother. Beat that 'Tesco on Line'!

John Padley has the last word on Mystery Photograph No. 1 in WHH No. 12.

I did not know my brother had involved me in his letter suggesting the location of this photo. He obviously didn't put my opinion forcibly enough.

I believe it is of a train leaving Nantmor for Beddgelert. The railings are those at the ends of the cattle grids. They can be seen in other photos. There is no bridge. The people are standing on the road immediately west of the level crossing. The photographer is also on the road, which has made a right-angled turn northwards and descended from the level crossing on its way towards the main road.

If the photo was in Coed Mawr, where are the trees ?

The bridge over the Afon Cwm Cloch is also in a wood.

If it was at the bridge in Cwm Bychan, the "stay posts" of the handrail would be descending into thin air.

See WRH No. 6 p.2. (photo). Very little of the cattle grid end fence remains by then. Is the roadside fence post (extreme right) also in the mystery photo (with a man beyond) ?

**Market Rasen
Lincs.**

100 YEARS AGO - PART II

Following the article in Newsletter No 13 regarding the estimate for the PB&SSR undertaking published in 1901 let us now consider the fourth section involved - Railway No. 2. This would have been from what would eventually become Croesor Junction to Llyn Gwynant and involved the cutting of the Aberglaslyn tunnels - a total length of seven miles, one furlong and 3.40 chains. The cost of cuttings in rock was quoted at 5/- per yard and in 'soft soil and marl' - 1/6d. Embankments would involve shifting 98,072 cubic yards of material at 1/6d per cubic yard. Tunnelling was of course comparatively expensive; 280 yards at £13-12s per linear yard. The total earth-works cost was put at approximately £17,500.

Two river bridges over the Dylif and Nantmor were costed at £1575 and 'viaducts' at £1550. 'Pitching and levelling' of level crossings £100. Providing the permanent way, fencing, electrical equipment and rolling stock carried a value of £51,879-3s-9p with £843-6s-0d for 'points, sidings and junctions'.

The latter would have been at Croesor Junction and on the east bank of the Glaslyn north of Bryn y Felin.

Stations at Beddgelert - presumably near the above-mentioned junction - Llyn Dinas and Llyn Gwynant would cost £150 each. But land purchase for the proposed alignment was cheap compared with the other three railways at only £50 per acre.



Work nearing completion at the Nantmor end of the Long Tunnel in the Aberglaslyn Pass.
Photo P.G. Thomas 1906.

22 acres would be required. Total cost of this section of the undertaking - including a 10% contingency factor - was quoted at £81,048-2s-0d.

Finally the estimate covers the cost for 'electric lighting of Beddgelert, Portmadoc and Criccieth' indicating the close association between the PB&SSR and North Wales Power and Traction Company. Apart from the cost of the main power station - at the head of Nant Gwynant - there would be substations at these towns served by overhead lines. The total cost of this electrification is quoted at £37,055-10s-0d.

The total cost of railways Nos 1 and 2 and the electric

lighting proposal is put at £213,210-1s-11d.

One hundred years on the main manifestation of all this lies in the tunnels through the Aberglaslyn Pass and one shudders when considering how much they would cost 'per linear yard' in 2001! It is also pleasing that several photographs are available showing construction in progress at various sites between Beddgelert and Nantmor.

If you would like a copy of the complete estimate these are available from the Heritage Group secretary at £1.00 each inclusive of post and packing

Another Look Back in Time by John Keylock

Aitchison's Application for Membership of the Institute of Civil Engineers (reproduced by kind permission of the Institute) with thanks to Michael Bishop.

GOWRIE COLQUHOUN AITCHISON, (Age 35), [Born 25 February, 1863], Glynperis, Llanberis, North Wales
He was educated at Overslade, Rugby, and at Cambridge. Held appointment under the University of Cambridge, superintending the erection of the necessary scientific instruments and machinery for the Pathological Department, under the late Professor S.C. Roy, 1887-1888. He served a pupilage to Mr H.A. Huberty, Civil Engineer, of Burbage, 1888 to 1891. He was then appointed District Manager and Engineer of the Buxton Lime Firms Company, Limited, 1891 to 1895, and had the following works and Collieries under his charge :- Grin-Harpur Hill, Hoffman Quarry and Hindlow Limestone Quarries, with an output of 1,000 tons *per diem*; Whaley Bridge, Thatch Marsh and Goyt Collieries, and Engineering Shops of the Company; 40 miles of permanent way, and running powers on a portion of the High Peak Railway. He was engaged on the setting out and construction of the Harpur Hill wire-rope haulage scheme. Appointed Engineer-in-charge and manager of the Snowdon Mountain Railway -Abt System-1895. Finished construction of the same under Sir Douglas and Francis Fox, MM. Inst. C.E., 1896-1897. Appointed (in addition to the above) Engineer and Manager of the North Wales Narrow Gauge Railway Company, March, 1898. Both the above appointments-to the Snowdon and the North Wales Narrow Gauge Railway Companies-he now holds.

Dated 9 November, 1898.

Proposed by DOUGLAS FOX (M)

Francis Fox (M.), 1870, James W. Szlumper (M.), Geo. Farren (M.), John Higson (M.), William Henry Brinekman (A.), E. Evans (A.), Jacob Higson (M.), J. Menzies (A.), G.A. Hobson (M.), William W. Szlumper (M.).

A WELSH HIGHLAND JOURNEY

September 11th - 2001

With a reasonable weather forecast and no other commitments I decided to go over to North Wales to take a look at the latest developments on my favourite stretch of the NWNG section of our railway. Traveling by train again from my local station to Chester, and onwards to Llandudno Junction and Blaenau Ffestiniog, it was good to see the Conwy Valley Line well patronised, with many passengers booked through to Porthmadog.

On the FR the 11-50am Down train was hauled by the new Double engine 'David Lloyd George' with 10 bogies. I alighted as usual at Tan-y-Bwlch where 'Blanche' made a very impressive start on a slightly greasy rail with an Up service. A welcome pot of tea on the platform and I was soon away up the old road towards Croesor, my first time this year due to the Foot & Mouth precautions. There were a few minutes to spare at Tan Lan (near Croesor Junction for readers not familiar with this part of the WHR) before the arrival of the Beddgelert bus, and I went into Mynwent Llanfrothen (Cemetery) to pay respect to very dear friends who lie there. It is a place of perfect peace but at that very moment, as I was later to learn, that a most dastardly act of terrorism was taking place in far off New York.

I had an hour in Beddgelert between buses, and made good use of the two footpaths which enable one to look at the station site and then that most magnificent feature of the 1923 railway, the 60' deep cutting near Cwm Cloch. Imagine my concern when I reached the footbridge behind the 'Goat', with only five minutes before my Caernarfon bus was due. A large Road sign proclaimed the bridge to be closed (from 22/6/01) and the 'Official Notice' stated there was 'NO ALTERNATIVE ROUTE'. The reason for the closure was 'unsafe parapet' but it looked no different to the condition in which I have seen it over many years. No doubt the Local Authority are anxious not to have personal injury claims made against it. The barricade having been pushed over.... I caught my bus!

At Rhyd Ddu there was much activity, with a tipper lorry just delivering a load of slate waste, and a dumper truck depositing mud and vegetation from the track bed. A large area to the east of the car park was noted to be fenced, as was the main line away towards Snowdon Ranger. The



definitive path along the railway now being closed,

I took to the original footpath from Rhyd Ddu to Glanyrafon Quarry, which crosses the line at Rhos y clogwyn. I was delighted to find that the County Council have been working on this path recently and several 'sleeper' bridges have been constructed over small streams. At Rhos

Michael Davies on his Favourite Section

y Clogwyn two nice wicket gates have appeared at the footpath crossing (LC62) but sadly all trace of the siding there has been obliterated by the trackbed reconstruction. It may be remembered that the sleeper marks of this short lived siding (c1930) were very clearly visible for nearly sixty years after track lifting. On the large rock bluff immediately north of the siding were the words 'DIM WHR' in blue paint. The path crosses the old incline and then I had to climb right up into the Glanyrafon Quarry as no other path exists hereabouts, but it was a lovely afternoon of sunshine and good cloud effects, and heaven for the ornithologist. A continuous sound of machinery below indicated that work was continuing apace on the track bed at Glanyrafon Sidings but this could not be seen through the trees. The Quarry still has much of interest to the

Railway on Top of the World - Track in position to the north of South Snowdon station. Photo DW Allan 31st October 2001

Industrial Archaeologist with giant water wheel pits, remains of the Barracks, and a remote

building that may have been the Gunpowder Store. The path crosses several of the tips and eventually reaches the Afon Treweunydd which is crossed by a substantial steel footbridge perhaps half a mile above the line, almost the Glanyrafon Viaduct in miniature! I eventually reached the railway again at LC56 (Bron y Fedw Uchaf) to find the trackbed still in the familiar state of the past fifty years although a section of wall had recently been repaired. It was noted that the lineside fencing hereabouts is in very good order, so possibly will not require the attentions of Achnasheen Fencing. I then followed the footpath to the very fine pedestrian underpass (UB87) at Bron y Fedw Isaf that hopefully will survive the reconstruction process, before heading to the A4085 for my return bus to Caernarfon. I always find this service very reliable and we were soon passing Plas y Nant and Salem where it was noted that new fencing poles were already in place or lying on the ground awaiting positioning. In Caernarfon there was even time for a 'swift half' before the Bangor bus was due. The connection at Bangor Station was just a little tight for comfort but I did catch my train and was safely into Chester before 8pm - another very memorable day in the mountains, and on the railways that have been part of my life now for well over fifty years.

THE JOHN KEYLOCK PAGE

MORE INWARD GOODS

Since 'Freight to Beddgelert' appeared in Newsletter No. 13, the writer has had sight of pages from the Beddgelert 'Goods Received' book. This runs from 12th June to 31st July 1923. It covers all stations on the line including the Bryngwyn Branch, but not Dinas and Portmadoc. This has enabled us to add to the type of goods that the railway carried to Beddgelert during the first two months of operation. There was a brisk trade throughout the period from Liverpool, with fish, sacks of meat and bags of bacon arriving for the various hotels - the Royal Goat featuring prominently.

LOCOMOTIVE WATER SUPPLY

In Newsletter No 7 there was an article about WHR water tanks and the fact that some water supplies were 'lifted' into the tanks by hydraulic ram. It was suggested that the tank at Beddgelert benefited from a mains supply; a letter from the absentee landlords of Cwm Cloch farms to Col Stephens dated 4th December 1925 shows otherwise. (See back page for full letter). Messrs Walsh and Howarth - the landlords - claim ownership of the Cwm Cloch stream together with its water rights and had an agreement with the railway for them to take water from

A DIGRESSION & A CORRECTION

In Newsletter No 10 (P.2) a photograph of a Chevrolet bus accompanied an article entitled 'Of Harps and Buses'. Almost certainly the bus is standing in front of the old post office in Aberdaron. This vehicle was supplied new to the Tocia bus company of Pwllheli in May 1928 (less than a year after the demise of the Pwllheli and Llanbedrog Tramway and one is tempted to assume that the Jones brothers, who had a large shareholding in the Tocia Bus company, saw an opportunity to 'fill the gap'. For much of its life with Tocia CC8048 ran on hire to the Jones brothers to operate their seafront service. Furthermore this 26 seater was used on Sunday excursions around Lley, for the benefit of holidaymakers in an era long before private car ownership was the norm.

Regular deliveries of ice were made to Nurse Griffiths in the village, originating from Llandudno, where it is presumed there was an ice producing plant. The Saracen's Head however chose to obtain their supplies from Helsby in Cheshire.

Fred Clare had two motor cycles delivered during this time from Nottingham, as well as a coloured enamel advertising sign for Raleigh Cycles which no doubt would have been prominently displayed outside his Riverside Garage premises. Amongst other wares which arrived at Beddgelert were stationery for JE Powell's emporium, tobacco from a dealer in Amlwch, boxes of live birds - perhaps pullets for the Rev. Vawdrey's daughter in Nantgwynant and finally, along with a picture with broken glass, various items of PLA - passenger's luggage in advance - in the form of tents, trunks and hampers.

the stream for use at Beddgelert station for a rent of £10.0.0 per annum.

The railway crossed the Cwm Cloch stream at the overbridge north of Beddgelert station. From that point to the water tank would have been approximately 175 yards. This leads one to speculate that an hydraulic ram was installed in the flow of the stream to 'push' water to the tower and up into the tank. The tap on the side of the tower would thus have been gravity fed and used by the station staff. Furthermore the driver's log reference to 'taking water at Tyn-y-Coed' might suggest that flow in the Cwm Cloch stream was at times inadequate to supply the Beddgelert water tank.

The Boring Bit!

Your committee is conscious of the fact that nothing appears in the Newsletter regarding the proceedings/happenings/decisions at Annual General Meetings. There always seems to be more interesting stuff to fill the pages of the Newsletter - and members can always get a copy of AGM minutes from the Secretary! However at our last AGM in May it was overwhelmingly agreed that the annual subscription to the Group should be increased - to £10.00. Notice of this decision, not having been communicated to the membership at large immediately after the event, we give forewarning that the new subscription rate will become effective from the 1st January 2003.

After four years we are now a group of over 180 members and it is perhaps appropriate, and of interest, to advise the membership how their £7.50 sub has been spent, other than on the production of four Newsletters a year. For example: - Bridge plates for 'new' WHR (Caernarfon) - £215.

Repair of original NWNG crossing gates - £180.

Purchase of archive material.

Sales stock, including production of NWNG ticket 'catalogues'.

Dinas station building and waiting room - £832.

Commemorative plaque for Gladstone coach.

Contribution to Gelert's Farm Museum project.

Contribution to the Baldwin project at Leighton Buzzard - £50.

Surely his violation of the Sabbath would have been frowned upon by the local chapel-goers!

A 1924 handbill issued under the heading 'Welsh Highland & Festiniog Railways' offered 'Combined Rail & Motor Tours' to Nefyn, Abersoch, Sarn and Aberdaron (via Pwllheli) every weekday (which included Saturdays) until the 20th September. Tours to the last three resorts were operated by the 'Tocia Motor Bus Co'. The cost of an excursion from Beddgelert, depart 9.30 am, to Aberdaron (via Portmadoc) was 6s-8d but because of the scant WHR timetable it could only be done on Thursdays and Saturdays and then only until the 13th September!

Reverting to W.S. Jones - the Beddgelert bus operator - one gathers that a photograph of one of his buses standing in Castle Square - Caernarfon, features in Ian Allan's 1983 publication entitled 'Halcyon Days of Buses'.

ELLESMERE PARK,
ECCLES,
Near MANCHESTER.
4th December 1925.

H.F.Stephens, Esq.,
Welsh Highland Railway,
Tonbridge, Kent.

Dear Sir,

Land At Beddgelert and Water Supply.
.....

We are in receipt of your letter of the 2nd instant, and for which we thank you.

We are pleased to got directly in touch with you, as this will save a lot of time, than if we had to pass all our letters through your Portmadoc Office.

We received from Messrs Davies & Davies of Portmadoc, over two years ago, a Conveyance of some land of ours at Beddgelert, which you have used but have not fulfilled the conditions in the Conveyance. We are giving you three of these conditions: —

1st . Messer Sir Robert McAlpine & Son when they bought the land they actually used in the deviation of the railway to ease the gradient, did not buy the land (about six acres) which was made into an island site.

You can understand that there is the new railway on three sides, and the River Cwm-Cloch on the other.

2nd. The river Cwm-Cloch is our property with all its water rights, and you yourselves are under agreement to pay and do pay to us the sum of £10 per annum for the right to take water for use at Beddgelert Station.

We have an agreement with the Proprietors of the Royal Goat Hotel to supply water to their reservoir at the back of their Hotel, for the sum of £20 per annum. There has been this supply of water for a number of years and is shown on all the plans before the deviation was made, and it is mentioned by Sir Douglas Fox & Partners and Davies & Davies that a four inch pipe should be put in to replace the one that they would interfere with. Messrs McAlpine have tried to get out of the obligation to put this 4" pipe in, notwithstanding that it is one of your obligations in the conveyance. Through not getting any water, the Hotel Company have refused to pay the £20 per annum.

3rd. There were two ways up to our four farms, one from the Carnarvon Road, and one past the end of the Royal Goat Hotel which is very handy for anyone going to the Farms from the Portmadoc road. Across this road, the Contractors put your Beddgelert Station.

We will now set out the damage that we have sustained: -

1st. 6 acres of island sites at the same price that you have bought the land next to it. £600. 0. 0.

2nd. Loss of £20 per annum that we have sustained and are sustaining, say for 20 years, the length of the agreement, 20 years @ £20 per annum. 400. 0. 0.

3rd. Value of road to Cwm Cloch and Bron Hebog Farms. 150 0. 0.

1st island sites.	£600. 0. 0.
2nd Water rights.	400. 0. 0.
3rd Right of way.	150. 0. 0.
	<u>£1150. 0. 0.</u>

We made this claim to Sir Robert McAlpine & Sons who only made an offer of £125 which we could not entertain. We would have put the matter in the hands of our Solicitors, but Mr Haworth and myself have had continuous sickness for the last two years.

We have given details of the points in dispute, and will be pleased to meet you to discuss the matter, as we would rather come to an amicable settlement than waste a lot of money in law.

Awaiting your reply.

We remain,

Yours faithfully,
for Walsh & Haworth

(Sgd) E. Y. Walsh.