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THEN & NOW

The re-building of the WHR, with the eventual addition of the Caernarfon to Dinas section (first mooted in the 19th century), has attracted wide publicity. The result is a world-class, 25 mile railway with huge potential.

This 21st century reconstruction represents the re-instatement of two distinct railways (accepting that the Croesor tramway was incorporated into the WHR in 1922/23).

The 1870's was an era of both affluence and cheap labour, witnessed by the substantial NWNCR buildings and bridges. We are so fortunate to have inherited the goods shed and subsequent award-winning station building at Dinas, both of which exist essentially in their original form. The reconstruction of Tryfan Junction is at the top of the Group's agenda (see enclosed appeal leaflet), while rebuilding Betws Garmon may fall to a later generation. Snowdon Ranger station building has survived to be 'listed' and likewise the remains of the weigh-house at Glanrafon. Together with the bridges already noted this represents some substantial and obvious NWNCR infrastructure.

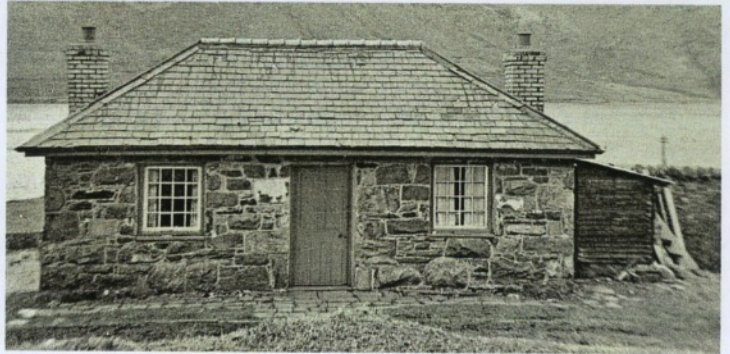
Moving forward to 1922/23 the situation is not dissimilar to the present reconstruction project. As today, in 1923 there was money only for a line of rail and very little else.. Hence the Col Stephen's philosophy of 'cheap and cheerful' timber and corrugated iron station buildings with their distinctive, but alas transient, period appeal. It is significant that the two evident structures that remain from the period are the durable concrete supports for the water tanks at Beddgelert and at the site of Portmadoc New (1923) station. To these must now be added the three replica river bridges, which as much as anything else, epitomise the WHR, particularly Bryn y Felin river bridge and its association with the scenic Aberglaslyn Pass.

This lack of original lineside infrastructure in 1923 is partly responsible for the new waiting shelters on the island platform at Beddgelert which have been criticised for their utilitarian appearance.

However without the generosity of the WHR Society, and a private benefactor, there would have been nothing at all, or at best some untypical temporary structure. On reflection perhaps critics will appreciate that their style reflects the influence of Col Stephens. Again 'cheap and cheerful', but incorporating similar facilities to the original, albeit on a smaller scale, so as to fit on the island platform and remain within the constraints of HMRI. Considerable effort has gone into replicating original style seating (as in the waiting room at Dinas) all of which has been paid for by donations, and fabricated by members of the West Midlands branch of the W.H. Society.

The replica crossing box has been built (see page 3) and awaits installation on a concrete and brick base, yet to be provided. Needless to say this Group has ideas for other replica infrastructure, particularly between Beddgelert and Porthmadog. In addition the WHR Ltd has constructed a superb mirror-image replica of Nantmor halt at Pen y Mount – surely a candidate for a heritage railways award.

Based at Gelert's farm, the WHR Ltd are doing their level best to compliment the scene; the Gladstone and Buffet cars, rebuilt from originals, plus a replica Ashbury Corridor will form a typical three-coach Russell hauled train. In addition detailed replica



NWNG station - Snowdon Ranger photographed in 1948 by Bill Rear



Col Stephen's style Beddgelert station in 1923



Beddgelert station shelter - 2008 style - David Allan November 2008

goods vehicles are either completed or under construction. Their efforts deserve much greater support.

In conclusion the writer of this article purchased tickets No 2 & 3 back in 1984 for the privilege of travelling on the first Russell-hauled train to Pont Croesor. He looks forward to his reward!

Cambrian Crossing - Past, Present & Future

When Owen Pugh accepted the 11/- per week position (see WHH N0. 34 page 1) of Croesor Crossing signalman in 1879 he was 43, living with his mother in Barmouth and already employed as 'signalman on a railway'. The 1881 census shows him living at the Croesor Crossing Railway Cottage with his younger wife and three year old daughter, having succeeded to the position from one John Jones – a boarder at 35, Chapel Street Porthmadog – on his retirement. He is described as 'pointsman & gate-keeper'. Lodging with them was 18 year old William Davies who was a stoker on the Cambrian. The suggestion is that having married Owen Pugh needed to move away from his widowed mother's house in Barmouth.

At the 1891 census the cottage/bungalow had become known as Cambrian Railway Cottage likewise the cottage adjacent to

Richard Watson & John Keylock combine to add to Edward Dorricott's story of the Crossing and its Box

Traeth Mawr Crossing, which currently gives access to Porthmadog football ground. By this time the Pugh's had an eight year old son, who, along with the now thirteen year old daughter, were 'scholars'. At the time of this census there were a mother and son visiting, so the accommodation was either considerable or a squash! Pugh was described as a 'gatesman'.

At the time of the 1901 census the Pugh family were still in residence. Mary was a dress maker and son David, now aged 17, a railway porter Owen Pugh was 65 so perhaps he had retired by the time of the 1911 census. Nevertheless he had been at the job for over twenty years and was either content with his lot or 'something better' never turned up.

Reference has been made to the adjacent Traeth Mawr crossing. At the time of the 1881 census here lived 43 year old Thomas Edwards with his wife, five daughters and two sons; perhaps another case of quite a squash!

Edwards was described as P-Way inspector and in 1891 was still in residence with only two 'scholar' sons. By virtue of

this comparatively long residence the location become known locally as 'Edwards' Crossing'. By 1901 Thomas Lloyd had moved in with his wife, two children and a 'Boarder'.

Fascinating; it is this human involvement with the WHR and its predecessors that brings the railway to life

The crossing of the main line by the narrow gauge for which Owen Pugh was responsible in the late 19th Century has an interesting history – Richard Watson takes up the story.

The installation of the new Cambrian Crossing – or Cae Pawb, as it's now known – is an exciting development in the rebirth of the Welsh Highland Railway. As with so many other aspects of the regeneration of the WHR I sometimes have to pinch myself that it's really happening. Who'd have believed it in those dark days, just a few years ago, when anything vaguely heritage or steam-related was anathema to the main line railway authorities? "A narrow gauge steam train crossing our railway, Carruthers? No sir....." You can just imagine the powers-that-be choking over their brandy and sodas in their London club.

Another era, another attitude – how refreshing it all is. Cae Pawb is now the only location apart from Newark where any two routes cross on the level, let alone where two railway companies' tracks cross one another. It's also the only narrow gauge over standard gauge crossing, apart from an example on the private railway system at Statfold. At one time there were others, of course – for example, in the GWR/FR yard at Blaenau, in Minffordd Yard, the RNAD depot at Trecwn and the MoD depot at Eastriggs in Dumfriesshire. The FR crossings have long since been removed, the system at Trecwn is being dismantled, but the crossing at Eastriggs may still exist.

The present WHR crossing has been built to current standards, using a very heavy rail section weighing 113lbs per yard (about 56 kg/m). It is of the cut-through



*The Evolution of a Crossing
The Cambrian Crossing in 1923 (top); in 1936
(centre); in 2008 (bottom)*

type, in which the standard gauge rail is uninterrupted apart from a slot cut into the head to accommodate the flanges of narrow gauge rolling stock. The narrow gauge track, though constructed in similar materials, is interrupted with separate rails inside and outside the standard gauge. This is logical, given the disparity between the types of train and speeds at which they operate. On the narrow gauge, there are 30ft transition panels of 113 lb (56kg/m) plain line, one either side of the crossing itself, followed by similar 80 lb (39.7 kg/m) panels connecting the crossing to 60 lb rail (30 kg/m) on the WHR itself.

The flat bottom rail used for the standard gauge portion of the crossing is a specialised "solid" section, having no web,



diately thought "Cambrian Crossing"!

Most of the views of the "old WHR" Crossing that I know of show bridge rails mounted on longitudinal timber sleepers, with steel angle serving as check rail. The special chairs seen in the WHR views are also visible in the picture taken at Swindon. The similarities between these photographs suggest that the WHR crossing was built to a standard GWR design at some time following the Grouping of the Cambrian on 1st January 1922. Was "our" crossing assembled at Swindon?

I'd always assumed that the WHR crossing had been made from second hand broad gauge materials, but the fact that such large crossings were still being built in bridge rail as late as 1935 suggests that new rail might have been rolled for the purpose.

I think we can say that the Cambrian Crossing was renewed to a standard GWR design before the WHR opened in 1923, as part of the general upgrading of the former Croesor Tramway to WHR standards.

Edward Dorricott's recent article on the Crossing Box is of considerable interest, as it proposes that the 'box may have been built much earlier than I had supposed, that is to say in about 1894. That would be during the life of the Croesor Tramway, so might explain its presence in the older photograph depicting the 'bullhead' crossing. Was the photo taken when the crossing was about to be renewed? If so, I wonder how the Croesor horses crossed the main line. I can imagine the horses having to walk on one side of the narrow gauge, and not within the "two foot", as there would not have been room. In the photograph, there does appear to be a well-worn path along the WHR on the Minffordd side of the crossing. I imagine that equipment such as point rods would be hazardous for horses picking their way over the Cambrian met-

als, so logically the path would be on the opposite side of the Tramway.

The Great Western provided boarding for the horses at the Plymouth (Laira) crossing of the Lee Moor Tramway, albeit within the "four foot". I wonder why this wasn't provided outside the "two foot" for the Croesor horses?

As always, there are more questions than answers.

And what of the future for Owen Pugh's box? As ever there is nothing certain about the Welsh Highland, so read on as John Keylock brings you up to date with events

In July it became apparent that by September there would not be ready a base on which to erect it. Nevertheless the box is as complete as it can be prior to being transported to site. It has had a trial assembly by Buildings Bespoke in Herefordshire (*see photo left*) and even in its raw timber state looks right.

We have acceptable quotations for Welsh slating the roof and a contractor prepared to insinuate his way onto a tight site to prepare the necessary foundation and base. What we don't have is the go-ahead from Network Rail to get the necessary work done, however Dave High (the site supervisor) reports that he is making progress" in his discussions with Network Rail. (*November 13th 2008*)

The original plan was to install the box in December, it was then agreed to bring installation forward to September. It now looks as though both dates will pass. Nevertheless our understanding it that the box needs to be up and running in preparation for the re-opening of the railway (from Porthmadog to Beddgelert) next summer.

North Wales Chronicle April 7 1894.

An accident which might have resulted fatally occurred on the Narrow Gauge Railway at Dinas on Saturday. As the 12.5 train was taking the cross road on its approach to the station, the latter part of the train was diverted from its proper course, with the result that the carriage next to the brakesman's van was thrown on its side. Fortunately all the passengers were extricated from their perilous position little the worse for the shock. All the chairs on the points were broken.

though the narrow gauge appears to be of the normal type.

What does this have to do with WHR Heritage? Well, it does continue the theme of track materials changing through the years in the three known incarnations of the Croesor-WHR crossing. The crossing as existing pre-1922 appears to have used standard gauge bullhead material. It seems that it was re-laid by the GW in bridge or 'Barlow' rail, with ex-standard gauge bullhead transition rails, at some point after that date. Its nadir came in 1938, when the GWR removed it, some say with unseemly haste. Sixty-eight years later the crossing reached a new zenith when it was restored using specialised flat bottom materials, and we can look forward to its reconnection to the WHR during 2008.

I spotted an interesting photo recently in a book I acquired some time ago, *Thro' The Lens*, by C.W. Judge. (OPC Railprint, 1985). The book is an album of photographs showcasing the work of the GWR official photographers down the years.

I think one of the photos is of particular interest, as it depicts a complicated diamond crossing assembly at Swindon Works. The caption reads "When special crossings and larger crossings were required, these were often assembled outside, as seen in this view in August 1935." I took one look at the photograph, recognised the materials used and imme-

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NWNGR - Four Wheel Carriage - c1877

It all started with my friend Glyn Lancaster Jones, a builder of full size steam launches in Port Dinorwic, North Wales. I have known him now for many years and have often wasted his time with idle chats and dreams about steamboats. Glyn knew my father Victor Mills who also had an interest in steamboats and designed the fabulous 'Mills Compound' (also known as the 'Beumaris Compound') marine engine that was built many years ago by the Beumaris Instrument Company. Glyn, who also builds highly successful water tube boilers, recently decided he would like to contemplate a change from building steam launches in the near future as they take so long and every one is bespoke. Some of the thoughts that crystallised were to make copies of early vintage caravans and of small narrow gauge carriages and trams that might be useable as garden workshops, offices, sheds, summer-houses etc.

David Mills Tells the Tale of his 7¼" gauge NWNG 4-Wheeler

I then came upon the North Wales Narrow Gauge Railways early 4-wheel carriage. It was very small at about 10ft long and rather more handsome than many others such as the slab-side GVT and Talylyn carriages. It had a gentle turn-under of the sides and handsome fascias like its mainline cousins so I could see



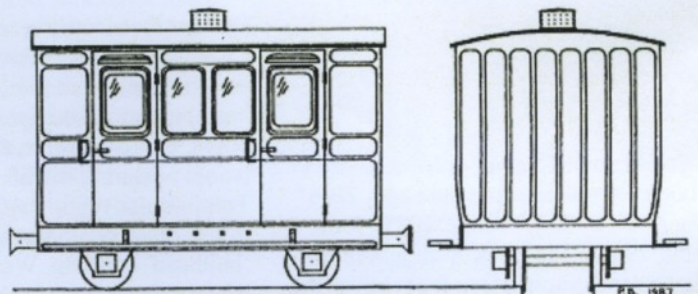
*Completed model & final version of paint scheme
The un-prototypical twin buffers are to ensure compatibility with existing model stock*

some possibilities here with some smart paintwork, lining and a little other detailing.

A full size outline drawing was produced in AutoCAD and scaled down to about 1/5 scale so that a large model could be quickly built as a portable demonstrator of the sort of pretty carriage Glyn could supply. At this point 7¼" society member John Davies spotted the drawing at one of our Gwynedd Engineering Society meetings and asked if I could

scale it up a bit for his railway. I hadn't even seen John's railway at this time, but agreed to blow up the drawing to about 1/3 scale, making it about 40" long x 24" wide. John then said he was having the Heywood Society visit his line on the 20th May, so I only had a few weeks to get something knocked together. Being a modeller in the smaller scales it was a bit of a challenge to quickly work out how to build it and with what materials. I decided to use MDF for its good surface finish and ease of cutting and shaping. After great difficulty in acquiring 3mm board locally I marked out all the corner radii for the fascia panels and carefully cut them with a large hole saw in a hand-held electric drill. The rest was cut out with a jig saw and all the edges filed and sanded to a radius. I cut some

timber frames with curves on the lower part for the turn-under of the sides and started to glue the frames to the side panels except for the lower section to be turned under later. This gave me an open



box that was framed at the top half but free at the bottom half. When set, the lower sides were curved in and glued and pinned to the frames.

The body was then ready to take a base frame comprising buffer beams and sole bars. The floor was made of tongue & groove boards and a removable roof made on curved timber frames.

The weekend before the body painting took place I spent a day at John's place (left) where we modified a spare Cromar White wagon chassis to fit my frame. If I had known about its existence earlier I could have made my frames 3/8" longer and saved John cutting and welding the chassis.

I then had to decide what colour it should be. I have taken some liberties here as I didn't know the original NWNCR livery. It is thought to have been similar to Midland Lake, but then it could well have been L&NWR deep plum or L&Y brown and buff. I fancied a rich red colour so I had Dulux paint mixed at a DIY store. I painted the fascias cream ready to fit after the side panels were painted.

When the fragile fascia panels were ready to glue in place it was like gluing a piece of lace curtain onto a wall and great care was taken with applying the Time Bond adhesive. I decided to try this adhesive as it gave me a little time to apply it without setting and ability to gently position the fascias accurately. When satisfied with the fit, I just squeezed them tight against the side and end panels. Job done.

The day before the Heywood Society visit I finished sticking the fascias on the



sides and fitting the dummy oil lamp vent on the roof. A week earlier I had searched the Harrogate ME exhibition for large shaded carriage letters without success. Only sets of GWR, LNER etc. were available off the shelf, although one supplier very kindly offered to try to make up some for me during the week. I thought this a bit tight on time so I did them in Photoshop and printed them on a laser printer. The paper was sprayed with a couple of coats of old Letraset lacquer on both sides to seal it and after carefully

cutting with a scalpel the letters were glued to the sides. The Perspex window panes were mounted in place and the four home-made brass T handles were secured with brass nuts. A dummy oil lamp top capped off the job.

The carriage was taken to John's the day before the Heywood visit and the wheels and springs fitted. Cromar White also kindly lent me a set of buffers and 3-link couplings. As it turned out the springing was too stiff and I had the wildest ride on rails in my life! The springing has since been adjusted and by inserting a 4mm spacer in the suspension and is now a comfortable and somewhat safer gentleman's saloon! John then handed me a membership application form for the 7 1/4 Society and now I'm hooked!

Since its debut, I have altered the fascia paintwork to more closely represent the Midland Railway style. Tony Martin of Cromer White was very interested in it and took it to the AGM in Brussels and placed a B&W photo of it in his advert in the Autumn Newsletter No 122.

The prototype was knocked up in a hurry, but any production versions could be CNC routed with a finer paint job.

John Keylock of the WHR Heritage Group kindly supplied me with details of the original NWNCR monogram and crest that were scanned, and reworked in Photoshop. I fitted crests to panels on the



As presented to the Heywood Society

carriage sides as the monogram looked like a serpent's nest and was practically unreadable.

Since its debut before over seventy Heywoodians, I thought of building either a rake of three four-wheelers or the similar style bogie brake composite also used on the NWNCR at that period.

The Festiniog Railway has some beautiful 'Heritage' stock in a dark livery that is very tempting to copy. I am interested in building more narrow gauge carriages to order.

Enquiries: David Mills, 45 Millbank, Llandegfan, Anglesey LL59 5RD Tel: 01248 713903 Mprints@aol.com
Full size carriage enquiries: Glyn Jones, Bodafon, Snowdon St, Port Dinorwic, Gwynedd Tel: 01248 670611 Lancaster-jones@tiscali.co.uk



COUNTY COURTS - CARNARVON - MONDAY

Before Mr Horatio Lloyd, Judge

Damages for Assault. - Morris Davies, a farmer living at Rostryfan, was sued for damages for assaulting Ellen Jones, the wife of a neighbouring farmer. Mr G Thomas was for the plaintiff, and Mrs Allanson for the defendant. The parties were returning from a Carnarvon Eisteddfod by the North Wales Narrow Gauge Railway, and shortly after leaving Dinas the defendant and others in the carriage commenced smoking. Plaintiff, being in ill health, requested them to desist, and all complied excepting the defendant, who, it was alleged, remarking that he hated women and would do all he could to annoy them, puffed his pipe in her face. She tried to "hook" it out of his mouth with her umbrella, which he wrested from her, and beat her with it about the head and face. - The defence was that the alleged assault was greatly exaggerated, and had been aggravated by the plaintiff's conduct. - His Honour agreed that the plaintiff brought the assault upon herself by poking her umbrella in the defendant's face. Instead of striking her with it he should have taken it from her and retained it. He assessed the damages at two guineas. *North Wales Chronicle (Bangor, Wales) Saturday October 13, 1877*

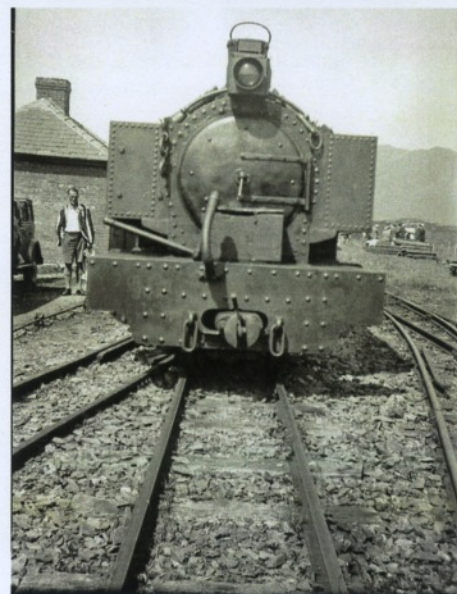
A WELSH HIGHLAND RAILWAY TRAVELLER IN THE THIRTIES



There can't be many people still alive today who actually travelled on the old WHR and even took some photographs. However one such gentleman is 91 year old Dr Harold Vickers now living in genteel retirement at Rhos on Sea. Dr Vickers travelled twice on the WHR in the early thirties, probably in the summers of 1933 (when he was just 16) and 1934 or 1935, and his recall of the events of 75 years ago, enlivened by seeing the pictures in his album, is quite amazing. We are privileged to publish here his eye witness, almost verbatim recollections of those trips. Harold now takes up the story in his own words, hardly edited, from the tape, starting with the first of these two trips, accompanied by his father (also Harold – hence the Harold E) and his younger brother Tony (who passed away earlier in 2008). Clarifications in italics are by Michael Bishop.



“We were on holiday in Rhosneigr (*on the south west coast of Anglesey*) and we caught the train - the excursion that came along the coast; whether it started at Rhyl or Prestatyn, I don't know, but it took us under Caernarfon in a double tunnel, and then stormed up the gradient to the Welsh Highland Terminus at Dinas. Here I can remember getting off to be greeted by clouds of sulphurous smoke oozing out of the engine shed. I first of all remember that the staff included many who seemed to be octogenarians - they seemed ancient. (*Harold has prints of 3 pictures by his friend Joey Hughill and commented on how youthful by comparison some of the engine crews were - two of these pictures were reproduced on pages 97 and 114 in Vol 2 of John Stretton's "Halfway to Paradise" and the third of a side-view of 590 on the Portmadoc Co's. website*) And when we got going I can remember looking out of



Harold photographed the engine - (Harold's father is to the left in a blazer) reproduced here - and then climbed up Snowdon, over the other side and down to Llanberis where they joined the Standard Gauge)

Michael Bishop interviews Dr Harold Vickers

the window and noticed how marshy it was as we left, against which *Russell's* motion could be seen oscillating. I can't remember any more until we climbed the spectacular scenery alongside Quellyn Lake before arriving at South Snowdon station.

I remember getting off, and as soon as we had done so, going to the back of the train where there was a posse of gangers uncoupling a motor trolley (*ganger's trolley*) - undoing yards of rope - and then starting it off and then chugging back down the way we'd just come. (*This practice of roping trolleys features in several photographs of the line. They must then have walked to the front of the train where*

Now the next time we travelled, it was only my brother and I, and we attempted the through journey to Blaenau Ffestiniog, but in fact we had to change at Beddgelert from being hauled by *Russell* to 590 then had to walk through Portmadoc from the Great Western railway Crossing, because obviously they didn't want to pay for the transit to the Great Western. I can remember going over the top (*i.e. the summit near Pitts Head*) and down the other side, and I can remember going very, very, slowly round the S-bends into Beddgelert. When we got into the final stretch into Portmadoc '590' was either steaming badly or the track was patchy because we'd get up to a reasonable speed and then we'd drift down to something like 5 miles-an-hour.

And we did this several times before we got to Portmadoc, and I say Portmadoc, but in fact we stopped in the siding before the Great Western, we had to walk on to Portmadoc to find something to eat (*at Portmadoc the weather was threatening, which did not do much for Harold's two photographs of a double engine at Harbour Station platform!*) We slipped all the way to Blaenau, where we arrived very late to the great annoyance of the L.M.S., who shouted at us “to get a move on” but we lost our path and waited for ages at Llanwrst.

THE NORTHERN COUNTIES TRACTION COMPANY LIMITED

In the context of WHR pre-history, the N.W.P & T. Co., and its association with the P.B. & S.S.R., is, with further diligent research, becoming better understood. However it is only comparatively recently that information has come to light about an earlier company established to promote the P.B. & S.S.R. this company was the Northern Counties Traction Company Ltd (N.C.T.Co.) who did all the 'spade work' to obtain the 1901 P.B. & S.S.R. Act.

The N.C.T.Co. was incorporated as a limited company in December 1900 with a registered office in tHelens (at the same address as Oppenheim & Malkin, Solicitors) with a nominal capital of £5000 divided into 1000 shares of £5 each. Their Memorandum of Association stated their objects as being 'carrying out the business of an electric traction and power company in all its branches providing the necessary equipment to provide electricity'. Furthermore to carry on the business of electricians, electrical and mechanical engineers supplying electricity for the purposes of light, heat and motive power and be providers of the necessary equipment employing electricity. No mention of railways or even tramways, but the facility 'to sell, improve, manage, develop, exchange, and enfranchise, lease, mortgage, dispose of, turn to account, or otherwise deal with, all or any part of the property or rights of the Company'.

Among the initial subscribers, each for one £5 share, were names that would become familiar in a few years with the flotation of the N.W.P. & T. Co. - viz George Edward Heyl Dia, electrical engineer of Manchester, a director of Glover's Cable Company and Chairman of English Industrials Ltd. - a company promoting and financing the passage of tramway bills through Parliament; William John Glover, cable manufacturer of St. Helens; Henry Samuel Oppenheim, solicitor of St Helens and John Hammill, chartered accountant and Secretary to the Company.

In November 1900 all the necessary 'papers' had been deposited by the N.C.T.Co. with Parliament in anticipation of obtaining the P.B. & S.S.R. Act during the next (1901) parliamentary session. The purposes of the Act can be summarised as follows:-

1) Purchase of the 'Croesor Tramway (from Hugh Beaver Roberts) and dissolve the owning Portmadoc, Croesor &

Beddgelert Tram Railway Company (P.C. & B.T.R.Co.), pay off it's liabilities, retain it's powers enshrined in the 1865 & 1879 Acts and maintain the section between Portmadoc and what was to become Croesor Junction.

2) Build a railway from Croesor Junction to Beddgelert, up Nant Gwynant and terminating on the edge of Llyn Gwynant adjacent to the outlet of the Afon Glaslyn;

3) To authorise county and district councils to make contributions by way of loan or otherwise towards the undertaking of the Company, upon such terms and conditions as may be prescribed by the Bill.

4) To work in conjunction, particularly, with the N.W.N.G.R & F.R.

5) To establish the hydro-electric power station at Cwm Dyli beyond the northern shore of Llyn Gwynant and supply electricity to Beddgelert, Portmadoc, Criccieth and for the use of their own undertaking.

6) To empower the Company to acquire the necessary lands for said scheme(s) either by compulsory purchase

Research - Michael Bishop Story - John Keylock

or agreement. All of this was under the signature of Evan R. Davies, Solicitor to the Promoters, of Pwllheli.

In March 1901 an agreement was reached for the sale of the P.C. & B.T.R to the N.C.T.Co. and in August the P.B. & S.S.R Act was passed. Whilst the Bill was being 'read', Sir Douglas Fox gave evidence on behalf of the promoters as 'Engineer of the Scheme'.

By April 1901, 100 £5 shares in N.C.T.Co. had been taken up by Joseph Beecham, 'gentleman' of StHelens, William Windle Pilkington, 'Colonel' of Prescott, Lancashire, Duncan McKechnie, 'gentleman' of Prescott and A.W.B. Pearson of London, 'gentleman', who was the Chairman of the Company until his death within 12 months. In July, a month before the passing of the P.B. & S.S.R. Act, Messrs Pilkington, Beecham and McKechnie purchased a further 100 shares each.

The necessary Parliamentary Deposit to enable the bill to pass through both Houses of Parliament was advanced by Pilkington and Beecham as security against a loan the N.C.T.Co. had taken from Parr's Bank. But what of the triumvirate who did all the nec-



Joseph Beecham a director of NCT Co Ltd and subsequently of the NWP&T Co Ltd

essary 'spade-work' to get the Bill through Parliament? We don't know when they started work or how long it took, but it would seem likely that they benefited from surveys, plans and estimates produced for earlier similar schemes. The three involved with this promotion were Aubrey Ward-Thomas, consulting engineer in partnership with Frederick Francis Bennett (styled as Bennett & Ward-Thomas) and Alfred Mountain Fowler M.I.C.E., F.S.I., civil engineer, all of Manchester. It would seem that all three had been involved with a scheme for West Cumberland Tramways, and Fowler particularly was a tramways man having been involved therewith at Leeds, (during the early use of flat-bottom rail), Salford, Newcastle, North & South Shields, Stockport and Blackpool. He had designed and carried out as engineer many river bridges in iron, steel and stone. He had been engaged on waterworks at Bradford and Chesterfield and had been Engineer to both Leeds Corporation and Northallerton waterworks. Furthermore he had been Borough Engineer at Leeds, Newcastle and Salford respectively; 50 years experience of municipal engineering and in private practise for the last 20. Of Ward-Thomas and Bennett we know little except that the latter was the originator of the scheme for electrifying the Croesor Tramway and extending the line to Beddgelert and Llyn Gwynant in conjunction with the water power scheme. He and Mr Fowler had prepared all the surveys, plans and estimates for the Bill.

Having by November 1900 brought the P.B. & S.S.R. Bill to Parliament, the matter of the engineers' fees payable by the

N.C.T.Co. was obviously all important and it had already been approved in December that Bennett, Ward-Thomas and Fowler would be appointed engineers to the scheme. Their remuneration would be on the basis of 5% of the value of the contract; a recognised procedure. By mid-1902 the N.C.T.Co's prospectus inviting subscriptions for P.B.& S.S.R. construction had been issued and from this it was apparent that Ward-Thomas and Fowler had not been appointed as engineers. Effectively there had been a breach of agreement. It would seem that Oppenheim was a rather devious solicitor!

It transpired that after the passing of the 1901 Act Sir Douglas Fox, who had given evidence to a Parliamentary Select Committee during the passage of the Bill, had been in negotiations with Oppenheim who claimed that this already well known consulting engineer had been employed for 'promotional purposes'. He had powerful financial influence and his reports in Prospectus would influence the inflow of capital to the scheme. However there was no intention that Ward-Thomas and Fowler would be supplanted as engineers and at the right moment Sir Douglas Fox would

withdraw. But this did not happen! In July 1903 an advertisement appeared in a Manchester newspaper giving notice that a (another?) company was about to be floated for the work authorised by the 1901 Act. This, very reasonably, prompted Ward-Thomas, with whom Bennett had been no longer in partnership since early in 1901, to instruct his solicitor to give notice of his firm's claim as instigating engineers of the scheme and of breach of contract by the employment of 'other engineers'. Oppenheim had entered into an agreement to float this new company (N.W.P. & T.Co.) with a view to obtaining for himself and his clients the enormous profits from the sale of the Act to the exclusion of Ward-Thomas's firm and Mr Fowler.

At an extraordinary general meeting of the N.C.T.Co. in December 1903 it was specially resolved that the Company be wound up voluntarily and a Liverpool chartered accountant be appointed as Liquidator. By this time of course, the N.W.P. & T.Co. had already been floated. Of the five directors of this new company, Joseph Beecham, who was also a director of the St Helens Cable Co., featured from the N.C.T.Co., Lloyds were the bankers, for whom a new

director, James Tomkinson MP for Crewe Cheshire, was also a director along with Parr's Bank of St Helens. The latter would subsequently be taken over by Lloyds. Not surprisingly one of the two firms of solicitors to the N.W.P. & T.Co. was Oppenheim & Son.

In an affidavit of July 1904, by which time the P.B.& S.S.R. construction had been proceeding for some six months, Ward-Thomas claimed that ever since Oppenheim had secured his (Ward-Thomas's) firm's scheme for his clients, he had been prejudiced against his firm. Under his advice, the N.C.T.Co. had "resorted to every device to avoid their liability to keep my firm and Mr Fowler and so secure for himself and syndicate (N.C.T.Co.) members the profits that rightly belonged to my firm". "The expression of goodwill by Mr.Oppenheim when compared with his acts in the matter is too thin to bear comparison".

One can but feel sympathy towards Bennett, Ward-Thomas and Fowler who effectively had their scheme hijacked essentially at the instigation of Oppenheim.

John Davies



John Lebrun Davies, who is perhaps best remembered by most as having donated the buffet car to the WHR, died peacefully at the end of September aged 77. He had not been well for several

years and bore his illness with philosophical fortitude. John joined the Heritage Group within four months of its inception and subsequently became a life member. Not only did John give 'us' the buffet car but he also made generous donations towards its restoration. John was present on trackbed surveys and joined several working parties tidying up a dilapidated Tryfan Junction station building, where this photograph was taken

In recent years the writer kept John informed of restoration progress and indeed called at Gelert's Farm on Monday 6th October to assess progress with the intention of telephoning him on returning home. Alas I was pre-empted by a letter from his widow, Sue, advising of John's passing. This Group extends its sympathy to Sue and the wider family. In John's memory we have made – at the family's suggestion

– a further donation towards the cost of the buffet car restoration.

When complete it is planned to install a brass plaque in the coach acknowledging John's generous gift along with a framed copy of the original 1942 bill of sale/delivery note.

Since the early 1960s those with an eye to WH restoration had cast covetous eyes on the two halves of the buffet car set at right angles in a field on the outskirts of Waunfawr village. It was not until the death of John Davies' aunt, Jinny Williams, that the buffet car remains became available through John's good offices as executor of her estate. Thank you John for this vital ingredient to a train of heritage stock; it is hoped that at a future date some of the family will be able to travel in the fruits of John's generosity.

Buffet Car Update

by Chris Dearden

Restoration work on the original WHR Buffet Car has reached the stage where – in the words of one of the team – "it now looks like a complete carriage"! Mounted on its bogies and in one piece for the first time since 1942, visitors to Gelert's Farm can now begin to appreciate the form of the carriage as WHR passengers of the 1920s would have seen it.

Matchboard panelling has been fitted to almost all of the bodywork, the roof has

been fitted and canvassed, and the window glass has been installed. Restoration of the roof boards proved a particularly lengthy task because the Buffet Car was cut into two pieces during its life as a summer house in Waunfawr, and the original roof boards had to be painstakingly joined back together.

Specialist restoration work continues to be done by Magnay & Yates, a joinery firm in Haltwhistle, Northumberland. A system of specially developed joints means that the amount of new timber being used in the restoration can be kept to a minimum; some of the joins are extremely impressive, being completely

flush with the original wood. (see picture below).



TIMETABLE OF W.H.R. DEMOLITION

The equipment required by Cohens for dismantling the W.H.R. was delivered to Dinas by rail in early August 1941. On the 13th a train managed to get into the Aberglaslyn Pass but on the following day Portmadoc was reached after six hours. En route level crossings had to be dug out, and barbed wire barricades removed. The northern portal of the long tunnel had been filled in (to act as a wartime air raid shelter) so this had to be removed even though photographic evidence indicates that it was filled in again on completion of track lifting. Arthur Rimmer travelled on both these 'trains'.

John Keylock Traces the Demolition of the Line in 1941 & 1942

By September 1941 the start of track lifting was imminent; confirmation to proceed being awaited from the Air Ministry and Ministry of Supply. Work started on the 29th but by early October only half a mile had been lifted between Dinas and South Snowdon (Rhyd Ddu). Lack of quick progress was probably attributable to the shortcomings of the petrol 'tractor'. It was during early and late October that Messrs. Bolton & Boyd-Carpenter made their two forays to the dying railway and documented activity.



By December 1941 the track was being lifted between Betws Garmon and Waunfawr; they were working back from South Snowdon towards Tryfan Junction and Dinas. Cohens had delivered two 26 H.P. diesel tractors; one for use on this section and the other between South Snowdon and Portmadoc. By January 1942 the track had been lifted from South Snowdon to Tryfan Junction. In February 1942 Arthur Rimmer was back again to witness demolition activities. On the 4th he travelled from Beddgelert to Portmadoc in one hour and the following day from Dinas to Rhostryfan. Track lifting had already started between there and the Drumhead. The arrival of the two diesels was obviously accelerating activity.

Demolition in progress near Rhostryfan. A 1942 photo by Arthur Rimmer

went, supposedly, into the wartime melting pot. But Cohens - perhaps in wartime haste - were not completely thorough. In Pont Cae'r Gors cutting remained sleepers of still usable quality. The track in the cutting below Pitt's Head, removed by a re-emergent F.R., is well documented in the saga of 'Garraways Bath'. Also left behind by Cohens were fish plates and bolts, rail spikes and the odd wagon component - tangle remains!

We are fortunate that those few who witnessed the demolition of the original W.H.R. documented their visits and it is to be hoped that a future generation will not have to record a similar happening!

And so the original W.H.R. trackbed

Croesor Valley Tales

Recent journal articles have made reference to the carriage of goods from suppliers in Porthmadoc to destinations in the Croesor Valley during the first half of the 1920's. In July 1907 Moses Kellow's wife Ellen (Nell) was advertising in the 'Daily Mail' and 'The Lady' a cottage to let in Croesor village.

From 'The Croesor File' courtesy of Adrian Barrell

The 'cottage' was Llys Helen, currently the home of the son of 'Bob Owen Croesor'. (See photo right - November 2008) By August 1907 a tenant was installed and wrote expressing satisfaction. In reply either Ellen or Moses Kellow replied

comfortable in it. Butchers, grocers and other tradesmen call with their carts regularly for orders or anything can be ordered from Portmadoc and delivered by the Croesor Narrow Gauge Railway which runs through the valley. You can hire carriages at the Bron-danw Arms Hotel or if a dog cart would suffice you could get this from the farmer close by. Milk and butter can be got in abundance as there are several farms close by....."



owned by the PB&SSR, shortly to become a moribund organisation. Nevertheless just as the PB&SSR had financial dealings with Parry regarding timber extraction so they were charging 11½d per ton for sending slates to Porthmadoc in 1914.

"I am very pleased to hear that you like the cottage. I think you will be very

By this time the Croesor Tramway - from Carreg Hyldrem to Porthmadoc - was

'Y Trên Bach'

TH. Parry-Williams was born and brought up in Rhyd Ddu. A leading academic and Welsh literary figure, he was knighted for his services to Welsh culture and the Welsh language. In 1942 he published a book of essays, *Lloffion*, in one of these he remembers his boyhood and the Little Train that served that isolated hamlet which was his home. The essay, translated by Brian Paul, reflects not only the impact of the 'Little Train' but also an appreciation of what it meant to the villagers of Rhyd Ddu at the turn of the nineteenth century. We are privileged to publish Brian Paul's translation here.

The station and train was a part of village life and not something unimportant or an intrusion

The train was a symbol of the Industrial Revolution and now it has reached us in the shadow of Snowdon.

For about an hour in the morning (as children), we made the station a type of temple, and the stationmaster a priest (!) and the train as it were, a symbol of a new religion that would undermine all others!

Childhood memories of 'NWNGR' on coaches, and the use made of the word 'Terminus' on railway timetables at Rhyd Ddu Station.

Rhyd-Ddu is not as romantic sounding as 'Grand Canyon' or 'Sante Fe', but the company, after much deliberation, named the station 'Snowdon', a very misleading name for visitors - many not realising that to get to the summit entailed a 2 1/2 hour climb up rough paths.

'Gunpowder Plot' - Update

Roy Allen writes:

Re the article in WHH 41. I would like to add the following information.

I found the metal plate way back probably in the early eighties at the back of stables at Betws Inn, Betws Garmon, near to Waunfawr, which at the time was a riding stables. I kept it in my garden for many years not paying much attention to it until reading a copy of a Furness Railway brochure. I sent the picture to the Furness railway

Visitors not wishing to climb Snowdon were able to go down to Beddgelert by coach and horses. The author states this was good enough for Beddgelert, but Rhyd Ddu itself had a train service! Beddgelert people in that respect were inferior!

In the summer the station was busy, with much going to and fro. Smoke and ash smells, English being spoken, carriage doors being slammed shut, whistling and rumbling engine noises, and visitors around. After the last train left, a striking silence fell over the village as it set

Translation by Brian Paul

bled once more to ordinary village life.

Trains 'ran' in winter carrying slates to Dinas, and bringing back coal and other goods into the country areas. There was a Market at Caernarfon on Saturdays and that had to be visited. The train lost some of its 'sparkle' in winter as the weather took its toll.

and they came to the same conclusion as you that it was a gunpowder barrel lid. However when I paid a visit to my nephew who lives near Carnforth we decided to go to where Dixons had the gunpowder works at Blackbeck where there is now a caravan site. We took the plate with us and showed it to the proprietor who dismissed the idea that it was a gunpowder cask lid because he explained that nothing could be made of steel because of risk of sparks and in fact he was making a collection of finds he made of brass clogs tips and nails etc and



Coach & horses leaving Rhyd Ddu for Beddgelert - 'good enough for Beddgelert people - but Rhyd Ddu had a train!'

A long journey by morning train involved eating breakfast by the light of an oil lamp, and travelling on the train on a cold hard bench with only a flicker of light above in the carriage. It was quite sad to leave the village in the autumn or winter as the only passenger as sometimes happened. It was almost heartbreaking to travel through familiar countryside in the darkness for a few miles, but compensated for when arriving home from some distant city or town on one's return.

As the line was extended to Beddgelert and Porthmadog in WHR days, the word 'terminus' lost its meaning, but many still called the train - 'Trên Bach Rhyd-Ddu'.

Demise of WHR and removal of track, but the author states: - "the trackbed remains for someone confident enough to repossess it, and bring back the world and its trappings to this part of Arfon. (How prophetic! - ed).

even the buffers on the locos were made of wood. I left the plate with my nephew. possibly this may change the explanation that you have reached on the mystery plate!! I live in Waunfawr very close to the WHR Station and also the old Dudley Park Quarry which is now a nature reserve. Further investigations are on-going with the Cumbrian Railway's Association.

Further information on this matter has come to light and will be detailed in the next edition of Welsh Highland Heritage

The Cambrian Railway Gets Cross!

Cambrian Railway Company
Engineer's Office
Oswestry

Memorandum

The Portmadoc Flour Mills Co

20th March 1919

Portmadoc March 21st 1919

To Mr G.C. McDonald
Cambrian Railways
Oswestry

42965.M.

Dear Sirs

Re Shed at Beddgelert Siding

May I call your attention to the very bad condition of your transhipping shed on the Beddgelert Siding? It is practically falling to pieces, and is a source of danger to our employees working the traffic. I shall be much obliged if you will give the matter immediate attention.

Yours faithfully

Messrs The Portmadoc Flour Mills Company
Portmadoc

Dear Sirs

Re Gelert Siding Shed

We are in receipt of your letter of March 20th. No doubt you are aware as it was reported to you by your local agent and Inspector Ridge, that the damage to the above shed was caused through shunting operations by your men at the Siding some time ago. If not for this, the shed would have been no source of danger to anybody.

Yours faithfully
For the Co
C.J. Edwards

G.42068.V.

Memorandum

To Goods Manager.

The Portmadoc Flour Mills Co

A951
Cambrian Railways
Portmadoc.... 19.7.1919

Portmadoc March 24th 1919

To Mr G.C. McDonald
Cambrian Railways
Oswestry

Shed on Gelert Siding used by the Portmadoc
Flour Mills Company

Dear Sirs

Re Gelert Siding Shed

I have again seen these people hereon and understand that the statement in our letter of June 14th is incorrect, and the Manager of the Mills withdraws his statement. The Manager however, desires to see the Engineer with a view of coming to some agreement as respecting the erection of a new shed at Gelert Siding.

It is rumoured that the Croesor Railway is to be electrified, and if that is carried out the Mill people will be prohibited to make use of the tramway with their horses as at present, and some other arrangement will have to be made.

(signed) W. Jones.

We are in receipt of your letter of March 22nd. Previous to the damage done by the shunting operation, the shed was firm except that part of the corrugated iron was charred through the smoke of the engine. We do not know what the arrangements were as to the upkeep of the corrugated iron when the shed was built; but we understand that the Railway Co supplied them. During the last four years, as you are aware, owing to war restrictions, nobody could procure corrugated iron.

Yours faithfully
For the Co
C.J. Edwards

This picture of Beddgelert Sidings, taken circa 1918, clearly shows the transhipment shed referred to in the correspondence. The whole site was an army camp at the time of the picture.

Above correspondence 'unearthed' by Peter Johnson from the Public Record's Office. Our thanks to both.



John J. Marks - Beddgelert Station-Master

John Marks' great niece in Australia is aware that her great uncle worked on the Welsh Highland in the 1930's, at which time he would have been in his mid sixties. During 1934/5 he was the 'station-master' at Beddgelert, in company with Miriam Roberts who at that time was in her late teens and, dressed in traditional Welsh costume, acted as 'station-mistress' cum 'hostess'. Passengers travelling the length of the railway invariably had to change trains at Beddgelert with usually about an hour to 'kill' and so Miriam provided a focus, as well as selling tickets.

John's previous employment was with the L.M.S. in Manchester and as Miriam often mentioned "he tried to run the WHR, or his part of it, like the L.M.S." Living at Bridge House, Pont Aberglaslyn it seems reasonable to assume that the Beddgelert position was a good option, being closer to home than the nearest L.M.S opportunity for employment, and a less demanding job in a run up to what must have been a late retirement.

Ellen Jones, who before moving to Criccieth, spent most of her life in Nantmor remembers John Marks, known as 'Jack', as "a tall, slim-built gentlemen always



wearing a cap". Indeed all the photos of him on duty at Beddgelert station show this to be the case. In the photo with his wife 'Caddie' (Katherine) outside Bridge House in the 1930's they are patently

Another Biography from John Keylock

posed in 'Sunday best'.

Caddie of course ran the tearoom, which was a single story addition on the southern elevation of Bridge House. As guard of 'Trên Bach Port' 'Jack' would have been able to encourage passengers getting off at Nantmor "to be sure to visit the Aberglaslyn Tea-room" !!

Also living at Bridge House at this time was Caddie's sister and two other female relatives. On John's second retirement, perhaps precipitated by the cessation of passenger services in 1936 - he and Caddie moved to Bron-yr-Aur about ¼ mile further south and above the Porthmadog road. Apparently this cottage was once the home of the local water bailiff.

John was born in Conwy, son of a coal merchant. He and Caddie had one son who died in infancy. Caddie was 18 years younger

than Jack who died in 1950 aged 86. Caddie died 6 months later and both are buried in Beddgelert churchyard. It is interesting to note that even though not living at Bridge House when he died the grave headstone reads 'In memory of John J. Marks - Pont Aberglaslyn...' The only other anecdote relating to John's work on the WH is that in his capacity as the Beddgelert to Porthmadog train guard timings were often disrupted to shoo cattle off the line!

John Marks features in several photographs of the WHR; perhaps the most notable being the posed July 1934 lease photograph in which he is standing - equipped with bell punch apparatus - to the right of Miriam Jones. In the photo published here (*left*) he is inspecting the couplings at Beddgelert.

Thanks are due to John Hopkins for providing the initiative for this modest 'portrait'.

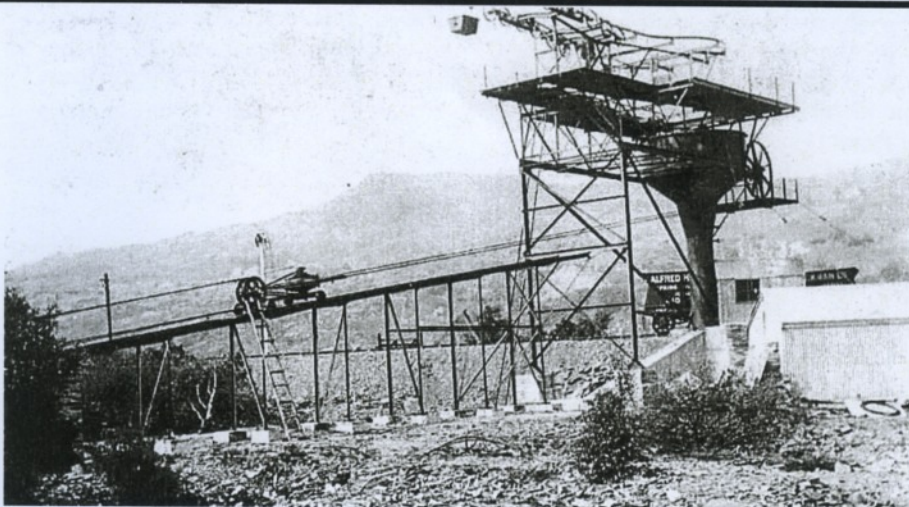


The Aerial Ropeway to Llanberis

Dave Linton adds to Gwynfor's Article

With regard to Dr Gwynfor Perce Jones' interesting article on the Iron Ore Mines of Betws and Waunfawr (Welsh Highland Heritage No 39),

I would take issue with him on just one minor point. Describing the type of ropeway going over to Llyn Padarn he mentions a wire rope "providing the 'track' for the tubs which were presumably powered by a lighter 'endless' haulage cable." Looking at the photos of the ropeway terminal in the article it does not appear to have any arrangement for a separate carrying rope and the cable pulleys appear to be on pivoting beams characteristic of Roe's patent. In addition, according to Jeremy Wilkinson's article on Iron Ore Mining in Caernarfonshire (British Mining No. 78) the ropeway was supplied by Ropeways Ltd, of whom Roe was the



The Llanberis end of the ropeway

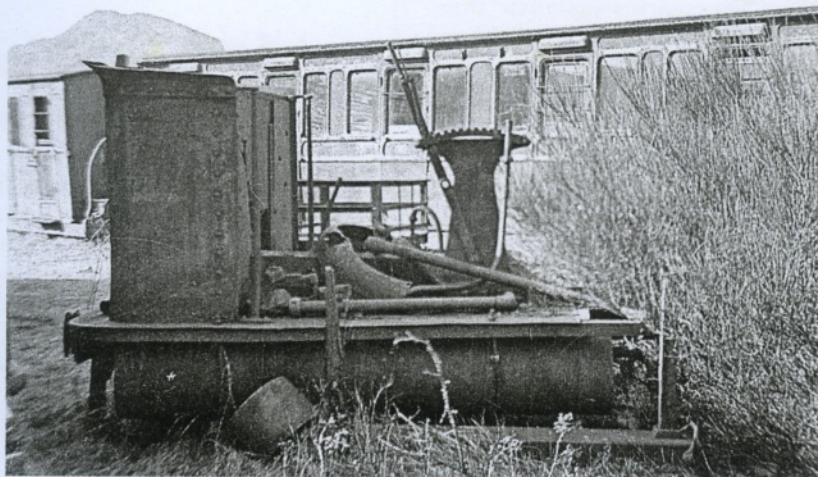
chief engineer. Consequently, I think it most probable that the ropeway was of the type where the buckets were carried

on a single rope (i.e. no separate carrying and haulage ropes).

Moel Tryfan - the Final Days

'Moel Tryfan' was scrapped on October 2nd 1954; her rear bogie wheels survived for re-use in the pony trucks for 'Linda and 'Blanche'. The air receiver (*photo right - Bill Rear*) is now at Gelert's farm. The bottom photograph is self explanatory, but who are the three men involved? Are any recognisable as early FR volunteers or are they the scrap metal merchants men?

It may be apocryphal, but it said that Alan Garraway was never paid the then scrap value (£35.00)



The evisceration of 'Moel Tryfan' at Boston Lodge in 1954 captured on film by R.A. Cook. Courtesy Michael Bishop & The Railway & Canal Historical Society

Station Jewellery

The recent acquisition – as a result of Derek Lystor’s eagle eye on e-bay – of an enamel sign, the same as one which used to adorn the western end of Dinas Goods Shed in the 1930’s (see photo) prompted investigation into what other enamel signs may have been displayed on the railway be it



NWNG or WHR. The railway station was a popular environment for enamel signs which were both weather proof and easy to keep clean. One has only to look at

the well-known photograph by Francis Bedford (bottom) taken at Snowdon Station (Rhyd Ddu) in the mid 1890’s. Three times one is exhorted to ‘Drink Everybodys Tea at 2/- lb’. Food and drink seem to take precedence; ‘Use Allmands Self Raising Flour’ and there are two adverts for Gwilym Evans Quinine Bitters’. None of these feature in the definitive works on ‘Street Jewellery’ (by Christopher Baglee and Andrew Morley)

The rebuilding of the WHR brought to light two further examples which do feature; ‘Nectar Tea’ and ‘The Vacuum Oil Co’. The former succeeded an earlier rectangular sign with



a font in the style of the Arts & Crafts movement (1880-1914). Our later example (see photo) (the location of which is currently a mystery) is black and white but it was also was produced with a green or pink background – and in two sizes.

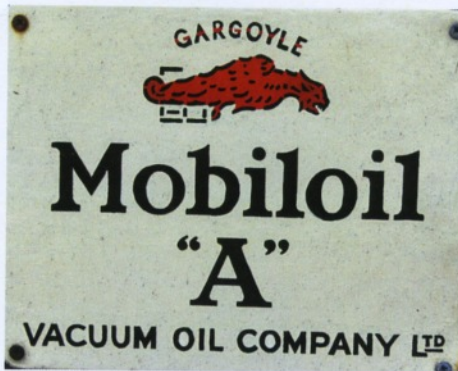


Apparently hundreds of these were

found in a warehouse in the 1980s – a discovery that must have led to a reduced collector value!

Finally the Vacuum Oil Gargoyle (see photo) the reverse of which was finding use as a ‘Keep Out’ sign on a farm gate during one of the early Group trackbed

surveys. It is reasonable to assume that this was a relic from the period – in the 1930’s – when the Vanwil Oil Company



was occupying part of Dinas yard. Vanwil were agents for Vacuum.

Keylock on Station Adornments

Thumbing through a copy of ‘More Street Jewellery’ I came across an advert for ‘Cooper’s Sheep Dip’ a product that was delivered by the WHR to farmers along

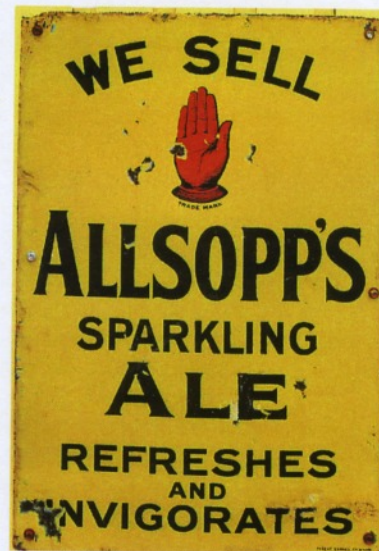
the line. But more interesting was the solicitous advert to ‘Try Kops Crisps’ at 2d a packet. The packet of crisps illustrated is identical to the original ‘Smiths’ except that ‘Kops’

is printed in lieu. Now if I am correct Smiths main manufacturing plant was in Birmingham – Tyseley no less – and so was Kops Brewery (who still manufacture lemonade as R, White & Sons the original proprietors) and with the opening of the WHR Kops used the railway to deliver ‘casks’ to Beddgelert. Based on the foregoing it is tempting to suggest that

Kops sold their crisp business to Smiths.....

In the heyday of enamel sign manufacture there were some twenty suppliers in the UK. The ‘Hadfield Fertiliser’ sign was made by the Falkirk Iron Coy in North Britain. Perhaps the most familiar enamel signs on the NWNG/WHR were those used on poster boards. These had white letters on a blue ground – proclaiming, according to the era – ‘North Wales Narrow Gauge Ry’ and ‘Welsh Highland Railway’. Examples of the former may be seen in the railway museum at Winchcombe and the narrow gauge museum at Tywyn. A third example has recently been taken into the Group’s custody from the collection of the late Allan Pratt and will eventually be displayed in the museum at Gelert’s Farm. A WHR example is already on display there. The next task is to try and establish their manufacturer.

So the detail that comes to the railway from beyond the boundary fence can often be most absorbing!

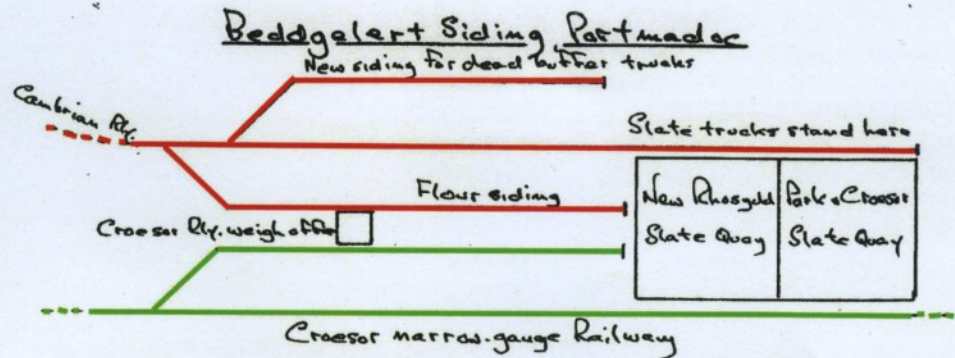


Snowdon Station in circa 1896 adorned with ‘Station Jewellery’

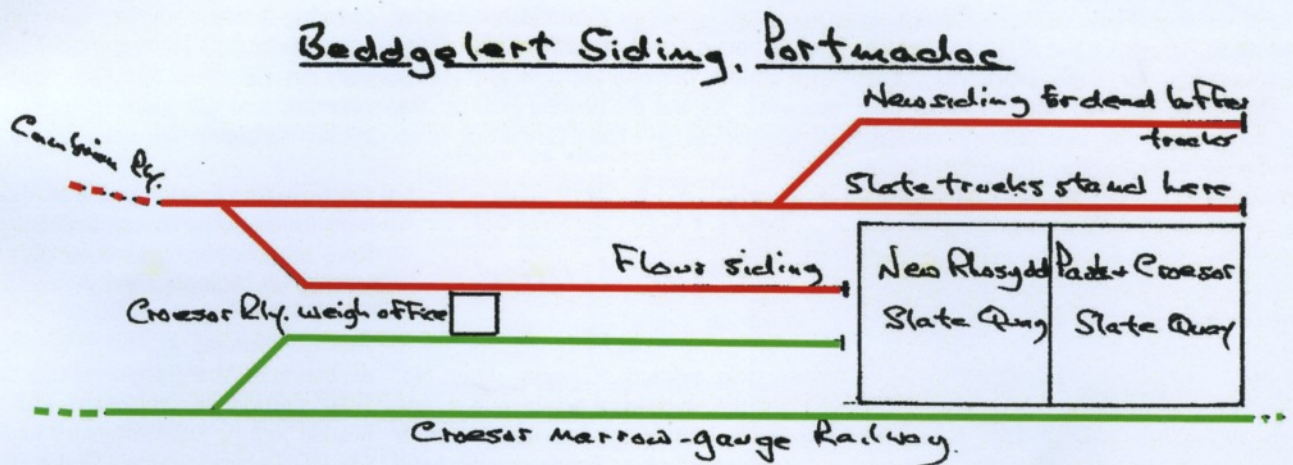


New Siding Proposed for The Croesor - 1900

Adrian Barrell's scholarly treatise covering the Parc & Croesor quarries inevitably has many references to the Croesor Tramway which transported their slate production to either Beddgelert Sidings – for transhipment on to the national rail network – or to the Wharves at Porthmadog for export by sea.



It is here suggested to lay a new line on ground already made.



It is here suggested to lower the railway where slate trucks stand to facilitate loading the slates and to provide the staff for the new line laid beside it. This is the proposal I decidedly prefer. M.K.

Moses Kellow, who got the best and most from the slate quarries, was both meticulous and methodical, but nevertheless his letter books are notoriously difficult to decipher. But at least they have survived otherwise this article would not be possible. In a letter to the Cambrian Railways dated 5th December 1900 the Croesor Tramway – in the guise of Moses Kellow – proposed a new standard gauge siding at the top end of Beddgelert Siding. He provided two options, both supported by simplified drawings which appear here, suitably transcribed to make them more legible. His preference was for the layout in the bottom

diagram, for the obvious reason that it would put the Cambrian wagons at a lower rail level thus making slate transhipment from the storage wharves much easier as illustrated in this photograph of slate stacked at Beddgelert Siding with the New Rhosydd sign clearly visible. There is no evidence to suggest that



Kellow's recommendations were ever implemented.

Tickets Please!

My thanks to all those members who got in touch pointing out the errors in my article on the back page of WHH No. 41, especially David Woodcock who has provided much help and assistance. (See also letter from Richard Maund below).

Referring to the two tickets illustrated in the article, whilst #078 is indeed an LMSR print as stated; both examples are for exactly the same journey, i.e. a return trip from South Snowdon to Bangor via Dinas Junction. It is highly probable that in 1923 the LMSR were providing all through pre-printed tickets between its stations and those on the WHR, and were doubtless acting as Agents for the WHR to simplify accountancy for such journeys. This would have allowed settlement to take place between the two railways without involving the Railway Clearing House. However, it is quite possible that Stephens may have put a stop to such arrangements – which would account for the appearance of WHR headed examples (ticket #161) replacing the earlier LMSR prints as they became exhausted.

David's work on timetables shows that day excursions from WHR stations to Bangor were generally no longer possible after the end of the summer timetable in 1924 until the high season timetable of 1936, other than on days when the Saturday South Snowdon - Dinas "Market" service operated in 1925, and the heavily dated Dinas - Beddgelert evening trains in 1934 & 1935. Ticket #161, a Waterlow print, must have been printed c 1923/24, but may not have actually been issued until the 1934-35 lease period.

Expanding on the use of LMSR tickets, I am indebted to Glynn Waite of the LMS Society for explaining the issue of that company's Supplementary Tickets over the WHR & FR. When a passenger booked for a tour from an LMSR station, they were given a separate ticket for each leg of their journey. The tickets were probably in an Edmondson booklet format bound loosely together on one edge with a glued piece of paper to allow easy removal. As was the general practise, the booklet would have had a card cover upon



Derek Lystor Tries Again!

which was printed "Circular Tour No. XXX", the station of origin and a few words of conditions, and a back cover with further conditions. Inside would have been the requisite number of tickets to cover the corresponding stages of the journey.

Taking ticket #090 as an example, (*see above*) the cover of the booklet would have read "Circular Tour No. 204", issued from Colwyn Bay. Three travel tickets would have been necessary for this tour: i) An LMS titled ticket covering the outward journey from Colwyn Bay to Di-

nas Jct OR Blaenau Festiniog and the alternate return,

ii) A WHR titled Supplementary ticket covering a single journey between Dinas Jct to Portmadoc Harbour (#090),

iii) An FR titled Supplementary ticket covering a single journey between Portmadoc Harbour to Blaenau Festiniog.

All three were valid in either direction, bore the same serial number, and would have been collected as each part of the journey was completed.

Another example was LMS Tour 202, an excursion to Aberglaslyn. In this case, the WHR portion was covered by an LM&SR headed Return Supplementary ticket, Dinas Jct to Aberglaslyn via Welsh Highland Railway and was an all green print.

My thanks to David and Glynne as mentioned and to Chris White for permission to reproduce ticket #090 from the NGRS Museum, Tywyn collection.

Richard Maund takes Guard Lystor to task.....!

Please have Guard Lystor report to training school for some brushing up on elementary ticket issuing procedures! (see article in WHH No. 41)

The LMS issue ticket (no. 078) would, indeed, have been accounted for by Bangor LMS, as denoted by the word BANGOR at its foot; whether it was also held and issued there I cannot say. However - like its Welsh Highland counterpart - the outward half is the right hand side and the

return half is the left hand side, in this case indicated by the words "Return as per Bill" and the overprinted "D" which signified the return portion of a ticket - and usually one valid for outward and return on the same day. The two tickets illustrated thus served exactly the same purpose - a day round trip to Bangor originating from and returning to South Snowdon. Indeed, if 078 had been a ticket for which the journey originated at Bangor, the heading would have been LMS, not Welsh Highland Ry.

My understanding of Season Excursions is simply that they denoted advertised

excursions valid only between certain dates (usually the summer season); the addition of "Day" confirms that the ticket was valid only for outward and return on the same day - thus affirming the significance of the "D" overprint.

None of which gets us closer to the reason for an LMS-issue ticket for a journey starting at South Snowdon!

Sincerely

Richard