

WELSH HIGHLAND HERITAGE

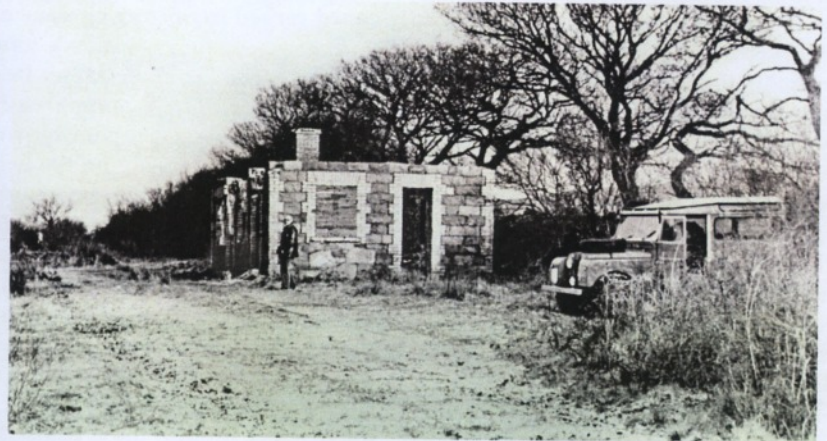
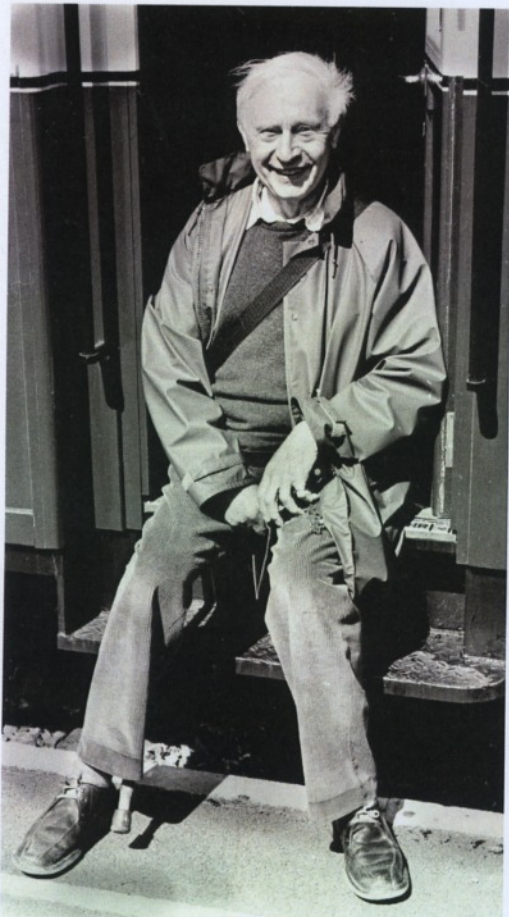
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James Boyd (1920-2009)



Difficult yes, but courageous also, for he continued to write despite having been predeceased by his two daughters and his wife Dorothy. He was also suffering from the effects of two strokes.

How appropriate that with Tryfan Junction reconstruction about to get underway that we reproduce a photograph of J.I.C. and his first Land Rover at this station in 1952.

Photo left shows James Boyd at Dinas in 1998

Many reading this will probably have been influenced to become involved with the WHR as a result of his writings. He will have been pleased that subsequent researchers have elaborated on, and in some case corrected, what he offered in 'Narrow Gauge railways in South Caernarvonshire'.

Tryfan Junction Progress

The reconstruction of Tryfan Junction is at last underway. A container for the safe storage of materials has been delivered to the site and safely positioned despite a blizzard. A site meeting was held on the 21st February and an action plan has been agreed. The initial work involves removing the vegetation from the interior of the building and photographing the remaining internal structures. The whole interior will then be covered with a membrane and concrete poured for the floor. At the same time the base of the signal cabin opposite the station will also be exposed. The project is led by Stuart McNair with Derek Buckles as site manager.



James Ian Craig Boyd died peacefully at home on Friday night the 20th February 2009. James – for that is what he insisted I called him in the more recent of our thirty year's friendship – was not the easiest of men to get on with; indeed until the death of my good friend Arthur Rimmer he found it difficult to accept that there was anyone else with a serious interest in the WHR. How wrong he was, and, being convinced, has subsequently passed to the Welsh Highland Heritage Group, as custodians of the railway's heritage, new photographs and other original documents.

John Keylock, pays tribute to the doyen of the Welsh Narrow Gauge

Over thirty books – essentially covering narrow gauge railways – is a prodigious output and this writer remembers being chastised for being single-mindedly 'WHR and its predecessors'. But then James was an author - having graduated thereto from the Manchester based family textile business. However he would never admit to having moved from 'rags to riches'!

Thank you Mr Boyd for nurturing two generations of narrow gauge railway preservationists; your name will for ever be associated with their efforts.

Welsh Highland & Festiniog Management 1922 - 1925 ---- Part One

The "heritage" of our railways depends much on the personalities who directed and managed them, and it is appropriate that their biographies should be recorded in addition to the history of the artefacts (particularly motive power and rolling stock, which seems to loom so large in many railway histories). The two men who were probably the main driving forces behind the post-Great War developments which led to the construction of the WHR were

Henry Joseph Jack (the subject of John Keylock's article in *Welsh Highland Heritage* No. 26) and the many-faceted Pwllheli lawyer, Evan R Davies. Likewise, there is a considerable following (near deification in *The Colonel Stephens Society*) and much biographical data for Holman Fred Stephens who - with "man management" skills that seem to have reflected his military provenance - expanded from his engineering role to take the railways forward from the fall of Jack in late 1924. He fulfilled this role for five years, until his retreat to the Lord Warden Hotel,

Richard Maund describes the personalities that shaped the face of the WHR

Dover, with the illnesses from which he there died on 23 October 1931. So much for *direction*, but what of the *general management* from 1922 until Stephens assumed all his multiple roles in 1925? Unfortunately, relatively little has been published (in two cases their full Christian names seem to have escaped record in railway circles - until now), and James Boyd's apparently definitive works on the two railways contain fanciful figments of imagination to trap the unwary about these officials. This article certainly does not claim to be "the final word" - but perhaps it may prompt those whose forté is genealogy to probe further. . .

In 1920, as the dust settled after World War I, the "Dolgarrog raiding party" from the Aluminium Corporation Ltd were gathering their forces to make what might be considered a "reverse take-over" by the uncompleted Portmadoc, Beddgelert & South Snowdon of the partially moribund North Wales Narrow Gauge and the active Festiniog Railways.



Gowrie Colquhoun Aitchison

The old order passeth. . .

Gowrie Aitchison, an engineer and surveyor had been managing the NWNGR since March 1898 - latterly as Receiver and all else, performing these manifold duties at this stage by remote control from Collingham, near Newark! A comprehensive biography appeared in *Welsh Highland Heritage* No. 8, so need not be repeated here.

At the Festiniog, Frederick Vaughan had been in office since 1907. He was born in Oswestry in 1849 and after a career initially on the Cambrian - rising quickly via superintendent of the coast line (at the 1881 Census he was boarding

Railway Year Book entries in respect of FR, WHR, NWNGR and PB&SSR - 1921 to 1925

<u>Railway</u>	<u>Secretary</u>	<u>Gen. Manager</u>	<u>Engineer</u>	<u>Loco Supt.</u>
1921				
FR	A.G Crick	F. Vaughan	Rowland Jones	R. Williams
NWNGR (1)	G.C. Aitchison (10)	G.C. Aitchison (10)	G.C. Aitchison (10)	G.C. Aitchison (10)
PB&SSR (2)	C.E. Hemmings	H.J. Jack	G.K. Paton	(none shown)
1922				
FR	A.G. Crick	F. Vaughan	J. Williamson	R. Williams
NWNG (11)	E.J. Deane 14 Dale St, Liverpool (14)	S.G (sic) Tyrwhitt (7)	(none shown)	(none shown)
PB&SSR (2)	C.E. Hemmings Clark St Dolgarrog \$	H.J. Jack (Managing Director)	G.K. Paton Dolgarrog \$	(none shown)



Henry Joseph Jack

in Tremadoc), then to chief traffic superintendent, so clearly a competent officer - he went to Ireland as traffic superintendent of the Waterford & Limerick (later Waterford, Limerick & Western) from November 1892. When that company was taken over by the Great Southern & Western on 1st January 1901, he reportedly "retired" to Kingstown (now Dun Laoghaire); at age 51 this seems premature and it may be that he found other employment in the Dublin area. Or perhaps he did enjoy six years of full time golf (at his death he was President of the Portmadoc & Borthygest Golf Club). In autumn 1907, having sought employment as auditor, he actually got himself elected to the FR board (through introduction by two Irish shareholders - shades of those old Dublin connections with the FR board) and took over as Managing Director on 1st January 1908. The "established histories" record how he then set about the company with a vengeance, but by the time Jack & Co. came on the scene he was over 70. There is a suggestion that he

had earlier proposed that the FR throw in their lot with the Aluminium Corporation but when the latter did arrive he nevertheless lost his seat on the board on 16th July 1921, although he retained his General Manager's position at a salary of £225 p.a. He tendered his resignation - apparently at short notice - to take effect from 1st April 1922 and died only days later on 6 April 1922, aged 72. Reporting this, the next day's *Cambrian News* [7 April 1922, p.7] added: "His death came with tragic suddenness . . . his death aggravated by devotion to duty, which undermined his constitution and kept him ailing for some time. . .". Two weeks later, the same paper [21st April 1922, p.9] records that, for the dispatch of his remains for interment in his native Oswestry on 17th April, FR officers present were: "Mr Tyrwhitt, General Manager; A G Crick, Traffic Manager; Robert Williams, Traffic Superintendent; Robert Evans and Tom Rees of the manager's department". He was survived by his wife, Louisa Frances Burslem Vaughan, and his estate was £6853 0s. 9d.

Management of the PB&SSR - at that stage operating for freight merely the statutory part of what had been the Croesor Tramway - was in the hands of **Henry Joseph Jack** of the Aluminium Corporation, but he was not a railwayman and clearly had many other activities requiring his entrepreneurial (and, some would allege, other) attentions.

Therefore, the Dolgarrog "raiders" were going to need some "new blood" to get the new Welsh Highland up and running, and to revitalise the FR. As the grouping of the standard gauge railways came closer to fruition (the Act providing for this came into force on receiving Royal assent on 19 August 1921) it would not be surprising if Jack & co. had envisaged finding some competent manager from one of the minor (or even major) lines as the

fall-out of the "grouping" process: facing an up-hill struggle against the entrenched post-holders of the larger companies (not every small railway did as the Stratford upon Avon & Midland Junction company is reputed to have done and gave its management a massive pay-rise shortly before the "cut-off" date, to ensure them of a much higher status in their new Group than would otherwise have been the case - and much enhanced pension at the expense of their new employer!) and in a situation where there would be a glut of available personnel, there could well be a choice of competent applications for the top jobs at Portmadoc! But fishing in those waters would not be practicable until early 1923 and before then there was a new railway to inaugurate. One of the interesting "what ifs" of historical speculation would be if Jack & co. had gone down that road, instead of falling in with Stephens.

The new regime

The Aluminum Corporation's first move was to take control of the NWNRR in April 1920, followed twelve months later by Jack assuming Aitchison's role as Receiver and Manager of that railway. On 16 July 1921 the Dolgarrog party assumed control of the FR board, dispossessing Vaughan of his directorship although he did remain General Manager - it seems sensible to have retained Vaughan's experience while providing him with support to tackle the WHR project. The press report of his death (see above) suggests that there would have been doubts about Vaughan's robustness. So they turned to the Great Western Railway, for secondment of managerial support for a brief term - an FR board minute records that it would be "for a short time to tide over a period during which the proposals for reorganisation of the Festiniog and neighbouring railways are under consideration" and it looks as though a two-year term may have been specified.

The following notes are compiled by the present author and did not form part of the details as published in *Railway Year Book*.

- # = The offices of Evan Davies & Co. (the London practice of Evan R Davies, a solicitor and FR board member) - W R Huson was an employee of that firm
 \$ = The local offices of the Aluminium Corporation Ltd. and of its subsidiary, North Wales Power & Traction Co Ltd
 {1} = at this stage operating only Dinas - Bryngwyn, for freight
 {2} = at this stage operating only Portmadoc - Carreg-hyllidrem (former Croesor Tramway), for freight
 {3} = resigned as Managing Director 16 July 1921 but remained as General Manager to 31 March 1922
 {4} = appointed 1 April 1922; resigned (at end of secondment) 30 September 1923
 {5} = appointed 1 October 1923 (on a temporary basis); employment ceased summer 1924. Replaced by E H R Nicholls (Managing Director FR and General Manager WHR, 17 May 1924 - 22 April 1925, whose departure has been anticipated by the 1925 edition, having tendered his resignation the previous November)
 {6} = appointed Engineer 1 May 1923 but resigned briefly during Nicholls' tenure; re-appointed Engineer and appointed Loco Superintendent 16 December 1924; appointed Managing Director 22 April 1925 (died in office 23 October 1931)
 {7} = should read S E Tyrwhitt; appointed early 1922
 {8} = resigned as Secretary 13 June 1922



Septimus Edward Tyrwhitt

While we are unlikely, now, to know for certain, it surely does not seem likely that this incoming "support" would have been expected to have to assume Vaughan's mantle during the period of secondment (or at least not quite so soon). Nor are we likely to know the terms under which the Great Western were moved to release a 36-year old middle manager to Portmadoc in the opening months of 1922.

Septimus Edward Tyrwhitt was born in Dresden, Saxony (now Germany) on 14 May 1885, the seventh child of a senior Royal Naval officer (one speculates that his pregnant wife would only have been in Dresden were he on some official posting, such as naval attaché to the British embassy - scope for further research!). In 1891 the family were in Oxford (the father by now retired from the navy), and in 1901 in Hastings. Young Tyrwhitt joined the Great Western at Swindon Locomotive Works as a pupil in 1904 and was afterwards employed in the drawing office there from 1907 to 1910, when he joined the staff of the Superintendent of the Line at Paddington. This was the department responsible for the operation of the railway (and, incidentally, the *de facto* passenger commercial department, there being no separate department in

those days). During the 1914-18 war he served in France with the Royal Engineers, T.A., and was for more than two years with the 1/1 Wiltshire Fortress Company, R.E., T.A. (afterwards 565 (A.T.) Company, R.E.), which was composed almost exclusively of men from Swindon Works. He married Isabella A Christison in Neath in June 1915. During the final advance through France, Tyrwhitt was Bridging Officer, 6th Corps. After the war, from 1919 to 1921 he was Outside Traffic Manager, Ebbw Vale Steel, Iron & Coal Co Ltd (this also may have been a "career broadening" placement - indicating an officer expected to "go places" in the GWR). In 1921 he returned to the drawing office at Swindon for a few months until dispatched, very early in 1922 [*Railway Gazette* 28 September 1923], to Portmadoc to assist Vaughan on the FR and to be designated General Manager of the NWNCR. As his age testifies, he was not (as James Boyd wrongly avers in *Festiniog Railway* Vol. I, p. 221) at the end of his career - indeed, this move looks more like a management development opportunity for a potential officer to broaden his experience before moving upwards within the GWR (he was, of course, older than might be expected nowadays for such treatment because of his "lost" years of war service). Upon Vaughan's retirement, from 1 April 1922 Tyrwhitt was appointed General Manager both of the Festiniog and of the Welsh Highland Railway (Light Railway) Co., which was conceived from the same date; his salary is not known. He, therefore, bore the brunt of the "traffic" responsibility for the reopening of the former NWNCR, in July 1922, and of the new Welsh Highland the following June - as well as effecting savings on the Festiniog's operations. Curiously, in a *Cambrian News* [4 August 1922, p.5] report of a petty session case at which he was representing the company, Tyrwhitt was referred to as "acting General Manager on Festiniog Railway Company".

According to *Railway Gazette* [5 October 1923], Tyrwhitt's sojourn at Portmadoc ended on 30 September 1923 when he returned to Paddington, to be replaced by Capt. John May, R.E. After a short period at Paddington - again in the Office of the Superintendent of the Line - *Railway Gazette* [16 November 1923] reported a "general post" of GWR officers in consequence of the retirement, from 1 January 1924, of their Chief Engineer: Tyrwhitt was appointed Second Assistant to the Divisional Locomotive Superintendent, Cardiff Valleys, Barry (later based at Cardiff) (an "Assistant to" was always lower than an "Assistant"). Towards the end of that same year he was promoted Assistant Divisional Locomotive Superintendent, Newport. Tyrwhitt joined the Supplementary Reserve of Officers, R. E., in 1925, and raised 152 (G.W.) Railway Operating Company, which he commanded until his 50th birthday when (as reported in *London Gazette* [7 June 1935] in the rather cruel phraseology of the service) "Major S E Tyrwhitt having attained the age for removal, ceases to belong to the Reserve." His final railway appointment, in 1945, was Divisional Locomotive Superintendent (re-designated under BR as District Motive Power Superintendent), Cardiff, from which post he retired in August 1950 [*Railway Gazette* 8 September 1950, p. 267]. Tyrwhitt died of bronchopneumonia and old age on 12 September 1977 at Clatterbridge Hospital, Bebington on the Wirral, his occupation being described on his Death Certificate as - entirely appropriately - "Locomotive Superintendent - retired". His wife appears to have predeceased him; his estate was £15,661.

Tyrwhitt was the first of three relatively short-tenured occupants of the managerial seat at Portmadoc: the other two we will meet in the second part of this article in a subsequent issue of Welsh Highland Heritage.

Welsh Highland Anecdotes

Hugh Davies who farmed at Fron Farm, Prenteg and who is now in his 80s tells Brian Paul how the railway helped the local farmers in about 1932:-

"My father bred pigs and the piglets were sold on when two months old. My father and myself would place a piglet in a sack and then carry them to Pont Croesor Halt. The sacks were handed to the guard, who then took charge of them to be delivered to Mrs Pierce, Ty'n Coed, Beddgelert."

"I remember Mr Gruffydd Jones, a diary farmer of Tynllwyd, (near Ty Newydd Morfa - the farm on the corner at the end of the 'Croesor Straight') sending milk by Ganger's Trolley to Porthmadog. The trolley was met at Penmount and the milk distributed by Tom Miles, the farm servant."

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Welsh Highland Enamel Signs

NORTH WALES NARROW GAUGE RY

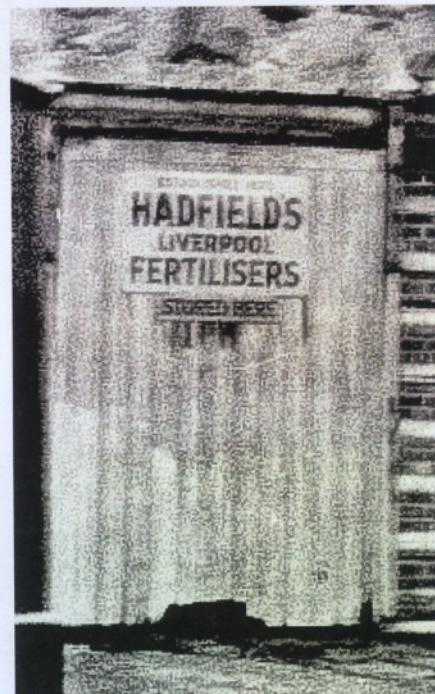
WELSH HIGHLAND RAILWAY

John Keylock, sage of matters WHR and NWNGR, in discussions told me that the WHR has two different types of enamel heading signs in its collection.

Michael Bentley examines these 'Collector's Items'

enamel name-board. John advised his valuation, as a mater of interest. Size of the plate is 48" long x 4 1/2" wide black upper case

lettering on a white enamel background. I inspected the plate prior to sale and there was no maker's name indicated on either front or rear face, unlike the Lynton & Barnstaple Railway enamel that was sold here in Septembers auction. Readers will see from the pho-



um" of 10% which meant £880 in total. The L&B plate sold for £850 plus £85 buyers premium, that was a total of £935 paid.

Although running to sixteen pages Journal No. 42 space did not permit two items mentioned in the text to be reproduced. These were a photograph of the Nectar Tea advertisement that was found nailed to a tree at Wernlas ddu. The second photograph is of the Hadfield's enamel sign that was attached to the southerly end door of the goods shed at Dinas. Both are reproduced here.

Should readers have any WHR or NWN-GR historical relics that you are considering for disposal or sale, please initially speak with John Keylock, address and telephone number bottom of page of this Journal. John would like to know and record the details of items, even if you finally decide you have to dispose of them through 'other channels' - thank you.

Thanks to all who wrote in pointing out that the photograph in No 42 of the demolition of Moel Tryfan was taken at Harbour and not at Boston Lodge.

I usually attend the quarterly Sheffield Railwayana Auction, because I have a love and interest in mechanical railway clocks - so, in passing, I ask if anyone



has or knows of details or pictures of the 8" sized face fusee movement clocks, as supplied to the NWNGR when the line opened? (*Details: via the editor please*) I'm sure there would have possibly been a 'local' connection or maker involved? I think that they could have been oak cased (dropdial or roundhead type), there were clock-case makers locally who sourced oak timber as used by the clockmakers in Llanrwst, where movements were made/assembled with enamel dial faces bought in from travelling salesmen, before the whole was assembled for sale. There were also clock makers listed for Caernarfon and historical records say clock making was often a 'winter evening occupation' in the 19th century!

The December auction included for sale one WELSH HIGHLAND RAILWAY

tograph that the L&B plate size 20 1/2" x 5" wide has a maker's name of Falkirk Iron Co., Falkirk bottom right corner, upper case light blue lettering on a white enamel background, unlike the WHR

LYNTON & BARNSTAPLE RAILWAY

one!

I registered to gain a bidding card, needed to bid for lots at the auction, just in case it went for a low-price! The opening bid was £200, there were other known WHR members present in the room but they did not appear to be bidding. Continued brisk bidding pushed the price to dizzy heights of £800 - sold hammer price - plus the "buyer's premi-

What's in a Name.....?

Dinas Junction Sign as existing in 1923

DINAS JUNCTION
CHANGE HERE FOR
SNOWDON & BEDDGELERT

Second Incarnation, Post 1923

DINAS JUNCTION
CHANGE HERE FOR
SNOWDON BEDDGELERT
PORTMADOC
& BLAENAU FFESTINIOG

Space left – for CAERNARVON, perhaps?

"&" between SNOWDON and BEDDGELERT removed.

Sign with new lower section added.
Wording in different lettering

Third Incarnation, 1934?

DINAS JUNCTION
CHANGE HERE FOR
SNOWDON BEDDGELERT
ABERGLASLYN PORTMADOC
& BLAENAU FFESTINIOG

ABERGLASLYN in painted letters

Welsh Highland Railway station name signs or running-in boards were something of a mixed bag in design, but can be divided broadly into two main types. There were those of essentially N.W.N.G. pattern, on the section north of Rhyd Ddu. This location went through several changes of name: "Rhyd Ddu" originally, then "Snowdon", and later still "South Snowdon". (And today, "Rhyd Ddu" once more!) The design on the later W.H.R. section south of here was rather different. In the majority of cases, name boards appear to have been restricted to one per station so pity the poor passenger looking the wrong way.

This is an incomplete study, based on photographs and site visits, so further observations are welcome.

North Wales Narrow Gauge Section

In general, former N.W.N.G. stations had one board each, mounted under the eaves of the station building facing the railway. These signs had ten inch raised letters picked out in white on a black background, the shape being close to a present-day computer font known as "Modified Univers".

An example of this type was rescued from Bryngwyn, and is preserved at the Narrow Gauge Railway Museum at Tywyn. It was purchased by the NGRM from Mrs Griffiths of Bryngwyn Farm on 29.9.1964, at which time it was in very poor condition. It was kept in store until the new museum building was ready, when the original letters were removed from the remains of the old board and mounted on a new board for all to see. Is this the only "original" in existence?

The writer has never seen a clear photograph of Bettws Garmon or Snowdon Ranger stations when these were in use, but believes that Bettws had an "under the eaves" sign as at Tryfan Junction and Waenfawr. Of Snowdon Ranger, more anon.

One exception seems to have been Dinas Junction, where passengers arriving on the N.W.N.G. apparently relied on the "big rail-

Richard Watson unravels the complexities of WHR station names

way" signs on the other side of the L.N.W.R. to tell them where they were. A "Change Here" sign was provided for passengers alighting from the L.N.W.R./L.M.S. line. There may have been a smaller "Dinas Junction" sign mounted on the reverse for travellers arriving by N.W.N.G. or W.H.R., but this is not apparent from photographs. This interesting sign seems to have existed in three distinct forms during the Welsh Highland period. An early W.H.R. photograph of "Moel Tryfan" at Dinas reveals a relatively shallow board restricted to two lines of lettering. The destinations advertised were "Snowdon & Beddgelert" – and was perhaps a 'left-over' from the N.W.N.G. era. If this was so, then it must have puzzled a few people alighting from



the main line at Dinas after 1916, as no N.W.N.G. passenger trains ran between that year and re-opening in 1922. Passengers for Beddgelert would have completed their journey by road coach from Snowdon station.

At a later date the sign acquired a new lower section to which the words "Portmadoc & Blaenau Festiniog" were added. At the same time, the "&" was removed between the words "Snowdon" and "Beddgelert". The typeface used was rather different, the letters being narrower than the older characters. The new section thus resembled the finger signboard at the top of the Dinas station approach road, and the "Welsh Highland Railway" sign facing the South Snowdon car park.

These signs were probably constructed by the same sign maker. Curiously, a large space was left to one side of the word "Portmadoc" – had the maker allowed for the word "Caernarvon", in readiness for a possible extension to that place?

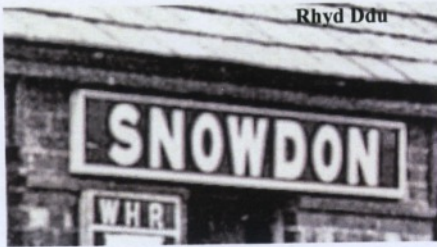
At a still later date – perhaps in 1934 – the word "Aberglaslyn" appeared in the same space, in hand painted lettering. I wonder if the inscription referred to the halt at Nantmor, or the pass of the same name? The latter of course, would have been a scenic attraction rather than a station, though W.H.R. tickets from 1934 onwards stated "Aberglaslyn".

Attention was drawn in an early edition of Welsh Highland Heritage to graffiti that appeared on the sign. It seems someone had painted a capital letter "I" after the "For" in "Change Here For". It was suggested that the "I" had been added by a local with a sense of humour, intending to convey the word *yfor*, or 'tomorrow' in Welsh. Change here tomorrow, as there are no trains today! I have some knowledge of Welsh and tried to make sense of this, but thought the spelling of the word should be *yfor* rather than *yfori*. However, if you look carefully at the same photo of the sign – the one with the trilby-hatted gentlemen – you can make out a smudge which *might* be a painted-out letter before the word "FOR". A "Y" perhaps, so a mis-spelt *Yfori*?

As mentioned, the station at Rhyd Ddu was known as "Rhyd Ddu" originally but was renamed "Snowdon" in N.W.N.G. days. The name was changed again after the WHR opened, this time to "South Snowdon". The new board was similar to the old one, but with raised letters. An additional sign reading "Welsh Highland Railway" appeared, located to one side of the building facing the car park.

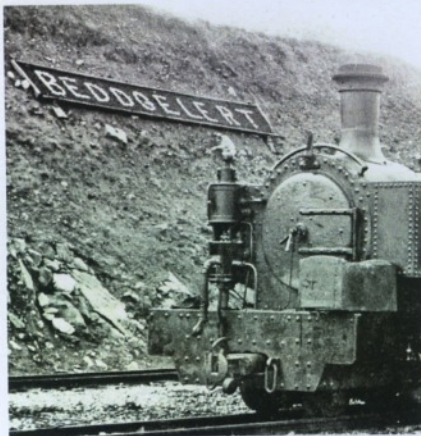
Today's 'Snowdon Ranger' was initially referred to as 'Snowdon'. In 1881 it was

Rhyd Ddu

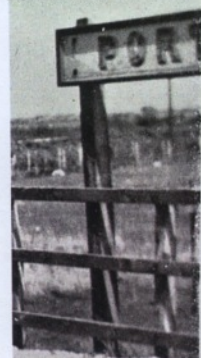


Welsh Highland Section

South of Rhyd Ddu, at stations where Colonel Stephens' waiting shelters were provided, signs were often, but not always mounted under the eaves over the entrance. The halts at Hafod Garregog and Ynysfor were exceptions, as was that at Snowdon Ranger. The signs at these halts were mounted between two old rails to one side of the shelter. Nantmor was un-named initially but later received a sign with painted letters. This was removed at some stage (or perhaps it fell off!) It is depicted in the well-known snap of a bored-looking boy scout holding it for the camera. Having fallen off, it was re-sited inside the station building on the back wall. According to John Stretton's caption (WHR - A Phoenix Rising) the photo was taken in the late 1940's; posing a question as to why it was still there at this date. The halt was renamed "Aberglaslyn" during the FR lease period but there no photographs to suggest that a new nameboard was ever used. In contrast to the ex N.W.N.G. stations, the southerly stations had hand lettered, painted boards with shading in a different hue. Hafod Garregog halt (relocated from Ynysferlas) had a sign fixed between two old rails, but seemingly little else to denote its status as a halt other than an old carriage body, as at Croesor Junction.



Portmadoc New 1923



changed to 'Snowdon Ranger' and in 1893 it became 'Quellyn Lake' and remained so until closure in 1937. This location had a name board fixed between two posts instead of under the eaves of the building.

Beddgelert did not possess a name board at the time of opening, but later acquired the usual sign under the eaves of the station building. The name was also picked out in white stones on the embankment side at the south end of the station. Portmadoc New (1923) station appears to have had one sign, mounted on posts on the loop side only. This read simply "Portmadoc". The 1929 station was endowed with a very crude hand-painted affair, again reading "Portmadoc" but with "W H RLY" in smaller letters underneath. Waiting passengers had the luxury of bench seats at certain stations, and appropriate names were displayed on the backrests. Such locations included Portmadoc (1923 and 1929), Beddgelert and possibly Ynysfor. In contrast, today's signs on the WHR main line have raised white letters, made from an expanded plastic material called "Foamalux". The letters are mounted on a black background, and are similar to the original N.W.N.G. signs though the typeface is slightly different. Those on the Welsh Highland Heritage Railway replicate the "shaded" lettering style of the post-1923 W.H.R.

One exception is at Bontnewydd Halt, where the original sign installed in 1999 was vandalised. It was later replaced with a "Boston Lodge" production having painted letters in the FR house style. There are plans to replace this with a raised-letter version in due course.

My thanks to John Keylock and David Allan for their help in writing this article. I have

Hafod Garregog



Quellyn Lake



Ynysfor



been unable to trace good photographs of the following stations and their name boards: Salem; Plas Y Nant; Snowdon Ranger/Quellyn Lake; Pitts Head; Hafod Ruffydd; Hafod Y Llyn; Croesor Junction and Pont Croesor. Can anyone help please?

The Kerr Stuart - What Happened next.....

The fate of the Kerr Stuart Diesel, after its trials at Dinas and its brief flirtation with the FR, has been the subject of much speculation. This letter, dated September 1957, from Tom Rolt to James Boyd, provides some answers.

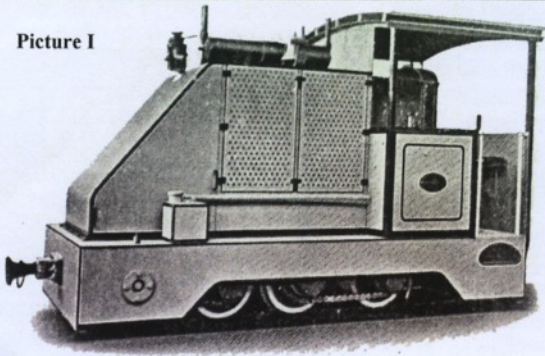
"The loco which went to Dinas was a prototype and the first diesel loco K.S. ever built. There was never any intention of selling it to the F.R. although obviously we should have welcomed an order for a similar one. The point was that my uncle, Kyrle Willans, who designed the loco, wanted to have the prototype thoroughly tested under service conditions before putting the thing into production, decided that the W.H. and F.R. line was the best testing ground and arranged matters with them. I have only my Memory to go, by, and it is more years ago than I care to think, but I would not have said that the loco was working, there as long as 12 months. I know it was midwinter when it went there, I would have said December 1928 or January 1929. The first locomotives of this type were ordered for (I think) the Sudan and in fact the loco sent to Dinas had, as you can see, the teak shuttered cab which we fitted to these Sudan engines. Actually, this cab had to be cut down in Dinas shops because it was too close a fit in the Aberglaslyn tunnels. Even in cut down form I doubt if the engine could have worked through Moelwyn, but so far as I know she never worked far onto F.R. metals and spent most of her time working the slate traffic between Bryngwyn and Dinas. She was driven throughout by a K.S. employee named Philips and I only went up there occasionally so I cant answer at first-hand for her movements, but this is my recollection of what Philips told me.

The engine was a 60hp McLaren-Benz 4 cylinder, and because this was before the days of 24 volt starting equipment, there was a J.A.P. engine in the cab for starting purposes which for some reason is not shown in the section picture. The controls for the change speed and reverse gears in the straight 'crash' gearbox worked in quadrants on the nearside and the long lever beside them worked the clutch. The latter could be held in the 'out' position by a foot locking pedal below it. Incidentally the gearbox, which was made by K.S. had an all welded steel casing. This was one of the very first examples of fabrication taking the place of casting on a job of this kind.

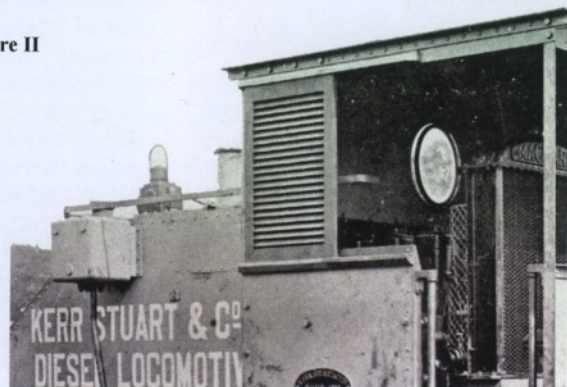
I fear I can't remember exact weight, but it was heavier than it looked, I think between 5 and 6 tons. I know that its weight caused me a major disappointment. After return from Dinas the engine was sent to Fazakerley where MacAlpines were then building the new Liverpool - Manchester road and were operating a considerable mileage of construction railway. I was sent up there to drive the thing. Alas! the weather had been very wet and when I started to move up the line the p.w. simply disappeared into the mud and that was that! Soon after we produced a 30hp 2 cylinder 4 wheeled version which was light enough for contractors' lines.

The production job was slightly modified as a result of the trials on the Welsh Highland. Instead of the vertical 'chimneys' a barrel silencer was fitted and fore and aft sandboxes were fitted instead of the single ones feeding between the two leading axles. These modifications are shown on the section picture. The chassis of the loco was identical with that of the high pressure geared steam locos which we built concurrently. The object of the design was that alterations of gauge could be made very simply. Although heavy and crude by present day standards these locos were very robust and long lived. We built a single 90hp 6 cylinder standard gauge job of the same design for work on the R. & E. between Mirthwaite and Ravenglass in 1929. I was under the impression that this had at last been scrapped, but when I called in at Ravenglass last week I was told that she had been sold to the N.C.B. and was working at some colliery in Durham. She has now been fitted with electric starting but is otherwise as built. Not a bad life for a diesel."

Picture I



Picture II



Picture I shows original version (*Railway Gazette*) and picture II with the teak shuttered cab ready for use in the Sudan, here on trial at Dinas.