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Khurshed Framroz Antia Triumph & Disaster

David Allan reflects on an e-mail recently received from India

At the end of April this year Peter Liddell received an unexpected email from India. The first part of it read:-

“On the 28th May 1968 at 02:44 hrs, just seven minutes after take-off from Mumbai, Garuda Airlines’ Convair CV-990 PK-GJA Pajajaran, flying from Jakarta to Amsterdam via Mumbai crashed 37 kms North of Mumbai at the village Bilalpada, Nalasopara.

There were no survivors and not a single body was recovered; only some limbs. The four engines found at the site were deemed to be working at the time of the crash but the black box was never found. The cause of crash remains unknown. On board was our grandfather, the brilliant and dedicated engineer, K. F. Antia”.

The email was from Yasmine Stafford, his much loved granddaughter.

What, you may ask, has this got to do with the heritage of the Welsh Highland Railway? May I explain - the clue is in the last sentence of that email, for it was on the Welsh Highland that Khurshed F. Antia, one of India’s greatest railway engineers, learned his trade – the hard way – under Col. Holman Fred Stephens.

Khurshed Antia was born in Navsari on 10th December 1904, the fifth child of Framroz Antia and Dhunmai Tata. Academically brilliant and a fine sportsman it was his principal at St. Xavier’s Collegiate School, Kolkata (then Calcutta) who entreated the family to send the talented lad abroad. He completed his B. Sc. (Eng), Engineering

Diploma and M. Sc. (Eng) from Kings College, University of London, also winning its full hockey colours!

As part of his University course he was required to gain practical experience. He approached Col. Holman

Stephens for assistance and the good Colonel, perhaps sensing his potential, suggested that some time on the Welsh Highland and Festiniog Railways might be just the ticket. It was while on this secondment in 1924/25 in Portmadoc that Antia wrote a treatise for his University course relating his experiences on these lines at what was a critical time for them both.

This treatise ended up, misfiled, in a dusty cupboard in Tonbridge at the heart of Stephens’ empire from which it was rescued many years later by Arthur Iggulden, Stephens’ Chief Indoor Assistant. Iggulden was in the employ of British Railways Southern Region when he retired in the mid-60s, but after this he was able to devote more of his time

to answering queries concerning Stephens’ ‘Tonbridge empire’. In 1970 he invited Michael Davies to visit him in Tonbridge. Michael was one of the founder members of the Welsh Highland Railway Heritage Group and its treasurer for many years. Iggulden and Michael became friends over the next few years and Michael acquired various documents that Arthur had thoughtfully preserved on the closure of his office in 1948. Amongst these was a manila folder, which was endorsed ‘Shropshire & Montgomeryshire Railway Co - Rents List Year 1938’; it was this folder that mysteriously contained the Antia



K.F. Antia (1904 - 1968)

treatise. Helpfully the treatise included photographs of the FR & WHR taken ca. 1925. A single date stamp (8th Nov 1928) on the back of the folder was the only other clue to the date that the work was received in the Tonbridge office.

We published this treatise in full as part of a Supplement to *WHH* 46 (December 2009).

On returning to India with his University of London degree, Antia rose rapidly through the ranks of India's railway engineers. During his time on the Welsh Highland he had been much influenced by the work of 'Concrete Bob' McAlpine. This experience encouraged him to introduce pre-stressed concrete bridges to Indian Railways which were soon to become the norm in that great continent. In his spare time he relaxed in his beloved Matheran, with its own narrow gauge railway, where he wrote his most enduring book, still used today – '*Railway Track*'.

In 1968 he was elected President of the Institute of Engineers (India) and, in his inaugural address, quoted Kipling's famous poem that contained the lines "*If you can meet with triumph and disaster and treat those two imposters just the same...*" It was just 100 days later that he died in the air crash. His life ended prematurely having witnessed both 'triumph and disaster'.

Khurshed Antia was a family man, immensely proud of his wife Amy, his only daughter, Thrity, and his four grandchildren, Yasmine, Cheryl, Dinaz and Darius. I was privileged to have met two of those grandchildren, Cheryl and Dinaz (known to the family as 'Gypsy'), when they came to visit the Welsh Highland a few years ago to see the places that their grandfather wrote about in his treatise.

This visit was reported in *WHH* 49 (September 2010) along with a more detailed appreciation of Antia's life and copies

of some of his photographs that were not included in his treatise.

I was equally privileged to have corresponded over the years with Yasmine, though we have never met. It was Yaz who first got in touch via email in 2010 following a chance hit on the name 'Antia' on our web site and it was from there that we were able to tell her about the treatise that he had written in 1924/5 during his time on the Welsh Highland.

Now we come to the second part of that email mentioned in the opening paragraph which reads:-

"We would like to make a donation of 500 pounds to the Welsh Highland Heritage commemorating the 50th death anniversary of K F Antia (see your December 2009 issue/supplement and subsequent September 2010 issue). Please do send us your details so that we may effect a transfer.

We think he would approve this small gesture amongst the others we make to mark this anniversary.

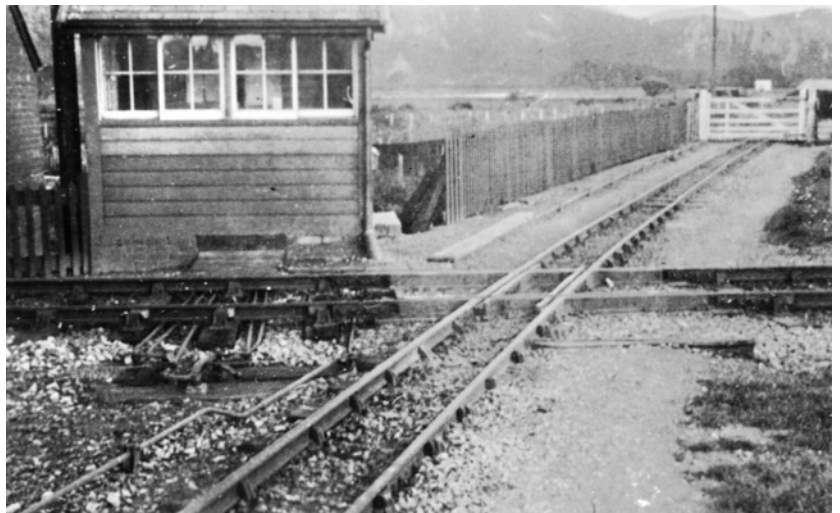
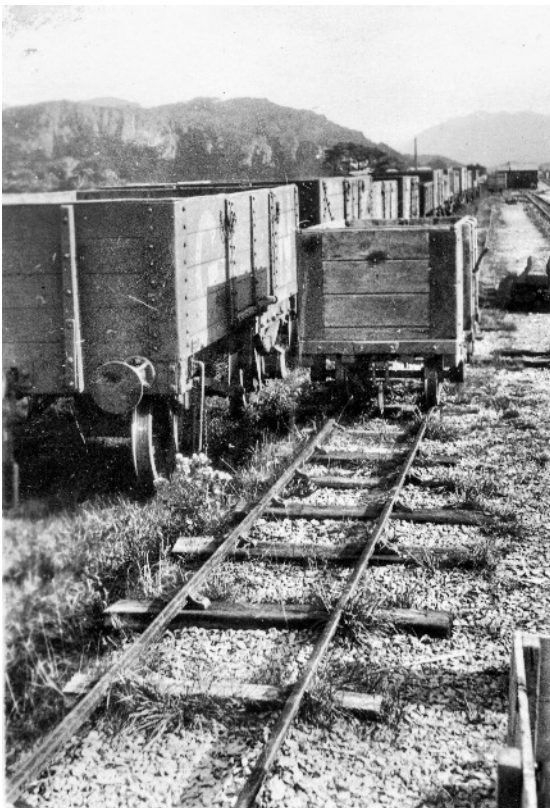
Look forward to hearing from you,

Sincerely,

Yasmine Stafford"

Thank you Yaz and Cheryl and Dinaz and Darius, not to mention your mother Thrity. Your wonderful gesture is greatly appreciated and I know that the Welsh Highland Heritage group will find a suitable memorial to honour your brilliant grandfather and the time that he spent on the Welsh Highland Railway.

David Allan.



Two examples of Antia's photographic work from his 1924 Treatise.

Above: The 'Cambrian Crossing', looking from Portmadoc New across the standard gauge towards Beddgelert. (WHHG 5)

Left: Standard gauge wagons with narrow gauge wagons alongside at Gelert's Sidings - looking north from a point just beyond the weigh house. (Arch 4285)

A TRIP TO BRYNGWYN

The essay following has been translated from the original Welsh. It was written by John Hughes, Llain Fadyn, Rhostryfan, who composed it for a local Eisteddfod composition, probably about 1950 or a little later (since he used a ball point pen). He chose the pen-name *Crwydryn* (Wanderer); eisteddfodic compositions always have to be submitted under a pen-name so the adjudicator cannot show any favouritism. I am very grateful to Mrs Menai Jones, John Hughes's grand-daughter, for loaning me the original manuscript and allowing me to translate it for inclusion in *WHH*.

John Hughes was familiar with the railway as a passenger and as a local resident, rather than as one of the company employees, and he might not always have used the terms current at the time in Welsh on the railway. However, they may in fact be the terms he heard, and several times he uses English terminology in parentheses to clarify what he is describing. Perhaps it is a chance for *WHH* readers to start a discussion on what terms the old NWNGR railwaymen used in both languages!

John Hughes consistently uses the word *wagen/wagenni* for wagon(s), *wagen gaeëdig* for van and *cerbyd* or *cerbydres* (the latter strictly the Welsh for 'train') for carriage. He uses *trolï* for the platelayers' trolley used as a quick way home for the Tryfan Junction station master, but also refers to bolster wagons as *trollïes hir* ('long trollïes' – and note the English spelling). He differentiates between *wagenni glo* (coal wagons) and *wagenni bach* which carried slate, and correctly notes that some were timber and some, metal. Engines are never called *injan / injans* (the modern usage) but always *peiriant/peiriannau*.

He never uses the normal term for railway rails, namely *cledrau*, but refers to them as *rheilïau* or as *barrau haearn* or iron bars.

Railway employees generally he merely terms *gweithwyr* (workers), and some positions are given English names: foreman, checker, porter, guard. Platelayers are called as such, although the local quarry term for men who tended to the quarry tramways was *fforddolwyr*. The station masters are however termed *gorsaf-feistri*, firemen are *tanwyr* and interestingly, drivers (at best in Welsh as a rule called

'*dreifwyr*' or '*dreifars*' on the railways) are accorded the older Welsh term *gyriedydd/gyriedyddion* (which can equally refer to a coach-driver).

Signals and points are referred to by the English words. A signal box however is always called a 'signal point box'. Does this reveal a certain lack of familiarity with railways and their jargon, or does it preserve an old local NWNGR usage? He calls a goods shed *ystorfa nwyddau* and a waiting room, *arosfan*. Both *stesion* and *gorsaf* are used to describe a station.

When it came to trans-shipment at Dinas, the word used in the essay for stacking slate in the standard gauge wagons is *gosod*, in other words, 'place' or 'put', but in parentheses the writer notes the word actually in use, *peilio* which is presumably the word the wagon loaders used.

One final matter of vocabulary: "Tryfan Junction" never caught on locally as the name of the station. It was always referred to locally as Tyddyn Gwydd, after the nearest farm, and John Hughes does this too, so I have preserved this usage in the translation.

A question remains of course as to how accurate the essay is in portraying the line when it was running. It was written some 35 years after the line closed to passengers and some 15 after the last trains ran on the branch. John Hughes was not a railway man, but a local who regretted the line's passing, having travelled on it

many times in his youth. There is scope for work in the official FfR archives at the Caernarfon Record Office to check many of the facts, especially the names and functions of the staff, although a quick look at Boyd (*Narrow Gauge Railways in South Caernarvonshire*, Vol 1, 1988, page 254) would seem to suggest that his memory was not far out. He was certainly mistaken about one of the engines, however – there never was a *Tryfan Ranger* of course. The overall impression given by reading the Welsh original however is of an essay by someone who knew what they were describing and whose memory remained remarkably fresh. Certainly, first hand accounts of Bryngwyn and its trains are few and far between, and as such this must be regarded as an important document.

Gareth Haulfryn Williams



John Richard Hughes (1887 - 1974)

**The History of the Narrow Gauge Railway from
Dinas to Bryngwyn**
The
North Wales Narrow Gauge Railway
And later the
Welsh Highland Railway

It is strange to think that the old trackbed and the ruins of the stations are the only remains of what we (when we were children and older than that) used to call the Lein Bach, and it is strange to think about it and recall it. There is hardly a single one of the old workers alive today.

Work commenced building it in around 1870 or shortly after. It took some time to complete. It was completely finished in 1876. The railway to Rhyd-ddu had opened prior to that. My grandfather used to say that Cornishmen were the majority of the craftsmen building the trackbed, laying the rails and especially building bridges big and little over streams and under roads. The bridges they built remain strong to this day. The only one that has been changed is Wernlas Ddu bridge; this was done by the County Council some years ago to facilitate buses when they came to the neighbourhood.

We will start the story at Dinas (Dinas Junction), which was the junction for the LMS Railway. There were a number of sidings here, and a large goods shed to hold goods awaiting collection, and also to re-load for carrying on the Trên Bach. The standard gauge wagons would come in from one end and the Lein Bach's wagons from the other. The goods shed had a large platform for convenience's sake, for loading on one side and offloading on the other. Goods, feedstuff and fertilisers would arrive there as would agricultural machinery. Coal would be re-loaded from a siding the far side of the goods shed. The company had wagons to carry 5 and 10 tons, and closed ones for the carriage of feedstuff, fertilisers and goods. There were small wagons for carrying slate, some wooden ones and some of iron, and long trollies for carrying iron bars and boilers for the quarries.

The slate unloading wharf was at the bottom end of the station. There would be three or four men there engaged in the work, and T.R. Thomas was the foreman and checker. He would count every broken slate and would also load (or "pile") them in the standard gauge wagons.

There was an office here for the station master and the clerk as well as space for small parcels. The waiting room was a wooden building, where tickets were issued. Belonging to [the station] was a blacksmith's forge, foundry, joinery workshop, a large signal and points box and a large shed to keep the coaches.

Calling to mind the old workmen, there was Lloyd, the old joiner from the town [Caernarfon]; William Owen the blacksmith, from Tyddyn Canol; and Brereton from Bontnewydd the fitter, and a frequent driver.

The best-known drivers were: John Williams (Jac Pen Bont or Jac Lein Bach) – his clothes would always be shining with oil – he was funny and witty; Hugh Roberts (Huw Carreg Gath) – only occasionally would he come to Bryngwyn – it was a bit too dry for him; William Hugh, related to Carreg Gath, a bachelor who would try to walk out (or as we say, get a date with) some of the visitors. Another of the drivers on the Lein Bach was W Hughes, Maen Coch, the only one of the old workers who is still alive.

Relations of Hugh Garreg were the firemen. I can also remember one who would call himself a porter, the unforgettable Tom Cale. You would have to watch out for your hands and clothes in case he closed the door on them. I can remember one strange occasion. Tom had switched the points below the bridge that carries the Saron road, turning them the wrong way so that the carriages turned on their sides. The stationmaster and several others ran there, and Cale was shouting "I'll pay damage, Mr North. [They are] only blooming quarrymen."

Let us turn to those who were stationmasters and clerks. Mr Tanner was one of the first and he built the house known as Fern Villa. Tanner would often be at Bryngwyn, coming up with the train. He had a very handy little trolley to return with: a little four wheeled vehicle with a long hand brake. This would be towed behind the train to take it up.

After him came Mr North, another Englishman. He would not leave the station very much other than to visit the 'Ring', or Mount Pleasant [the now-demolished pub at Dinas]. It was for him that the company built the house that the Lein Bach owns today.

After North died, Daniel Jones the clerk and a guard became station master. He was a man with a rather wild temper. John Jones was one of the first clerks and then John Morris, Tom Morris the guard's son, and Daniel. Maggie, Daniel's daughter, took his place when he got promoted.

Turning to the guards, as they liked to be called, there was: Tom Morris, 'passenger train man' as he liked to style himself; Owen Thomas, guard – he would mostly be at Tyddyn Gwydd as station master and travel on the trains to Rhos[tryfan] and Bryngwyn, and then back again on the little trolley, he kept several birds in the station at Tyddyn Gwydd [Tryfan Junction] and he was a good singer; Hughes Station Master, as we would call Robert Hughes, Maen Coch – he would work at Bryngwyn and was responsible for lowering the slate wagons on the large slate incline from Foel, Gors y Bryniau, Braich and Vron [quarries]. Bryngwyn station was important and busy when the quarries were at their prime. Hughes had an accident one evening at the top of the incline and he died as a result; Dafydd Lloyd took his place and he worked there for many years.

Let us turn now to the platelayers: Will Roberts 'fawr' [big] was the foreman. Jeff Lamerick; Sion Williams from Saron; Sam Bach from Saron; Sion Jones, 'clochydd' [the sexton]; Sam Jones from Chatham [Farm]; Ted from

Llanfaglan, husband of Sion Clochydd's daughter; and Thomas Ore from Dolydd.

I will try to remember the names of the old engines; *Tryfan Ranger*, certainly one of the first ones and *Snowdon Ranger*; *Moel Tryfan* and *Russell* - the latter two on the Rhyd-ddu road [line].

I would say of the track that the railway had a pretty sound bed all the way, which was closed off to keep out any animals and suchlike that might wander onto it. It had excellent metal rails (steel and iron) and the distance between the two rails was 2 feet. The company's main office was in Liverpool and a certain Mr Dean was the last manager.

Now for a journey from Dinas to Bryngwyn in the little train. We leave Dinas just after 9 in the morning. *Tryfan Ranger* is the engine, and then two carriages, one partially First Class, then a large closed wagon for feedstuffs and goods, a large wagon with coal in it, sixteen small wagons, and the guard's van. We see that the First Class is for the Moeltryfan Company and Mr Menzies, Gors y Bryniau and several others, among them two Jews going to the quarries for dinner time, with watches to sell. There is an old man from Waun Wen too, also going to the quarries, with his ointment for removing hard skin from the hands. He would have two hundred with him and would get rid of the lot.

We take our seats and off we go, passing the buildings – the forge, the big workshop and the foundry; there is also a signal box here before entering Glan-rhyd cutting and going under the bridge that carries the main Pwllheli and Porthmadog road. Before long we reach another bridge, Pont Caer Moel: here we have one sort of bridge under us and another over us, over the river and under the road from Rhos-isaf to the main road. There are a number of gates opening off the fields, with stiles where there are footpaths. The train passes over a sturdy bridge at the bottom end of Bodaden yard. Fencing keeps out [animals] as far as Pont Wernlas ddu. There is a little gradient through Coed y Foty and Wernlas ddu. Then we go under the bridge by Cae Hen land and Bicall bridge before reaching Tyddyn Gwydd.

Owen Thomas puts some small parcels in his office in the station, two passengers get in to go to Bryngwyn, the guard couples up the small trolley behind the train, and we start off again, taking the turn for the Rhos and Bryngwyn road [branch line], the other line going to Rhyd-ddu.

We go under another bridge that carries a road going to nearby farms. Arriving at Cae Hen gates, we stop. There is dew on the rails and the fireman goes to sit on the engine's front buffer to drop sand on the rails and that is his work all the way to Bryngwyn. The sand helps matters and we move along fairly well once again. We reach Rhostryfan, passing a signal or points box. I notice that there is still one siding here and the station has a single building, with a tool store for the workmen, a generous waiting room, and somewhere to issue tickets and keep goods. Rhos station is very handy and convenient, being almost in the village, but also serves Rhosgadfan.

A lot of goods and suchlike arrive at Rhos station – goods for James Hughes, Evan Griffith (Bryn Cwm) and William Jones (Four Crosses) who had carts to carry them away. There is also a wooden building by the station gate on the road to the school, which contains scales (called a platform machine) for weighing carts and their loads.

We start off again from Rhos and notice that there are coal wagons behind the station in the siding. We pass under the bridge leading from Cae Rhug land and then under the old Pont Hwmffra in the village which carries the road from Rhosgadfan. From here on there are a number of gates and several small bridges over streams, past Tŷ'r allt and in the direction of Hen Dŷ Newydd. After passing that, there is an embankment and a sturdy bridge over the outlet of the Caehaidd bach bogs. Caehaidd Terrace comes into view and passes, and ahead of us is a substantial bridge that crosses the Afon Wen. By now, water from Ffynnon Wen [reservoir] here goes to hundreds of houses and the water main flows as far as Dinas Dinlle. And here is the large Bryngwyn cutting, with a fairly large bend. A strong river flows under the railway, there is a bridge and a good embankment. The little train slows down. There are a number of mountain ponies on the track and the fireman goes to drive them in front of us and old Penbont [driver John Williams] gives the whistle a bit of steam – they gallop ahead of us. And here we are at Bryngwyn station. We have crossed the Carmel road and the gates both sides have been closed. We see here that it is a busy and important place, the end of the journey for the little train – and of great benefit to the surrounding districts, the quarries bringing most of the income.

We find ourselves in a fairly exposed spot with several lines of rails and a generous coal siding. There is a signal points box, a tool store, an office for Hughes the station master, and a fairly large waiting room, where small goods would be kept. There is also another spacious store shed with a raised platform for unloading goods and feedstuffs. The coal siding is full and we see the following to talk to: Robert Thomas, Bryngwyn; John Roberts, Carmel; Evan, Bwlchlllyn; and Bob, Siop y Fron. Everyone is pretty busy. Here comes a cart, collecting boxes of goods for Thomas Elias, Carmel. There is another weighing machine like there is at Rhos[tryfan]. It is very busy at the foot of the incline with a new steam engine going to Foel quarry. This had had a special engine to haul it from Dinas, and I can see a lot of fussing about. It is almost ready to start, with a wire rope attached to it and old Hughes at the top of the incline by the drum. It is hauled up slowly, and after moving for around a hundred yards it stops. On asking why, we learn that the workmen are moving the track so it can pass under the middle of Pont Fronheulog. It went up successfully, and the little Gors y Bryniau [quarry] engine hauls it to the Foel. *Kathleen* is the name of the Gors engine.

There were a lot of smashes on the incline with couplings and axles breaking because they came down at such a speed, and this would be a loss to the little railway company.

The Bryngwyn train would run twice a day, morning and afternoon; but on a Saturday it would run four or five times.

I remember that the first train on a Saturday morning would be a little after eight o'clock. They used to call it the Market Train. The last train on a Saturday night would be in Bryngwyn between 8 and 9 at night. It would be like I have described at all the stations.

Let's take a final look at a few things I can recall. Hughes the station master had an accident at the top of the incline, and his leg was almost cut off. I saw him on the ground with William, Wern, comforting him. He was carried on a ladder to Bryngwyn, with sides on the ladder to hold him up. After a lot of delay, Bryngwyn was reached and it was found that an engine and a carriage with Dr Davies in had come up from Dinas, but they put poor old Hughes in the van. Many a time had he given us a lift as far as Hen Dŷ Newydd.

Here are some memories of Rhos station: playing football on the square patch of ground; and climbing on the wagons. Near the station William, Sarn [?] broke his leg; one of the Post Office employees was fetching some goods on a handcart and William jumped on the back of it. The cargo tipped over onto his legs and broke one of them.

Once, the Bontnewydd policeman came to the school after we had lost control of two wagons and they went down to the Tyddyn Gwydd bend before jumping the rails. How would it be today? – the Juvenile Court.

[Some material following appears to have been omitted when the author made a fair copy; what remains is difficult to make out, but it appears to suggest that at least two men from Rhostryfan were involved in erecting the stiles. One man, J.J. Thomas, Fronolau, would take chisels down to Pen-y-goes forge (where Hen Efail, Dinas, stands today) for attention, while Griff Roberts, Glan Carrog would do other work. J.J. Thomas would also take part in finishing the work as well, and this was one way of disposing of rails].

Several of the old stiles remain. There are two wooden ones, I think. There is an iron one near Hen Dŷ Newydd; a fragile wood one nearer to Rhos at the Pen Cae Coch [?], and an iron one opposite to it; an iron one on Gaerwen land; a gate in place of the old stile by the station, likewise on wasteland at Bodgarad; one at Wernlas Ddu; a wooden stile by the River Enthryd [?] on Bodaden land; two iron ones both sides of Bodaden yard.

One final look back trying to remember those were the last to work on the line:

Hen. O., Brynmelyn; Dafydd Roberts, joiner, Groeslon; Lloyd, Dolellog; Robert Roberts, Glan-rhyd; J. Williams, Mineipwll [?]; Tom Ore, Dinas; J.R. Thomas; Caradoc Jones, Glan-rhyd.

The Lein Bach was convenient for these parts, and especially for Carmel, Bwlchyllyn, Cesarea, when there were only carts to carry goods from Caernarfon or from stations on the standard gauge line; and there were only a few coaches for carrying passengers. The little train would be well patronised on Saturdays, until the buses arrived. What brought its end was the decline of the quarries.

The end of the small line from Tyddyn Gwydd to Bryngwyn came in 1934, and everything finished in 1937. Isn't it sad to think that its metal got used to make shells in the last war. A lot of it is now overgrown with thorn and bramble, and in some places it is a convenient footpath for many of the farms, and while it is sad to think that the old Lein Bach has come to an end, some things remain to remind us of it, of the old pleasant times, and the many trips we had along it. As I sit by the fire, many things come to mind when I think about the line.

Crwydryn (John Richard Hughes, Llain Fadyn)

In WHH 15 (March 2002) we presented E. Pennant-Jones' translation of a 1955 essay which also described the Bryngwyn Branch. This essay, written by Nesta Williams, was similarly submitted to an Eisteddfod competition. It is not inconceivable that this was same competition entered by Crwydryn.

Nesta's essay, we were advised, was edited prior to translation and, we were also advised, was a prize winner.

It is intriguing to read the two essays side by side and to compare the similar memories of, and fondness for, the railway expressed by both authors.

WHH 15 can be accessed via the Heritage Group website (at <https://is.gd/WHH15>).

Nesta Williams, with Foxy the dog, photographed near the Bryngwyn Station site by David Allan in September 2001.



Dick Lystor continues his exploration into the ‘nooks and crannies’ of WHR operations.

A black and white photograph of a small, weathered wooden building with a gabled roof, possibly a shed or workshop, situated in a rural landscape. The building has a wooden ramp or staircase leading up to its entrance. The background shows a hilly or mountainous area with sparse vegetation.

[illegible]

As can be seen, these two coaches were not quarryman's vehicles, but 4w Ashbury passenger coaches built in 1868, and withdrawn in the 20's. (ref Boyd FR Vol II p 351). The two carriages duly arrived at Nantmor on 10th March 1926 and Evans was asked to get a quote from Mr. R. Owen, the local carpenter at Beddgelert, for fixing them on site (alongside the siding). HDJ provided Evans with Mr. Owen's quote which, unfortunately, has not survived in the file having

been sent up to Tonbridge by Evans. (The year 1926 clearly corrects the statement made in "Halts Update", *WHH* 7 page 3, that the erection of these coaches occurred during the FR lease period.)

The first real hint of what was to come was revealed in a letter from Evans to Stephens on 26th February, in which he explained that JDJ was continually asking for concessions. The latest was a request for a rate of 3d per 1cwt sack to Hafod Garregog and Beddgelert instead of the 4d quoted. Jones was mistaken in this, because the rate quoted by Stephens earlier was already 3d. His explanation was that he was unable to sell at a cheaper price than that which was in force from Caernarvon by road transport. Presumably Stephens, knowing a rate of 3d had already been fixed, agreed to this "reduction" to come into force from 1st January 1926. However, he specifically mentioned Hafod Ruffydd as opposed to Garregog, so perhaps they had all got their Hafods mixed up! Once again, HDJ at Beddgelert was informed of this new concession, and duly altered his rates book once again!

By the end of April 1926, Evans' patience was beginning to get strained. Writing to Stephens on the 30th, he again complained that JDJ was constantly seeking concessions and that he was bringing his flour and goods in from Portmadoc by road, not rail. Evans considered that apart from him threatening not to use the WHR unless rates were reduced, he was out of order asking for storage whilst using road transport to bring goods in and only dispatching the odd load by rail.

In reply, Stephens agreed a 6d reduction in the rate per ton and Evans passed on the decision in the following memo to HDJ at Beddgelert.

"I understand that Mr J. D. Jones, Nantmor, gets most of his flour by road, and which is stored in the shed provided him in Nantmor Station. I think you told me that the reason for this was that the rate for flour from Portmadoc was too high. We would be prepared to give him a rate of 3/6d per ton provided that he sent 50 tons or more within six months from the date hereof (31st August). Of course, unless this tonnage is guaranteed we cannot give him the rate referred to above. Will you please have him seen, and let me hear from you early."

Not surprisingly, JDJ accepted the reduced rate, but would not guarantee the tonnage! Evans didn't think that his business was big enough for such a large tonnage, so Stephens reduced this to 25 tons minimum and HDJ was again asked to act as go-between. This last flurry of correspondence took place in October and November 1926, with no sign of a breakthrough in the stalemate!

By now, even more exasperated, Evans wrote once again to Stephens early in January 1927. He reiterated that JDJ was still bringing in flour by road, and that he was not using the shed that was erected for him (contrary to what he wrote in his memo to HDJ), but using the station building itself which was causing problems with rats. Having spoken to JDJ personally, he had failed to get him to agree to any quantity of flour to dispatch. There was a feeling locally that he was being allowed to use the station without supporting the railway or paying rent for the privilege. Evans considered the man to be ***"nothing but a nuisance"***! In his reply of 7th January, Stephens fully agreed with Evans' concerns and added that

JDJ should remove his goods, as he could hardly expect to use the premises free of charge. Ever the optimist, Stephens even suggested that the shed converted from the two carriages would be useful for the copper mine traffic. He had obviously forgotten that by that time, the Cwm Bychan concern was nigh on bankrupt, owed the WHR money, and was soon to dispose of all its assets!

Shortly after, Evans again met with JDJ and explained the situation as it then stood, telling him that goods brought in by road could not be stored at Nantmor. JDJ not only disagreed with this but would not promise to send them on by rail either, adding, rather confusingly, that he only stored goods which he sent by rail. With regard to the shed, he told Evans that it was of no use to him. Consequently, he was told to remove his goods from the station building, which he agreed to do within 14 days. Not to be outdone, he then went on to enquire as to the price being asked for the bookstall at Beddgelert, saying he would like to buy it and transfer it to Nantmor to store goods and "other purposes"! These other purposes were not elaborated upon! Explaining the outcome of this meeting to Stephens on 13th January, Evans added

"From my experience, and from what everyone else informs me, Mr Jones is a very obstinate person, hard to deal with and wants everything too cheap".

Unsurprisingly, JDJ was ordered to vacate Nantmor by letter on 11th February 1927 and told to send the station key to Evans by the beginning of the following week. HDJ was also instructed on the same day to inspect the station to make sure it had been cleared. It wasn't until 11 days later that he wrote back to Evans saying that the previous day he had sent Ganger J. O. Thomas to call on JDJ and that the key had been handed over. HDJ presumed the station had been cleared (!) but was going down himself at the weekend to inspect and collect (the key?).

No further correspondence appears in the file until a year later, when, on 10th March 1928 Stephens wrote to Evans asking if he was aware that JDJ was still in occupation at Nantmor, this time storing potatoes! The answer from Evans was no but he added that he had kept an eye on the station, but not recently, and promised to look into the matter. Stephens promptly told him to charge JDJ 2/- a week for the time he had been there and tell him to clear out! Further correspondence between Evans and Stephens during March revealed that the latter had received a letter from DOJ. Although the letter is not in the file, it would seem a distinct possibility that JDJ had somehow connived to make DOJ think that an agreement to use Nantmor was still in effect, and that he had also regained possession of the station key. Evans reiterated that no further agreement had been made since JDJ was asked to leave and that the key had been handed over to HDJ at Beddgelert. (Of course, by this time HDJ was no longer in the employ of the WHR - see *WHH* 69 page 4).

The following month Stephens asked if the potatoes had been removed and the back rent collected. The station had indeed been cleared out, but with regard to the back-rent JDJ was as belligerent as ever, pointing out that no goods had been there over more than one night and that he failed to see why he should be charged. Evans reminded him that as he held the key, he was in effect a tenant and thus responsible for payment. For good measure, JDJ added that he considered that he was

being treated unfairly, especially as he sent goods away via the WHR; indeed he had recently sent two boxes of eggs via Dinas and a dispatch note from the Group Archives shows that he sent 6 Returned Empty preserve bottles to W. P. Hartley's Ltd at Aintree on the 10th of the month.

Stephens was tiring of the whole matter as well and told Evans on 5th June not to press JDJ for rent after he delivered up the key, finishing his letter

"This is the worst of the Festiniog and Welsh Highland Lines. We are told one thing by one person and another thing by someone else".

Come 19th June, JDJ had still not returned the key, and the new Agent at Beddgelert, Thomas R. Thomas (see below), was ready to go down to collect it himself if necessary. The same day Evans wrote yet again to JDJ telling him to deliver

it up himself without further delay or trouble. By the 22nd it was at last in the safe keeping of T. R. Thomas, who was authorised to keep it at Beddgelert station. One wonders if John David Jones ever sent any more of his produce over the WHR after this whole sorry affair was concluded!

References: - Gwynedd Archive Services XD97 22640 & National Archives RAIL 1021/5

Footnote. Thomas R. Thomas (b.1906) was the son of Thomas R. Thomas the NWNGR & WHR slate checker at Dinas. Thomas (junior) was also employed on the slate wharf, and as mentioned in *WHH* 69, page 5, became agent at Beddgelert in 1928 after the services of H. D. Jones had been dispensed with. Auditor Rennie's assertion that Thomas would make a "very good lad for the Company", was over optimistic, as he had gone by 1930, and Rennie himself was replaced at the end of that year!

FESTINIOG RAILWAY.											
(149) No. 6		Progressive No.									
From Nantmor		Station to Dinas		Station.							
[W. & S. Ltd.]		Departure 3.8p		o'clock Train,		day of 10th		19 28			
No. of Wagon.	No. of Cons. Note.	Consignee's Name and Address.	No.	Description and Marks.	Weight. c. q. lbs.	Paid on. s. d.	Paid. £ s. d.	TO PAY. £ s. d.			Consignor.
6		W.P. Hartleys Ltd	6	Preserves	2 14						2 14
		Aintree									W.P. Hartleys Ltd

The despatch note recording Jones' jam jars setting out on their journey from Nantmor to Aintree



A pastoral scene wherein the signal box at Pen-y-Mount - the replica of the Cambrian Crossing Box - basks in unusually bright and warm conditions - unusual that is both for Wales and for a Bank Holiday weekend.

In this view looking towards Porthmadog, the north end of the P-y-M platform, with the station building in the distance, are visible to the right.

After trials and tribulations with its paint finish, discussed in earlier issues of *WHH*, the problems appear to have been solved and the building looks resplendent.

P.W. Liddell (May 7th 2018)

Two Pay Lists (Part 1)

Dave Rogerson continues his notes on NWNGR/WHR personnel

I noted in the *Jottings* I submitted for *WHH* 76 that Dick Lystor had kindly sent me a copy of a 1922 Pay Sheet for the fortnight ending 24th May 1922, right at the end of the existence of the NWNGR. This was not the whole story as he also sent me a number of Census Records from earlier research, which confirmed my thinking, and a three sheet document on NWNGR Ledger paper headed Rate per Annum of Staff and signed G C Aitchison. It is this latter, and earlier, NWNGR list which I wish to consider in this offering.

The Rate per Annum document is, in my opinion, an approximation of the staffing costs per year either for Aitchison's own information or in answer to a question from a director. If it were a record of payments it would need to record changes in who was employed and possibly rates of pay over the year just past. It would also be more accurate. At this point I must reveal that my professional life was spent as a maths teacher and homework like this needs to be marked.

What I believe Aitchison has done is to take the known "present" weekly pay rates and multiply by 52, adding additional amounts for planned overtime payments. If the given yearly amounts are divided by 52 to reverse this calculation then 23 of the 32 records work out exactly. Those of us of a certain age will remember the difficulty of multiplying £ s d and Aitchison would, I am sure, agree. He has, in fact, only made five mistakes and twice he has copied and recopied an understandable error. There are two other simple mistakes. Tom Morris has been awarded an extra £1 and Idwal Owen has gained 10s, probably in transcription from Aitchison's rough calculation sheet. The only entry which cannot be simply explained in this way is that for David Lloyd Hughes which is the only calculation with pence in the answer. This must come from pence in the sum and the extra difficulty this presents. My suggestion here is that it should be £49/12/4 not £49/14/4 as that would represent a weekly rate of 19s 1d. Homework Mark 75% - could do better.

This leads to the table (above right) where I have highlighted the changes I have suggested.

There are many much more interesting things to extract from this document. For example I noted in my *Jottings* that there seemed to be some antipathy between Jeb Limerick and Thomas Ore over who was to lead the track gang. Here Jeb has been promoted to Ganger and Thomas has taken on his father's trade as company stonemason at the same pay rate as Jeb.

It is also interesting that there appears to be full service planned to both Bryngwyn and Rhyd Ddu with two drivers, two firemen but only one guard. This must mean that either the two trains always travelled together between Dinas and Tryfan Junction (the inspectorate would require them to be coupled together) or one of the other staff acted as guard for the Bryngwyn service on this section of the line. Could this explain the 7s per week that J Lambrick (almost certainly

	Original Document Basic			Suggested Basic			Weekly Wage	Over Time /Day
	£	s	d	£	s	d	s	s
G W North	84	10	0	84	10	0	32.5	
D O Jones	57	4	0	57	4	0	22	
R G Jones	32	10	0	32	10	0	12.5	
T Morris	63	8	0	62	8	0	24	4
W Hughes	52	0	0	52	0	0	20	
D L Hughes	49	14	4	49	12	4	19s 1p	
J E Hughes	39	0	0	39	0	0	15	
I Owen	65	10	0	65	0	0	25	
T R Thomas	67	12	0	67	12	0	26	
R Jones	48	2	0	48	2	0	18.5	
R Hughes	48	2	0	48	2	0	18.5	
C Jones	46	12	0	46	16	0	18	
J Jones (No.1)	39	0	0	39	0	0	15	2.5
W Jones	48	2	0	48	2	0	18.5	
J Jones	46	12	0	46	16	0	18	
T Beaumont	93	12	0	93	12	0	36	
W Owen	69	4	0	70	4	0	27	
J Lambrick	18	4	0	18	4	0	7	
R Lloyd	69	4	0	70	4	0	27	
R Thomas	69	4	0	70	4	0	27	
J Williams	57	4	0	57	4	0	22	
W H Williams	62	8	0	62	8	0	24	4
H Williams	39	0	0	39	0	0	15	2.5
T Lewis	46	12	0	46	16	0	18	3
T H Parry	39	0	0	39	0	0	15	3
J Limerick	52	0	0	52	0	0	20	
T Jones	39	0	0	39	0	0	15	
S Williams	39	0	0	39	0	0	15	
J Williams	49	8	0	49	8	0	19	
O Jones	39	0	0	39	0	0	15	
T Ore	52	0	0	52	0	0	20	
S Jones	33	26	0	33	26	0	13	

Jeb's son John) was paid for Tryfan Junction? Above Tryfan Junction it appears that D Lloyd Hughes from Rhostryfan took over in the same way that his predecessor Owen B Thomas had done (see *WHH* 13) before handing over to W Hughes for the final stretch to Bryngwyn. It is noticeable that the latter two are listed as Guards or Travelling Agents on the third, summary page whilst J Lambrick is included as Clerk/Station staff. It also confirms that at this period Tom Morris normally took the train up Rhyd Ddu.

In connection with the loco crew I wonder whether the H. Williams, Fireman is in fact Hugh Williams, Willie Hugh's elderly father. He was the long serving driver who had retired before 1901 which meant that his son was promoted to driver. Before 1911 his grandson Hugh Roberts had taken over the fireman duties, so this table must pre-date 1911.

From the Editor

Sir William McAlpine

David Allan's reference to 'Concrete Bob' McAlpine on page 2, prompts me to record, with regret, the passing of that great railway enthusiast and supporter, Sir William McAlpine who died on March 4th this year. Sir William was the great-grandson of Sir Robert McAlpine ('Concrete Bob') the founder of the civil engineering company that bears his name. Sir William was perhaps most noted in railway circles as 'the saviour of the Flying Scotsman' although his range of interests was wide indeed. He was a regular recipient of *WHH* and I will miss affixing that 'special label' to his copy in future.

General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR)

This issue of *WHH* includes two 'fliers': a copy of the Group's Accounts as distributed at the recent AGM and, prompted by the recent changes in Data Protection law, a request that members formally confirm their consent that the Heritage Group can hold their personal data. Clearly, without this data we could not, for example, regularly distribute *WHH* so please ensure that you respond to this request by one of the means described.

Two Playlists (Part 1) - Continued from previous page.

Another point of interest is a note in red under loader John Jones (No 1) which indicates that he was still acting as Sexton, one of his jobs recorded in *WHH* 75 when he was introduced as a platelayer, and that his actual pay may have been considerably less than stated due to these duties.

There is also evidence of the importance of Tom Morris, the guard, to the operation of trains. He is top of the list after the headquarters staff. The loco crew get alternate weeks overtime for Rhyd Ddu trips; Tom Morris is paid for every week of the year. The level of pay for the loco staff is a half day during the winter but a day and a half in the 14 week summer season; Tom Morris for a half day in winter and a full day in summer, perhaps John Jones (No 1) or another member of staff gave him an occasional late start in summer. The rates of overtime pay are based on a six day week but it is probable that the actual working week ended on Saturday lunchtime for most employees. I am aware that the workers at Doncaster Plant Works were pressing for this arrangement as early as 1865 and it was a common arrangement in the coal industry much later. NWNGR timetables show that throughout the year one crew would have to be out before 7am to take the early morning workman's train to Rhyd Ddu so this might account for the additional half day's pay. The second crew would not be needed until it was time to prepare for the double departure after 9.30. Comparing the timetables for March 1909 and June 1909 which David Woodcock has kindly sent me shows that, in this year at least, both crews worked over an hour longer every summer weekday, they also had an extra workload because two services to Waenfawr only in winter were extended to Rhyd Ddu every summer Saturday with one of the crews again finishing later to accomplish this. The extra days' pay in summer must be recompense for some arrangement of this nature. The only other explanation is that

Journey into the Past

Readers will recall Mike Hadley's piece in *WHH* 78 in which he described plans to run Heritage trains on the WHR later this year. Students of the 2018 Timetable will no doubt have noticed four 'Journey into the Past' dates - each of the Sundays in August. Each trip will run from Dinas to Rhyd Ddu and back.

Specifically, Mike noted the need for volunteers from our Group to 'host', and to provide appropriate background to, the trains' passengers. He laid out details as to specific volunteer requirements. As plans move into the implementation stage, the need for volunteers becomes the more pressing. I will reiterate the final lines of Mike's article here.

"Don't worry if you are a little hazy regarding some of the history; we will provide everyone with basic information and handouts. If you are interested in volunteering, please contact;

Mike Hadley on 01386 792877 mikehadley@gmx.co.uk

or Nick Booker on 01926 864900

nick.booker@welshhighlandheritage.co.uk"

Aitchison was perhaps toying with the idea of a Sunday service which, of course, never became a reality. The stationmasters received no extra pay for these services presumably because Tom Morris collected the fares and there were no parcels or goods to deal with. Incidentally I am afraid I must now reduce Aitchison's mark as he has forgotten to include John Williams' overtime in his calculations.

Another point worth noting is Tom Beaumont's salary. Without him there would be no locos running and hence no need to employ train staff, station masters, loaders or a track gang. He is pivotal to the operation and has the highest hourly rate although George North's Housing Allowance makes his take home pay greater.

Finally there are five in the track gang split into two groups. Jeb Limerick leads Thomas Jones and Samuel Williams whilst John Williams, at a lower rate of pay, directs the work of Owen Jones. I think there may be a lost fourth page of Aitchison's summary which brings together all the track costs and gives an overall total so I will not deduct any further marks for not completing his homework.

Dating this document is confusing. It is certainly before 1911 because Idwal Owen moved away before the census of that year. However in that same census Jeb Limerick records his profession as Platelayer, doesn't admit a promotion to ganger and is working alongside Thomas Ore. Did they go through a period of these two leading separate gangs neither being accorded the status of ganger? It is certainly after 1900 because Owen B Thomas has left Rhostryfan to farm at Llanddeiniolen. It has been suggested that it is from 1909 and I can see no evidence to contradict this.

In Part(2) I intend to look at the 1922 document and compare the stories the two lists tell.

Peter Liddell's Photo Analysis



The Gladstone Car stands at Dinas as part of the 14:50 to Beddgelert - H.F. Wheeler (14/24) - August 8th 1935

On occasion we receive queries that prompt detailed analysis of photographs we thought we knew very well. Just such occurred recently when Colin Lea asked us two questions. The second of these asked whether we knew of any photographs that showed the narrow-gauge face of the Dinas refreshment room. That much was easy as we were able to identify images that clearly showed the narrow-gauge aspect to be the same as seen on the standard-gauge side. However, Colin's main question centred on the Dinas 'tippler';

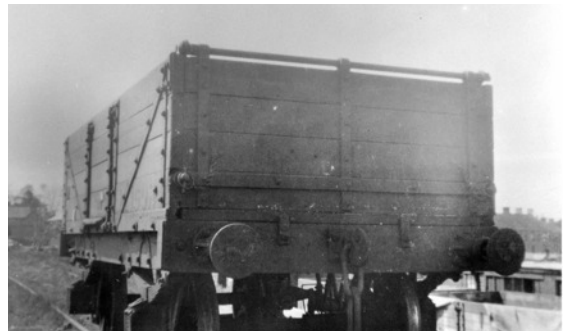
I'm doing some research into Dinas Junction. One mystery I have is the tippler. There may have been two, it's unclear, but one seems to have been built for the Dudley Park stone trains and the other is much clearer...a coal tippler from the high-level SG to the lower level NG sidings. However, I am yet to find a photo of it. I think the track was slewed very close to the retaining wall where the tippler was located but I can't find any details beyond major Spring's description of it as a 'coal tilting table'. Does the group hold any photos, drawings or details of the tippler(s)?

My instinctive reaction was 'no, we don't', but I nevertheless looked again at the photos. When trawling again through Hubert Wheeler's photos I revisited his image no 14/24, one of his three images showing the Gladstone Car in a train waiting to depart Dinas (see main photo above). A familiar scene we must have seen several times but look at the extreme top left-hand part of the image (the enlargement upper right). Wheeler's image shows a wagon in the process of being tipped, or, perhaps, suffering some potentially significant accident. It is important to note that the image shows the side and not the end of the wagon, so, if it was indeed being tipped it had been turned through 90 degrees beforehand.

We know that Wheeler took no further images of this wagon and therefore we can only presume that he considered the action to be 'commonplace', so not an accident it would seem. The tipped wagon, whilst not fully visible, was clearly privately-owned colliery stock. More than that, the wagon must have been designed for end-tipping.



Fortunately, Geoffrey Hughes has left us images of standard gauge wagons on the elevated siding at Dinas, of which that shown below (his GH39 dated ca.1931) is the most clear. This and his other photos show three different wagons in this location which were all designed for end-tipping.



I know that as a result of our dialogue Colin is now digging more deeply into this and other facets of operations at Dinas. I look forward to his contributing a more comprehensive article on these matters, hopefully in the not too distant future!

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