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## Grand Days Out with History Nick Booker reports on a successful new initiative.



The Vintage Train at Dinas Junction after a successful round-trip to Rhyd Ddu on Sunday August 5<sup>th</sup>.

With two down and two to go as I write these words, *Journey into the Past* has I believe delivered what it set to out do ‘...giving a glimpse into the fascinating past of the Rheilffordd Eryri/Welsh Highland Railway’

For the first journey, Sunday August 5<sup>th</sup>, we had around 20 passengers plus volunteers and for my second outing on the 12<sup>th</sup> it seemed like a few more. ‘Meet and greet’ was originally spread between the Goods Shed at Dinas and a newly refurbished Waiting Room which housed the new WHRHG display stand plus a big screen TV showing old WHR film from the 1930s and a montage of stills from the Group’s collection. Illustrating the pragmatic approach to this new marketing initiative, no sooner had your chairman suggested that he was gagging for a coffee on the first Sunday, and no doubt some of the passengers were as well, the ‘management’ quickly produced them for all. This is now a feature for the remaining Sundays.

Just like guests at a party, a good number of passengers turned up early and more later decanted from the service

train. Volunteers and the train crew were then busy briefing passengers, handing out information sheets and generally schmoozing with our ‘paying guests’ until it was time to board and off we set at 11 am with the Group’s volunteers spread around the train talking about the WHR and it’s history, at least for some of the time!

Arriving at Tryfan Junction, more teas and coffees were available and your chairman managed to cover the history of the NWNGR/WHR in what seemed like 3 minutes! The ‘big thing’ at Tryfan is of course the provision of photo run pasts, and the railway’s track safe people organised this extremely well. Here Clare Britton, the railway’s Commercial Manager, in her period early 20<sup>th</sup> century dress came into her own as a photographic model on the first Sunday.

Time marched on and we once again boarded the train and bowled along at a good pace through the sunshine on the first Sunday, and with a bit of rain on the second, to Waunfawr, passing dappled trees and the usual sheep safely





*Prince*, with FR Brown Marshall bogie carriages nos. 15 and 18 and the replica of 'Curly Roof' brake van no. 1, at Tryfan Junction - the first 'Journey into the Past' train - August 5<sup>th</sup> 2018.



The Vintage Train, with *Prince* standing alongside the water tower at Waunfawr - August 5<sup>th</sup> 2018.





A sylvan scene at Waunfawr as *Prince* simmers gently in bright sunshine alongside the water tower - August 5<sup>th</sup> 2018

grazing etc....Here we paused to let the service train pass through and this stop just like that at Tryfan, showed what a convivial and interesting day we were having as our train emptied to watch *Prince* take water and to marvel at the difference in size between the Garratts and the England engines. But time waits for no man (or woman) and passengers rejoined the train and off we set on our journey south, pausing at Betws Garmon to marvel at the planned conservation work and the wonder that anyone should build a station so far from the village. Our engine driver then

took the train at a good pace towards Glan yr Afon Bridge, where on the way back we stopped to admire the waterfall and the views, and then later slowing to glimpse the remains of the quarry weighbridge in the undergrowth. I think we may find that the site is cleared of vegetation later this year, if the train guard on the second Sunday has his way!

Arriving at Rhyd Ddu at quarter past one (old time), the railway's team set out the picnic and hot and cold drinks



*Prince* and the Vintage Train await the passage of the south-bound service train at Waunfawr - August 5<sup>th</sup> 2018





The replica Curly Roof brake van at the rear of the Vintage Train as it waits in the sunshine at Rhyd Ddu - August 5<sup>th</sup> 2018

and we relaxed in the hot sun on the one day and cool sunlight on the second! We were very fortunate with the weather on both days. Some lucky people had a ride in *Prince's* tender on the run round while others admired the views, chatted and wondered how those 19<sup>th</sup> century 'money men' ever thought that a railway built here could be a financial success. However, time passed all too quickly and so, after clearing up the crumbs and the empties, we were back on the train and off we set to the north with a full head of steam, pausing once again at the weighbridge and the bridge over the Afon Treweunydd. More to discuss here on the difference between a viaduct and a bridge!

The views across Llyn Cwellyn are marvellous as the railway follows its sinuous track along the lower contours of the mountains. Too soon, we were back at Waunfawr with another stop to allow the service train to pass. Off again with a brief stop at Tryfan Junction to drop off volunteers (to do the washing up!) and we arrived back at Dinas at around three o'clock.

As passengers ambled back to their cars or waited for the train back to Caernarfon, the feedback and kind comments were gratifying and these *Journey into the Past* trains do seem to bring some 'added value', to use a marketing term,

to what is always a scenic and enjoyable journey. On both days we finished with a 'wash up' discussion, what worked, what didn't, what could be improved etc? A lot of time, thought and preparation have gone into setting up this series of trains, both on the part of the railway, including the train crews and the commercial/marketing team, and of ourselves. Depending on the revenue and cost outcomes, and of course demand, I hope we can do it again. It is very gratifying to see the building at Tryfan Junction open and being enjoyed. The WHR needs a few more 'heritage themed scenes' or tableaux along the line and a conserved Betws Garmon and a Glanrafon weigh house free of vegetation are just two more examples we have to look forward to in 2019, maybe with a train of WHR/NWNGR coaches and who knows what pulling it!

Finally, my great thanks to all those who have contributed, and who are contributing, to the success of the *Journey into the Past* trains and associated activities, the railway company staff and the volunteers from the railway and the Heritage Group and of course our passengers, or should it be customers, who have made it all so worthwhile and enjoyable.

**All photographs supporting these notes were taken by Nick Booker.**



# MORE ON THE "CLEMINSON ENIGMA"



A northbound NWNGR passenger train pauses at Plas-y-Nant for the benefit of Valentine's photographer - Valentine 24343.JV - 1896  
 This enlarged section from the complete image affords a close-up view of the complete train.  
 This version of the image is from the John Scheltinger collection and is filed as Arch 3320(2)

In *WHH* 40 (June 2008), Michael Bishop reviewed the progressive acquisition of carriage stock by the NWNGR, starting with the two Ashbury Brake Composites (No. 1 and 2) and the three 4-wheel carriages (No. 3, 4 and 5) that were available for traffic when the railway opened in 1877. He noted an announcement in the *Carnarvon and Denbigh Herald* of 22<sup>nd</sup> December 1877 regarding the acquisition of further stock.

Reading the source document, I find there to be four separate references to the NWNGR in that one issue. One presented a summary timetable showing passenger services between Dinas and Quellyn whilst the other three touched on the introduction of the Cleminsons and the actual announcements will be seen to be in some ways more interesting than suggested in *WHH* 40;

*In another column we give a description of a new railway carriage which is being introduced upon the North Wales Narrow Gauge Railway. The improvement consists of a "radiating axle," which admits of the sharpest curves being turned without the "grinding" so much complained of in the ordinary description of carriages. This system is economical in several respects. There is a saving of lubricating material, and a considerable lessening in the wear and tear of the wheel tires. Carriages nearly twice the ordinary length can be constructed with only three pairs of wheels. Mr James Cleminson, of London, is the patentee of this invention.* [page 4 column 4]

*The tenth half-yearly ordinary meeting of shareholders was held at the Queen's Hotel, Manchester, on Thursday last..... There was no passenger traffic for the first six weeks of the half year, and the rolling stock was wholly insufficient to cope with the passenger traffic offering. Two composite carriages, 2nd and 3rd class, with a break compartment, and one 3rd class carriage, each thirty feet long, were added*

*this week to supply a great want.* [page 5 column 1 – extract]

*The passenger traffic on this line having increased considerably of late, it was decided by the directors to augment their rolling-stock. On Wednesday last [19th December], an official trial was made of some new carriages which are about to be introduced. These carriages are somewhat similar in appearance to the old carriages, but the arrangement of the wheels and axles is entirely different. This system, which is the invention of Mr J. Cleminson, of 5, Westminster Chambers, Victoria-street, London, has been applied to the royal saloon carriages of the London and South-Western Railway Company and is in use on several English and foreign railways.* [page 8 column 1 – extract]

The key difference perhaps between the notes in *WHH* 40 and these extracts is the change of tense from *are to be introduced* to *were added*.

The three Cleminson carriages, built by the Gloucester Wagon Company, were, it seems, available on the Railway before the close of 1877 and must therefore have been ordered some time previously. The maker's photographs of these new carriages show descriptive plaques carrying the date "Dec. 1877". There were two Brake/2<sup>nd</sup>/3<sup>rd</sup> composite vehicles and one All-3<sup>rd</sup> vehicle, numbered 6, 7 and 8 respectively. The identity of no. 6 as one of the two Brake vehicles is confirmed by the reports into the 22/04/1883 accident at Snowdon Ranger (*WHH* 19). Incidentally, these same reports confirm that nos. 3 and 5 were indeed applied to 4-wheelers.

In his *WHH* 40 article, Michael indicated the apparent numbering conflict encountered in 1891 when the NWNGR acquired two carriages from Metropolitan – the Workmans Car and the Tourist Carriage, later known as the Gladstone Car. When acquired, these were given the numbers '7' and

'8' respectively, numbers already apparently allocated to Cleminson carriages – one of the Brake Composites and the All-3<sup>rd</sup>.

Michael simply concluded his paragraph entitled *Ambiguity of Coach Numbering* with the observation;

*Maybe there isn't a rational explanation and there were simply two '7s' and two '8s'!*

However, on page 8 of *WHH 41*, Michael was able to address this anomaly using a 'new' photograph that showed *Moel Tryfan* with a recently arrived mixed train at Rhyd Ddu. As the station was still called Rhyd Ddu, as the locomotive was fitted for continuous brakes and as both the Workmans and Tourist carriages were in the train, this photograph was dateable to 1892. In a short article entitled *The Cleminson Enigma*, Michael was able to show that the Cleminson Brake Composite clearly visible in the train was carrying the number '10', albeit somewhat crudely applied.



An enlargement from Arch 4933 (iBase 2985) showing the number applied to one of the Cleminson brakes in 1892.

This photograph appeared to confirm that the Cleminsons (strictly at least just one of them) had been renumbered by the time the two new carriages arrived in 1891. In fact, two at least should have been renumbered but there is no photographic evidence of the additional changes. Logically, it would seem, No. 6, 7 and 8 had simply been renumbered as 9, 10 and 11.

Of course, as Michael noted at the end of his *WHH 41* article, two further new carriages (the Ashbury 'Corridors' No. 9 and 10) were to be acquired in 1893 with the four Ashbury 'Summer' carriages (No. 11, 12, 13 and 14) in 1894 thus, apparently, reintroducing carriage numbering anomalies. His final paragraph simply read;

*To complicate matters further the "Corridors" were delivered from Ashbury in the second half of 1893 and numbered '9' and '10'. In which case shortly after this picture was taken the Cleminsons must have been renumbered again.!*

The photograph at the head of this article shows an NWNGR train 'posed' for the benefit of Valentine's photographer just south of the bow bridge at Plas-y-Nant. This image has the Valentine reference number 24343.JV, which gives us an issue date of 1896, suggesting that the photo was taken in that year or, possibly, the year before. This photograph has long been in our archive, but it was only recently when I received a much better copy, from the John Scheltinger collection courtesy of Chris Jones, that its full significance was revealed.

The apparently well-subscribed train behind *Moel Tryfan* comprised, from the rear: Ashbury 'Corridor' (of 1893) No. 10; Ashbury Brake Composite (of 1877), either No. 1 or 2; Metropolitan 'Workmans' carriage (of 1891) No. 7; Gloucester Brake/3rd (6-wheel Cleminson); Gloucester All-3rd (6-wheel Cleminson); all three of the Ashbury 4-wheel carriages of 1877; and the other Gloucester Brake/3rd (6-wheel Cleminson). None of the carriages acquired in 1894 appear in this formation. Note that the Cleminson Brakes had ceased to be 'composites' with the withdrawal of 2<sup>nd</sup> class in 1892.



A close-up of the leading Cleminson seen in Valentine 24343.JV

The Cleminson nearest to the locomotive can, on careful examination, be seen to be carrying the number '5'. However, marshalled immediately behind we see the three 4-wheelers, one of which we know originally to have been 'no. 5'. Given the NWNGR's apparent aversion to duplicating carriage numbers it seems clear not only that the further renumbering postulated by Michael in *WHH 41* did indeed take place but that this renumbering also involved the 4-wheelers. So, what happened?

The answer probably lies with the continuous-brake saga and the protracted withdrawal of the 4-wheelers through the 1890s. By mid-1893, in order to 'make room' in the numbering sequence for the two Ashbury 'Corridors' the Cleminsons, particularly those occupying the numbers '9' and '10', would have had to be renumbered. As it seems that one of these at least was given a number previously allocated to one of the 4-wheelers, it follows that they too would have had to be renumbered. In *WHH 40*, apropos the brake saga, Michael wrote:

*Additionally, in connection with the Board of Trade 1890 directive to fit continuous brakes, Russell wrote to the BOT in June 1892 stating that "there are three 6-wheel carriages of particular construction which cannot be fitted with continuous brake. Two of these have Brakes and a Brake Compartment, one has not"*

and

*Despite the difficulties, the 6-wheelers were fitted with continuous brakes in 1894, but the BOT was told that the problem with the 4-wheelers was money, but they had been fitted with "blow-through pipes". By April 1896 the BOT were getting insistent, and Russell agreed they would be fitted or "taken off the road" by the end of 1897. But there had been enough prevarication and Russell had to improve his offer to the 31<sup>st</sup> March 1897 to discontinue running them, which was begrudgingly accepted.*

Also in *WHH 41*, on pages 6 to 8, Michael examined J.C. Russell's 'manoeuvrings' in the early- to mid-1890s including additional information surrounding the 'continuous-brake saga' and the acquisition of new carriages.

We may never know what precisely happened, but it seems at least possible that the three “piped-through” 4-wheelers were arranged as a permanently-coupled set, probably collectively given the number ‘3’. Subsequently, following their withdrawal, this number was possibly allocated to a new carriage acquired in 1897. As Michael argued in *WHH* 41, it could well be that the initial intention was that this carriage would have combined the three 4-wheel carriage bodies mounted on one long bogie chassis. Establishing the three as a permanent rake was perhaps the less desirable but more achievable alternative? Just what was acquired in 1897 is still a matter of debate (see discussions surrounding the ‘Mystery Coach’ photographed at Boston Lodge in the 1920s and 1930s, in e.g. *WHH* 40, 47, Festipedia etc).

As a result of these manoeuvrings, the numbers ‘4’ and ‘5’ would have been vacated to allow the three Cleminsons to be given the numbers ‘4’, ‘5’ and ‘6’. That one of the Cleminson Brakes was indeed given the number ‘5’ seems incontrovertible. However, there is additional information to be drawn from our Valentine’s photo regarding the number allocated to the All-3<sup>rd</sup> Cleminson. Whilst nowhere near as clearly visible, assessment of what can be seen here, in conjunction with the Symons photograph showing all the railway’s locomotive and carriage stock at Dinas in c.1893 (*WHR* 98 – picture 3 in Michael’s *WHH* 40 article – reproduced below), suggests that the All-3<sup>rd</sup> at the time of these two images was carrying the number ‘6’. If this was so, it would appear that the two Cleminson Brakes were numbered ‘4’ and ‘5’ by the time the ‘Corridors’ were acquired in mid-1893.

In 1907 the NWNCR acquired two new Brake Composites from R.Y. Pickering and the order paperwork instructed Pickering to apply the numbers ‘4’ and ‘5’ to these carriages.

The Directors’ Report of September 1907 recorded:

*During the Half-year two new Composite and Brake Carriages were obtained to replace two of similar construction which had been running since the opening*

*of the line in 1877. The cost, £780, was paid out of moneys in Court representing the renewals reserve.*

The phrase “*since the opening of the line in 1877*” has generally led to the assumption that the Pickerings replaced the two Ashbury Brake Composites (No 1 and 2), largely because of a presumption that the Cleminsons were not acquired until 1878 and from perceived implications of the phrase ‘*similar construction*’ in light of obvious differences between bogies and the Cleminson system. However, if they replaced the Ashburys, why were they allocated the numbers ‘4’ and ‘5’? As we now know that the Cleminsons were running on the railway in 1877, the year of partial opening, allowing for 30 years hindsight it does seem probable, given the numbering and the relative qualities of the Ashbury and Gloucester carriages, that the Pickerings actually replaced the Cleminson Brakes and that this would not have been inconsistent with the spirit of the Directors’ 1907 report.

Thus, to complete Michael Bishops 2008 analysis, we can conclude that the three Cleminsons were numbered ‘6’, ‘7’ and ‘8’ when acquired in 1877, were renumbered ‘9’, ‘10’ and ‘11’ in anticipation of the acquisition of the 1891 Metropolitan carriages, finally to be renumbered again as ‘4’, ‘5’ and ‘6’ ahead of the acquisition of the ‘Corridors’ in 1893. This may seem an unnecessarily complex sequence of events, but in 1894, when NWNCR carriage stock was at its maximum, there was apparently a numbering sequence in place which listed the oldest carriages first and the newest last. Perhaps this was planned or maybe simply accidental but at least between 1894 and 1897 their listings were neat and tidy.

The two Cleminson brakes were retired when the Pickerings arrived to replace them in 1907 – the All-3<sup>rd</sup>, which would have been structurally more sound without the centre cutouts for the Guards’ doors, probably soldiered on for some time after this – perhaps this one Cleminson was still in the inventory when preparations for re-opening were underway in 1922, although we know it did not survive into the *WHR* stock lists.



*Beddgelert and Snowdon Ranger with all the NWNCR carriage stock acquired by the railway up to and including 1891. The train comprised the three Ashbury 4-wheelers (running together), the all-3<sup>rd</sup> Cleminson, the two Cleminson Brakes, the Workmans and Tourist Cars from Metropolitan and both Ashbury Brake composites. A third locomotive, presumably Moel Tryfan, can be seen beyond the rear of the train.*

Symons Gems of Wales series 1893 - *WHR* 98



## Two Pay Lists (Part 2)

Dave Rogerson continues his notes on staff remuneration.

In Part 1 of this article (*WHH 79*) I looked in detail at the Aitchison estimates of the annual payroll which was probably drawn up in 1909. I will now turn to the actual payroll for the two weeks ending 24<sup>th</sup> May 1922 signed by D.O. Jones (see page 9 opposite). Unsurprisingly the arithmetic is perfect so I can lay down my red pen and concentrate on the changes which have happened.

This sheet refers to the period when, as I said earlier, the NWNGR was approaching its end and operating as a freight only service. It might represent the last period of operation on the NWNGR before McAlpine refurbished the line and it became the WHR. This, according to Boyd, had been due to finish by 21<sup>st</sup> May 1922 but passenger services would not be resumed until 31<sup>st</sup> July.

The first thing to note in this pay list is the reduction in staffing levels compared to Aitchison's plans. To operate the full service effectively he planned to employ 32 men. D.O. Jones paid 20, most of them for only 9 days' work in the fortnight. This has reduced the cost by about 50%. This four and a half day week fits well with Boyd's reference to a report of 1921-2 which notes fair traffic on the Bryngwyn branch but only a weekly service to Rhyd Ddu. However Myfanwy Williams is employed for 9 days at "Snowdon" which may indicate a more frequent service. The only people in full time employment were Daniel Owen Jones himself and Thomas Richard Thomas the yard foreman. The balance of roles has also changed. The number of people engaged in management or as station staff has halved, the train crew has been halved, the track gang has reduced from five plus a mason to two, supernumeraries such as John Limerick and the cleaner Thomas Parry have gone but the workshop has only lost a carpenter and the yard gang stays at seven – admittedly with one looking as though he was not required to work in this fortnight.

Many of the workers had, however, remained faithful presumably on the promise of better times to come on the WHR. Jeb Limerick is the ganger helped by one man who I assume is Samuel Williams (only his surname is given in the document). Thomas Ore is still refusing to work with Jeb so has been found work in the yard alongside the delightfully named Brutus Caradoc Jones. Dafydd Lloyd Hughes is still organising Bryngwyn but there is nobody at Rhostryfan. Willie Hugh Williams and John Williams are continuing to drive but there are no firemen so they, presumably, operated one engine in steam together. Tom Morris is on the payroll but, as there are no passenger duties, his role as guard has been ignored and he is on "general duties" none of which have been required in the fortnight.

Other changes have also taken place. Tom Beaumont has retired and Albert Bailey employed as fitter. It is interesting

to note that this role still commands the highest rate of pay, equal to the Traffic Superintendent himself.

Looking in more detail at the ten who are in both lists it is interesting to see who has attained more responsibilities and hence promotion up the payscale. Inflation between 1909 and 1922 was of the order of 250% and one would expect somebody doing the same job at an equivalent payrate in the two years to have a figure in the final column of this order. T.R. Thomas and W.H. Williams are both the nearest in job description and nearest to 250. J Williams has received a rise to give him parity with W.H. Williams. S. Williams, who started with the company after 1901 and might have been on trial in 1909, has the lowest start rate and is still amongst the more lowly paid in 1922 although his percentage increase is massive. Tom Morris who has lost his role as guard has the lowest pay and smallest increase. D.O. Jones is now Superintendent, D.L. Hughes now has the whole of the Bryngwyn operation under him and Jeb Limerick has been promoted to Ganger – these three have all above inflation increases. This leaves the 1922 loaders, C. Jones and T. Ore, getting an unexpectedly high rate which may reflect the importance of low slate breakage numbers to the freight only system – but I speculate.

	Day Rate				Increase
	1909		1922		
	s	d	s	d	%
D.O. Jones	3	8	14	2	386
T. Morris	4	0	9	4	213
D.L. Hughes	3	2	10	8	337
T.R. Thomas	4	4	11	10	273
C. Jones	3	0	10	6	350
J. Williams	3	8	10	10	295
W.H. Williams	4	0	10	10	271
J. Lamrick	3	4	11	2	335
S. Williams	2	6	10	2	407
T. Ore	3	4	10	6	315

This payroll represents the NWNGR reduced to its bare bones and is a valuable contrast to the high hopes expressed by Aitchison's plans for the coming year. I suspect that the reality of most of the forty-four years of the existence of the railway lies somewhere between these extremes.

**David Rogerson**



## NORTH WALES NARROW GAUGE RAILWAY

## Pay Sheet for fortnight ending 24th. May 1922

Men's Name	Occupation	Days worked	Rate	Amount	Mens contr- ibut- ion	Amount payable	Signature	Co's cont ibution
D.O.Jones	T. Supt.	12	14/2 <del>8.10</del>	8.10.0	2/4	8. 7. 8		2/6 4
M.O.Jones	B. Clerk	9	6/10	3. 11.6	1/10	2.19. 8		1/10 4
M. Williams	Snowdon	9	5/-	2. 5. 0	1/10	2. 3. 2		1/10
T. Morris	General		9/4					
T.R.Thomas	Foreman	12	11.10	7. 2.0	2.4	6.19.8		2/6
Garadoc Jones	Loader	9	10.6	4.14.6	2/4	4.12. 2		2/6
Thos. Ore	"	9	10.6	4.14.6	2/4	4.12. 2		2/6
W.Ll.Jones	"		10.6					
R.J.Roberts	"	9	10.6	4.14.6	2/4	4.12. 2		2/6
J.Williams	"	9	10.2	4.11.6	2/4	4. 9. 2		2/6
W.G. Jones	"	9	9.4	4. 4.0	2/4	4. 1. 8		2/6
D.Ll.Hughes	B.Gwyn	9½	10.8	4.18.8	2/4	4.16. 4		2/6
W.H.Williams	Driver	9½	10.10	5. 0.2	2/4	4.17.10		2/6
John Williams	"	9½	10.10	5. 0.2	2/4	4.17.10		2/6
A.E.Bailey	Fitter	9	14.2	6. 7.6	2/4	6. 5. 2		2/6
Jeff Lamrick	Ganger	9½	11.2	5. 3.4	2/4	5.1. 0		2/6
Williams	P. Layer	9	10.2	4.11.6	2/4	4. 9. 2		2/6
D. Daniels	Carpenter	9	11.8	5. 5.0	2/4	5. 2. 8		2/6
R.Williams	B.Smith	9	11.8	5. 5.0	2/4	5. 2. 8		2/6
W.Ll.Thomas	Striker	9	4.4	1.19.0	2/4	1.16. 8		2/6
			£87. 7.1041/-		£85. 6.10			44/4
					2. 1.10			
Insurance			£ 2. 4.4		2. 4. 4			
			£89.12.2		£89.12. 2			44/4

(Sgd) D.D. Jones,

Dinas

# A TRIP TO BRYNGWYN - COMMENTS

I have received a couple of sets of comments from readers following our publication of John Hughes' memoir in the last issue, both concerning characters specifically mentioned in his narrative. The first of these was penned by Richard Maund and I reproduce his letter in full below:

## TRIP TO BRYNGWYN : E J Deane

John Hughes' fascinating memoir in *WHH* 79 mentions a little known personality of the NWNCR/WHR management when he says: "The company's main office was in Liverpool and a certain Mr Deane was the last manager." That reference to Deane (sic) must date the reminiscence to about 1920-21. Deane seems to have had no mention in James Boyd's *Narrow Gauge Railways in South Caernarvonshire* (Vol. 1, 1988), Peter Johnson's *An Illustrated History of the Welsh Highland Rly* (2nd edn, 2009), nor the index to *WHH* (although he did appear briefly in *WHH* 44 - on p. 11), so perhaps a few words about him may be appropriate - albeit belatedly!

Edward James Deane was born in Malpas, south Cheshire, in 1876, qualified as a chartered accountant in 1898 and entered a partnership based in Liverpool which took over as the NWNCR's auditors at about that time. By 1905, Deane - now in a partnership with W P Davidson - had moved their office to 14 Dale Street, Liverpool. Their relationship with the NWNCR continued - to the extent that the company's registered office was, in 1913, transferred from Dinas to that same address: clearly the partnership carried out more than auditing functions for the company. This was at about the time Gowrie Colquhoun Aitchison (*WHH* 8, p.3 and 21, p.4) - resident away in east Nottinghamshire - added the Receivership role to his Secretaryship of the company.

Aitchison was formally released by the Court of Chancery from the Receivership to enable Henry Joseph Jack to succeed him in April 1921 (although Jack never took the more mundane managerial or secretarial roles). However, Bradshaw's Manual for 1922 - recording the situation as at 31 December 1920 - already shows for NWNCR: Secretary & Manager: E J Deane, 14 Dale Street, Liverpool. Thus Deane stepped into those NWNCR posts for a short period following Aitchison - but he must have been involved, behind the scenes, with the company's affairs for nearly a decade by then. As NWNCR manager, Deane was succeeded by Septimus Edward Tyrwhitt, who was appointed to the post in early 1922 - shortly before he also took over the FR and WHR posts from 1 April 1922 upon Frederick Vaughan's retirement. Deane's role as company secretary was eventually subsumed by Evan Robert Davies' law firm as the Aluminium Corporation took closer control of the NWNCR and rolled its assets into the Welsh Highland Railway (Light Railway).

Deane (or his partnership) also acted as auditor for the FR for a number of years as well as for the PBSSR and, later, the WHR(LR).

I am grateful to Dick Lystor and Michael Bishop for their assistance in researching Edward Deane.

At about the same time, I received another cluster of 'Jottings' from Dave Rogerson, accompanying his final version of Two Paylists Part 2 (see page 8). As with his previous 'Jottings' (*WHH* 76 page 10) I have decided simply to present these 'as received'. Interestingly, these also address, in part at least, John Hughes' memoir.

## MORE JOTTINGS

The publication of John Richard Hughes's memories of the Bryngwyn Branch at roughly the same period as I covered in the same issue stimulated a few thoughts. The period his memories cover begin before he was 13 years of age in 1900. He refers to Owen Thomas who left about 1900, Robert Hughes who was tragically killed in 1901, Will Roberts the ganger who had retired before 1901 and Samuel Tanner who left about 1898. His memory of names 50 years later is remarkable. The only minor corrections I can supply instantly are that the fitter was called Beaumont rather than Brereton and two well remembered employees Willie Hugh and Dafydd Lloyd had surnames Williams and Hughes respectively. I wonder if Tom Cale was a nickname for Thomas H Parry? What was wonderful was to get pen pictures of Willie Hugh Williams and John Williams, the denizens of NWNCR cabs for so many years.

When John wrote "*the little Gors y Bryniau [quarry] engine hauls it to the Foel. Kathleen is the name of the Gors engine*", I am sure he refers to the loco built by the Vulcan Foundry for that quarry. The quarry was renamed Alexandria in 1863, perhaps to commemorate the marriage of the then Prince of Wales, but the original name appears to have persisted locally.

## EVEN MORE JOTTINGS

The *North Wales Express* of Aug 1<sup>st</sup> 1901 reports that;

At the Bontnewydd Show at the end of July 1901, Tom Morris of Glanryd Villas, Llanwnda came first for his display of broad beans, second for his peas and was third in the view of those judging the neatest gardens.

At the same show John Limerick, Jeb's son, came third in the 220 yards footrace for boys attending Bontnewydd School.

**Correction:** In drawing similarities between the backgrounds of Jeb Limerick and Thomas Ore (*WHH* 76 p. 10) I mistakenly stated that the Ores were of Irish origin. In fact Thomas Ore's father, Thomas, came from Montgomeryshire. Apologies.

David Rogerson



# From the Editor

As I finalise this issue of *WHH*, we have reached the half-way point in the *Journey into the Past* program of Vintage Train journeys between Dinas and Rhyd Ddu. I have chosen to devote 4 pages of this issue to Nick Booker's description of the first two of the four planned journeys. By the time you receive this issue all four of the journeys should have been completed.

The first journey was blessed by what many might describe as wholly untypical Welsh weather - the sun shone all day and I make no excuse for opting to select from that day's photographs to illustrate Nick's notes.

I would like to pick up on one particular comment in his notes:

*maybe with a train of WHR/NWNGR coaches and who knows what pulling it!*

What indeed! I know that the very first services on the new Welsh Highland Railway in 1923, were operated by England locos and FR stock, but we surely have it within our means to operate trains such as these with actual WHR locomotives and stock?

I look forward to the introduction, hopefully not too far into the future, of more broadly based heritage experiences on the 'new' railway.

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fitted with Thomas's Patent sprung buffers. It would seem, therefore, that we are seeing an ex-NWNGR coal wagon, but which one?

As we see single rows of bolts on the corner strap, it follows, from our photographic evidence, that this was not no. 9, 10 or 12.

Perhaps the most obvious point of discussion is the presence of a side-access door on the same side of the wagon as the brake lever. This access door was apparently not of the top-hinged type but rather of the split side-hinged design seen earlier on the NWNGR ridge-top covered vans. Note how the doors were secured by a hinged bar dropping into a bracket on the nearer visible door edge member. Straight away we see that this wagon did not fit Boyd's 'rule', further confirming that this 'rule', if it ever was a 'rule', is invalid.

Is it likely that there would have been be a 'mix' of door types on any one coal wagon – top-hinge on one side, side-hinge on the other? If not, then the wagon seen here would appear not to have been no. 1, 3, 6, 9 11 or 12.

By elimination, therefore, the 'Beddgelert' coal wagon could have been no 2, 4, 5 or 8.

If we examine the door frame details on the Beddgelert Coal wagon and compare these with the door-frame metal work on Covered Van no. 4 (see photographs in *WHH71* and in detail above right) we will see interesting similarities. We showed in *WHH71* that, in all probability, the doors and hinges fitted to Covered Van no. 4 were taken from FR end-door covered vans. However, they were not fitted to the metal hinge supports from those same vans. Close examination of the door edges on Van 4 show strong similarities to Van no. 2 but with some apparently spurious additional details, notably an unused drop-bracket on one frame and a similarly unused metal extension to the other frame which probably would have once provided hinge support for a door-securing beam that would have dropped into the afore mentioned bracket.

We know that WHR coal wagon no. 4 was still a coal wagon in October 1927, when it was subject to an accident at Beddgelert (*WHH69*). If Van 4 was indeed a conversion from coal wagon no. 4 then this conversion must have happened after that, most likely over the winter of 1927/8. This conversion appears to have incorporated end-doors and hinges taken from FR Vans mounted on original NWNGR/WHR supporting iron work. As the curved-top end doors were wider than the typical doors fitted to the coal wagons – compare the relative widths of the doors fitted



An enlargement from H. F. Wheeler's Dinas photo of the two covered vans, showing the west-side door of Van 4.

to Vans 2 and 4 – it would seem that special efforts were made to improve access here compared to that provided on Van 2. As the access was widened, the wagon's original door-framing iron work would have been moved outwards to increase the size of the gap. As Van 4 retained an apparently spurious drop bar bracket with, on the other side of the door, the additional iron work that would have supported the drop bar hinge, we can only presume that these were features of the original coal wagon no. 4.

This suggests either that the coal wagon seen at the head of these notes WAS number 4, or was another wagon built to this same overall design. If we accept that Van 2 was a rebuild of Coal Wagon no. 2, which apparently did not have these additional features, then if this design were repeated it could only have been as no. 5 or 8. Should additional photographic evidence come to light, this conclusion, which is essentially based on exclusion, i.e. we know which wagons this was not, hopefully one day will be refined.

It remains a distinct possibility that the wagon seen at Beddgelert was, for some unknown reason, a 'one off'. If so we might well be looking at a photograph of no. 4 before its conversion into a covered van.

# Peter Liddell's Photo Analysis



Beddgelert, 1923. FR England locomotive *Little Giant* with a northbound train (WHR 29 - LPC 6504).

*The exception that proves the rule* is a phrase oft used but perhaps not as often understood. This time I will look at a photographic example where, in my view, contrary to this assertion an exception disproves a rule or, more strictly, that a presumed rule is not a rule at all.

First, the 'Rule'. In *Narrow Gauge Rails to Portmadoc*, 1949, p. 122, Boyd wrote:

*The earlier slate and general mineral wagons (used chiefly for stone traffic) were solid-sided wagons of two sizes, having in the smaller size fixed sides and in the larger a drop door on one side only. The dimensions of these wagons were in almost all cases identical with those larger types in use on the Festiniog system.*

and later, in 1988 (*Narrow Gauge Railways in South Caernarvonshire*, p. 237) this description had evolved to:

*There was a lift-up door of 4 planks in the five-plank side on the one side; the other side was masked by the brake lever, and the doors were arranged on the west side.*

Boyd was apparently not given to changing his position without good reason and he consistently maintained this 'door on one side, brake on the other' description throughout his writings. This appears to have become a generally accepted 'rule' when describing NWNGR/WHR large coal wagons.

Whilst we do not have identifiable photographs of every wagon there are sufficient examples to raise real problems. It is true there are pictures that show access doors with no brake and a very few that show a brake and no access door. Significantly, there are photographs from NWNGR days, taken as late as 1893, that show there to have been neither brake levers nor access doors on the west side of large open wagons.



An enlargement from WHR 29 (left) showing the east side of the coal wagon and (right) an enlargement from WHR 30 (LPC 6505) showing the north end of the same wagon.

Then we have the photograph at the head of these notes.

This is one of a pair of Locomotive Publishing Company images taken at Beddgelert in 1923, each showing *Little Giant* at the water tower with a train of FR stock. The visible part of *Little Giant's* train comprised small bogie brake van no. 2 after its then recent conversion to include passenger accommodation and bogie carriage no. 17. On the inspection siding were WHR dual-fitted brake van (no. 4) and a large coal wagon. It is this wagon I would like to look at more closely in these notes.

First and foremost, was this wagon ex-NWNGR or was it Festiniog stock? Two major factors appear to rule out the latter; the wagon had side access doors and it was fitted with simple dumb buffers – the FR large coal wagons had end doors and were

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