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# Glanrafon - A Site of Special Heritage Interest?

**The civil engineering that created the shelf on which slate was exchanged between Glanrafon Quarry and the NWNGR. P.W. Liddell - 2nd May 2015.**

The North Wales Narrow Gauge Railways' 'Moel Tryfan Undertaking', following the failure of the 'General Undertaking' the only section of the original NWNGR proposition actually to be built, was led by the perceived need to connect the quarries of the Moel Tryfan area and of the upper Gwyrfai Valley to the sea, and to the standard gauge, at Carnarvon. As built, the NWNGR main line ran from Dinas, near Llanwnda, to Bryngwyn thence to connect via incline and tramways to the Alexandra, Moel Tryfan, Braich and Fron Slate Quarries. From Tryfan Junction a branch was drawn up the Gwyrfai Valley by the prospects of trade from and with the quarries near Rhyd Ddu, notably the Glanrafon Quarry.

With the passage of time what had been the 'branch' was to become the main line and, later, the cornerstone of the Welsh Highland Railway.

Rail access to Glanrafon Quarry was not easy and was not finally secured until the Afon Treweunydd was crossed by the bridge known colloquially as 'Glanrafon Viaduct'. The building of the bridge was assisted by the establishment of an agreement between the Glanrafon Quarry Company and the NWNGR signed on August 16th, 1879 (see *WHH* 67). The Glanrafon Company prepared the major shelf on which their interchange with the Railway was to be located and, under the terms of the agreement, contributed financially to support the continuing extension of the Railway south from Snowdon Ranger, including the building of the bridge.

Without the Glanrafon Quarry and their enthusiasm for the railway, it is a moot point whether the NWNGR would ever have reached Rhyd Ddu and whether instead the line to Bryngwyn might have remained the Railways' main line.

It can therefore be argued that the Glanrafon Quarry was pivotal in the ultimate development of the Welsh Highland and, as such, it should properly be recognised.

When it comes to identifying and describing the importance of the Glanrafon site, time and geography have not been kind. Today, the quarry facilities can only really be appreciated from the train but, regrettably, they are now almost invisible as vegetation has been allowed to grow and effectively engulf the site of the transhipment facility.

When tracks were lifted in the early 1940's, a desolate scene remained. Through the 1940's to the late 1990's little changed, save the progressive and gradual deterioration of the Weigh House. Other than surviving sleeper patterns in the surface of the shelf, little else remained as evidence of the work that was carried out here.

**Left - Glanrafon in 1948 - Bill Rear**

**Centre - In 1961 - S.A. Leleux**

**Right - In 1964 - Nick Booker**

**Left - 1965 - Michael Bishop**

**Centre - In 1997 - Trackbed Survey - D. Allan**

**Right - The railway newly arrived - 2003 D. Allan**

**The incline to Glanrafon Quarry rose at right-angles to the NWNGR, past the 'working face' of the Weigh-house. Note the newly-installed gate across the foot of the incline - 2003 - D. Allan**

In 1997, aware of the impending arrival of the new railway and the likelihood that much of the surviving evidence of the NWNGR, PBSSR and WHR might as a consequence be lost, the Heritage Group was formed to, as it says in the rubric to these pages, "Record Yesterday for Tomorrow".

Members of the Group visited the Glanrafon site regularly, first to carry out track bed surveys recording all that had survived and then, as the new railway approached, to record developments from track bed preparation, through track laying to final opening of this section of the line.

Even as the new track reached the site, there had been little change in the area's general appearance, however, with the railway there came new site fencing arrangements. The view of the quarry incline above clearly shows the new gate at the incline foot, a gate that formed part of a new boundary around the site. It perhaps seems sensible to keep sheep well away from a working railway, indeed to this day they can be a problem elsewhere on the route. However, without natural predators the vegetation around the transshipment site was free to flourish.

The photograph at the head of these notes shows the dramatic change in the scene only 12 years after David Allan's later photos. Although obviously decayed, the remains of the Weigh House were still there, to the right of the incline foot, but rendered invisible by natural growth in this view from across the valley.

Since 2015 the vegetation has continued to grow and, on a recent trip from Beddgelert to Caernarfon, even though I knew where the building remains were, I found it virtually impossible to spot them even from just a few yards away. In addition, because of the height of the vegetation the main features of the quarry cannot properly be seen from the train.

As it is obviously impossible from the train to see the civil engineering that enables this important site, the significance of the whole area is totally lost.

As with Betws Garmon, there are remains here that at least are in need of stabilisation, lest they be lost forever. In addition, this important site is in need of proper explanation and presentation.

Whilst it may reasonably be argued that Glanrafon is an important site, there is no hiding the difficulties intrinsic in making the most of this area and telling its story to the passing public.

First and foremost the site should be cleared - perhaps boundary fences could be moved so that subsequently the local denizens keep the site clear? Once clear, attention can be given to preserving, and presenting, the remains of the Weigh House.

Perhaps here, more than might have been the case at Tryfan Junction, the site warrants a display of slate wagons assembled on tracks indicating the original exchange layout? Such a layout should logically include track leading towards, perhaps even on to, the incline. This would allow the presentation of a loaded wagon adjacent to the building where the weigh bridge would have been.

Large, legible, running boards at each end would complete an important element of the Railway's heritage.

# Past, Present and Future

## Chairman's Report for 2018/2019

The rule of three is a well-known approach in writing and speaking for keeping readers' and listeners' attention, hence the title of my article.

Last year the Group had three highlights to be proud of. After much preparation and organisation, chiefly by Mike Hadley, the remains of the station building at Betws Garmon are now conserved following the commissioning of the contractor Cyril Williams to stabilise and conserve the existing walls. including restoring some of the fallen stone blocks and re-pointing. Using a relatively new technique pioneered by English Heritage at Hailes Abbey in Gloucestershire, the walls are now capped with turf which, it is said, will be better at preventing water and frost penetration, thus prolonging their lives.

**The grass-topped walls at Betws Garmon**
**Contractor's photograph January 2019**

Later this year, we hope to put up a running in board properly to identify the site. Fittingly, we also acquired the station's Parcels Book at an auction earlier this year, which our Archivist is currently analysing. A preliminary note on the book and its contents will be found on page 5 of this issue.

Also in 2018, we were very pleased to support, both financially and with volunteering, the very successful Heritage Trains run by the Company between Dinas and Rhyd Ddu on the four Sundays in August. These generated a good deal of goodwill and interest among the passengers such that the Company is running them again this year with an extra one in September. If you would like to have the opportunity to talk to passengers about the Welsh Highland's heritage and history, fancy an entertaining day out and like dressing up in period costume (quite simple really) please add your name to the roster being organised by Mike Hadley. Full training and crib sheets are available!

In the autumn, Dave Rogerson's article on railway pay scales caught the eye of Geoff Courtney, who writes for Heritage Railway Magazine and it became a feature article in the October edition, thus bringing Dave's research and our Group to a much wider audience.

Finally, our Annual Accounts, which should be on the web site by the time you read this, show that we are in good financial health, with sufficient funds for some interesting future activities.

Last year I reported that we were working on a manuscript by Dave Southern on The Croesor Tramway. As it turned out, we were able to access a considerable amount of additional material from the researches of the late Adrian Barrell, who spent a considerable amount of his life and that of his family in researching all things Croesor. Unfortunately, Adrian died in March of this year but last year we spoke and corresponded before his illness overwhelmed him. The book, recounting the history of The Croesor Tramway, is a fitting memorial to a well lived life and his obituary features in this present edition of WHH (page 9).

Sales of the book have been excellent, and we have now passed the break even point and are into profit. Despite the obscurity of the subject, Geoff Courtney of Heritage Railway magazine managed to produce an excellent feature article a couple of editions ago.

**The Heritage Train at Tryfan Junction, 5th August 2018.**
**Nick Booker.**

While we deal with the past in our archives, which continue to proliferate with acquisitions such as the Bettws Garmon Parcels Book, tickets, photographs and a WHR enamel sign, the present and future is never far from our thoughts, thus to mangle a cliché, 'time expands to fill the space available'. Thus, I'm hopeful dare I say confident, that steps will be taken this year to provide a home for the WHR and FR archives. There is a long way to go yet but a momentum for action is building up.

Continuing my 'present' theme or trope, the front-page article by our editor, Peter Liddell, underlines the historical importance of the Glanrafon Quarry site and the remains of the Weigh House. It emphasises the contribution that some judicious clearing of the vegetation and basic conservation activities would make to telling the story of the WHR to present and future passengers, ensuring that the site makes a positive contribution to the future success of the railway. We will make every effort this year to encourage its sensitive restoration and conservation.

For now and in the future, our website is our face to the world and continues to perform well as our electronic shop window and I thank David Tidy our web master for his continuing efforts in keeping web presence up to date. The inclusion of Pay Pal on the site has been a great boon and continues to be a great advantage for users and for sales of books and subscriptions.

The Group's Facebook page has proved to be an excellent marketing tool and continues to provide a forum for discussion and the posting of items that might not fit within the constraints of the website; we now have nearly 500 followers. If we are to remain relevant in the present and the future, we will need to maintain our presence in the more traditional technologies such as print but also to embrace others whether it be Facebook, Twitter, Instagram or something as yet to be invented.

With our widely dispersed membership the Group's Journal, along with the Facebook page and the website, binds us together in our common cause. Peter Liddell as Editor and print manager manages to produce a well-regarded quarterly publication and heritage voice. He can be most persuasive in eliciting those 1,000 words or more to fill a space at short notice. Also, woe betide anyone who makes a careless comment on a photograph as I know to my cost. Through his forensic approach to analysis of what some might just regard as a picture of a train on sunny day, the contents of snapshot can reveal stories and facts that are truly amazing. Peter also wrestles with the design and printing of our books.

We continue to maintain our links with both the WHR/FR and the Heritage Railway in various ways, Heritage and archives are moving up the priority list and the Company plays an important role in ensuring that both railways pay more attention to heritage assets and history than perhaps has previously been the case.

Our raison d'être continues to be 'to locate, record, categorise and preserve as appropriate buildings, bridges, mineral lines, quarries, infrastructures and other artefacts, including documents and records, associated with the Welsh Highland Railway and its predecessors…'. However, to continue to do this in the future we need to maintain and grow our membership, which currently stands at around 260. Furthermore, we need to ensure that the governance and running of the Group is sustained for the future by attracting new members to the committee and/or volunteers for opening up, for example, Tryfan Junction station at weekends and for helping out on the Heritage Trains in August.

On the locomotive side of things, we very much welcomed the news of *RUSSELL's* test run to Beddgelert and also it's impending runs as part of the Heritage weekend in June. With that in mind we have decided to support the WHHR's recreation of Baldwin *590* financially (see notes on page 10) as we have done with the Kerr Stuart project, so that at some point in the future we might see all three locomotives at Beddgelert.

Finally, thanks are owed to all the members of the Committee for the sterling work they have put in over the past year to keep the Group functioning and I hope will continue do so for both present and the future!

Thanks are also due to ZPQ, the printers of the journal and some of our books. They continue to combine keen prices with good service and quality.

**Nick Booker**

**Chairman**

**May 2019**

# The Bettws Garmon Parcels Delivery Book

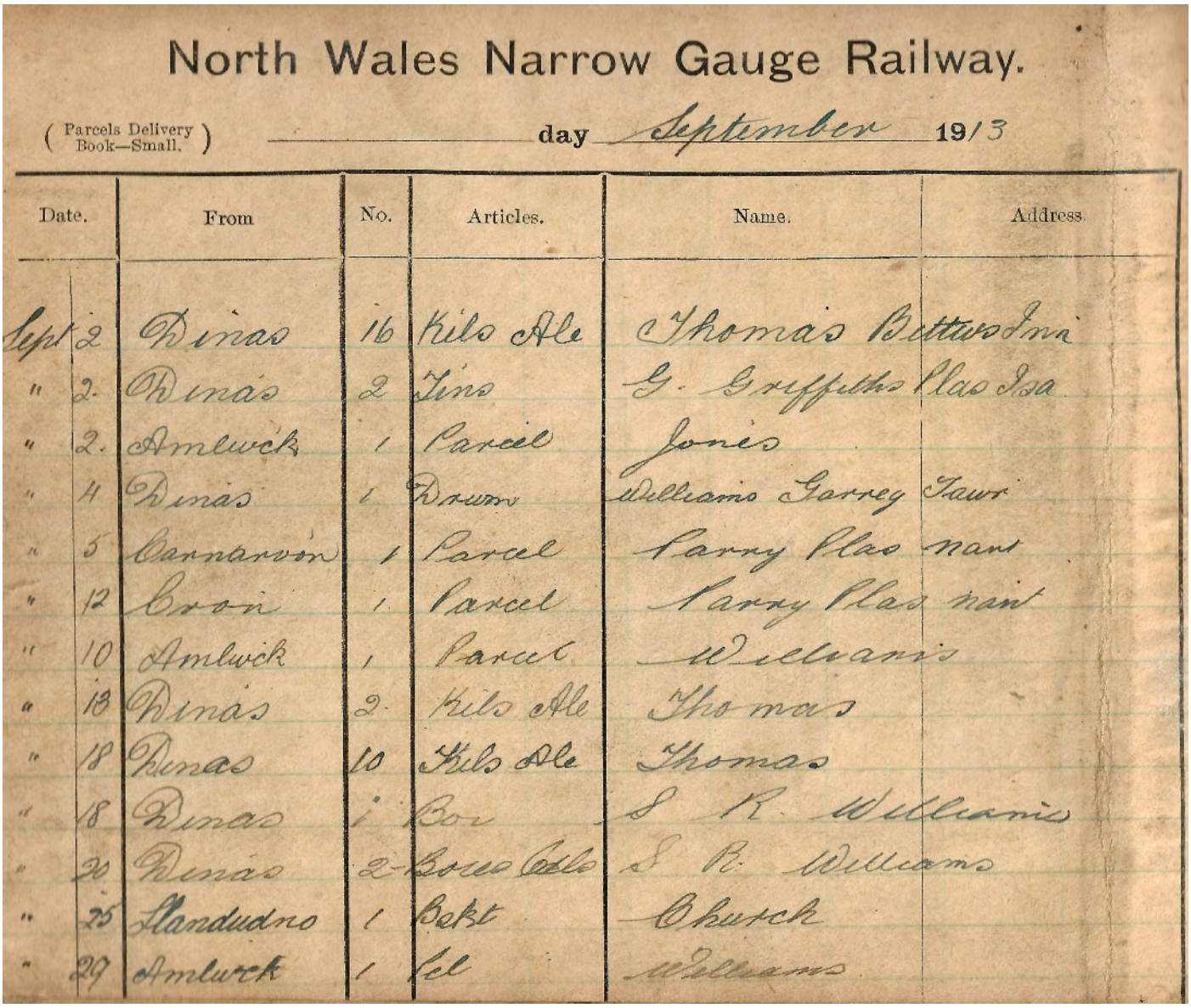
## Dick Lystor describes a recent Heritage Group Acquisition

Recently, this unique item was successfully acquired for the Group by Nick Booker, whose eagle eye had spotted it in a local railwayana auction. It had originally been discovered in Dinas shed on 4th September 1938, and by the state of its condition, must have been well looked after in the ensuing 80 years by whoever found it. The partially filled book covers the period from September 1913 to September 1923, by which time the NWNGR had become part of the WHR.

The recorded entries show that goods traffic to such a small community was surprisingly quite healthy during the war years, and even more so after hostilities had ceased, improving considerably during 1919 and 1920. However, the following year there were 5 months when no goods at all were dealt with, but traffic had picked up again in 1922 and 1923.

Throughout the whole period covered by the book, there were two concerns which received deliveries nearly every month. First was the Bettws Inn, whose landlady Ellen Thomas ensured that her patrons were not short of ale, and secondly the village Post Office, run by Samuel Ellis Williams, who catered for virtually everything the local residents required, particularly groceries of all descriptions, other household goods, medicines and coal. There was another coal merchant, R.H. Jones, but Williams was by far the largest distributor.

Local farms and small holdings also provided the NWNGR with a steady flow of traffic. Livestock was



North Wales Narrow Gauge Railway.

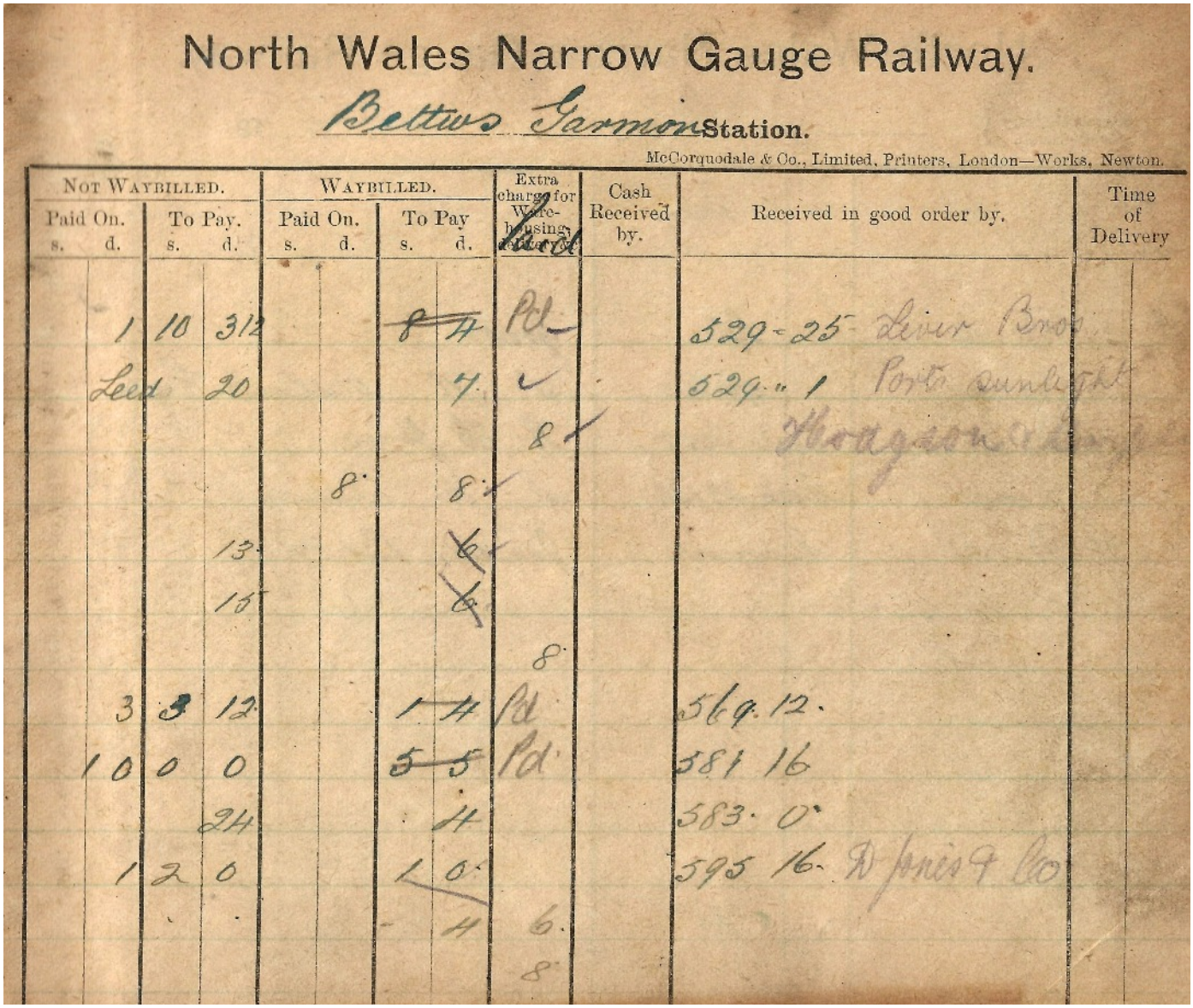
( Parcels Delivery Book—Small. ) _____ day September 1913

| Date. | | From | No. | Articles. | Name. | Address. |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Sept | 2 | Dinas | 16 | Kils Ale | Thomas | Bettws Inn |
| " | 2. | Dinas | 2 | Tins | G. Griffiths | Plas Isa |
| " | 2. | Amlwch | 1 | Parcel | Jones | |
| " | 4 | Dinas | 1 | Drum | Williams | Garreg Tawr |
| " | 5 | Carnarvon | 1 | Parcel | Parry | Plas nant |
| " | 12 | Cron | 1 | Parcel | Parry | Plas nant |
| " | 10 | Amlwch | 1 | Parcel | Williams | |
| " | 18 | Dinas | 2 | Kils Ale | Thomas | |
| " | 18 | Dinas | 10 | Kils Ale | Thomas | |
| " | 18 | Dinas | 1 | Box | S. R. | Williams |
| " | 20 | Dinas | 2 | Boxes Cells | S. R. | Williams |
| " | 25 | Llandudno | 1 | Bskt | Church | |
| " | 29 | Amlwch | 1 | Pel | Williams | |

delivered, such as pigs and calves, and feed for these and cattle and varying amounts of fertilisers were another important source of revenue for the railway. One important recipient of goods transported to Bettws was McAlpines who took deliveries of coal in October 1922, perhaps in connection with the impending extension of the WHR through to Portmadoc.

The industries of the area, slate quarries and mines, also provided traffic to Bettws. The entries in the book also give an idea of their later short lived periods of activity. The Silurian Iron Ore Company took receipt of coal, machinery, lamps and rails etc from November 1913 to December 1918, with only derisory traffic in the following two years. Traffic ceased after December 1920. The Treflan Slate Quarry enjoyed a particularly active three months between June and August 1922, the railway bringing in rails and machinery, but took its last load of coal on November 6th, after which nothing is noted. The other quarry in the area was the Victoria, or Hafod y Wern, Quarry, and in July, August and September 1923 took delivery of cylinders of gunpowder from Haverthwaite, a subject which was covered in John Keylock's article in *WHH* 40, page 8. All three of these enterprises closed at various times in the twenties.

Not only does the book record goods received at Bettws Garmon, but it is also shared to a small degree with both Quellyn Lake and South Snowdon. As both Bettws Garmon and Quellyn Lake were un-staffed, it begs the question as to who was responsible for keeping the records for these two stations. It may well have been the guard of the goods train, with the book being kept in the guard's van. Myfanwy Williams was in charge at South Snowdon and most of the entries here are in her hand. It would seem that as the book was not completely filled, goods deliveries to both Bettws Garmon and Quellyn Lake ceased after



North Wales Narrow Gauge Railway.

Bettws Garmon Station.

McCorquodale & Co., Limited, Printers, London—Works, Newton.

| Not Waybilled. Paid On. s. | d. | To Pay. s. | d. | Waybilled. Paid On. s. | d. | To Pay s. | d. | Extra charge for Warehousing delivery | Cash Received by. | Received in good order by. | Time of Delivery |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | 1 | 10 | 3 12 | | | ~~8~~ | ~~4~~ | Pd | | 529-25 Lever Bros | |
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| | | | 24 | | | | 4 | | | 583. 0 | |
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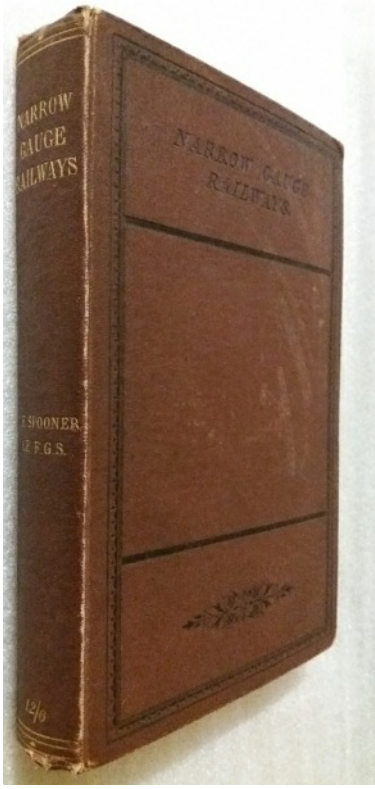
September 1923, and everything was subsequently recorded at South Snowdon. (Indeed, this station had its own dedicated book from at least May 1924 and certainly earlier, the remnants of a battered copy being amongst the documents found in the "Quellyn Lake hoard").

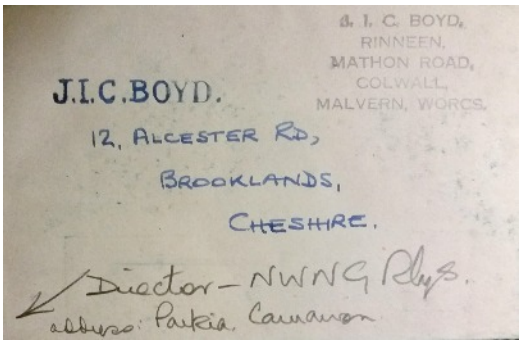
Entries for Quellyn Lake are minimal, only occurring in 1921 and 1923 but are mainly for coal, animal feed, wool and sheep dip. On 7th & 8th June 1923, J. Carney & Co took delivery of timber, paint, brushes, putty and trestles, and it is suggested that these materials were used for repairing and painting stations along the line. The XD97 archive has a file regarding a contract this firm had for that reason in August 1923. For those interested, the file reference number is 22995.

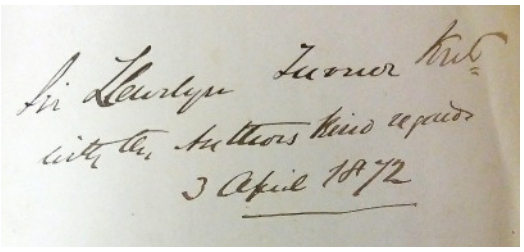
Entries for South Snowdon cover the month of March 1923 and generally follow the pattern of groceries, animal feed, general merchandise and also ale for the Quellyn Arms. Coal for the two Rhyd Ddu coal merchants, Messrs Gissing and Limerick, feature prominently. It is unsurprising that as the extension of the line through to Portmadoc was but a few months away from completion, various materials for McAlpine were being off loaded at South Snowdon. Likewise, goods were also received for delivery to Beddgelert, such as ale for the Tanronen (sic) Inn and the Prince Llewelyn, and coal for W.S. Jones, who later had his own wharf at that station.

However, being a parcels delivery book, it is no surprise to find that by far the commonest entries recorded in its pages are simply referred to as 'parcels', the contents of which will remain forever unknown!

# Narrow Gauge Railways by C. E. Spooner



**Left - Spooner's book**
**Below Centre - Spooner's inscription to Sir Llewelyn Turner**
**Above Centre - Boyd's 'label' - note his identification of Sir Llewelyn**
**Right - The 'historic' bookmark found within the volume.**

## Michael Chapman recounts a 'second-hand' book acquisition

If you are of a certain age, you'll remember a television commercial showing an elderly gentleman searching second hand book shops for *Fly Fishing* by J R Hartley. In the end our hero tracks down a copy using the Yellow Pages.

Time has moved on and the dawn of the internet, with its listings of second-hand book dealers' stock online, has made searching for rare titles so much easier. Or if you prefer, print-on-demand and e-books are also available.

Black Friday arrived and, whilst browsing for something else, I happened upon a copy of *Narrow Gauge Railways* by Charles Easton Spooner.

Mr Spooner needs no introduction to anyone interested in the history of the narrow gauge in North Wales. He was the Secretary and Engineer of the Festiniog Railway Company from 1856 until 1886. He was also Engineer to the North Wales Narrow Gauge Railways Company and was involved in the family company of Spooner & Co.

As it was black Friday, I was cheeky and asked if a discount was available. Nothing ventured - nothing gained. It was! Deal done and two days later a brown parcel arrived.

I appreciate I am sentimental, but wow! Here in my hands was a book published in 1871, so it's over 147 years old. What makes this book even more special is the provenance as it appears to have been inscribed by Spooner himself to Sir Llewelyn Turner.

A search of the Ffestiniog's www.festipedia.org.uk site revealed Sir Llewelyn was a promoter named in the 1872 NWNGR Act. By the time of the January 1873 Prospectus he was Chairman of the Board of the NWNGR. He remained a Director when he passed the Chairmanship to James Russell in 1879. He was still a Director when he died in September 1903. (See also *WHH* 64)

After Sir Llewelyn possessed the book it must have passed through the hands of W J Prior, a bookseller and stationer in Upper Bangor, North Wales - the label is inside the front cover.

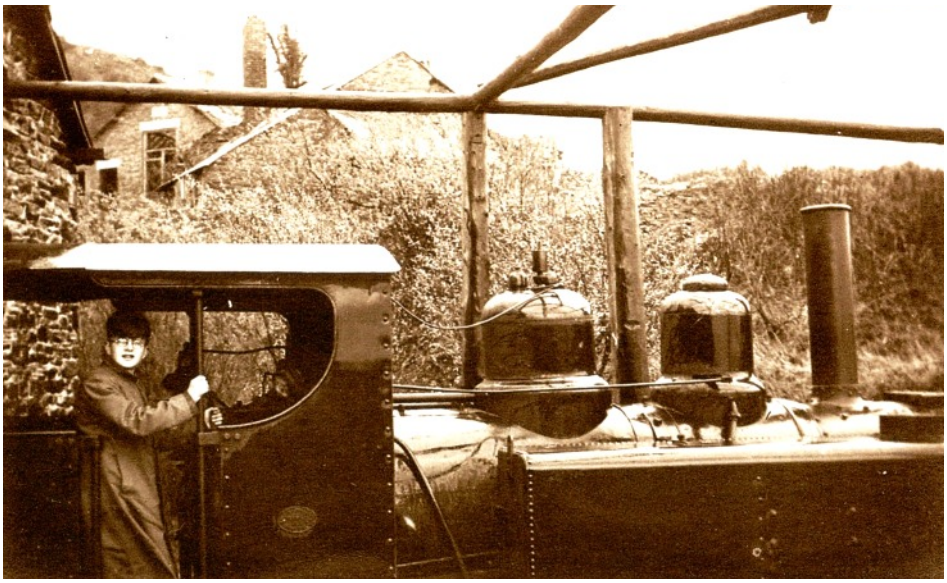
On the subject of labels, the next owner's label is glued on the end-paper; a certain Mr J I C Boyd. Again, he needs no introduction. And what makes the book even more interesting is that Boyd's receipt, dated 20th May 1947, is in the book; it cost two pounds and ten shillings no pence. This equates to roughly £88 in today's money!

Boyd also appears to have analysed the text in detail as his (?) pencil annotations are evident in the margins throughout the book.

Even the bookmark is historic! A 6d toll ticket from the Conway Bridge Commissioners for the Conway suspension bridge is carefully preserved within the pages.

Now I am 'keeper' of the book; I don't feel like I own it – rather I am, as it were, merely holding it for the next generation.

# Adrian Barrell (1936 – 2019)



Adrian Barrell, who has died age 82, was a keen industrial archaeologist, devoting much of his leisure time to researching and exploring the history of the quarries and the tramway of the Croesor valley in North Wales.

Born in 1936 at Ware, Hertfordshire, to Frederick and Lily Barrell, the family had moved to St Mary's Road, Ealing by 1939, in close proximity to his beloved Great Western Railway. Here Adrian went to Ealing Grammar School and showed early academic promise, gaining a place at Keble College, Oxford. At Keble, Adrian read history, graduating in 1956. After coming down, two years of National Service followed and Adrian rose to the dizzy heights of a Sergeant Radar Instructor.

Adrian's interest in industrial archaeology, and in particular railways, was possibly sparked as his grandfather and great uncles were 'motor men' on the Metropolitan Line. Later, a family holiday in Shropshire took Adrian to Snailbeach with its mines and the eponymous narrow-gauge railway where he was photographed in the late 1940's standing on the footplate of Number 3, one of the railway's then derelict Baldwin-built locomotives. Shortly after, Adrian was given a copy of J I C Boyd's book 'Narrow-Gauge Rails to Portmadoc', published in 1949, which focused his enthusiasm on North Wales and this gift later became heavily annotated with comments and amendments on Boyd's early researches.

Cycling was another ardently pursued enthusiasm in the early 1950's and Adrian frequently took his bicycle on the night train from Paddington to North Wales to explore the abandoned quarries and their narrow-gauge railways and in particular the Festiniog Railway where he became an early but largely unsung volunteer in early days. Famously he was on a works train, headed by the armoured Simplex, Mary Ann, when it crashed into the level crossing gates at Penrhyn.

Richard Casserley, the railway photographer, was a great friend and he and Adrian travelled extensively together exploring the more obscure corners of the railway network, both home and abroad.

In 1961, after marriage and completing his vocational training at the Ely Theological College in Cambridgeshire, Adrian entered the Church of England. His first positions brought him down to Devon as Curate in the parish of St James the Less in Plymouth. Once fully ordained he and his young family moved to his first parish of St Peter's Bideford. In 1970, Adrian became the vicar at St. Mary the Virgin, Walkhampton, near Yelverton where he set up home and the family became much loved members of the local community.

Adrian and his wife had two children, Hilary and Richard. They became willing participants in Adrian's interests and many holidays were spent exploring the remains of the North Wales slate industry. Adrian's love and interest in Croesor and its quarries began in the 1950's when he arrived over Bwlch Rhosydd with a heavily laden bicycle! By the 1980's, he had begun to research the history of the Park & Croesor Slate Quarries and was intrigued by their innovative Manager and Engineer, Moses Kellow. Adrian spent much of the 1980's and 1990's not only exploring the quarries of the valley but also many hours in Gwynedd Archives, the National Library of Wales and other locations researching Croesor's history. This also encompassed tracking down those who had worked either in the quarries or on the tramway and he created a rich cache of oral histories, making many friends in the process. Adrian's researches culminated in the creation of 'The Croesor file' and a supplement comprising his work and that of others, relating to the Croesor Slate Quarry, from the 1860's onwards. This is now lodged as a CD at the National Library of Wales and in the libraries of other interested researchers. Happily, the many years of painstaking

research and the deciphering of faded Minute Books resulted in the publication of two books. In 2015, Delfryn Publications re-issued the autobiography of Moses Kellow, the Manager of Croesor Quarry from the mid-1890s until its closure in 1930, and, in 2019, the Welsh Highland Heritage Group published a history of The Croesor Tramway, jointly authored by Dave Southern and Adrian.

Adrian's enthusiasms and interests were wide ranging and he was a member of many societies and groups including the Shropshire Caving & Mining Club, the Welsh Mines Society, the Welsh Highland Railway Heritage Group and the Festiniog Railway Society. He was a born organiser and in the 1990's he ran an informal tour group under the banner of 'Kellows Tours' comprising like minded individuals that explored mines and quarries both above and underground, mostly, it seems, on an officially unapproved basis!

After divorce in the early eighties, Adrian married again, and on leaving the church, retrained as a very successful paramedic for the West Devon Ambulance Trust working for them until his retirement.

On retirement in 2001, he dedicated more time to the industry of Cwm Croesor, including following up leads that surfaced from the original publication. Closer to home he was also a keen volunteer on the Launceston Steam Railway and was able to devote time to many other projects, including the planning and construction of yet another N-gauge model railway.

Although a private man, Adrian was very family orientated and a friend and colleague to many, always willing to lend a helping hand. He was excellent company, fun and engaging to be with. He endured his final illness with great fortitude and characteristic good humour, dying peacefully surrounded by his family on 19th March 2019, three days before his 83rd birthday. He is survived by his son and daughter and two step-daughters from his second marriage.

# Baldwin Restoration and the 'Antia Donation'.

In *WHH* 79, we wrote of an unexpected donation from Yasmine Stafford, grand-daughter of K.F. Antia, in memory of her grandfather. We have been thinking long and hard as to how best to establish and appropriate memorial.

Elsewhere in this Journal it is noted that the Heritage Group is to make a donation to support the WHHR Baldwin restoration program.

In 1985, Baldwin 10-12 D works number 44699, WDLR number 794, was repatriated from the Khatauli Sugar Mill Railway in Uttar Pradesh, India, and passed into the care of the Imperial War Museum. At Khatauli the locomotive had operated with the name *TIGER*, later simply *No. 2*.

***TIGER* in operation at Khatauli, early 1980's**

In April 2004, following the establishment of an agreement between the IWM and the WHHR, the locomotive, or more precisely its component parts, was delivered to Gelert's Farm for restoration. It was agreed that this restoration would create a representation of the original WHR Baldwin, WDLR no. 590.

The locomotive is currently undergoing final restoration at the Vale of Rheidol Railway and Nick notes in his annual report (page 3/4) that the Heritage Group has agreed to make a contribution towards the restoration fund.

***794* arrives at Gelert's Farm - April 2004 - David Allan. Note the number '2' on the end of the lower side tank in front of the cab structure.**

Given the relationship between this locomotive and India, it seems to us that it would be a fitting tribute to Antia if we contributed his family's donation to this cause.

Whilst we have no evidence that Antia photographed *590* when he visited the WHR in 1924/5, the locomotive was at the Railway and was operating over this period. It seems likely that he and *590* would have 'crossed paths'.

We will be discussing with WHHR possible means of recording the Antia family's contribution towards the restoration of the locomotive.

# From the Editor

I received the following message from Dick Lystor shortly before going to press:

*Whilst staying with Val Blake, Francis Blake's widow, at Tai Sygun, she gave me a cheque for £400 to donate to the Group, so I wonder if you could find room in the next edition for this short thank-you note.*

*Val, Francis Blake's wife, has very generously donated £400, from the sale of his ticket collection, to the Group in his memory.*

*Francis was a great supporter of the various WHR groups, and was especially involved in tracklaying with the Black Hand Gang of the Welsh Highland Railway Society. His other great involvement was with the Barry Steam Locomotive Action Group, which resulted in many locomotives being saved from the cutter's torch.*

*On behalf of the WHR Heritage Group I would like to thank Val for her very kind gesture.*

Only too happy to oblige, Dick!

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conventional roof layout. All were fitted with a balcony at the Guard's end of the vehicle. In FR service the vans were oriented with the Guard's compartment at their downhill, or Portmadoc, end.

These basic characteristics are helpful when identifying these vans in train formations on the Welsh Highland – pre 1929/30 three were vans, one curly roofed (no. 3) and two with longer wheelbases (nos. 4 and 5). The fourth, no. 2, was a passenger/brake composite. After 1929/30, all but no. 3 were passenger/brake composites.

**Figure 7 - *James Spooner* heads a Duffws to Portmadoc train out of Minffordd in 1926. The train included both a Pickering Brake Composite and one of the FR Large Bogie Brakes (first and third vehicles behind the double-Fairlie). Note that both vehicles have the same orientation - Guards' compartment at the Portmadoc end - Ken Nunn - iBase 667.**

As it happens, the NWNGR oriented their Passenger/Brake Composite carriages, first the Ashbury carriages nos. 1 and 2 and later the Pickering carriages nos 4 and 5, with the Guards' compartments at the Dinas end. The Pickerings survived into WHR ownership and were never turned, so their orientation matched the 'standard' FR arrangement

Whilst originally configured as true guards' vans, each of the FR vehicles was subject to specific developments. Of the original 'curly roofed' vans (nos. 1, 2 and 3), no. 1, built in 1873, was scrapped in 1921. It has now been replicated and operates in vintage trains today (see, for example, *WHH* 80). No. 2, also built in 1873, was redeveloped, introducing passenger accommodation in lieu of the goods space, in 1921. No. 3 retained its original configuration until it was eventually scrapped in 1955. The longer wheelbase vans, nos. 4 and 5, built in 1880, remained in their original configuration until they too were developed to incorporate passenger accommodation, no. 4 in 1929 and no. 5 in 1930.

When converted, no. 2 retained its end balcony but nos. 4 and 5 were given new bodies lengthened to include the space previously occupied by balconies.

These vans were photographed on the Welsh Highland from the earliest days. However, even on these very early sorties up (down?) the WHR to Dinas it is apparent that some, but not all, were turned prior to these operations.

In figure 1 we see Van 2 as part of what we believe was a 'special' trip up the new Welsh Highland. The Van had not been turned. In figure 2, which shows a normal service train, Van 3 had been turned. This van appears in other photos apparently taken on this same trip, but it is also to be seen behind a double-Fairlie (*James Spooner*) at Beddgelert, also in this revised orientation (WHR 104) and also taken in 1923. It seems reasonable to suppose that when stock was allocated for regular use over the FR any brake vehicles were turned. If this supposition is correct, it follows that, as the brake vehicles were not turned in figures 3 and 4 these, like figure 1, do not show 'regular' operation of these vans.

Figures 5 and 6 were taken in the first years of the post-lease period of operations, i.e. 1934 and 1935. As brake van no 4, seen in 1934 (figure 6) and van no 5, seen in 1935 (figure 5) were both turned, it would seem that these vehicles were each rostered for regular use, for a reasonably long period, over the WHR.

# Peter Liddell's Photo Analysis

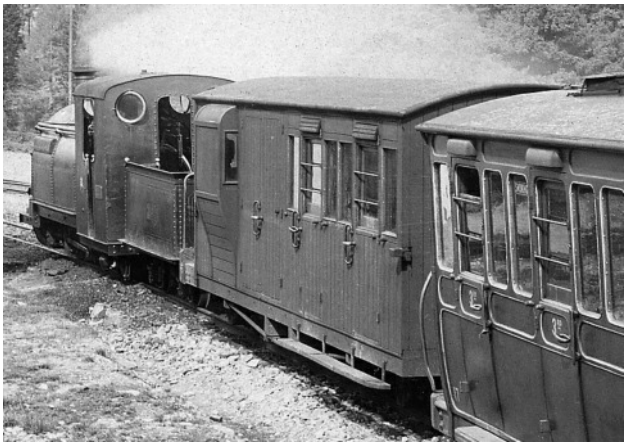

**Figure 1 -Top left - FR Converted Brake Van No. 2 at Beddgelert in 1923 displaying 'FR-orientation' - LPC - WHR 29.**
**Figure 2 -Top right - FR Brake Van No. 3 at South Snowdon - still named simply 'Snowdon' - in 1923. The Van had been turned at some point prior to this journey - Topical - WHHG 16.**
**Figure 3 - Centre left - FR Large Bogie Brake Van, still in its FR orientation, in a short train approaching Waenfawr from the south in 1925 - Tuck - WHR 163.**
**Figure 4 - Centre right - another view of an FR Large Bogie Brake, also in 1925 and still in standard FR orientation - Frith - WHR 36**
**Figure 5 - Bottom left - Rebuilt Large Bogie Brake No. 5 at Beddgelert in 1935, turned for operation over the FR - JE Simpson - WHR 7**
**Figure 6 - Bottom right - Rebuilt Large Bogie Brake No. 4 at Beddgelert in 1934, also turned. - Topical - WHR 37**

In a recent note from John Padley to your Editor, which covered a range of topics, he specifically noted the orientation of FR Brake Vans seen on the WHR. Photographic evidence suggest that while FR Vans were, on occasion, turned prior to operations over the WHR this was by no means always the case. In the following notes I will look at at least some of the evidence we have readily to hand.

The Festiniog Railway operated, at various times, five bogie brake vans - the first three originally featured the characteristic 'curly roof' design and the latter two were longer with a more

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