TALYLLYN NEWS

THE JOURNAL OF THE
TALYLLYN RAILWAY PRESERVATION
SOCIETY

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No. 16 - SEPTEMBER, 1957.



Photo *J. I. C. Boyd.*

Unusual gathering. Numbers 4, 3, and 6, at Dolgoch on the occasion of the Television broadcast.

(This picture is repeated from the last issue in response to many requests because folding spoiled it on many copies. It is hoped to deal likewise with the other ones in due course).

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HISTORICAL NOTES ON THE GLYN VALLEY TRAMWAY FIRST CLASS COACH NOW AT TOWYN.

by W. J. K. Davies.

The Glyn Valley Tramway, like several other minor railways of its era, appears to have been somewhat vague and variable in its provision of different classes of passenger accommodation, and it is by no means easy to ensure an accurate picture. The horse tramway issued only one class of ticket and this policy apparently persisted into the opening years of the steam-worked line. In a contemporary account of the opening in March, 1891, the writer notes that "There are none of the divisions of classes, first, second and third, all parts of each coach being open for the use of everybody" and this is supported by the table of fares quoted in the same account, as these, too, show only one rate of charges.

It is to be presumed, however, that there was some public demand for first-class accommodation, for in 1892 or 1893 the present first-class coach was supplied by the Midland Railway Carriage and Wagon Co., Ltd., being built at their Shrewsbury works. The exact date of building cannot be ascertained, as the design drawing, which shows several detail differences from the finished product, is undated and unsigned, and no order books survive. (The dates quoted above were supplied by the successors to the builders, the Metropolitan - Cammell Carriage and Wagon Co.).

The coach was the only first-class carriage owned by the Glyn Valley Tramway. It was of similar design to some already supplied to the company, but was more sumptuously fitted out inside, being upholstered in corded blue cloth with sprung cushions and having mirrors and luggage racks on the end walls. Interior woodwork was in mahogany and roof panels were in white lincrusta wax cloth with gilt mouldings. There was a three-quarter height partition between the compartments, and a single roof lamp, burning colza oil, served to light both of these.

The coach was finished externally in the elaborate livery adopted by the G.V.T. in its early years. This was creamy white with deep green panelling. There was a very elaborate gold leaf lining on each panel and a G.V.T. monogram in gold on the centre waist panel; the ends were soon painted all green. No class distinction was shown on any of the coaches when bearing this livery, which continued in use on some coaches up to about 1914; it is not known how long it lasted on this particular coach. The coach bore the G.V.T. running number 14.

It seems to have had an uneventful life, the only noticeable change over the years being the alteration of the livery to a medium green, relieved by cream above the waist, togther with the addition of class indications in red and gold lettering on each door and an oval garter on the centre panels, enclosing the G.V.T. monogram. In 1926, when the stock was being refurbished and the need for economy had become apparent, the rather expensive garter transfer was replaced by the letters G.V.T. painted in gold with red shading. At some time during its career, the colza oil lamp was replaced by one burning acetylene.

Comments have more than once been made about what happened when this coach was out of use for repair or painting, and rumours of composite coaches crop up from time to time. The former G.V.T. stationmaster at Chirk, however, denies that there were any composites. He says that the coaches in regular use — four thirds and one first — were marshalled in two rakes, and that the rake containing the first-

class coach worked the main trains of the day (in later years the 10 a.m and the 1-40 p.m. from Chirk and their corresponding return workings), other trains being third-class only. When the first-class coach was out of use for any reason all trains were run as third-class only. Sceptical readers, accustomed to more formal train working, might remember that the G.V.T. was a very free-and-easy line, and took full advantage of its official status as a tramway, in practice arranging its stock workings to suit itself.

The history of the first-class coach following the closure of the line is not too clear, for the surviving coach bodies had a habit of being transferred from one owner and place to another, fairly frequently.

It was sold, with several other items of stock, when the line was finally dismantled in 1936, and when next heard of was in the possession of a noted local resident, Mr. Moss Edwards of Llwyn-y-Cil. It was later bought by a garage proprietor at Chirk, and, according to an article in the Oswestry Advertiser, "While there, the owners of the Tal-y-llyn Railways, one of the very few narrow gauge railways now existing, had made enquiries with a view to purchase."

This was not done, however, and in 1953 the vicar, the Rev. W. C. Dickin, bought it, ostensibly as a henhouse. This idea was destined to be still-born, for his children were greatly attracted to it and it was given over to their tender mercies to be used as a playhouse. It performed this purpose for the next three years until in the early part of 1956 we find Mr. Scholes of the British Transport Commission's historical department, writing to Chirk Parish Council about the possibility of preserving it, but nothing more appears to have been done at the time. The "Advertiser," reporting this, asked whether a permanent home

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could not be found for it in Wales and this wish was granted later in the same year when a T.R.P.S. member bought the coach and presented it to the Society.

It was taken to Towyn early in 1957 and has since been re-built in Pendre works, as mentioned in the last issue of the "News." The reconstruction appears to be a really first-class job (no pun intended) and much credit is due to the original builders, for in spite of its long exposure to the elements the framework is still in good condition and the fact that the coach still retains its original steel underframe has considerably helped the process of reconstruction.

It is interesting to note that the Talyllyn Railway brake van booking office was ante-dated by the Glyn Valley Tramway by some twenty years, for in a contemporary account of the opening in 1891 there appears the following reference : "The tickets from the picking up stations to the intermediate stations can be obtained in the van at the rear of the train."

The existance of the G.V.T. mobile booking offices has been known for a long time but I think this is the only definite reference to the fact that they operated right from the opening of the line. Standard cardboard Edmondson-type tickets were issued from these vans.

Nant Gwernol and Talyllyn Lake.

The introduction by Mr. Simmons in the last issue of the subject of possible extensions to the Railway seems to have struck a very responsive chord amongst members of the Society. From the letters received, there would appear to be a definite bias in favour of an early extension to the foot of the first mineral incline in the Nant Gwernol, and a similar but slightly less bias for the Talyllyn extension.

Members, as will be seen from the letters which follow, are not unmindful of the technical, legal and operating difficulties likely to be met with, and as the matter will undoubtedly now be considered at a higher level this correspondence and discussion will be of great value.

We make no apology for reproducing the letters more or less *en bloc*, as they are not only extremely helpful but seem likely to be of absorbing interest to the majority of members.

Mr. T. B. Peacock, Q.A.L.A.S., Halstead.

Let us all thank Mr. Simmons for so kindly blowing us bubbles from his dream pipe. We need those sometimes, when the harsh realities of life threaten to overwhelm us. I am sure my enthusiasm for the extension over the mineral track is shared by the majority of members and I can't believe we need to wait seven years for that. The time factor should be determined by the growth of a fund specially set aside to meet the cost. Surely that could be started right away, all proceeds not in use being invested at compound interest until required. Contributors might be given the choice of (a) Making a general contribution in cash, (b) Contributing by labour, or (c) contributing in kind —station name-board, seats, stop blocks, etc.

I sincerely hope that whatever is undertaken, whether for the new track or for the station, is done really properly, not track over which a

speed restriction of 5 m.p.h. has to be imposed, or a station consisting of a bank of cinders. Let our ambitions be modest but our achievements really worth while.

Mr. Tris. England, B.F.P.O. 38.

Extension to Nant Gwernol is within the spirit of the T.R.P.S. but so far everyone seems to have been put off by the fact that service passenger trains have never been there.

The T.R.P.S. is the largest Society of its kind and to keep it in this state it must keep up the flow of original ideas. So far there has been very little competition, but those in Another Place are looking for surveyors, and a new tunnel would attract many members. A new viaduct would have the same effect for the Talyllyn, (and would be less expensive).

When the Old Faithfuls return rejuvenated to Towyn the steam population will be rather thick on the rails, and Nant Gwernol would give some extra space; a Centenary extension to Talyllyn would give both 'Old Girls' a real taste of the wide world.

I will be side by side with Mr. Simmons in scraping a ledge eastwards.

Mr. T. S. Williams, Kidderminster.

Everyone must heartily agree that the present site of Abergynolwyn Station is quite hopelessly unsatisfactory. A scheme has been advanced for road transport from Aber. to the lake — some generous type in a Dormobile — and also for the re-opening of the mineral extension up Nant Gwernol, where the scenery is *really* first class. About the difficulties of a bridge on a curve I cannot form an opinion, not being an engineer, but it does seem that it would be necessary since I doubt whether it would be possible to fit all the horse-shoe curve on to the approaches. Still, enough talent to overcome that difficulty should be available. I take it there are no public roads to be crossed. Whether a single bulldozer would be adequate, one must leave to the experts — one might meet rock fairly close down, which would surely present difficulties. I take it that the descent to the valley floor will be achieved before we come to the screes, which might drop a stone or two on to the track.

Mr. J. M. Davis, Sheffield.

I am sure everyone hopes we shall get to the Nant Gwernol before the date our President gave, but to say 1958 is being rather too ambitious. Mr. Simmons will see much at Towyn on which to spend his time and money. For instance, the old Talyllyn coaches are in rather a poor state and rebuilding will soon be necessary. More passenger coaches are also urgently needed, and in addition more covered acommodation is required at Pendre. It is not much use having a longer line if we have insufficient stock to run on it.

Extension to Nant Gwernol would also necessitate the provision of station premises — more expense — and although not an expert, I think that more than patching of the track will be necessary beyond Abergynolwyn. In addition to all this, remember that we have not yet relaid Towyn to Abergynolwyn.

The proposal to extend to Talyllyn lake is even more interesting, and I think we should certainly bear it in mind for the future, have a course surveyed and try to obtain a rough estimate of the cost involved.

But *please* let first things come first. It would be fatal to be too ambitious at such an early stage. We are only new to the railway business and many a more prosperous company has fallen through being

too ambitious.

Mr. E. Keith Stretch, Newcastle, Staffs.

First of all it must not be forgotten that the mineral extension beyond Abergynolwyn station was built privately by agreement with the landowners, and has never been authorised as a railway. Before passenger trains could be run over this extension either a special Act of Parliament or a Light Railway Order would have to be obtained. The former is extremely expensive, and an application for a Light Railway Order might well not be approved until the whole of the present passenger line is in really good condition. The fact remains that however well relaying has progressed, there is still an awful lot of ballasting to be done, and it would be folly to use valuable labour on reconstructing the extension when the main line will deteriorate badly if ballasting is not seen to.

As for possible extension to Talyllyn, it seems to me from careful measurement on the O.S. six-inch plans that the route suggested would involve a descent of about 1 in 60 for 1¼ miles, followed by an ascent at 1 in 80 for 1¾ miles. These gradients are necessary if the Iago stream is to be crossed low enough to avoid an expensive viaduct. But even if Mr. Simmons' figure of 1 in 70 is more accurate than my 1 in 60, it is still a severe gradient, much longer than any comparable gradient on the present line, though there is no doubt that this course falling to the valley floor would involve much less in the way of earthworks and bridges than one attempting to keep to a hillside ledge all the way. (Abergynolwyn station is only about twenty feet below the level of Talyllyn Lake). Also, to work a longer line would need longer trains or more trains, because of the longer journey time, and the less the gradients the better. So I don't see that an extension to Talyllyn is a practical proposition at all, even as a very long-term policy. And we must remember that there *is* still quite a lot to do on the existing line.

Mr. Frank G. George, Wembley.

The letter from Mr. Simmons has given me much food for thought. What little I have seen of the energy, enthusiasm and financial help put into the Society by "boys and girls" of all ages has convinced me that interest will not — nay, *must* not — be allowed to flag. It is obvious that there is much work yet to be done and more money to be found to get things as the Management so rightly require them, but we have a terrific potential voluntary labour force and quite a number of most generous patrons. I know from personal experience how hard it is for the younger members to help with our finances, but properly organised, with help and guidance from the elders, what fun we could all have in the next few years, reaching on to Talyllyn! A target, I feel, well worth aiming for, and a possible aid to recruiting youngsters for the years ahead.

I wonder, too, what Hugh and sons think of the scheme. There would appear to be no fear of lodging turns!

Dr. H. E. Vickers, Liverpool.

I suggest that those most interested in the Nant Gwernol scheme form themselves into an Extension Committee with the following terms of reference.

(1) To survey the track formation to Nant Gwernol and estimate the amount of work and material needed to prepare the extension for passenger carrying.
(2) To ascertain the necessary legal formalities.

(3) To draw up a practical plan for doing the necessary work, the manual part to avoid interference with present and future proper maintenance of the existing line and rolling stock, and make no additional demands on the already fully-occupied permanent staff.
(4) To wait upon the Railway Management with this information and, if necessary, work on behalf of and to the satisfaction of this body.

Mr. Joseph Tyrrell, Dublin.

Please allow me space to add my support to all that Mr. Simmons says on this subject. Whether the novel attraction of our railway will wear off or not is something we cannot forecast, but the risk of its happening should not be taken.

Mr. Simmons mentions the possibility of local passenger and goods traffic. In my opinion it is very important to have some of this kind of traffic, as it would be permanent, even if not of huge proportions, and could result in an all-the-year-round service.

The holiday traffic would also be swollen by the extension, and the railway would justify its name, and also terminate in a town, instead of remote countryside, as at present. Traffic has been lost to some B.R. branch lines because of the inconvenient location of many stations.

To realise the dream will cost money, of course, but although, like our friend Mr. Simmons, I am of limited means, I am more than prepared to contribute my share to the cost of carrying out this project. I think that the matter should receive early and serious consideration.

Mr. J. N. Slater, London, S.W. 15.

Whilst commending Mr. Simmons' enthusiasm I would like to make some observations on the subject, apart from the obvious obstacle of the high cost.

For instance, would the landowners be prepared to part voluntarily with their land? For if we had to resort to compulsory purchase an Act of Parliament would have to be promoted. This would be a Private Member's Bill and it might be years before pressure of Parliamentary business would allow of its introduction. There might be opposition from the Talyllyn hoteliers on the grounds that crowds of holidaymakers would upset their regular (fishing) customers — they already refuse to serve coach parties so cannot be expected to look favourably on a trainload of passengers.

Additionally, the question of fitting train services into the longer route would present many problems, for the present services give the holiday maker a pleasant morning's or afternoon's outing, but, with an extra three miles or so of route our present speeds would require the journey time to be extended by about half an hour. This would mean that the morning train would have to leave about an hour earlier than it does now, to bring the passengers back in time for lunch. The afternoon trains would have to be similarly re-timed, and might thereby miss their main-line connexions at Towyn. The difficulty could be overcome by speeding up the trains but we would be compelled to fit continuous brakes on all our coaching stock. This apart from a considerable amount of work on the track to make it suitable for fast running.

I feel the proposal is a very courageous and interesting one, but I would be very chary of seeing it rushed into. We might well end up

(*cont'd, page* 10).

TRAINS annual 1958

Edited by
G. Freeman Allen

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THE REVOLUTION IN AMERICAN COACH DESIGN

G. FREEMAN ALLEN on
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like the late Welsh Highland Railway, which suffered for going too far and taking too long about it. Let us continue our present task of making the present line "fit" and then consider the extension to Nant Gwernol. It would not be impossible to extend to Talyllyn, but would it be worth risking the Railway's future just to justify its name ?

Mr. J. D. Smethurst, Birmingham, 32.

I must compliment Mr. Simmons on his enthusiasm. Though his ideas are by no means original, his practical approach to the problems are worthy of the highest consideration. Also it is high time that someone has given us the chance to discuss this important question of the extension of the railway. Though we are all most grateful to that small band of volunteers who so freely give up their spare time to the arduous task of track repair and maintenance, it would be a great achievement if the Nant Gwernol extension could be completed within the next two years. Cannot yet another rabbit be pulled out of the hat? I think it can. Who would have thought only three years ago that the track would be in the commendable state that it is today?

As for the extension to Talyllyn Lake (do not let us refer to it as a dream or mere conjecture!), I entirely agree with Mr. Simmons in principle. But one small point — where is the Company going to obtain sufficient rail of the right type and quality at a price it can afford? Should the Railway ever reach Talyllyn Lake, its attraction to the tourist would exceed even our wildest hopes — of that I am certain.

Unfortunately, like Mr. Simmons, my spare time is somewhat limited at the moment, but I am quite prepared to assist the schemes to the best of my ability. It really needs someone now, who knows the general state of affairs in the P.W. Dept. to state their side of the argument.

I do earnestly commend Mr. Simmons' arguments to the attention of the Society, for therein lies the Company's enemy — forever lurking in the background — a loss of interest in the Talyllyn Railway by the tourist.

Mr. Arthur Chambers, Worsley.

I would like to support Mr. Simmons' suggestion of a fairly early extension to Nant Gwernol. Perhaps not as early as 1958, for there is much work involved, but I do feel that he is right in that the line does at present end nowhere in particular, and that it would be better to get nearer to Nant Gwernol and to Abergynolwyn. I suggest that the existing Bryn Eglwys tramway should, of course, be used as far as the Winding House above Abergynolwyn and probably for a few yards beyond, and that the site of much of the old track up Nant Gwernol could be made into a useful footpath up the side valley.

I would also support his suggestion for an ultimate extension to Talyllyn, although not by his suggested route. According to my O.S. map the line at the Winding House is about 300 feet above sea level. To descend to the main valley floor at Pont Iago involves dropping 100 feet in about a mile; surely the more practical course would be to keep as nearly as possible to the 300-foot contour. This would allow the line to terminate near to the road and somewhere between Talyllyn Church and the hotel, without rising or falling more than a few feet from the Winding House.

This extension would involve the construction of some $2\frac{3}{4}$ miles of new track and all the complications which Mr. Simmons mentions, but it would give the travellers on the railway an obvious goal for their

journey, and it would probably provide the railway with additional traffic of a more permanent nature. The idea is well worth serious consideration.

Mr. J. A. Kugler, Walsall.

I was interested to see the letter from Mr. Simmons in the June issue, as it seems that at last the ice has been broken in starting a correspondence section in our journal. (*No ice, just not many letters — till now ! — Ed.*).

I cannot help but feel that the suggested extension to Talyllyn Lake is something of a pipe dream. The cost would be enormous and surely beyond the purses of us impoverished members, even assuming that money is the sole problem. The matter cannot be dismissed with the statement that "the main expenses would be legal, constructional and rails." What about the cost of the land that would have to be purchased? That is, if we would be permitted to buy it at all. If I remember correctly, the other side of the Nant Gwernol is in the hands of the Forestry Commission, who would undoubtedly take a poor view of our locomotives puffing out sparks and cinders amongst their valuable trees. (Can anyone visualise No. 6 with a spark arrester on top of its chimney?). Perhaps this is where the diesel 'Midlander' would come into its own — being stationed at Abergynolwyn for working this section.

However, the question of the revival of the mineral extension to the foot of the Alltwyllt Incline is an entirely different matter, and I fully support Mr. Simmons' views on this. In fact, I will go further and say something really controversial that will leave a lot of people standing with their hands raised in horror.

Why are we asked to contribute approximately £900 to a fund for the revival of the defunct 'Dolgoch' whilst the mineral extension is left to moulder still further? Surely, both commercially and aesthetically the mineral extension is the more important project of the two. Now that the Midland Area is having No. 1 restored to working condition, we shall shortly have four steam locomotives and one diesel available to work the line. Rehabilitation of No. 2 is no longer a necessity, but merely a sentimentality. Leave her to rest quietly as an honoured museum piece until more important matters have been cleared off the commitments sheet!

The Nant Gwernol extension is not the only important matter, either. At a recent Midland Area meeting, mention was made of the commercial necessity of adding one or two modern luxury coaches to our passenger stock, otherwise we are in danger of losing some of our tourist traffic. Yet our officials still look upon 'Dolgoch' as first priority !

I hope I have added a little fuel to the train of thought started by Mr. Simmons. If so, it has been worth while sticking my neck out.

Mr. A. T. Reade, Wolverhampton.

Augmenting Mr. Simmons' letter, I would suggest that negotiations be made with Abergynolwyn tradesmen as to freight traffic on the railway. The village incline could be re-laid with very light rails of the type in use on the Llanberis Slate Quarry Co's inclines, the winding drum patched up, a new bridge built at the foot over the stream, and a couple of sidings laid in the old yard there. A goods train could be run once, or perhaps twice a week, and during the summer season trains would be mixed, at no extra running cost. There has been talk for years about a possible weekly passenger service during the winter.

A coach could be added to the freight train, and there it is.

As the work on the incline would be costly, it would be wise to find out first of all who would use the goods service for a stated price, which should be reasonable and in competition with road deliveries from Towyn. No merchant is going to have his coal brought up by the T.R. for the love of it. Anything like the elevenpence charged for letters posted on the railway would be ridiculous, as that is.

Mr. J. L. H. Bate, Reigate.

My reactions to Mr. Simmons' proposals are as follows. To open the railway to public traffic beyond Abergynolwyn would require the approval of the Ministry of Transport Inspector. The present state of the track is not such as to inspire confidence, and Inspecting officers do not take kindly to a pair of decrepit rails buried in turf. We *must* get the line as far as Abergynolwyn in first-rate order before tackling the extension. If volunteer working parties were to devote a winter to rebuilding the extension, I have no doubt that it would look somewhat different by the following season, but it is not a job to be tackled in the proverbial five minutes.

Incidental works which would have to be undertaken are the strengthening of two bridges, the demolition of the old Winding House (unless it falls down first) and building a terminal station with reasonable facilities. In this connexion it must be admitted that Abergynolwyn station is distinctly lacking in amenities.

Turning next to the extension up the valley to the lake. Well, it is nice to think about it and to plan the ways and means of doing it, but would it really be worth while? When the Nant Gwernol extension is open there will be 7½ miles of track to maintain; another 3 miles would involve much extra work. The operating staff may well have views on 10-mile runs or more with our vintage motive power. Running time would be longer, hence more trains required to maintain the service, and more expense incurred.

From a constructional point of view the bridges are the only big problem. Nant Gwernol bridge would be a major work, probably of three spans, and could well cost £10,000 to build. Nant Iago bridge would be smaller but would still be expensive, for I do not think it reasonable to take the line down to the valley floor before reaching Nant Iago, and the crossing would have to be made up on the hillside.

Gradients as steep as 1 in 70 are not to be encouraged on any railway, particularly one with undersized locomotives like the T.R. I would say that 1 in 100 is the ruling grade we should aim at. Cynfal Bank, ¼-mile at 1 in 70, is quite enough for our present train loads.

The actual preparation of the route should not involve much trouble. The only unknown quantity is the amount of solid rock that might be met with in the excavation. Whilst, as Mr. Simmons suggests, a solitary bulldozer could do a lot of the digging, there is much else besides to do. Drainage, culverts for the small hill streams, fencing, ballasting and tracklaying all need to be carried out, and much of it is work which doesn't appeal to volunteers, and in any case for its proper completion requires skilled labour.

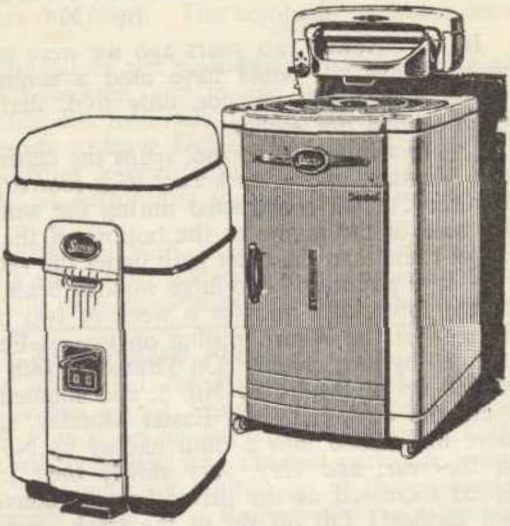
Despite the enthusiasm of volunteer workers, they are a dubious factor, and when it is navvying that has to be done there is no substitute for the professional.

To sum up, my view is that any extension beyond Nant Gwernol could well prove to be a white elephant, involving the Company in

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much expenditure on construction, maintenance and operation, and bringing little in the way of financial reward for the necessary outlay.

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★ FOOTNOTE....

All letters sent to the 'News' are published above, but there have evidently been many written direct to the Committee. As we go to press we have received the following note :

The Committee is fully aware of the possibilities of this extension, but only as far as the Second Incline. However, first things will have to come first, and the considered view of the Ministry of Transport as recently as 6th September is that they would consider it folly to extend the Railway before the present track is in first-class condition for the whole length of the line. Secondly, the Extension would be the subject of a Light Railway Order. Before this can be issued, certain requirements will need to be met, and we shall be receiving the advice of the Ministry in due course.

The Editor and Distribution Officer thank all Members who have written on the Nant Gwernol Extension and other subjects, and will reply where necessary as soon as the present 'panic' dies down.

THE NEW DOLGOCH FOOTBRIDGE

by 'X'

In the "News" two years ago we were told 'How to build a coach in two days.' I could have used a similar title for this article but though the actual erection only took that time the first stages had been carried out earlier.

The footbridge, of course, spans the cutting between Dolgoch Station and Viaduct, and gives access to a footpath which the Towyn Urban District Council constructed during the winter, and which leads down the side of the ravine to the bottom of the falls, giving a much more direct route than the older path under the viaduct.

A steel girder and two large wooden beams were to be the framework of the footbridge, and for a week or two before Easter these were to be seen at the Wharf, resting on two ex-Festiniog flat wagons loosely coupled by long chains. On Thursday, 18th April, they were cautiously moved up to Pendre by No. 3, and shunted into the loop, where they spent the week-end. On Easter Monday, shortly after 6-30 p.m., they were marshalled into a train hauled by No. 6, with the Talyllyn van at the rear, and very, very slowly their journey up the line began. Speed increased as the driver became convinced that the load would not suddenly fall off on to the track, and about 7-15 p.m. the train came to a halt in Dolgoch cutting.

Now came the major operation of raising the girder and beams up the north side of the cutting. Ably planned by Messrs. Bate, Hope, & Co., Civil Engineering Contractors to the Talyllyn Railway, this operation went off without a hitch. Two old rails were laid up the side of the cutting as runners, and the girder, and then afterwards the beams, were hauled slowly up the rails by a rope, which passed over the axle of an old pair of wheels at the top and then round a tree and back across the cutting to the winch of a Land Rover which had been driven up the rough track into the field on the south side of the cutting. The operation completed, the train returned triumphantly to Towyn. Darkness fell as the train approached Pendre, and the South Yorkshire Area's fine new "electric gas lamps" were a wonderful sight in the distance.

The scene now shifts to Whit Saturday. Once again a special train, this time hauled by No. 5 and leaving Pendre at 10-30 a.m. makes its way to Dolgoch, which is soon a scene of great activity as various members eat their lunch in the station whilst sheltering from the downpour. But soon the rain stops, and work begins. Some members dig holes on each side of the cutting for a bedding of sleepers on which the bridge is to rest; others bring ballast from a rock fall at the other side of the viaduct in a wheelbarrow which can only be persuaded with difficulty to climb the side of the cutting and dump its loads where the footbridge will be. In the process a well-known London member falls over the viaduct (fortunately not in the middle) and has to be rescued, rather muddy but otherwise intact, by means of a rope. Other members, scrambling up and down like monkeys, and balancing precariously like old-time sailors, errect scaffolding on the site. When the afternoon train arrives it is found that the look-out on the van clears the scaffolding by about half an inch; unfortunately the guard projects further than the look-out, and nearly knocks down the scaffolding with his head.

After the train has passed, the Land Rover is called into service

again, much to the interest of a bull in the field, and after complicated manoeuvres with ropes, the girder and beams are lined up with the scaffolding and pulled across on rollers. The acrobatic members once more scramble about.

Whit Sunday sees the removal of the scaffolding and the fitting of hand-rails (ready made) and decking, and lo and behold, the bridge is finished apart from painting the handrails. When the second down train (5-45 from Aber) is ready to leave Dolgoch, the guard can't find the engine crew anywhere. After several minutes' search he finds that the fireman, Lord Northesk, is performing the ceremonial opening of the bridge.

Did I say the bridge is finished? Well, it is in fact only temporary, and is shortly to be moved a yard or so sideways on to proper concrete bedding, to replace the present piers of sleepers and ballast in a hole.

FIFTY THOUSAND PLUS.

As we go to press we learn that the Railway carried its fifty-thousandth passenger this season on 1st September, and that receipts are more than a thousand pounds up on last year. This remarkable figure has been reached, it will be noted, with the best part of a month still to go. Part of the credit must, of course, go to the successful Television programmes, but the Society and Railway deserve a discreet pat on the back too.

As far as we know at present, peak day was 7th August, with £87 taken in fares alone. Morning trains on 7th and 8th August comprised all the passenger rolling stock, and were double-headed.

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LONDON & HOME COUNTIES AREA NEWS.

Exhibitions.

The two "long-distance" shows at Southend and Weymouth both proved very satisfactory and our thanks are due to the members who assisted in setting up and looking after the stands. In one case a member "moved in" to the Hall and stayed there all the time the exhibition was open, and two members made consecutive week-end trips from London to Weymouth to ensure the success of the display.

At present we are girding our loins for the Model Railway Hobby Exhibition, but are wondering whether Wharf will have anything left to sell! We shall have to concentrate on Membership Receipts at £1 apiece; we will do our best and report results in the next issue.

Area Annual Business Meeting.

This will be held as usual at the Fred Tallant Hall, Drummond Street, (near junction with Hampstead Road), N.W.1., on 11th November, 1957, at 7-15 p.m. (bookstall open from 6-45 p.m.). Once again, half the Area Committee have to be chosen, Area Society and Railway reports given, and questions, suggestions and even criticisms received. This is especially the chance for those unable to get to Towyn for the A.G.M. As is customary, the meeting will finish with some form of entertainment, full details of which are not yet available.

Working Parties.

Again we print an appeal for new names to add to our list of volunteers to join the excellent parties that go down to Towyn from time to time under the leadership of Mr. J. N. Slater. Please write to him at 14, Castello Avenue, Putney, S.W.15, if you would like details of our programme. If you join a working party, you will enjoy it, and will also help the Railway considerably.

Special Train to A.G.M.

This is drawing rapidly near and last-minute snags are being ironed out. Apologies to all who sent an envelope, per the last issue, and then received the leaflet automatically with their A.G.M. notice. It had been hoped to get the leaflets out earlier. However, the envelopes did save another being written out for acknowledgement of the booking. Full report next time.

MIDLAND AREA NEWS

The Midland Area's programme for autumn comprises, up to now, both working parties and film shows. Working parties at Towyn will be held on 19—20th October and 16—17th November, rendezvous outside Pendre Sheds at 9-30 a.m. each day. Anyone offering or desiring transport should contact Mr. John Burman, 85 Tamworth Road, Sutton Coldfield.

Film shows at the Engineering Centre, Stephenson Place, Birmingham, will be as follows : 9th October, Mr. Donald Gardiner, General Railway films; 22nd November, Mr. Jack Wyse, Austrian Narrow Gauge Railways. 7 p.m. both days. Members and friends welcome.

We are rather disappointed at the result so far of the Area Chairman's appeal for help towards restoring No. 1, and any contributions from inside or outside the Area would be greatly welcomed by the Area Treasurer, Mr. Alec Williams, 4, Wendron Grove, Kings Heath, Birmingham, 14.

The next Area Raffle will be held early in 1958. Details will be

Isambard Kingdom Brunel

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LONGMANS

given in the next issue, but offers of prizes will be most welcome to the Area Secretary now. The proceeds of the raffle will be entirely devoted to the restoration of the historic No. 1 locomotive.

EAST MIDLANDS & SOUTH YORKSHIRE AREA NEWS

The day excursion to Towyn in July set off in fine style, all arrangements having worked out to the minute. After some fifty miles our progress was rudely halted by certain unruly sections of the public who appeared to consider themselves outside the ranges of the law and of normal behaviour usually expected of people in this country. After an angry scene our organisers decided that in the best interests of the safety of our passengers it would be best to return home. We again apologise to all our passengers for the inconvenience caused.

The coach company, who were not concerned in any way in the industrial dispute, very generously agreed to repeat the trip at no further charge. We are very grateful for this offer, and the date was fixed for Sunday, September 8th.

Local Fixtures.

This Area is presenting a fully illustrated talk on the Railway at the local meeting of the Railway Correspondence and Travel Society on the 5th November.

The Annual Area Meeting will be held early next year; the exact date has yet to be decided, but it will probably be the last Saturday in February. Full details later. Please try to attend, and bring your friends with you.

Full details of these and all other local functions may be obtained from the Area Secretary (address on last page of text).

NORTH WEST AREA NEWS

Many members and friends who normally find it difficult to visit Towyn were enabled on 7th July to see for themselves the progress made on the Railway. Unfortunately, it was not possible to accommodate all who wished to travel on these special trains as they were quickly booked up, but it may be possible to run a similar trip at some future date.

The chassis of old No. 5 has been rebuilt as a flat wagon by Area members. This should prove a useful addition to the rolling stock. Some work has also been carried out on the Society lorry, which was brought to Manchester to carry the flat wagon and other equipment back to Towyn.

Working party dates for the coming winter have now been decided and will be found in the "Society Diary." Volunteers are invited to join any of these parties, and anyone wishing to go should contact Mr. Alan Chorlton at 6, Sunny Bank Road, Longsight, Manchester, 13, at the earliest opportunity.

ENGINEERING NEWS.

Locomotives.

Work is still proceeding on Nos. 1 and 2; the former at least is expected to be in service in 1958. No. 2 is likely to be fitted with steel boiler tubes instead of brass, and investigation is in hand on the subject of suitable chemicals to be used with our feed water, to prevent corrosion with steel tubes.

The extraordinarily heavy traffic this year has been capably dealt with by Numbers 3, 4 and 6, with the Diesel No. 5, *Midlander*, doing invaluable shunting and departmental work.

Rolling Stock.

A new open coach, No. 13, was built at Pendre during August to Mr. Bate's design, and is now in service. It is hoped that the Glyn Valley coach, which will bear its original number 14, will be in service in time for the A.G.M.

The weed-killing wagon constructed by the North West Area met with an unfortunate accident during the spell of very hot weather earlier in the season. It became derailed whilst being used as a water-carrying tender for dealing with casual fires accidentally started on the track and right-of-way. Damage was very extensive, but in view of the remarkably weed-free state of the track that this vehicle has dealt with, it is to be hoped that it can somehow be rehabilitated.

General.

Our President, Lord Northesk, paid tribute at a recent Committee Meeting to the work, both engineering and operational, done by the Permanent Staff, and it was agreed that due mention should be made of this later.

URGENTLY WANTED

If anyone has, or knows of, a wooden hut for disposal, size 150—180 square feet, which is suitable for occasional summertime residence, they would be doing the Railway a very great service by informing the Hon. Secretary, Mr. P. B. Whitehouse (address on front cover) as quickly as possible.

The usual financial limitations apply.

PUBLICITY.

Sales of all items at Wharf have been greatly increased this season, following the general trend of increased traffic.

Illustrated below is a set of silver charms in the form of Locomotive No. 4, a coach and the Talyllyn brakevan. These are excellently made and are likely to prove attractive to lady visitors. An experimental quantity has been obtained, to be on sale at Wharf before the end of the season at 13/6d. each, or £2 for the set of three. Any member wishing to purchase individual charms or a set should contact the Hon. Publicity Officer, Mr. Cope.

Notice is hereby given that the price for Railway Letters has been raised from elevenpence to one shilling, and T.R.P.S. stamps will be annotated accordingly. (The price of these letters is fixed by the G.P.O., not the T.R.).



PUBLICITY ITEMS DEALT WITH BY LONDON AREA SECRETARY.

The Society Ties have now arrived and orders have been dealt with. If you didn't book one, they are still obtainable at 15/- each. They have received much favourable comment, and for those who prefer a 'bow' we are investigating the position. Warning! The ties are made of Terylene and are susceptible to heat, so avoid hot irons (and cigarette ash!).

Car badges are out of stock and further names are required before a re-order is justified. Names only, please, for the time being; the price is 32/6d.

Lapel badges are also out of stock and members will be notified when they become available again.

The stock of old Talyllyn tickets is dwindling and the supplies of 30 different for 2/6d. cannot last much longer. The smaller packets of 12 for 1/- are more plentiful. Certain Londonderry & Lough Swilly tickets cannot be guaranteed now; if you order a packet, send 2/6d, and if any are short we will refund a proportion of the price.

We have been advised by the publishers that "Railway Adventure" (L. T. C. Rolt) is now out of print, but you can still buy "Narrow Gauge Album" by P. B. Whitehouse through the Society, and so enable the funds to benefit.

The Card Timetables are now all gone, we are sorry to say, but the Company's Official Rule Book, essential to anyone working on the line, can still be obtained for one shilling, plus twopence postage.

Christmas Cards.

This year opportunity has been taken of using two of the colour blocks we possess, to give a full colour front to the cards — this without

making them very much dearer. One photograph depicts No. 3 locomotive at Pendre, and the other No. 4 at Quarry Siding. To ensure fair shares the cards will only be sold in dozens (or multiples thereof) containing six of each card.

Including envelopes the price is eight shillings per dozen, and orders should be sent, with remittance, to T. W. Robertson, 23, Portway, Ewell, Surrey. In order to cope with expected increased demand an extra thousand have been printed this year, but you are advised to get your order in early, to avoid disappointment.

SIGNALS & TELECOMMUNICATIONS

There has been an excellent spread of S. & T. personnel spending their holidays in Towyn, so that a duty lineman has been available for almost the whole running season. It will be necessary to extend this even further next year, so that full telephone service can be guaranteed at all times.

A large amount of the new G.P.O.-type cable has been laid out, but there is a great deal of work needed to replace poles and to re-set the entire line on to the down side.

The new ground frame for Pendre yard has been checked, assembled and partly erected, and work on this will proceed as a first priority. As the frame is of ex-L.N.W.R. pattern, with long lever tails, it has been necessary to elevate the structure somewhat on a concrete base.

There will be a regular programme of working weekend parties this winter, and still more S. & T. members are urgently required for this very worthwhile job. If you have any signals or telecoms knowledge, if you do your own electrical wiring and repairs, or if you potter around the workshop with things mechanical or electrical, please contact the S. & T. Engineer at the address below, and he will ensure that you receive all relevant circulars and situation reports : Major D. R. Robinson, R. Sigs., 24, Oak Avenue, Romiley, Cheshire.

AN EXPLANATION AND APPEAL.

The Talyllyn administration is sometimes accused of inefficiency by Members who have been temporarily omitted from, or duplicated in, the distribution records. Whilst these failures are certainly undesirable, it should be remembered that the T.R.P.S. is a very vast organisation to be dealt with as a purely spare-time effort, and, indeed, it has its own peculiar problems which do not help matters at all.

As probably most of the complaints concern the 'News' we do make extraordinary efforts to keep things up to date, not, it must be admitted, with conspicuous success hitherto. For example, upwards of one hundred recently-joined members have probably been deprived of a copy of the last issue because of delayed notification to us after the order was given to the printer. The issue is out of print, and it will certainly be hopelessly uneconomical to order a reprint.

In desperation, the 'News' has set up a Central Registry of Members, with the object of anticipating the normal routine, so that we can detect errors, duplications, etc., at a very early stage. This means more work for the 'News' but we hope it will save us later work and headaches. You will see evidence of the 'C.R.' in the form of a permanent number allocated to you on your address plate. For the time being at any rate this is purely for 'News' purposes, mainly in connexion with printing and postal matters. It may at some future time be incorporated

with your ordinary Membership Number, somehow.

Being now partly mechanised with Addressograph facilities, we are in a good position to make this plan work, and are building up a most impressive and, we hope, foolproof, indexing system. This has taken time, and there is still a large backlog of queries, etc., to be cleared up.

Our one weak spot, however, is the time lag in getting Addressograph plates made, and here is where some member may be able to help us. Plate-making machines, known as "Graphotype" are very expensive indeed to buy initially, and we cannot hope easily to find such a bargain as the addressing machine itself. So if any Member has such a machine redundant which he is prepared to donate to the Society, or to sell at a price within our means, it will probably do as much for the Society and Railway as any other piece of machinery we've got — locomotives included! If you can help, please get in touch with me, or with the Hon. Treasurer, Mr. Garland.

Touching on another source of complaint with the last issue,I would explain that envelopes for the last issue had all been addressed before it was realised that we should have to use art paper for the cover. (One of the advertisements, not the pictures, dictated this). Apologies for the creases down the pictures, and you will see that we are now using an envelope that takes the magazine flat. We'd decided on this long before the last one went out, as apart from spoiling the photographs, the copies were so "springy" as to be well-nigh unmanageable in bulk, when folded. We shan't be sorry to get rid of the folding routine, anyway! It's a back-breaking job.

Jean D. Inkster,
Hon. Distribution Officer.

SIARADWCH CYMRAEG FEL CYMRO !
CROESO I BAWB — GWOBRAU DA !

For the benefit of 'foreigners' the above means "Speak Welsh like a Welshman! All welcome — good rewards !

Major D. R. Robinson, in addition to his S. & T. activities, is very anxious to increase the number of Welsh-speaking T.R.P.S. members, and is endeavouring to arrange with the Stockport Education Department to run official classes in Welsh this winter. Reception has been favourable, but a minimum of 15 pupils is required. Any member who is within reach of Stockport and who is interested should get in touch immediately with Major Robinson at 24, Oak Avenue, Romiley, Cheshire (Tel.: WOOdley 2516), and help to swell the number to the required size.

N.B.—Major Robinson is himself a learner, and begs indulgence if his Welsh, above, contains any clangers !

THE COMPANY'S CREST

Following the use of the "new" typecrest and comments in the last issue, it may be of interest to readers to know that those which have appeared on Society and Railway publications since about 1952 were based on two drawings made from the Company's official transferred crest. These were done in a very short time by a friend of the London Area Secretary; he unfortunately died about a month afterwards.

It is difficult to estimate how many 'prints' have been made from the various sized blocks that were made from these original drawings, but it must be a million or two.

SOCIETY DIARY

Sept 26 to Oct. 2.—Model Railway Hobby Show, Central Hall, Westminster.
Sept. 28—A.G.M. at Towyn. Special Train from London.
Oct. 9—Midland Area Film Show.
Oct. 12—Joint West Wickham & Croydon M.R.C's Exhibition, Selsdon.
Nov. 5—East Midlands & S. Yorks. Area. Talk to R.C.T.S.
Nov. 11—London Area Business Meeting.
Nov. 22—Midland Area Film Show.
Nov. 30—Closing Date for Photographic Competition.
Feb. 5—North West Area Re-union.
Working Parties :—
Sept. 28/29, All Areas; Oct. 19/20, Midland Area;
Oct. 26/27, London and N.W. Areas; Nov. 16/17 Midland Area;
Nov. 23/24, N.W. Area; Jan. 4/5, Feb. 1/2, Mar. 1/2,
Apr. 4/7, (Easter), N. W. Area.
Closing date for material for next Talyllyn News — 20th November.

SOCIETY OFFICIALS

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Treasurer :
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Mr. T. W. Robertson, 23, Portway, Ewell, Surrey.
North-West Area Secretary :
Mr. David Chatfield, 27, Lynwood Grove, Sale, Cheshire.
East Midlands & South Yorks. Area Secretary :
Mr. J. M. Davis, 58, Struan Road, Sheffield, 7.
Birmingham & Midland Area Secretary :
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Members M — Z Mr. R. W. Tippetts, 255, Warwick Road, Olton, Birmingham.
(Mr. Boyd-Carpenter, The Ridge, Eaton Hill, Baslow, Derbyshire, for those members who normally pay subscriptions direct to him).
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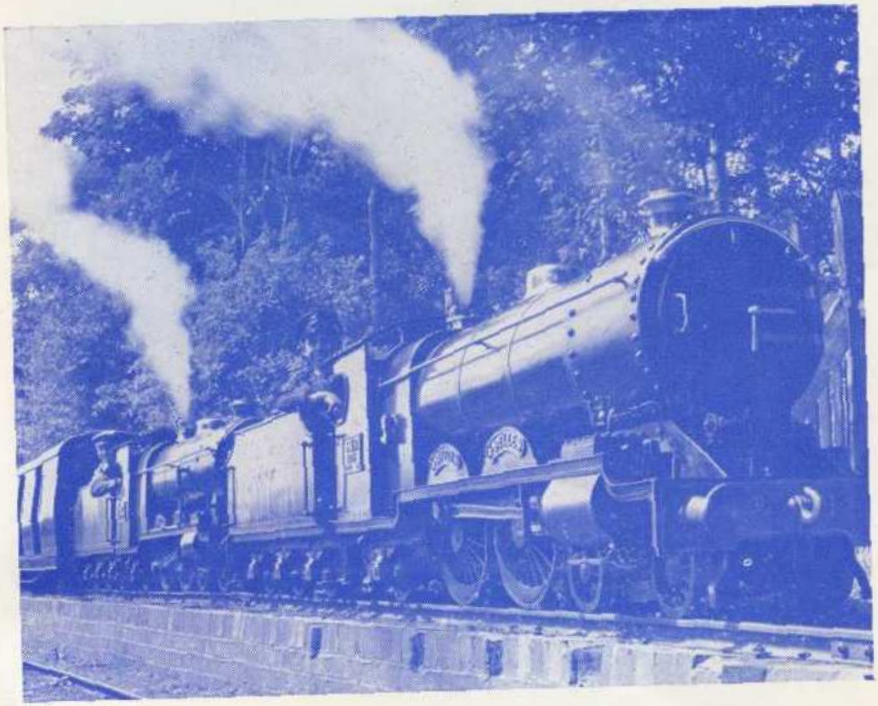
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