

Cowbridge railway – notes

1869, March Cowbridge railway extension to Llantwit –

.... public meeting held in Town Hall. Lengthy report re proposed line. After crossing the turnpike road at Cowbridge they should come out by Llanblethian, then go to left by Fishweir and Nyddwy, taking in Aberthaw where possibly docks might be formed, then eventually coming out by the Lord's Pond in the centre of Llantwit Major. Referred to having a level crossing in Cowbridge. Great improvements have been made to these – little inconvenience as the rails are lain in grooves to prevent carriages jolting etc.

Reference to as many as 500 visitors a week to Llantwit in the summer.

Central Glamorgan Gazette

1869, June 4th Thomas Jones, acting station master at Cowbridge railway station, caught at Neath. Embezzled money of the company.

Central Glam Gazette

1869, 9th July Mr Morgan, employee at Cowbridge Railway Station – took part in an interesting and exciting race of 150 yards for a small wager, on the Aberthin road, with Mr Edward Payne bootmaker. There was a large crowd of spectators. Mr Payne 'whose prowess as a winner has been evidenced by his having taken several prizes at the various athletical excursions held in the neighbourhood, was the favourite at the start, but this time his efforts were doomed to disappointment, his opponent winning by two yards'.

Central Glam Gazette

Cowbridge railway staff, 1872 – from 'The Cowbridge Railway' by Colin Chapman

George Howell of Llantrisant, manager, £200 pa

Henry Williams of Cowbridge, driver, £93.13s pa

William Thomas of Brynsadler, station master, £62.8s pa

Benjamin Gronwr of Cowbridge, fireman, £59.10s. 4d pa

Aaron England of Cowbridge, station master, £57.4s pa

H Bessant of Bryndadler, ganger, £57.4s pa

Richard Hughes of Aberthin, porter, £46.9s.6d pa

Ivor Arnott of Cowbridge, porter, £44.4s pa

E Howell of Penylan, platelayer, £41.4s.8d pa

E Breast of Penylan, platelayer, £41.4s.8d pa

E John of Penylan, platelayer, £41.4s.8d pa

Thomas Thomas of Penylan, platelayer, £41.4s.8d pa

Philip Griffiths of Cowbridge, guard, £52 pa

Mr Lacke of Llantrisant, porter, £41.12s pa

W Milford of Ystradowen, porter, £33.16s pa

B Howell of Llantrisant, clerk, £31.4s pa

Joseph Rufus of Cowbridge, cleaner, £28.12s pa

1892, 3rd October Cowbridge Railway – opening of the line from Cowbridge to West Aberthaw

Heavy snow – wintry weather.

At 11.15 a special train left Cardiff along the Taff Vale Railway and Pontypridd and Cowbridge Railway for the last-named town. The train consisted of a splendid saloon carriage and several other first-class carriages. In the saloon were many ladies, whose attractive beauty and charming toilets made one forget.....Gentlemen.....riding in the saloon with the ladies, others in other carriages.....with cigars, pipes and tobacco. After a short delay at Llantrisant station for the purpose of allowing the ordinary train from Pontypridd to precede the special to Cowbridge and for shunting purposes, the journey to Cowbridge was resumed.

....joined at Ystradowen by Mr Daniel Owen, Ash Hall, chairman of the new line (heavy cold)...

On approaching Cowbridge the gaily decorated new station came into view, with the platform thronged with people.....Mayor and Corporation there to greet....

Western Mail

Locomotive Shed

The Cowbridge railway engine shed was built in 1886. This was the second shed after the removal of the original yard layout. The shed lasted until 8th March 1924 and was dismantled in 1927. The shed floor could be seen in the undergrowth well into the 1950s.

Memories of Tim Edwards

Following an earlier letter in the Gem newspaper about the importance of Cowbridge railway station to the town, Garfield Adams (in 2000) wrote to the paper about the freight, which came into the railway sidings twice daily, returning to Pontyclun with outgoing goods :

‘My father and grandfather were coal merchants and farmers for whom the sidings were the centre of their business. All coal came in by train from many South Wales collieries including anthracite from the Swansea Valley and best house coal from Maesteg and Llanharry.

The weighbridge, essential for all large coal orders as well as other commodities, was strictly controlled by the yard supervisor. Livestock came in by rail from Fishguard to be sold as store cattle. Farm machinery, implements and animal feed, as well as household and commercial provisions, came through the yard for collection.

For Cowbridge Agricultural Show, then held in the Bear Field, animals and produce arrived by train from all over Britain, including the royal estates, such was the prestige of the show. During the war, vast quantities of timber were stored for distribution, employing six men.’