

Progress



Cynnydd

The Victorians were firm believers in progress. The railways were one of the most powerful symbols of progress.

In 1842 a group of Scottish investors sent Henry Robertson to Denbighshire to investigate business opportunities. He soon realised that the railways could transform the local economy. The priority was to link the collieries, the brick, tile & terracotta works and the iron foundries to their markets, the expanding cities of England. Robertson was the surveyor and the engineer for the railway that linked Wrexham and Ruabon to Chester in 1846. In 1848 his viaducts at Cefn and Chirk carried their first goods trains to Shrewsbury.

The railways also changed Wrexham itself. They were a source of employment and enabled local people to travel to the seaside or for work. The huge Cobden Mill on Watery Road relied on the railways to bring in the grain and deliver their flour. Developers bought land on Bradley Road and built houses for the workers at the mill. The new streets were named after the leaders of the Anti-Corn Law League¹.

The annual fairs and the travelling traders in the squares off Henblas Street lost out. Instead new shops opened selling goods the trains could deliver all year round.

¹ The Corn Laws kept the price of wheat high by taxing imports. Industrialists campaigned against the laws as cheaper wheat would lead to cheaper bread and the chance to hold down wages. The Corn Laws were abolished in 1846.



Benjamin Piercy, the entrepreneur behind railways in Wales, France, Italy and India, who lived at Marchwiel Hall.

Benjamin Piercy, y mentwr a oedd yn gefn i reilffyrdd yng Nghymru, Ffrainc, yr Eidal ac India. Roedd yn byw yn Marchwiel Hall.

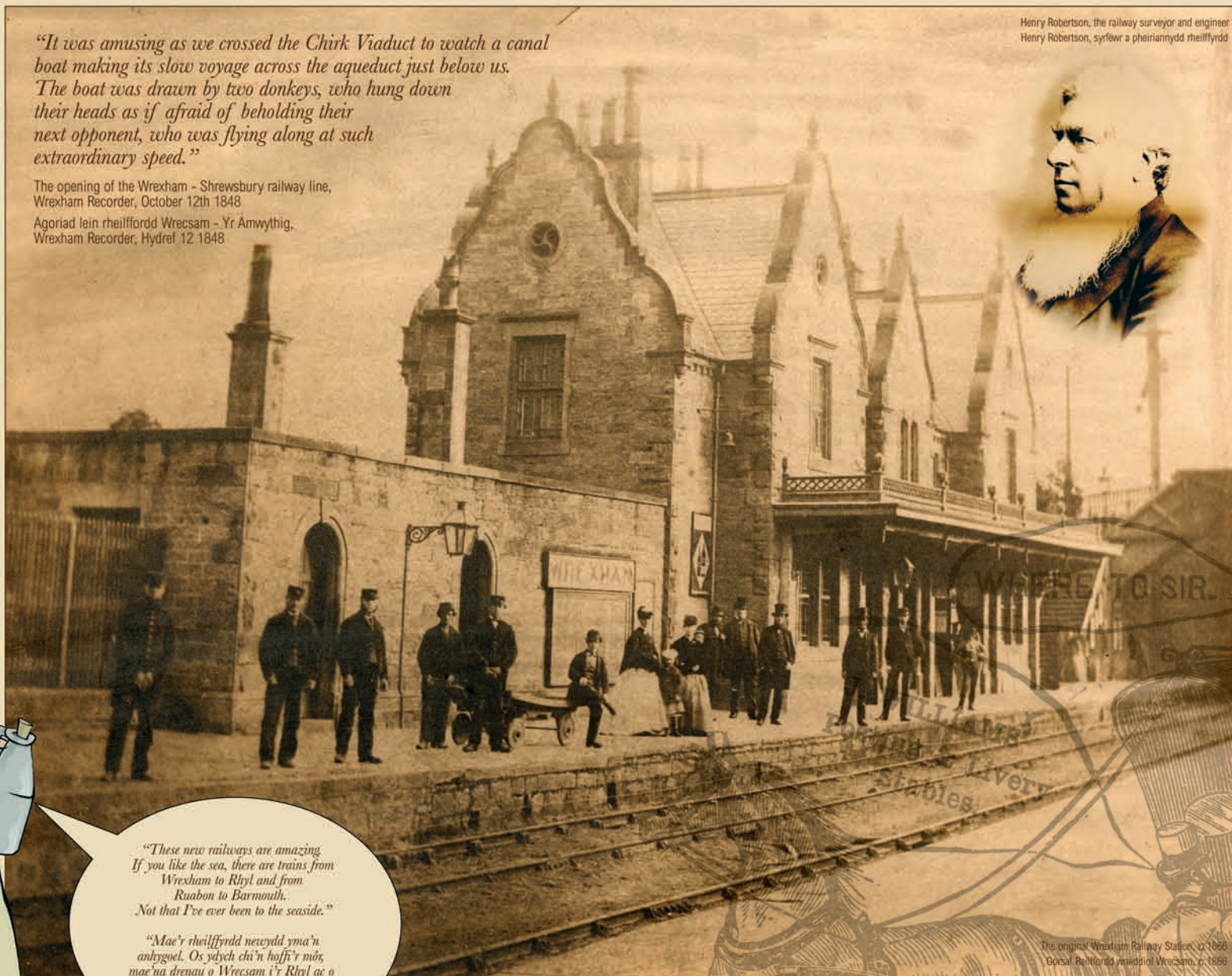
Roedd pobl Oes Fictoria yn credu'n gryf mewn cynnydd. Roedd y rheilffyrdd yn un o symbolau mwyaf pwerus y cynnydd hwn.

Yn 1842, anfonodd grŵp o fuddsoddwyr o'r Alban ŵr o'r enw Henry Robertson i Sir Ddinbych i chwilio am gyfleoedd i gychwyn busnesau. Sylweddolodd yn fuan sut y gallai'r rheilffyrdd drawsnewid yr economi leol. Yn ei farn ef, y flaenoriaeth oedd cysylltu'r pylau glo, y gweithfeydd briciau, teiliau a theracota a'r ffowndriau haearn gyda'u marchnadoedd, sef y dinasoedd llewyrchus yn Lloegr. Robertson oedd y syrfewr a'r peiriannydd i'r rheilffordd a adeiladwyd i gysylltu Wrecsam a Rhiwabon gyda Chaer yn 1846. Yn 1848, gwnaeth ei draphontydd yn y Cefn a'r Waun hi'n bosibl i'r trenau nwyddau cyntaf deithio i'r Amwythig.

Daeth y rheilffyrdd â newid i Wrecsam hefyd. Roedden nhw'n cynnig gwaith ac yn galluogi'r boblogaeth leol i deithio i lan y môr neu i'w mannau gwaith. Dibynnai melin anferthol Cobden ar y rheilffordd i gludo'r grawn iddi ac i ddanfôn y blawd yr oedd yn ei gynhyrchu. Prynodd datblygwyr y tir ar Bradley Road i godi tai ar gyfer gweithwyr y felin. Cafodd y strydoedd newydd eu henwi ar ôl arweinyddion y Gynghrair a wrthwynebai'r Deddfau Ŷd.¹

Collodd y ffeiriau blynyddol a'r masnachwyr teithiol a fynychai'r sgwariau ger Henblas Street eu gafael. Yn eu lle, agorodd siopau newydd a werthai nwyddau y gallai'r trenau eu danfon trwy gydol y flwyddyn.

¹ Y Deddfau Ŷd oedd yn cadw pris gwenith yn uchel trwy drethu mewnforion. Ymgychodd diwydianwyr yn erbyn y deddfau gan y byddai gwenith rhatach yn arwain at fara rhatach ac yn rhoi cyfle iddynt dalu cyflogau llai. Cafodd y Deddfau Ŷd eu diddymu yn 1846.



"It was amusing as we crossed the Chirk Viaduct to watch a canal boat making its slow voyage across the aqueduct just below us. The boat was drawn by two donkeys, who hung down their heads as if afraid of beholding their next opponent, who was flying along at such extraordinary speed."

The opening of the Wrexham - Shrewsbury railway line, Wrexham Recorder, October 12th 1848
Agoriad lein rheilffordd Wrecsam - Yr Amwythig, Wrexham Recorder, Hydref 12 1848

Henry Robertson, the railway surveyor and engineer
Henry Robertson, syrfewr a pheiriannydd rheilffyrdd



The original Wrexham Railway Station, c.1860
O'r saf. Rheilffordd wreiddiol Wrecsam, c.1860



"These new railways are amazing. If you like the sea, there are trains from Wrexham to Rhyl and from Ruabon to Barmouth. Not that I've ever been to the seaside."

"Mae'r rheilffyrdd newydd yma'n anhygoel. Os ydych chi'n hoffi'r môr, mae'n trenau o Wrecsam i'r Rhyl ac o Ruwabon i'r Bermo. Nid mod i fy hun wedi bod i lan-y-môr erioed."

