

JOURNAL

of the

Railway and Canal Historical Society

Vol. 10, No. 4.

July - September 1964

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THE LINK

By H. J. Compton

For boatmen who come up the River Thames and pass through Osney Lock at Oxford on their way to the Oxford Canal, there are two routes. One of these is to turn to port and pass under the G.W. Railway and then ring a bell for the swinging of the bridge over the now disused L.M.S. line, thence on to the Oxford Canal by working Isis Lock. Once upon the canal you pass on your way working up through Wolvercote Lock to Duke's Lock; here three miles above Oxford you pass the entrance to the second, longer and more picturesque route past Port Meadow and the Thames Conservancy locks of Godstow and King's. Immediately outside the top gates of the latter you turn to port and just before King's Weir turn very sharply indeed to starboard onto the Wolvercote Mill Stream. About 800 yards further on you come to the Duke's Cut on the left. This is 500 yards long, and, at a Stop Lock, joins the River Thames with the Oxford Canal.

In 1769 the Oxford Canal Company had secured an Act for making a canal from Hawkesbury near Coventry to Oxford, this being completed towards the end of 1789. Even so, no physical connexion had been made by the Company with the River Thames.

This was soon rectified, as the Duke of Marlborough constructed in the same year through his own land the short length of canal, now known as the Duke's Cut Branch, from just below Duke's Lock to the Wolvercote Mill Stream on a backwater of the River Thames, primarily to enable narrow boats to carry rags to his paper mill at Wolvercote. The main result was, however, that it made possible the movement of craft from the Midlands to London via the Oxford Canal and the River Thames. The financial benefit to the Oxford Canal was considerable as their total receipts for 1789 (£5,567) were almost doubled by that of 1790 (£10,697) and by 1796 the figure had risen to £25,880; but the junction had been effected without the approval of the Oxford Canal Company.

The Thames Commissioners for the Oxford - Cricklade District, who had been in financial straits for many years, managed to rebuild the lock at Godstow in 1790. Also, so that they could get tolls on all traffic passing on to or off the Duke's Cut via Eynsham or Godstow, they considered in the following year building a stop-lock 10' wide at the mouth of the Wolvercote Stream, but the proposal was not adopted.

The Duke's Cut was offered to the Oxford Canal Company in 1791 but was refused by them as they considered it would be injurious to their trade; but in the following year it was conveyed in Trust to the Vice Chancellor of the University of Oxford and to the Mayor of the City of Oxford, so that the matter could be settled at leisure.

There it rested until after protracted negotiation, a lease was signed on 30 August 1798 between the Duke of Marlborough and the Oxford Canal Company by which the Duke's Cut was transferred for 200 years to the company for an annual payment of £26. 9s. 1d. Later that year the Duke was paid £150 for rent and damage to his land incurred over the past nine years.

In 1791 Mr S. Simcock, Engineer to the Oxford Canal Company, reported to the Thames Commissioners that his estimate for improving the condition of the Thames Navigagtion between Fidler's Island and Godstow Lock was £936; the need for repairs is borne out by evidence given in 1793 to the Royal Commission on the River Thames when Mr Thomas Court, a bargemaster of Oxford stated that "The sill of Godstow Lock is laid too high, and the cut to the lock is not of sufficient depth, so that it is worse than before and more expensive. The towing path on Port Meadow is so bad we cannot use it, being obliged to tow on the Farmers Grounds; on the other side it is washed away in some places so much that small boats will go over it". It is hardly surprising therefore, that the Oxford Canal Company considered in 1792 the making of a connexion between their canal and the River Thames in Oxford itself, accordingly in 1793 they decided to construct Isis Lock, which was completed in 1796 at a cost of £686.

Rates for coal from the Midlands to Oxford and Eynsham via the Duke's Cut were identical in 1790, being about 1/6d per cwt.

To get a horse-drawn narrow boat through to the Thames via the

Duke's Cut it was necessary to take it to a point opposite King's Weir, tie up and then bring the horse round over a distance of three miles, which entailed going back along the Wolvercote Mill Stream and Duke's Cut, down the Oxford Canal to Wolvercote lock, through the village over Godstow Bridge and finally up the Thames towing path to King's Weir - all because of the absence of a roving bridge or horse ferry across the river at the junction with the Wolvercote Mill Stream.

The Wolvercote Mill in 1811 began to receive about 100 tons of coal a week to drive steam engines used in making paper and in 1856 when the mill was owned by the University of Oxford two narrow boats were purchased and plied in turn between the mill and Moira colliery on the Ashby Canal, until, refusing to meet the demands for higher wages from the boatmen, the owners sold them in 1916. The mill, however, continued to receive coal by water right up to 1950 when it was conveyed from Baddesley colliery on the Coventry Canal. Not only were the canal rates too high as will be seen from the figures given below, but the boatmen had suffered terribly from the hard winters, for instance in 1947 the Littlemore family in their returning empty boats were frozen up for three weeks just above Duke's Lock.

Canal 85/2 per ton. Rail 89/3 per ton. Road 83/11 per ton.

The Mill Stream has an average width of 42' and a depth of 4'6". For the 300 years up to 1943 the mill had been using water power to work engines used for beating and breaking pulp and rags. In 1869 it was using 254,000 gallons per day of which 4,000 gallons was returned as black liquid. This feature was taken up by the Thames Conservancy Board in their efforts to purify the water and in consequence settling ponds were constructed, but the problem was only really removed when rags were completely superseded by wood pulp. As there was no winding hole at the mill it was the practice for boats proceeding to the mill to be shafted down stern first from the junction with Duke's Cut.

Narrow boats trading between places above King's Weir and below Medley Weir on the River Thames up to 1928 used to travel via the Duke's Cut due to the shallowness of the Thames coupled with the fact that the sill of King's Weir was only 2'9" below water.

For this journey the Oxford Canal Company at the turn of this century charged 2/6d per boat and in recognition of the work done by their lock keeper at Duke's in this connexion he was granted a wage increase of 2/- a week in 1912 to which should be added his "perk" which he got from selling the grass he had cut along the canal banks to the boatmen who left their horses in his stable, now roofless, but still standing.

The stop lock (72' x 7') in the Duke's Cut Branch was originally built with four gates in a row, i.e. two pairs of two gates, one pair controlling the level and flow in each direction, thus enabling boats to pass through irrespective of the depth of water in either the Thames or the Oxford Canal. Today only one pair is visible and these have been renewed during the past five years. The paddle gear for one of the gates is enclosed in a metal box on the towing path which up to a few years ago

had an unusual spindle which required a special windlass having a circle with an inset niche. This special windlass was kept at either the lock keeper's cottage or at Juxon Street Wharf in Oxford, and in consequence pleasure craft avoided passing through the Cut, but since a spindle which can be turned by a normal windlass has been installed pleasure craft have increased; in fact in 1962 over 700 power driven craft used the Cut.

The Duke's Cut Branch to the Mill Stream and Thames has a towing path, except under bridge 232 which carries that for the Oxford Canal. The stop lock is, actually, under the iron bridge built in 1848 by the Oxford & Rugby Railway and widened by the Great Western Railway in 1900. 100 yards further on is the Ministry of Transport's bridge built in 1933/4 which carries the A40 Oxford - Witney Road. Otherwise the Duke's Cut passes through a rural setting of trees and fields and on the side opposite the towing path along the branch there is now a lake of some 200 square yards which was formed in 1960 after earth had been excavated to form the embankment for Oxford's Western By-Pass.

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The Author wishes to acknowledge the considerable assistance given by Mr C. Kingsley Belsten of Oxford and, in addition, the following: W.L.Murdock, Land Agent to the Duke of Marlborough, The Thames Conservancy Board, The British Museum, J.R.Henderson, Controller Wolvercote Paper Mill.

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N.B. Mr Compton asks for any information on the Carrington Canal.

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THE MIDDLEBERE PLATEWAY

By B. Baxter

In searching for relics of early railways, the student of railway history does not seek, nor will he find much material for his attention in the southern and south-eastern counties.

The industrial revolution which began in the closing years of the eighteenth, and developed rapidly in the first quarter of the nineteenth century, and as a result of which quite a network of tramroads sprang up in many parts of the country seems mostly to have been concentrated in the North and Midlands and also of course South Wales.

More probably the absence of coalfields or ironstone beds in most of the southern counties accounts for this. Sussex and Hants can produce nothing of interest, but the neighbouring county of Dorset had two examples. One of these, the Portland Railway, is well known. This railway, which obtained its Act of Parliament in 1825, was in part an inclined plane from the centre of the island to Castleton Quay and was still being worked by means of a winding drum cable as recently as 1939, when the line was abandoned.

The other line, which is the subject of this article, was older by about nineteen years. Dendy Marshall refers to it in his "History"² but refers to it as the "Corfe Castle Railway". This, in reality is rather a misleading title as, beyond the fact that it originated in the Purbeck Hills about a mile or so to the north-west of the village of Corfe Castle, this latter place had nothing whatever to do with the railway excepting that part of it lay within the parish of Corfe.

A more fitting and descriptive title would be the Middlebere Plateway. References are sometimes made to it as the Isle of Purbeck Railway but this was the title given to the narrow gauge mineral railway which succeeded it some sixty years later.

The district is an area of salt marshes and undulating heathland lying to the west of Studland Bay and to the south-west of Poole Harbour and bounded on the west side by the main road from Wareham to Swanage which passes through the village of Corfe Castle. On the western side of this road lie the Purbeck Hills and it is on a spur of these hills that Corfe Castle stands as an outstanding landmark which can be seen from afar and overlooking the whole area.

The best early description of the line is that given by Wm. Stevenson in his General View of the Agriculture of Dorset.³ Under the heading "Iron Railways" he states:

"A road of this kind $3\frac{1}{2}$ miles in length was made in 1806. It extends from the pits of Potters clay at Norden near Corfe Castle, to a place opposite Poole, where the clay is shipped for Liverpool.

The Iron Rails of which this road is composed are three feet long and five-eighths of an inch thick at the bottom, where the plate on which the carriage wheels run, is three and a half inches wide, with vertical edging three inches high on the side next to the horse path, and they weigh about 40 lbs each. The ends of the rails are supported on stones of 60-70 lbs weight in each of which is made a hole to receive an oak plug, to which the rails are fastened by means of a large headed nail driven between the contiguous ends, through a small cavity which is left for the purpose.

The declivity of the road is in some places four inches and in others five inches for every twenty yards, and the expense attending this work is stated by Mr Willis of Norden at about £2,000 a mile for new work. The clay is conveyed on small carriages with four iron wheels, carrying two tons each. Three horses draw ten tons to the seaside three times a day, at the expense of about six-pence a ton weight."

Other references to this railway are interesting and worthy of quoting. Thus, in Hutchinson's History of Dorset⁴:

"Plastic Clay - B. Fayle & Co. have works in Corfe Castle parish at Norden belonging to the Earl of Eldon. Clay raised here is

conveyed by a tramway, about three miles in length, laid with tram plates, which has been in existence for more than fifty years, to a wharf at Middlebere to be transferred in sailing barges of from 20 to 30 tons burthen for shipment at Poole."

Again, some twenty years later, C.E. Robinson writing of Middlebere says ⁵:

"Middlebere, whither runs one of the oldest tramways in England long used for the clay traffic from Norden."

The place at which the products of the clay pits were put on water was at Middlebere Quay, a point on a creek of Poole Harbour near Arne. The railway is shown on a map of Dorset contained in Hall's Travelling Atlas published by Chapman, Hall about 1847.

It will be noted that, according to Stevenson's account in 1812, ⁶ this was being shipped by seagoing vessels direct to Liverpool (whence, no doubt, much of it found its way to the Staffordshire Potteries) but, some fifty years later, Hutchins informs us ⁷ that shipment was being made to Poole (only) in small sailing vessels of 20/30 tons burthen whence presumably transshipment was made to larger ships. This appears to indicate that silting up of the Middlebere Creek was taking place and that the days of Middlebere Quay as a port of shipment were numbered.

In 1866, Fayles built and commenced to operate a new narrow gauge mineral line to a point on the River Frome at Ridge Wharf. The abandonment of the old Middlebere Quay would no doubt follow from about that date and with it of course went the old plateway.

This newer mineral railway, the Ridge line, was itself abandoned by the end of the second world war. By that time Fayles and Pikes (another neighbouring clay producing company) had amalgamated. Pikes' mineral line ran in an easterly direction straight to Goathorn Point. By about 1957 however, all transport of clay by rail had ceased in favour of road transport. Some time ago, the writer went over the course of the old plateway, the gauge of which had been given as 3 ft 9 ins. ⁸, and found much evidence of the existence of the route which can be traced for almost its entire distance of three and a half miles from Norden to the old quay at Middlebere. The general direction is north-easterly.

Commencing in the foothills on the west side of the main Wareham to Swanage Road at a point about half a mile away from the road, the old line ran in a cutting and passed under the road by a substantially built stone arch tunnel on which appears the inscription and date, B.F. 1807. The initials stand of course for the original owner of the line, Benjamin Fayle who first appeared in this district in 1795 and commenced his famous ball-clay pits, and the date on the stone, 1807, is an interesting confirmation of the date given by William Stevenson for the line. This part of the line, including the tunnel, is easily overlooked owing to dense foliage and undergrowth. Its actual position is about seven chains south of the present railway bridge on the Swanage line.

There is in existence at the Dorset County Records Office, a copy of a farm sale catalogue of Norden Farm dated 18 August 1838. A plan of the land included in this catalogue shows the "Rail-Road" from which it appears that there was originally a loop line at this point passing under the roadway by its own separate and individual tunnel. This tunnel, about four and a half chains to the south of the other one, can also still be seen. The purpose of this loop line is somewhat difficult to assess but, in view of the closeness to the claypits, it would seem to be that one road would be used for the despatch of loaded wagons down to the quay whilst, no doubt, the empty ones would be diverted to the lower, or southern branch of the loop to wait in a queue for their turn for reloading. At the present time, due to long years of disuse, both of the lines have developed into water courses.

At the eastern side of the road, the line curves towards the north and is crossed by the railway to Swanage. Near this point there was situated, according to the 1838 plan referred to above, the carpenters and smiths shops at Norden Heath. On the later six-inch Ordnance Survey map these are shown as "Clay Washing Pits".

North of the railway crossing, the plateway proceeds towards Langton Wallis and passes out on to the open heathlands. Near Langton Wallis the line crosses over a small stream, a tributary of the Corfe River, on a substantial embankment under which the watercourse was originally culverted. This has either been washed out or at some time removed to facilitate drainage and the point where the line originally crossed is now a ravine.

As one proceeds along, ample evidence that the line was a plateway is afforded by the several and many stone sleeper blocks still to be seen in the ground and occasionally the remains of a plate rail have been unearthed in places.

On Langton Wallis Heath slightly further north, the line makes a big sweeping curve eastwards passing through almost a right angle alongside the southern edge of Middlebere Heath, and in about half a mile further, curves slightly northwards again to resume its north-easterly course. This takes it to the eastern edge of Hartland Moor where there is a rock cutting of some importance extending several hundred yards and, upon emerging from this the line is crossed on a level by a lane leading to Slepe Farm.

Maintaining its north-easterly course the plateway skirts the salt marshes and upper reaches of the Arne Creek passing close by Middlebere Farm. This last portion of the route has now become merged into a roadway giving access to the farm. After passing the farm, the plateway turns once more to the east for the last quarter of a mile of its route before reaching the now derelict Middlebere Quay.

In the compilation of this article, the author gratefully acknowledges generous help and assistance afforded to him by Mr F.E.Dodman (Parkstone); Mr H.V.Johnstone (Reference Librarian, Poole Public Library); Miss M.Holmes

(County Archivist, Dorset); Mr A.G.H.Hopkins (Fircroft College, Birmingham); also Mr F.A.Ollett M.A. of Dorchester.

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Chapter xvi, Section II Iron Railways
4. History of Dorset Hutchinson. 3rd Edition 1961. p.95.
5. Picturesque Rambles in the Isle of Purbeck C.E.Robinson 1882. p.158
6. Stevenson *ibid*.
7. Hutchinson *ibid*.
8. Narrow gauge Railway Society Handbook No.1. W.J.Davies. 1957.

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PEAK FOREST CANAL AND TRAMWAY

by Brian Lamb

On a recent visit to Buxton Library and Museum to view the wheel, axle and sleeper stone from the Peak Forest Tramway, my attention was caught by the series of old maps of Derbyshire dating from 1805 to 1860.

In studying these I noted the routes of the Peak Forest Canal and Tramway; the Cromford & High Peak Railway and the Cromford Canal. The result of my observations, though by no means conclusive, are given below.

1805. E.W.Brayley. Engraved by G.Cole.

This shows and names the P.F.Canal and Tramway. The Cromford Canal is also shown but not named.

1805. Engraved by J.Cary

This shows the P.F. Railway only, though badly off the actual "as built" route. The route on the map is as shown on the attached sketch map from point 'B' (Bugsworth) to point 'D' due south of Peak Forest via north of Chinley, north of Chapel Milton to Sparrowpit at a point just north of the "Ebbing and Flowing Well".

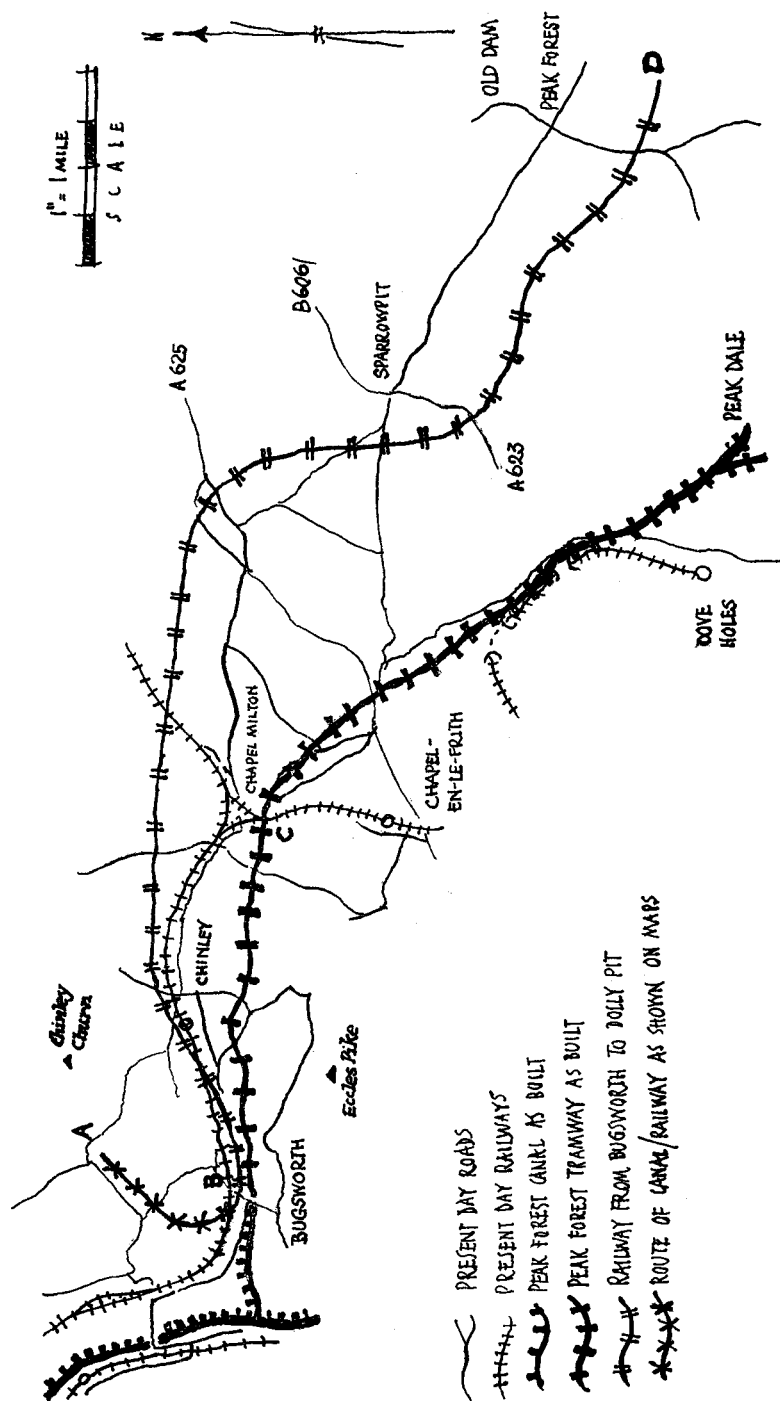
The Cromford Canal is shown and named.

1818. Engraved by John Cary.

This shows the P.F.Canal terminating at Chapel Milton (point 'C' on sketch map) with the P.F.Tramway from Chapel

PEAK FOREST CANAL & TRAMWAY

Route deviations as shown on various maps 1805 to 1860.



LAMB '63 H.E. JND 64

Milton to Peak Dale.

The Cromford Canal is shown.

1818. Thomas Dix.

This map shows the Peak Forest Canal as running all the way from point 'B' (Bugsworth) to point 'D', following the route as shown on the attached sketch map.

1830. Engraved by S.Hall.

This shows but does not name, the P.F.Canal and Railway; Also the Cromford Canal is shown but not named.

1860. Dower.

This map shows the Peak Forest Tramway only, the route following from point 'A' (presumably Dolly Pit) on the sketch map to point 'B' (Bugsworth) then continuing north of Chinley to Sparrowpit to point 'D' just south of Peak Forest. The stretch of line from point 'B' to point 'A' just north of the Bugsworth Canal Basin is quite feasible, as a branch of the P.F.Tramway did cross Black Brook and led to the top of the Lime Kilns just below St.James Church, Bugsworth; the tramway could then have run straight up past Bugsworth Hall to Dolly Pit. This, however, requires confirmation.

It is of interest to note that no canal is shown leading to Bugsworth.

The Cromford & High Peak Railway is clearly shown for the whole of its length.

The Cromford Canal is not shown and from this we must assume that Dower was a railway enthusiast and not a canal enthusiast!

As the Peak Forest Canal and Tramway were operative from 1797 for the whole of its length, with, of course the exception of Marple Locks which were operated by an inclined plane, the first two of the maps quoted are in conflict, even though the canal and tramway had been in operation for some eight years !

The map of J.Cary is more correct than that of G.Cole; Cary, did, however, in his 1818 map correct his route, though by so doing he still showed the canal terminating at Chapel Milton and not Bugsworth.

Thomas Dix in his map of 1818 appears to have assumed that the canal was a flight of fantasy only and proceeded to show its route as a railway though the route followed was that of Cary's map of 1805; he also adds the extra half mile at Bugsworth to Dolly Pit.

In Dower's map of 1860, despite the fact that the canal and tramway had then been operative for the whole of its length for some sixty-three years, the compiler appears to have thrown caution, and fact, to the wind and ignored the canal, and routed the tramway in accordance with Cary's map of 1805 !

From the foregoing we may assume that early engravers and cartographers played a game of follow-my-leader; and we can see who in this case the leader was - Cary !

The names of BUGSWORTH and BUXWORTH may appear confusing and it may be as well to explain that Bugsworth is the old name, whilst Buxworth is the comparatively modern name, having only been in use for some thirty years.

(The station name was changed to Buxworth on 4.6.1930 - Ed.)

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PRINCIPAL RAILWAY ACTS OF PARLIAMENT OF 1864

(continued from page 50)

by Geoffrey Webb

CANNOCK CHASE & WOLVERHAMPTON. Inc. cons. Burntwood (jcn Cannock Chase Colliery Co's Rly) to Wolverhampton (jcn G.W.R.) and Burntwood to Norton Canes (jcn Cannock Chase Extension Rly) (cap 312, July 29)

GREAT EASTERN. Cons. Liverpool Street to Tap Street; from Tap Street to Edmonton Stn with branches to North London Rly at Hackney Stn and at Navarino Road, with Northern & Eastern Rly at Cattle Pens and at Tottenham Stn, and with authorized Tottenham & Hampstead Junction Rly at Seven Sisters Road; from Hackney Stn to Walthamstow (jcn intended line to Highbeech Green) and from Copper Mill Stream (jcn N & E.R.) to Walthamstow. (cap 313, July 29)

LONDON BRIGHTON & SOUTH COAST. Cons. lines at Hrene Hill, Peckham, Brixton and Croydon; Croydon Central branch; from Lewes to Hamsey (jcn Uckfield line) and at Ford. Horsham, Dorking & Leatherhead Rly to be absorbed as from completion of rly. Horsham & Guildford Direct Rly, Bognor Rly, Brighton Uckfield & Tunbridge Wells Rly, Banstead & Epsom Downs Rly, and East Grinstead, Groombridge and Tunbridge Wells Rly may be absorbed. (cap 314, July 29)

METROPOLITAN. Cons. Finsbury Crescent to Trinity Square. (cap 315, July 29)

NEATH & BRECON. Cons. Maescar to Llangammarch and branch at Cadoxton-juxta-Neath. These lines not to be opened until six months after lines authorized in 1863. Co may make working agreement with Central Wales Railway. (cap 316, July 29)

PORTPATRICK. Caledonian Rly and L.N.W.R. may work line (cap 317, July 29)

PORTPATRICK. May run steam vessels Portpatrick to Donaghadee and Stranraer to Donaghadee, Belfast and Larne. L.N.W.R., G.S.W.R. and Belfast & County Down Rly may subscribe capital. (cap 318, July 29)

EXMOUTH DOCKS* Inc. cons. dock and branch rly at Exmouth. (cap 319, July 29)

MANCHESTER, SHEFFIELD & LINCOLNSHIRE. may run steam and other vessels from Great Grimsby to Rotterdam, Antwerp, Hamburg, Flushing, Lubeck, Stockholm, Copenhagen, Revel, Cronstadt, St.Petersburg and Konisburg. (cap.320, July 29)

METROPOLITAN DISTRICT. Inc. cons. lines completing Main Inner Circle and branches to West London Extension Rly. Interchange stns to be erected at Victoria, Charing Cross, and Earl Street, Blackfriars. No goods stn to be erected near London & Blackwall Rly but suitable works for interchange of passengers to be provided. Cos having London termini may run over line by agreement. (cap 322, July 29)

NORTH-WESTERN & CHARING CROSS. Inc. cons. Stanhope Street, St.Pancras (jcn.L.N.W.R.) to Charing Cross. Passenger stn to be erected at Hampstead Road and at junction of Euston Road with Tottenham Court Road. L.N.W.R. Charing Cross Railway and S.E.R. may work line. (cap 323, July 29)

TOOTING, MERTON & WIMBLEDON. Inc. cons. Merton to Streatham and branch Tooting Graveney to Wimbledon. L.S.W.R. and L.B.S.C.R. may work line. (cap 325, July 29)

ALDEBOROUGH PIER & RAILWAY. Inc. cons. rly and pier at Aldeborough. G.E.R. may work line. (cap 326, July 29)

BEMBRIDGE RAILWAY, TRAMWAY & PIER. Inc. cons. Brading to Bembridge Point with pier at latter place. Isle of Wight Rly may work line. (cap 327, July 29)

HOLYWELL. Inc. cons Greenfield to Holywell. L.N.W.R. may work line. (cap.328, July 29)

(concluded)

The following alterations should be made in previous entries:

- Cap 67: For "Bishop Aukland and at Dacre in parish of Stainton" read "Bishop Aukland and at Stainton in parish of Dacre"
- cap 142: For "connecting line to Mid-Wales Rly" read "connecting line to Central Wales Extension Rly".
- cap 188: For "CRICKHOWEL" read "CRICKHOWELL; and for "Crickhowel" read "Crickhowell"
- cap 190: After "MIDLAND & SOUTH WESTERN" add "JUNCTION" and after "North & South Western" add "Junction"
- cap 221: After "TOTTENHAM & HAMPSTEAD" add "JUNCTION"
- cap 273: (Lancashire Union, first line) for "Haith" read "Haigh".

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CRAWSHAY'S EMPIRE - THE CARDIFF TOUR, 9 and 10 May 1964

By H. Paar

Crawshay's was not the only name we met with on this tour, but there is no doubt that he was the predominant industrialist in the district covered. For two fine days, our coach fought its way leisurely up and down the Cynon, Taff and Rhymney valleys, and Mr Gordon Rattenbury guided us unerringly to the many tangible relics of yesterday's enterprises. His painstaking work earned our gratitude, for what a feast of techno-antiquity he presided over !

Two notable "last chances for viewing" occurred at Abercynon; the flight of locks on the Aberdare Canal, where it joined the Glamorganshire Canal, had suffered the first onslaught of the bull-dozer, and at Navigation, the Penydarren Tramroad terminus was about to be made into a bus station. At Hirwaun, we saw the impressive stone causeway carrying a tramroad over the Cynon to reach Crawshay's furnaces of which substantial remains were also to be seen, while the triangular tramroad junction near Llwydcoed relished us with stone blocks in plenty and a magnificent stone arch bridge across the river which rivals the Causey arch in Durham. Another fine stone arch was seen on the Penydarren Tramroad near Quakers Yard, and this spot provided much of railway interest, with the high and low level stations, the impressive great viaducts, shored up with massive latticed timbers against mining subsidence, the Penydarren line below, and Quakers Yard tunnel, all set in picturesque country.

Amongst the other places inspected were the Trevithick memorial in Merthyr, complete with specimen plates and blocks, the Penydarren iron-works site, an iron tramroad bridge at Roberts Town, the head of the Aberdare Canal, and traces of "The Doctor's Canal" at Rhydyfelin, while mechanically-minded members were delighted with an ancient beam pumping engine at the former Melin Griffith tin-plate works, driven by a water wheel and incorporating a double-throw crank working twin beams and pumps; long out of use and somewhat overgrown, it is nevertheless reasonably intact.

The incidental discussions which start spontaneously at intervals during these excursions are enjoyable features, and this one provided a choice variety - the definition of tramroad, railroad and similar terms, the technology of tramroads, the Quaker faith, the social conscience of the Crawshays, the temerity of authors, and many others.

As our coach made its way down to Cardiff at the conclusion of the tour, speed was reduced to a crawl behind a low-loader bearing a huge red-oxidized set of steelworks pincers some ten feet wide; one of our guests, a valleys railwayman for many years, confirmed that this and other similar "out of gauge" loads could be taken on the rail; looking back at the mile-long retinue in our wake, did we not hear Trevithick laugh ?

BLESS THE CARTOGRAPHERS !

By D. Garnett

"Even Swindon ! - Even Swindon !"

Would your head pop out of the window if you had heard this on your final trip over the Midland & South Western Junction line ? Yet a station by that name was so nearly a reality that no less respectable a cartographer than George Philip, founder of the business currently known as George Philip & Son, Ltd., actually showed it and named it.

PHILIPS' CYCLISTS MAP OF THE COUNTY OF WILTSHIRE was the reward for several pilgrimages to a little bookshop in Bristol, the proprietor of which was usually 'out'. The map, which measures 15" x 19" and folds into neat cloth boards $3\frac{1}{4}$ " x $6\frac{1}{4}$ ", is to a scale of approximately 3 miles to an inch. In addition to basic topographical information, it is over-printed with various letters and symbols; thus C means "Consul of Cyclists' Touring Club in that town"; H means "Hotel appointed and recommended by Cyclists"; X means "where machines may be repaired". An arrow with one pair of flights means hills to be ridden down with caution; one with two rows of flights, "Brake on" and three means "Dangerous - Dismount".

The map is undated but does not appear to be based upon the second Ordnance Survey of 1873 onwards, though it acknowledges that it is 'Reduced from the Ordnance Survey'. Probably it was extensively re-drawn in view of the considerable reduction. At any rate, tracks which it shows as "cross" roads are not designated "road" at all on the O.S. 1" Third edition of 1892 onwards.

By the dangerous process of dating the railways, it can be assumed that the map was published in about the mid 1880s. Thus the Highworth branch and the M.& S.W.J. line to Cirencester, both opened in 1883, are shown but the Tetbury branch, opened in 1889, is not shown.

Even Swindon - meaning Level Swindon or Flat Swindon - is to this day the area north of the Great Western main line and west of the Cheltenham Extension. There were houses west of the Rodbourne Road even in those days, but the map shows a road from the point where the Rodbourne Road passes under the Cheltenham line to a point immediately to the north of the spot where the road to Shaw and Lydiard Millicent crosses a small tributary of the River Ray. This is shown on current maps as a footpath. Even Swindon station was located at the point where the Midland & South Western Junction line crossed this road. Grid reference: SU 128850.

Search for an old Swindon resident produced Mr A.J.Bown, Chairman of the Swindon Education Committee. He remembers, very clearly, at the age of nine, being with his father on the site when the exact location of the station buildings was being discussed as an important topic of the day. He is now (March 1964) 67 so that would be about 1905 - much later than the map.

The odd thing is that the map does not show Rushey Platt station.

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RECENT LITERATURE

William J. Skillern

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- RUSH, R.W. and PRICE, M.R.C. The Garstang & Knott End Railway. 1964. (Oakwood Press 10/6)
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- WYNYARD, John Dams and canals. 1964. (Wheaton, 12/6)

ARTICLE

The Froghall-Utttoxeter Canal, by A.E.Dodd & E.M.Dodd. (In "North Staffordshire Journal of Field Studies", Vol. 3, 1963)

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BOOK REVIEW

THE SPRINGBURN STORY by John Thomas. Published by David & Charles, 30/-

Focussing a spotlight on Springburn, Mr Thomas sets out to show how this square mile north of Glasgow equipped the railway system. Within this area stood the works of the Caledonian and North British companies and those of two locomotive builders - Sharp Stewart & Co. and Neilsons - which were swallowed up in the North British Locomotive Co. in 1903.

Springburn-built locomotives have been familiar sights for many years, not only in Britain but all over the world, yet many people who can readily identify St. Rollox, Cowlairst, Atlas and Hyde Park works will not recognise them collectively as Springburn, in which case the sub-title "The history of the Scottish Railway Metropolis" will probably mislead them. Yet one is at a loss to suggest another title, for the story is not of locomotives only. We have the well-known Cowlairst incline at hand and the railway companies also built carriages and wagons in their works (although we read very little about them). Nor are we confined within the bounds of this remarkable square mile for, to name but a few digressions, we have the stories of the Edinburgh & Glasgow collision at Gogar in 1845, the fracture of Cardean's crank axle near Crawford in 1909, the great St Rollox trip to Carlisle in 1899 and other random recollections of Scottish lines, some of which are not closely connected with Springburn.

For all this fascinating and most readable material it is regrettable that some important developments at Springburn itself are missing. The circumstances in which Sharp, Stewarts, Neilson Reids and Dubs amalgamated to form N.B.Loco. - the largest locomotive manufacturing concern outside America - are but lightly sketched in and little is said of the decline of the great "combine" at a time when other locomotive builders were managing to hold their own. When one considers that the principal characters of the story are eminent Scottish locomotive engineers, with all the traditional characteristics, the decline seems particularly curious. What went wrong at Springburn? All sorts of explanations, credible if apocryphal, have circulated over the past thirty years and they are scarcely mentioned here.

We are left with the impression that Springburn is finished but this is not quite true. The reorganization of St. Rollox (to be renamed Glasgow Works) has been announced, there is the large goods depot at Sighthill and mention might have been made of the Cowlairst power signalling installation which superseded eight mechanical signalboxes a few years ago. Springburn may not be what it used to be, but it has a place of some importance on the rapidly-changing railway map.

One is inclined to question the author's sources here and there. We are told, for instance, that the L.M.S. high pressure locomotive Fury, built at Hyde Park and which came to grief on a trial run in 1930, "eventually emerged from the works" after reconstruction. This "emerging", however, happened at Crewe. And it seems most unfortunate that the name of Samuel Waite Johnson, sometime locomotive superintendent of the Edinburgh

& Glasgow and better known for his work on the Midland, should be spelled "Johnston" right through the book.

G. O. H.

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From the Warrington Guardian - 9th July 1864

SAILING OF A NEW SCHOONER FROM RUNCORN

On Tuesday last the new splendid clipper built schooner the "Charles Whiteway", 99 tons register, sailed on her first voyage from the port of Runcorn for Dublin under the command of Captain Charles Bowden with a cargo of 200 tons of salt. The vessel was recently launched from the shipbuilding yard of the late Mr Richard Brown at Northwich by whom she was built for Charles Hazlehurst Esq of Runcorn. We heartily wish her a successful career.

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From the Warrington Guardian - October 1st, 1864

RAILWAY ACCIDENT

On the 22nd ultimo, a carter in the employ of Mr W. Darbyshire, Morris Brook, cwing, he states, to the inattention of the railway gate-keeper, had to open the gate at Bradshaw's Lane between Latchford and Thelwall. While doing so, the wheel of his cart got on the soft sand and stuck so fast that it could not be extricated before the train leaving Manchester at 2 o'clock came up, notwithstanding the shouts and motions of the men. The engine struck at the cart and dashed it to pieces but the breaking of the shafts liberated the horse and probably saved the passengers from a serious accident.

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From the Warrington Guardian - October 12th, 1864

STEAM ON THE WEAVER

This important change in the mode of carrying salt down to Liverpool has been tried with every prospect of success both as regards economy of time and rate of carriage; and it is confidently expected that in a few

years, steam barges will almost entirely supersede the present mode of traffic as also render the Weaver what it ought to be - a recipient of general traffic as well as that of salt. The Weaver is undoubtedly capable of being a medium of communication with all the centres of canal traffic which have an outlet to the Mersey, whereby not only the Salt Trade would be benefitted but the value of property enhanced - the motive power in operation being steam; the new Docks at Weston Point will materially aid this development.

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LOCAL GROUP SECRETARIES:

LONDON: J.A.Hall, 123 Crescent Road, New Barnet, Herts.
 NORTH WESTERN: I.P.Moss, 224 Booth Lane, Middlewich, Cheshire.
 NORTH EASTERN: M.F.Barbey, 28 Hobgate, York.
 WEST MIDLANDS: J.H.Denton, Marchmont House, Church Rd., Codsall, Wolverhampton.
 EAST MIDLANDS: K.E.Spurge, 31 Elvaston Road, Nottingham.
 SOUTH WESTERN: D.Garnett, Pear Tree Cottage, Little Somerford, Near Chippenham.

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SCOTTISH CLOSED LINES

The following amendment should be made on p.5 of Scottish Closed Lines:
 Line 45. Closing date should be 1/2/1935

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At the meeting held in the Coalbrookdale Area on September 26th/27th, it was pleasing to note that Mr J.Horsley Denton was able to fulfil an excellent role as leader and organiser of the programme after his recent serious illness which has incapacitated him for some weeks past. All members of the Society will join in wishing him a speedy recovery to his normal good health.

Mr Denton's indisposition has inevitably caused some disruption in the regular production of the Journal. It is, however, hoped that things will return to normal within a very short time.

B. B.

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[Pages 69 & 70 do not exist]