

THE  
AERONIAN XP

JUNE  
2022

THE AERON VALLEY RAILWAY SOCIETY  
ENDEAVOURING TO ENTHUSE AND ENCOURAGE FOLK  
IN THE AERON VALLEY... AND BEYOND



Can you link  
this symbol  
up with an  
article  
inside?

SPECIAL  
OFFER

SEEK &  
YOU  
SHALL  
FIND

I  
N  
S  
I  
D  
E



Where is  
this structure  
and which  
article inside  
mentions it?

MAYBE NOT FOUND  
IN THE LAND OF NOD?  
BUT IT IS INSIDE!

B&Q

You can do it

You can do it -  
if YOU B & Q it!  
BUT  
What can  
B & Q NOT DO?



We helped  
Marc Brunel get  
through mud  
and silt in the  
early 1820s.



What publicity stunt performed  
during the first decade of the 20th  
century included this location?

FAKE

INSIDE?  
WHERE?

*BUS or HAIR-DRYER?*

**TAKE YOUR PICK**



## From your Editor

Some articles don't interest everyone.  
Different articles interest readers

to different degrees in different ratios. Maybe in the next issue those interest ratios could be much different. So, your Editor [whose responsibility is to provide a magazine every quarter, thinks [deciding on what to put in an issue] would AVRS readers find this of interest?

Your Editor is experimenting with  
12 AND 13 point Verdana fonts involving various articles.

**HOWEVER, *far more important* is the forthcoming celebration of Our Queen's Platinum Jubilee which the Severn Valley Railway is celebrating in a unique way with locomotive 70, [aka 34027 'Taw Valley'] in Bridgnorth yard on 14 April 2022. I am very grateful to Glynis Dray who took this photograph and Peter Hudson who approached this lady with my request for such a photograph.**



A Time to Celebrate June 13-17 2022





## Some Railway Byways in the Vale of Glamorgan [3]

[by T. B. Sands and reproduced from the December 1951 issue of The Railway Magazine with permission from Brenda Brownjohn]

Despite its impressive earthworks, the gradients on the surviving section are severe, starting at 1 in 108, just beyond Tyn-y-caeau Junction, and steepening to 1 in 80 for 1½ miles, round sharp curves into Pentyrch Cutting. The line then levels out past Pentyrch signalbox [photo below shows Pentyrch Cutting and the signalbox between Tyn-y-caeau Junction and Walnut Tree Viaduct - note the Barry Railway somersault signal] before dropping at 1 in 400



Walnut Tree (Garth) Tunnel  
South portal above.

spectacular lattice girder structure of seven main spans on massive brick piers, with a total length of 1,548 ft.



towards Walnut Tree (Garth) Tunnel  
496 yards] - North portal below.



From this tunnel the railway emerges abruptly, perched high up above the River Taff, which here flows through a narrow gap between precipitous and densely wooded hillsides.

This formidable obstacle is crossed by means of Walnut Tree Viaduct - a





a maximum height of 130 feet.

*Photos on the previous page are:-*

- [1] A general view looking north
- [2] Dolomite Works + beginning of the viaduct's demolition
- [3] Over 90% of this viaduct had to be demolished by hand because of the busy narrow gap which it crossed.

*[Why not look up more details about this viaduct?]*

Beyond the viaduct, the line enters a deep rock cutting, and then climbs at 1 in 81 for almost two miles up the eastern side of the valley to Penrhos Junction.

*[For more on the Barry to Penrhos and Junction section, then it is covered in two of the Editor's PowerPoint presentations - 'BY SUPER D TO BARRY ISLAND' and 'RAILWAY ALLSORTS' as shown to the RCTS group at Eastleigh in February 2022].*

The Rhymney Valley Extension of the BARRY RAILWAY was built solely for goods traffic BUT the surviving section is fully signalled and maintained,

*[ED:- Remember this article was ORIGINALLY written in 1951!]* and can be used for passenger traffic if needs be. From 1924 to 1935 inclusive, it was used by a Saturdays only train in the summer service - the 12.25 p.m. Pontypool Road to Barry Island - with its return working used a route *via* Ystrad Mynach, Caerphilly (*reverse*), Penrhos Junction and Tyn-y-caeau Junction to Barry Island.

In later years many other excursions *[especially on Summer Sundays]* used this route - like the

Rhymney to Barry Island excursion about to cross the

Walnut Tree Viaduct - see next photo.

Both the Barry Railway [Rhymney Valley Extension] and the Barry to Pontypridd line cross the path of the Llantrisant No. 1 branch of the former Taff Vale Railway [T.V.R.] -an obscure outlier of



that system which runs from Waterhall Junction to Common Branch Junction (Llantrisant), a distance of 7 miles.

Powers for this line were originally granted to the Llantrisant & Taff Vale Junction Railway [see tis seal - right] on 23rd July 1866,

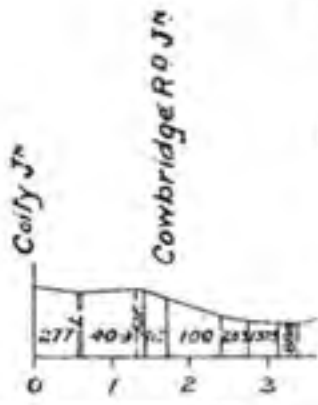


but were transferred in 1870 to the T.V.R., which eventually opened the line on 11th September 1866. It is a mineral line only, with severe switchback gradients and single line throughout worked on the train staff and ticket system. It has no physical connection with the Barry system at either point of crossing. Its main traffic is derived from the limestone quarries at Creigau, but ti is also used by a daily train to and from Cwm Colliery, north of Llantrisant.

The western 'tentacle' of the Barry Railway was a separate undertaking, incorporated on 26th August 1889 as the Vale of Glamorgan

Railway, and opened on December 1st 1897, with a main line of 20¼ miles from Barry to Coity Junction on the Llynvi & Ogmore section of the G.W.R.,





together with a spur of 33 chains from Cowbridge Road Junction to Bridgend Station (G.W.R.).

[see map on previous page and gradients alongside]

The Vale of Glamorgan was,

[5] many cuttings in the horizontal beds of lias limestone which are distinctive features through which the line is built as far as Southerdown Road - seem to impart a decided resonance to the running.

This line is double throughout, including the Cowbridge Road Junction to Coity Junction which is normally used for goods traffic only, which was reduced to single track under the G.W.R. regime, but has lately been restored as a double track.



A Cardiff to Swansea dmu has just come around the left hand curve alongside which is COITY JUNCTION with the double track line to Barry via Llanwit Major heading off in the centre background.

however, worked by the Barry Railway from the outset, and for all practical purposes formed part of the Barry system, but it remained a separate legal entity until absorption by the G.W.R. on 1st July 1922.

Nevertheless, it has physical features which mark it off from other Barry lines:-

- [1] its gradients are far more uneven.
- [2] suffers from much reverse Curvature.
- [3] Thus many speed restrictions of 40 m-p-h or less.



At what was known as Barry Town station, the line to Barry Island curved sharply to the left with a 10 m-p-h restriction whilst the Vale of Glamorgan line [to Llanwit Major and Bridgend] goes straight ahead soon to start the climb towards the next station, Rhoose, on a rising gradient of 1 in 226 which soon changed to a stiff 1 in 81 climb towards the 545 yard long Porthkerry No. 1 tunnel. This photo is of a coal





train for Aberthaw Power Station leaving Barry Sidings hauled by a 56xx 0-6-2T and banked by a 72xx 2-8-2T.

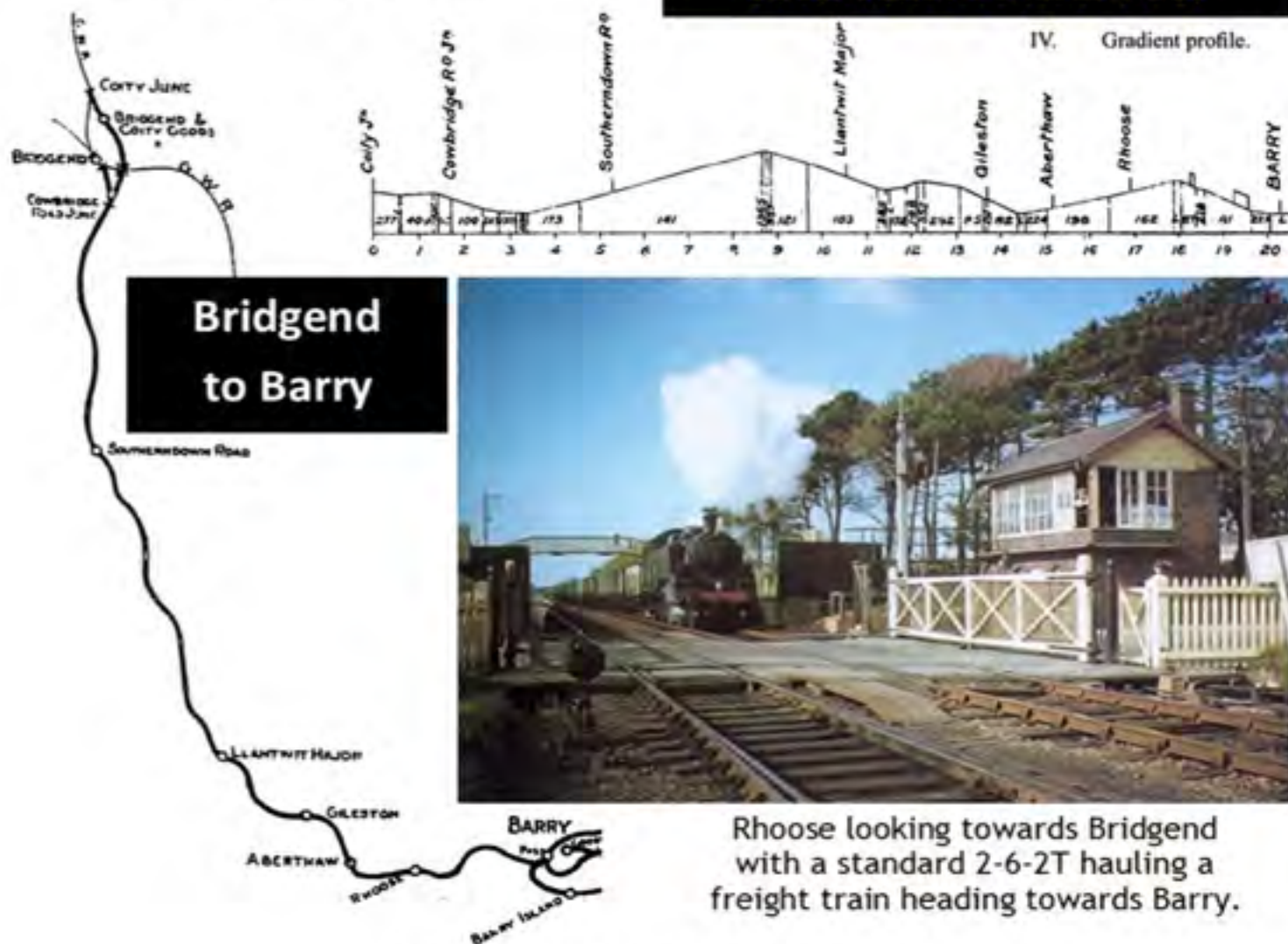


This climb continues over Porthkerry Viaduct [a fine well-proportioned structure of brick arches on limestone piers] spanning a beautiful valley not far from the sea - Bristol Channel. A good view of it can be seen from Porthkerry Park as well as looking down on it from the Barry to Rhoose coast road. It has 16 main arches and 3 approach spans, with a total length of about 1,125 feet and a maximum height of about 110 feet.



This photo shows a coal train with its class 66 locomotive using all its power to slowly cross the viaduct - quite noisy as the editor witnessed many times. Thus one wonders what the sound effect would have been with a steam hauled loaded coal train [sometimes with one loco at the front and one banking or two locos at the front] - where was Peter Handford?

**To be concluded in the next issue of THE AERONIAN XP**



Rhoose looking towards Bridgend with a standard 2-6-2T hauling a freight train heading towards Barry.

# P.S.

Your Editor came across this whilst trawling through some past railway magazines of the 1950s.

## CLOSING OF THE COWBRIDGE BRANCH

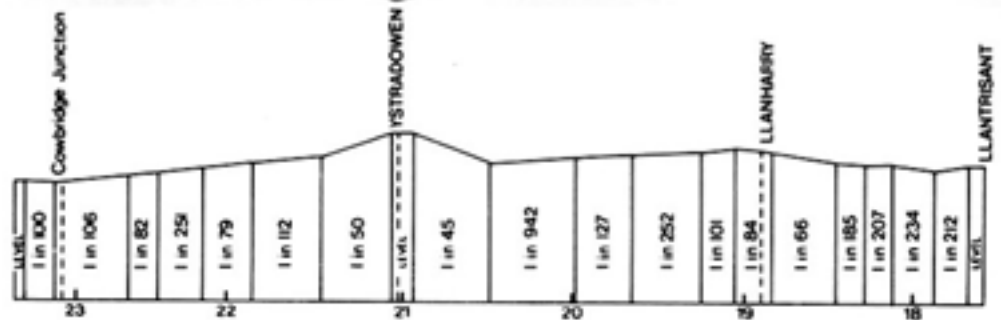
The passenger services on the Western Region branch from Llantrisant to Cowbridge were withdrawn on November 26th 1951. The stations affected are Llanharry, Ystrad-owen, Trerhyngyll, and Cowbridge. The extension of the branch from Cowbridge to Aberthaw was closed to passengers in 1930, and to goods traffic two years later, and has now been dismantled.



### Gradient profile

#### Cowbridge Railway

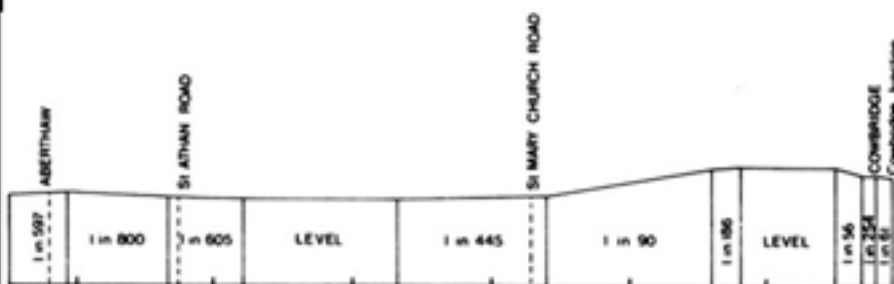
Cowbridge Junction to Llantrisant



### Gradient profile

#### Cowbridge & Aberthaw Railway

Aberthaw to Cowbridge Junction







### If only we'd known!

Above is 'Modified Hall' No. 6999 'Capel Dewi Hall' [87F - Oxford] with a dirty exhaust heading a Kingswear to Wolverhampton (Low Level) on August 7th 1965- just over a year since its moment of glory on 9th May 1964. It was withdrawn from 81F on December 1965 and was cut-up at *CashCCMores* yard in Newport, Gwent.

That moment of glory came when a High Speed Special using ex-G.W.R. 'Castle' class 4-6-0 steam locomotives were used on a western Region organised this 'Special' to celebrate No. 3440 'City of Truro's' 100 m-p-h run in 1904. For the London to Plymouth run [via the Berks & Hants line] 'Castle' class No. 4079 'Pendennis Castle' was selected. However, as the crew of 4079 were going for the 'ton' it failed with collapsed firebars near Lavington as it reached 96 m-p-h.

Continuing at a much lower speed it was replaced at Westbury by the only suitable locomotive there to haul a high speed train on westwards - 6999 'Capel Dewi Hall'. It's interesting to know that 6999 was in a good condition as it had left Swindon Works on October 24th 1963 after a Heavy Intermediate repair.

6999 was due to take this High Speed Special on to Taunton where one of several standby 'Castle' locomotives had been stationed in case of any breakdowns - at Taunton it was No. 7025 'Sudeley Castle'.

From Westbury to Taunton lay 47.2 miles of track with a locomotive that was not properly prepared for this run especially as it did not have the Ogilvie No. 1 coal [*from Ogilvie Colliery situated in the Bargoed Rhymney Valley, alongside the Brecon & Merthyr Railway's longer line from Brecon to Newport via Bargoed - both the colliery and the railway are no longer*] produced such a hot fire in 4079's firebox.

This part of today's Special [47.2 miles] was covered in 43 minute 14 seconds with an unprepared steam locomotive which is a fantastic piece of the journey and absolutely stunning!

[*See accompanying performance table*]

This amazing performance included a maximum speed of 86½ m-p-h on the short descent from Somerton Tunnel to Curry Rivel Junction. Between Keinton Mandeville and Creech Junction [a distance of some 20 miles] speed was never below 75 m-p-h!

One of the firemen that day was Brian Green who told ex-Western Region driver, Ted Abear that 4079's driver, Alf Perfect, was in tears at Westbury after 4079's mishap. However, off they set with 6999 and once they got the fire into a workable fire, it soon became abundantly clear that 'Capel Dewi Hall' was a '**goer!**' Thus both firemen got stuck into providing Alf Perfect [their driver] and 6999 '*romped away*' with its 245/265 ton train.

When the four men on 6999's footplate [*the driver, two firemen and Locomotive Inspector Bill Andress*] what a superb locomotive they were on, they decided to let Taunton know that they had decided that they didn't want to change locomotives there [*and thus continue non-stop to Plymouth*] in order to recoup the time lost as a result of 4079's mis-fortune earlier that day. In order to let Taunton know their feelings a note was thrown out [*weighed down with a lump*





of coal attached to it] as they passed through Castle Cary.

Fireman Brian Green also told Ted Abear that driver Alf Perfect was 'sitting feathers at Taunton about being stopped, and having to change locomotives'.

Many others [including your Editor] were also disappointed by what had happened.

**BUT** would have we have 4079 in this country in 2022?

**WESTBURY to TAUNTON**  
**"THE GREAT WESTERN" Special**  
**Saturday May 9th 1964**

Timed by J. R. Moore and D.W. Tuck

**6999 'Capel Dewi Hall'**  
 7 coaches 243 tons tare/265 tons gross  
 DRIVER: Alf Perfect  
 FIREMEN: D' Godden & B. Green  
 INSPECTOR: Address [Old Oak Common]

DISTANCE	LOCATION	Mins. Secs.	SPEED
0.00	WESTBURY	00 00	
1 45	Fairwood Junction Box	2 55	45
4 70	Clink Road Junction Box	6 58	56½
6 75	Blatchbridge Junction Box	8 57	65
10 85	Wiltham	12 50	61½
12 70	Brewham Box	14 40	55½
16 15	Bruton	17 54	71
19 60	Castle Cary	20 53	61*
21 70	Alford Hall	22 48	72/76
24 50	Keinton Mandeville	25 00	74
26 65	Charlton Mackerell	26 46	76/82
30 00	Somerton	29 19	79½
32 15	Long Sutton & Pitney	31 00	82
34 20	Langport East	32 27	85
35 25	Curry Rival Junction Box	33 11	86½
39 20	Athelney	36 05	79
42 45	Cogland Junction	38 35	77
44 75	Creech Road Junction Box	40 24	77
47 20	TAUNTON	43 14	



## 1921 LOCOMOTIVE BLOWBACK

In 1921 I was on the footplate of North Eastern Railway 4-4-0 tank No. 483 [see below for locomotive details] when a blowback occurred. The locomotive was coming to a stand beside a high wall. The blower was nearly off, and a full fire had just been built up with very dusty coal. The type of fire door on these locomotives did not completely close the opening, and before the blowback a swirl of mixed black coal dust and very dark red flame was clearly visible. This suddenly flared out as high as the cab roof, and continued until the fireman hurriedly opened the blower.

Although the cab of the tank locomotive concerned was small by the standards of the mid-1950s, there was plenty of room to avoid the flames and no-one was hurt. I retain a vivid recollection of this not very pleasant experience, however; the outstanding features were the part played by the coal dust and the cyclonic appearance of the deep crimson flames before the actual blowback. I was therefore surprised to see no mention made of coal dust in an Inspecting Officer's report on a locomotive blowback near Dunstable in April 1955 as mentioned in the February 1956 issue of 'The Railway Magazine.'

**AVRS EDITOR** [1] Has an AVRS reader got such a copy?

[2] Have any AVRS readers have any similar footplate that they'd like to share?



The information below is from the  
NORTH BRITISH RAILWAY STUDY GROUP.

Their website is extremely detailed and  
your AVRS Editor highly recommends exploring it!

The above tank locomotive was one of North British  
Railway class DO51 4-4-0 tank engines for suburban  
and country branch line passenger services. 30 engines  
were built at Cowlares during the period 1880-1884.

NBR nos 19, 33, 52, 60, 67, 72-79,  
98, 99, 101, 103-105, 109-111, 147, 174,  
225, 268, 294, 299, 316 & **483**.

**TRUE**

**or**

**FALSE**

In the 50s the blacksmith in the village, Llanfynydd, had a cattle truck that he used to also run a passenger service into Carmarthen on a Wednesday, the cattle market day. There were wooden benches he placed in the truck for seating. My father recalled a number of occasions when one, or more of the passengers had a calf to sell, the calves would be transported under a bench with legs tied to keep them relatively quiet. He also remembered an occasion when one got loose to cause a fair amount of chaos.

**Can any AVRS readers verify this incident?**





4498

**'Sir Nigel Gresley'  
as built with  
valences and  
single chimney**

- [1] A4 Pacific No. 4498 'Sir Nigel Gresley' differed from other A4 Pacific locomotives in that it had silver instead of the usual gold blocking to the transferred letters and numbers. Otherwise it carried the Garter Blue with black smokebox door and red wheel centres.
- [2] December 1938 saw 4498 entering 'THE PLANT' for general repairs. It left with new stainless steel Gill Sans letters and numbers as fitted to A4s 4488-92/5/6. Allocated to King's Cross Depot [now 34A], it was thought there that it was one of its most capable A4 locomotives.
- [3] Side valences were removed during the 1939-45 war to help with maintenance and [as with many other locomotives] repainted in a rather drab wartime black - as now in May 2022 running on the Severn Valley Railway.
- [4] DID YOU KNOW? In order to avoid confusion with air-raid sirens, 4498's chime whistle was removed.  
AVRS EDITOR: - did other A4 locos have their whistles removed?
- [5] Because in August 1943 4498 exchanged tenders with 4485, this resulted in the unusual scene of black painted metal numbers on the cabside and 'N.E.' in transfers on the tender.
- [6] Sometime in 1944 this locomotive was transferred from King's Cross to Grantham whilst in March 1947 4498 regained its pre-war Garter Blue livery with stainless letters and numbers, though its number became '7' as per the Thompson 1946 re-numbering scheme, whilst at nationalisation it became 60007.



6  
0  
0  
0  
0  
7





DATE	DEPOT
Nov '37	Kings Cross
Apr '44	Grantham
Jun '50	Kings Cross
Jun '63	New England
Oct '63	St. Margaret's
Jul '64	Ferryhill

**HOWEVER,**  
there is much more  
detailed  
information about  
this loco  
BELOW  
**PLUS** The **LNER SOCIETY** website  
which the AVRS Editor  
highly recommends that you explore!

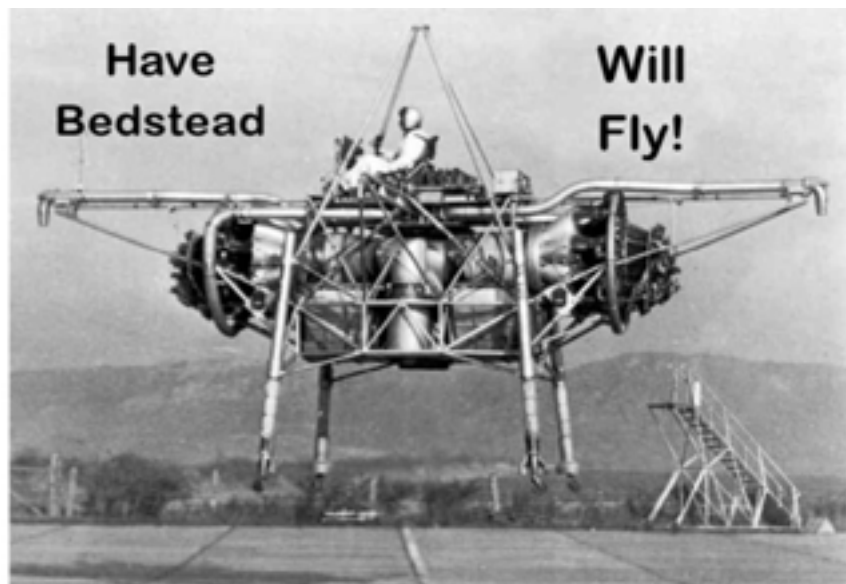
### MORE ABOUT 4498 (60007) 'Sir Nigel Gresley'

DATE	WHAT HAPPENED
3rd Jun. '56	Hauled Royal Train from Kings Cross to York with our Queen aboard
23rd May '59	The first UK train [ <i>Stephenson Locomotive Special</i> ] with a booked or advertised schedule of 100+ m-p-h achieved a post-war record for steam power of 112 m-p-h - see photo of locomotive plaque
1964	A4 Preservation Society formed [ <i>more on their website</i> ]
1966	60007 'Sir Nigel Gresley' saved Overhauled at Crew Works. Given wheels from 60026 [ <i>'Miles Beevor'</i> ] as these were in a better condition.
1967	Returned to steam running as 4498 in LNER Garter Blue.
	After several railtours in 1967, it was kept at Philadelphia [County Durham]
1977	Then kept at Carnforth
After 1977	There are several websites which will give the ongoing history of 4498



Plans are being drawn up to capitalise on the scenic value of the HEART OF WALES line in the 2023 summer with a tourist HST service. Here's a service '*Blue Peter*' made earlier!





The **Rolls-Royce Thrust Measuring Rig (TMR)**, was a pioneering **Vertical Take-Off and Landing (VTOL)** aircraft developed by Rolls-Royce in the 1950s. It was an experimental aircraft that was first flown on August 2nd 1954 and used in the early development of **VTOL** aircraft.

It has the distinction of being "*the first jet-lift aircraft to fly anywhere in the world*".

The design of the TMR is unique. It was powered by a pair of Nene Mark 4 turbojet engines, which were standard Sea Hawk engines modified only by an air bleed system that allowed 10% of the engine compressor air to bleed off for the control systems of the rig. These engines faced in opposite directions to each other at the ends of a tubular construction; the efflux from the jet pipes - a central one and a bifurcated one from the other engine - was turned downward through 90°.out vertical flights. First flying on 2nd August 1954 - but see later, extensive studies were to a greater understanding of the level of power and appropriate manners of stabilisation involved in a VTOL aircraft, as well as

proving the feasibility of the concept in general.

Two 95-gal fuel tanks were fitted under the engines and the whole rig supported by four hydraulic oleo legs. A platform across the structure above the engines had a seat bolted to it together with a conventional type control column and pedals that operated control valves from the engine compressor air bleed system collector box. The TMR was controlled by bleeding air from the engine through the control valves to diametrically opposed pipes, each equipped with a nozzle that could swivel 30° in either direction for turning the rig left or right. The control valves were also interconnected to the control column so that movement of the column would restrict the flow of air to the nozzles, thereby reducing the thrust and so controlling which direction the rig would go.

The thrust-to-weight ratio of the rig was critical: any vertical take off (VTO) aircraft must have a engine thrust that's greater than the total weight. The latter was minimized so as to keep within a 25% thrust advantage. Each engine provided a thrust of 3,850 lb, which, added to the 325-lb thrust from each of the bleed nozzles, gave a total available thrust of 8,350 lb.

This compared with a total weight for the rig, complete with pilot and full fuel tanks, of 7,196 lb. Handling improved as fuel was consumed; total running time was about 15 min.

The first rig, called XA314, made an initial ground run on July 3, 1953, before first attempting to lift off the ground on July 6, piloted by wing-commander Harvey Hayworth, Rolls Royce chief test pilot. The rig lifted only to the full extent of the hydraulic oleo legs so that the wheels did not actually leave the ground. During these early days of testing, it was felt that for



safety's sake the rig should be tethered; consequently, a large gantry was built and cables attached to either side and above the rig from cable drums built into the gantry were made for the first free flight.

After 20 hr testing the rig was withdrawn on November 19, 1953 for extensive modifications and overhaul inspection of the engines.

The first free flight took place on August 3, 1954, and was piloted by Capt. Ron Shepherd before a distinguished audience. The rig rose slowly into the air and was held steady in a hover attitude. It then moved forward, made a circuit of the test area was made, and demonstrated sideways and backwards movements before successfully landing.

During the next four months a number of free flights were made, all at a height of 13–15 ft but one flight was made up to 50 ft to ensure that there was no ground effect influencing the rig.

The final flight took place on the December 15, 1954. The rig was then transferred from Derby to Farnborough.

A second rig, the XA426, was built and first flown on October 17, 1955. It conducted extensive tethered flying for 12 months before its first free flight on November 12, 1956. This rig crashed a year later on November 28, 1957, killing the pilot. Testing of the TMR subsequently ceased at Rolls Royce.

#### PHOTOS:

TOP & MIDDLE - Crashed Flying Bedstead

BOTTOM - As displayed in the Science Museum



**EDITOR'S TRANSPORT FILL-INS** Honk if you love peace and quiet.

*"Don't stop me, I'm going to buy a car." "Why the rush?"*

*"I've just found a parking space."*

*"If I register my car n France, do I have to change the steering wheel to the other side of my car?"*

**CAR TOWING COMPANY** - "We don't charge an arm and a leg - we want tows."

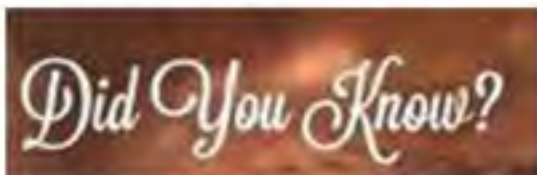




Interestingly the **Bell Aerosystems Lunar Landing Research Vehicle (LLRV)**, nicknamed the **Flying Bedstead** was a Project Apollo era program to build a simulator for the Moon landings. The LLRVs were used by the FRC, now known as the NASA Armstrong Flight Research Centre, at Edwards Air Force Base, California, to study and analyse piloting techniques needed to fly and land the Apollo Lunar Module in the Moon's low gravity environment.

The research vehicles were vertical take-off vehicles that used a single jet engine mounted on a gimbal so that it always pointed vertically. It was adjusted to cancel 5/6 of the vehicle's weight, and the vehicle used hydrogen peroxide rockets which could fairly accurately simulate the behaviour of a lunar lander.

**WHY NOT look up extra information on the Internet?**



That when I took over the Editorship of the AVRS I gave it the unique name - **THE AERONIAN XP** and discussed with the Chairman its contents and it was agreed that as well as railway related articles that other transport related articles could be included.

## Have I heard this before?

As one lorry driver was driving along, he came across the following road sign. Before the driver knows it, the bridge is right ahead of him, and he gets stuck under it in a similar way to the accompanying photo below!



Finally the police and Network Rail arrive. The policeman, puts his hands on his hips and says, "Got stuck?" The lorry driver replies, "No, officer. I was delivering this bridge and I ran out of fuel."



Is this **POULTRY IN MOTION**  
by Johnny Tillotson?

## **DID YOU KNOW?**

Western Region 'STAR' class 4-6-0s (which previously had been allowed to work over the ex-Southern Railway Plymouth to Exeter line only in an emergency) have recently [December 1951] been regularly running on this route.



This year continued the downward trend in the fortunes of London Transport that had been experienced in 1955 - even though the drop in passenger numbers was not as considerable as in 1955 but nevertheless it was still on the slippery slope.

At the end of 1956 the Suez crisis lead to fuel rationing was imposed which meant a sudden increased demand for public transport which LT was able to meet thanks to a sizeable reserve fleet of vehicle available. However, LT was required to achieve a 5% reduction on fuel use. However this was 'balanced' by the minimum fare increased from 2d to 3d.

Vehicle-wise this year saw a further drop in the total number of buses and coaches owned. Entering passenger service in the year under review were



RM1 [above] and six RTs [4787 - 4792]. RM1's entry into service was a great event and thus for the first time the public could experience the rumble and sound of an AEC Routemaster engine and its interior décor. Its allocation to Cricklewood garage [code - W] and its duties involved a mileage of 1,000+. The six RTs were brought of storage at Loughton garage [code - L] - see next column. Thirty STL class buses [that had been



Loughton garage in the 1970s



withdrawn a few years earlier] were disposed of - see STL 469 above.



All 120 Craven-bodied RTs were withdrawn from service with 95 sent to Bird's at Stratford-on-Avon.



Many were snapped up by Dundee Corporation - see *previous page*]



8 TD vehicles were withdrawn in 1956 - two seen above at Edgware Station on route 240A - all but one disposed of by the end of that year.

A further 32 T class vehicles [made up of vehicles withdrawn during 1956 and earlier. T792 above]

1956 celebrated the centenary of the London General Omnibus Company with events being held during London Bus Week (16th - 21st July) - a parade was held in Regents Park on July 16th and a line-up of historic vehicles on Horse Guards Parade on 21st July. It was said that in 1956 these vehicles were 'hidden' away at Reigate garage [coded - RG - an early photo of this garage is shown below. Were any of these vehicles at that 1956 event?]; thus their appearance caused a lot of excitement and interest!



### **From the Kirby Muxloe Village website**

The Leicester - Burton line was complete in 1859 when the station was rebuilt and named Kirby Muxloe Station. The number of passengers continued to rise along with the number of trains.

The first class carriages were occupied by professional and business men whilst the guards van, that smelt of fish, was left for the schoolboy season ticket holders.





-GET ME TO THE CHURCH ON TIME!

To get to a wedding in the 1840s, a former seaman-turned grocer used the Stockton and Darlington railway line to South Stockton.

But instead of using a tandem as illustrated, he used an old carriage fitted with a mast and a sail.

Thus he travelled the four miles **BUT ONLY** when the wind was right and there were no overbridges.

The round trip could have been a record for sail railway operation.

During the Olympics, at Victoria Underground Station, the station announcer's "Stand behind the yellow line" before each train departed was replaced by "Ready, Steady, Go!"



Which AVRS Committee Member said "I've done my good deed for the day."

*I saw our Editor going for the 8 o'clock bus and he looked as if he was going to miss it, so I let our dog loose and our Editor caught the bus. - just in time!"*



When two certain AVRS Committee members met!

"Do you believe in free speech?"  
"I most certainly do!"  
"Splendid! May I use your telephone?"

**SUPPORT YOUR SOCIETY ALL WAYS ALWAYS**



PEGGY ARMSTRONG [of 'HEARTBEAT' fame played



by GWEN TAYLOR  
in on the right]  
took her 1937  
Austin Goodwood  
to the garage for an  
oil change.



After the mechanic had briefly inspected  
under the bonnet, he turned to Peggy and said,  
"If I were you. I'd keep the oil and change the car!"

### Choppers to the rescue!

On October 23rd 1981 a pair of  
class 20 diesels (20 022 and 20 214) took  
over the 15.07 Plymouth to Manchester  
from a class 50 at Gloucester.

Good time was made from there to  
Bromsgrove, but these two class 20s  
almost found the Lickey Incline too  
much for them. Their ascent was made

at about 10 m-p-h to the accompaniment of a tremendous exhaust  
sound; and on arrival at Birmingham (New Street) No. 20 022 was seen  
to be issuing clouds of smoke from a traction motor!



**LOST 7 MINUTES!** A station pilot was also a standby loco in the event



of a failure, there is the story of a Castle  
class loco failing at Pontypool Road  
station with a hot box, the only  
replacement loco available was the pilot,  
an GW mogul, [AVRS Editor - *could it  
have been 5322 - shown here - or 7325,  
both now preserved ex-GW moguls  
were allocated to 86G, Pontypool Road  
depot?*] the two engines were quickly  
changed and the train set off for

Hereford [via Llanvihanagel bank beyond Abergavenny],  
with half the power it only lost 7 minutes on the booked time (!!),  
before being replaced by one of Hereford shed's Castles.

**LOOK!** Exploring the CORNWALL RAILWAY SOCIETY website awaits YOU!





**Note quite the Hybrid System of 2022!**

1914 Tilling Stevens petrol electric single deck omnibus. This *ungainly vehicle* was said to be the first motor-omnibus to run in Birmingham. It was eventually abandoned as being as being *'a little before its time.'*

**INTERESTINGLY YOUR EDITOR FOUND THIS in the 1950 Ian Allan ABC of SOUTHDOWN Buses & Coaches.**

**PETROL-ELECTRICS**

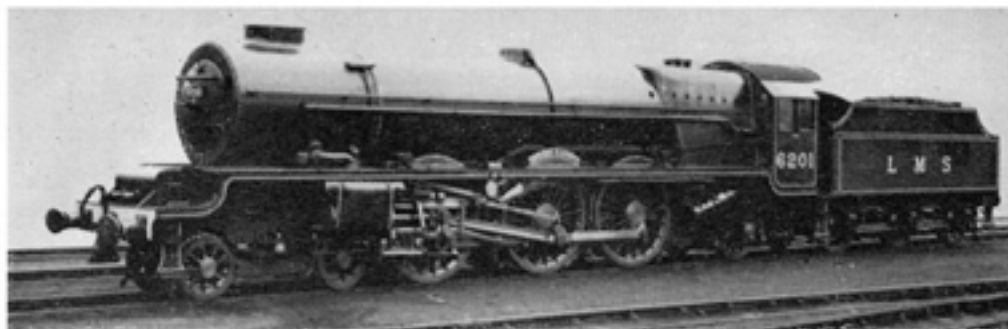
An interesting chassis of early days was the Tilling-Stevens petrol-electric.

The electrical equipment consisted of a dynamo directly coupled to a 4-cylinder petrol engine which supplied current to the motor which, in its turn, drove the back axle through the medium of a cardan shaft and worm gearing. The output of the dynamo could be reduced to practically zero by lowering the engine speed on the throttle and inserting a resistance in the field winding of the dynamo by means of a resistance lever. As this lever was pushed forward, a drum in the resistance box gradually cut out each resistance unit, by short-circuiting the contacts until full dynamo field was obtained.

The motor could be reversed by changing the direction of its field current by means of a controller operated by a lever on the steering column - it had three positions:-  
Forward, Neutral and Reverse.

This make of chassis continued in *SOUTHDOWN* service until 1932, with improved models reaching a total of 105 by 1926. Later models were fitted with heavier front and rear axles, and in the last of them a new type of engine was introduced. They were fitted at first with solid tyres and converted to pneumatics in 1925-6.

Alongside is a photo of the original appearance of Stanier's second Pacific [No. 6201 *Princess Elizabeth*] with stovepipe double chimney, top-feed but no dome, and a Midland-type tender.



**DON'T FORGET**

To read the FREE Internet magazine - **RAILTALK**





## DID YOU KNOW?

When enemy action in 1942 put electric services on the Waterloo to Alton line out of action, M7 loco No. 249 was one of that class that took over.

Alongside is M7 No. 30055 about to leave Alton with a last train over the Meon Valley line - a cross-country railway in Hampshire, England, that ran for 22¼ miles (35.8 km) between Alton and Fareham, closely following the course of the River Meon.



being sought by the police for possible involvement in a robbery. It was the dead of the night and 6422 was in steam in the yard.

The hijacker explained to the signaller controlling the shed's exit road that he was taking the locomotive to Worcester [85A] maintenance purposes. The signal was given and the locomotive set off passing from section to section and reportedly taking on water at

## THE TIMES

The hijack of the locomotive 6422 [seen above with the Dudley Dodger auto-train was taken at Birmingham Snow Hill station in 1936 - well before the story of the hijack mentioned below] was reported in the above newspaper on 26 January 1961.

This is the text of the article:-

It was January 1961 when 64xx 0-6-0PT was hijacked from Wolverhampton (Stafford Road) locomotive depot [84A]. The culprit was a former fireman who was



Stourbridge Junction - above.

Alas - *maybe*, the end of the run came when 6422 was abandoned at Droitwich.

# WANTED

## Your article 4 this magazine!

**DEADLINE** Saturday August 6th



## Toodiloo

BAKERLOO LINE

## Bakerloo?

In an early December 2021 free newspaper, it said that a whole London tube line could be closed? [mothballed?]. The London Mayor warned that this could happen if the government failed

to provide with much needed cash.

On Saturday December 11th 2021 an emergency funding deal for TfL [*Transport for London*] was due to run out; this caused thoughts that the Bakerloo line could be mothballed unless there was a new injection of cash.

Passenger numbers had dropped by 95% in the pandemic and numbers on the Tube were still 65% of normal.

This was said to be due to many commuters not travelling to their places of work 5 days a week and thus working from home.

Tourism, affected by the pandemic also contributed to that 65%.

Without the necessary funding for TfL, it was estimated that bus services would have to be reduced by one-fifth with Tube services needing to be cut by almost 10%. This would result in 100+ bus routes being withdrawn and reduced timetables for the Tube *plus* the already mentioned of TfL possibly closing a whole Tube line.

So - can an AVRS reader tell us what the outcome was?

Do you have a friend who you know would benefit from a complimentary copy of this magazine? Then why not ask our Chairman to do so.

## Which AVRS member's wife is getting the V.I.P. 'red' carpet treatment?



## **CHAIRMAN'S CORNER**



After a relaxing Sunday afternoon and 6 cups of coffee, our esteemed Chairman's thoughts turned to what he wrote on page 2 of the March issue of this magazine.

SO to save you wondering where your *better half* put that copy, here are those thoughts!

I think that my request for £7-50 for a year's POSTAL subscription for THE AERONIAN XP is about right. Anyone receiving their copy by e-mail might like to make a voluntary donation to the AVRS funds which will be gratefully received by our Treasurer [Leslie Mowbray] - see back page.





Joseph  
[Joe]  
Duddington

6th August 1876  
To  
3rd April 1953



**Doncaster**  
**Free Press**

The DONCASTER FREE PRESS launched a campaign to support a memorial in February 2021, after the Friends of Hyde Park Cemetery group discovered Joe Duddington lay in an unmarked grave - *above left*. They made the discovery when they asked where his grave was in the cemetery, which they help look after. Joe was the driver of Mallard on its famous record-breaking run on July 3, 1938, after being hand-picked by the famous railway engineer Sir Nigel Gresley as an experienced and trusted driver. A stone was carved earlier as a memorial to the iconic Doncaster train driver who broke a world speed record in the 1930s. Joe retired from the LNER in 1944, and died in April 1953, aged 76 at Dunscroft, near Doncaster. He lived around the Hyde Park area throughout his life, but later moved to Dunscroft, living on Broadway.



Lynsey Slater of the Friends of Hyde Park Cemetery, which raised over £5,000 for a memorial, supported by a campaign from the Doncaster Free Press, said in 2021:

*"We hoped to be able to unveil it on the anniversary of the run itself in July, but obviously Covid restrictions were so up in the air until such a late point in the summer. So we opted to just push it back to the autumn so we didn't end up in a situation of having to cancel everything last minute."*

**REMEMBER THIS WAS WRITTEN IN A 2021 NEWSPAPER OF THIS EVENT**

The family will be arriving to have a private viewing of the grave at 11am, with the general event to start at 12 noon. This will feature short speeches, from members of Joe's family, Doncaster MP Rosie Winterton and a dedication of the grave by the Reverend of St James' Church. The Friends Of Hyde Park will then give short guided walk of the cemetery for anyone interested featuring some interesting railway graves and stories from the cemetery.

Lynsey added: *"The supporters of the Free Press were absolutely massive in us getting that funding so quickly."*



*As a group we've been working on this for going on a year. Now there's actually going to be physically something there. There will be representatives there from the lots of organizations that donated to it as well. We had trade unions, the LNER, and The Railway Museum, fans of the band Big Train all over the world and many more. The band's song East Coast Racer is about Mallards record breaking run, among others - so it'll be a nice mixture of visitors.*

*We want everybody that read about it in the Free Press to come to see what they helped to create. We would never have been able to have done what we've done without such an outpouring of support. It was really overwhelming."*

Visitors attending the event are invited to head to the main entrance of the cemetery on Carr Lane. Limited free car parking will be available along Carr Lane, with additional parking available at St Leger House on Carr Lane. At the entrance to the cemetery visitors will be directed to the grave site.

### **OF COURSE**

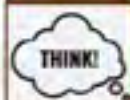


It must be remembered (and appreciated) that Mallard's speed record was a footplate crew effort - Driver Joseph (Joe) Durrington and Fireman Tom Bray. Both are seen here inspecting the instruments that recorded that world speed record.

The photo below is of Tommy Bray memorial, whose ashes were interred at Rose Hill Crematorium in Doncaster; he also has a new headstone as his resting place was lost.

### **AND**

There's plenty more information on the history of MALLARD on the Internet and many sources of railway literature.



**HOW CAN YOU SUPPORT THE AVRS?**



**AUGUST**  
**1966**

## A curious premature experiment?

Under the auspices of the *CHANNEL TUNNEL COMPANY* a special nine-coach test train [including *DM395001 Mobile Laboratory No. 1 - a Lancashire & Yorkshire Saloon - now preserved at the MIDLAND RAILWAY CENTRE*] hauled by D1996 - to later become Class 47 diesel-electric locomotive - was given complete possession of both single line Standedge tunnels [*BUT NOT the double track one*] between 10.00 and 16.00 on June 13th 1966 for obtaining measurements of air pressure and wind speed to help determine the size of locomotive required for 'chunnel' operation.

In this connection 31 ventilating ducts were sealed off, the train passing through at speeds varying between 35 and 55 mph. D1766 was subsequently used in further tests which lasted up to June 16th.

It is reported that further test are likely in which the speed will be increased by stages to 90 mph - probably with Deltic haulage.

### By car to the top!

As publicity stunts go, this 1911 stunt to drive a Ford Model T down Ben Nevis takes some beating. Henry Alexander Jr, the son of Scotland's first Ford dealer, drove the Model T down the Britain's highest mountain to help show how a massed produced American car was superior to hand-crafted British ones. The attempt, made in strong winds, hail and snow, was successfully completed. Volunteers carried wheels, seats and the chassis. Other parts of the car were put into 40 bags weighing 10 pounds (4kg) each. After being



reassembled on the summit the car was again dismantled for the descent.

AVRS EDITOR'S NOTE - There are a few accounts of this stunt with some having interesting variations!



This railway was modernised and re-opened to passengers on 16th April 1980. Do you know the 'nickname' by which it is known and where one can travel on it?





### "BULLDOG" 4-4-0s

#### 3453 'Seagull' & 3454 'Skylark'

It was reported in the January 1952 issue of *The Railway Magazine* that

the last two of this class were withdrawn just after the beginning of 1952. moved from Reading to Swindon during the week ending November 10th 1951. A few days later they were noted uncoupled from their tenders with number and nameplates removed.

HOWEVER both 4-4-0s were noted at Iver on October 31st -

3454 'Skylark' was running light with 7027 'Thornbury Castle' in the direction of Reading.

3453 'Seagull' was having some trouble starting its 63 wagons up goods train.



3453 'Seagull' on the Barnstaple Junction turntable.



3454 'Skylark' takes water at Oxford with a Birmingham to Swindon and return SLS Special.

3300 - 3340 were built with curved frames - similar to 'Duke' class.

WHILST

3341 - 3440 were built with the straight frame over the driving wheels.



**DON'T BIN THE AERONIAN XP - pass it on!**



## Oops! Have we heard this one before?



For the retiring local town station master, wonderful plans had been made with a super party

laid on [*with the town band plus the Mayor and Council leaders etc. invited*]. However, at the start of these celebrations there was the station master didn't turn up for his retirement 'do'. On investigating his absence, it was found that everything had been kept so secret that no-one had invited him. He had gone out for the day!

# OUR PART

# MakeSure



**we tell others about all the activities associated with this Society**

**THE  
AERON VALLEY  
RAILWAY SOCIETY**

**INCLUDING  
Its monthly meetings  
Its publications.**

# Q AND A

**WHAT WILL YOU DO**

**with your copy of  
THE AERONIAN XP**

**once you've read it?**

**Why not pass it on  
to a friend to read?**

**It might be what  
the doctor ordered.**

**C U  
AT THE  
NEXT MEETING?**





"Tell us what you think!"



From  
a set of booklets  
by Igloo Books  
and found  
in a  
Swindon Community  
Charity Shop



A painting [now slowly fading] near the entrance to a Caravan & Leisure Park some 5 + miles west of Barry Island. Behind this painting is the Vale of Glamorgan railway line between Barry and Bridgend which is sometimes used a diversionary route when the main line between Cardiff and Bridgend is closed.

Why not pass on any snippets from other society magazines that might be of interest to AVRS subscribers!





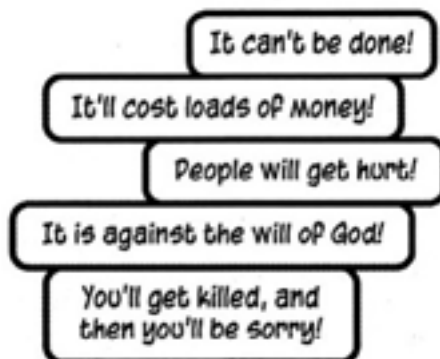
Young Isambard Kingdom Brunel was born into a family which was sometimes rich, sometimes poor BUT always a loving and happy one. His father [Marc] was Isambard's biggest influence.

Brunel Junior was sent to boarding school run by a church minister who banned bullying, fagging [*younger boys acted as servants to older boys*].

Brunel came home from this school in 1822 - everyone said what a nice, likeable person he was - full of energy, witty and always ready for a laugh, added to which he spoke fluent French!

Later Isambard was sent to study maths in Normandy, France [*where his father's family came from and where Marc reckoned that his son would learn more of this subject there than in England*]. Isambard also studied in Paris. He then studied under Abraham Louis Bréguet - a world leading maker of time pieces and precision instruments.

Next, Isambard joined his father on building a tunnel through mud!



In charge of this 'tunnel through mud' - under the River Thames between Rotherhithe and Wapping - two places that a lot of folk needed to get between every day.



A tunnel rather than a bridge made more sense since a bridge would have to be tall enough to allow sailing ships to pass underneath it.

Some 1,300 feet of tunnel needed to be dug under the river-bed - mostly mud and silt. This was slow work and its walls needed to be lined with bricks throughout or the river would come pouring in.

Ship worms came to the rescue! [*Ship worms are actually molluscs which are 'UGLY' little critters which had been wrecking ships for centuries. Such 'worms' have a head made of a hard shell which grinds the wood as it moves; the wood is then digested - UGH! - which is then secreted as a chalk-like substance which lines the hole it has made behind it, thus protecting the soft, squishy, wormy body!*]

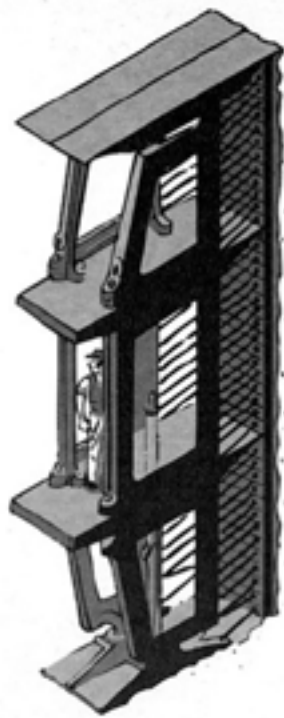
A patent tunnelling shield by Marc did a similar job - it removed the soil in front of it and lined the tunnel behind it as it moved forward - see the next page.



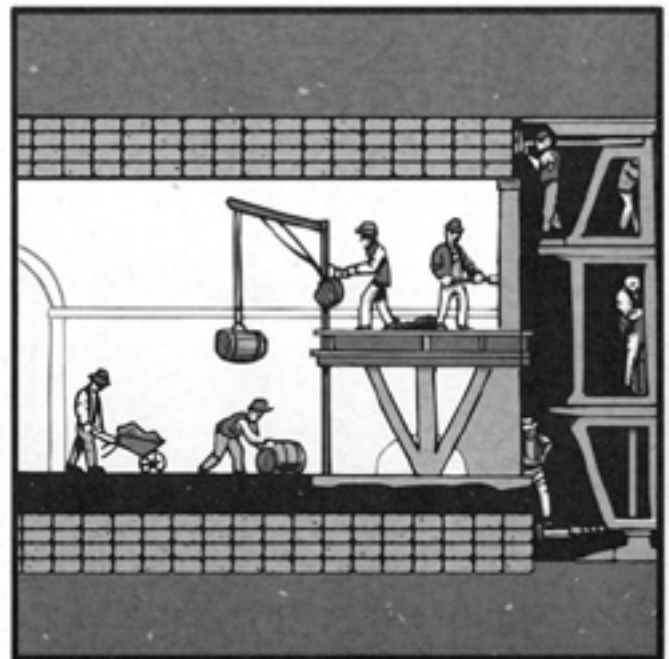
The Thames Tunnel attraction



Alongside is Marc Brunel's tunnelling shield - a big cast-iron 80 ton piece of equipment [the whole shield made up of 11 similar sections like this one either side of it ] which was divided into 36 compartments - in each compartment a man worked digging away at the rock or soil.



away in wheelbarrows. Meanwhile while the shield moved forward, other men would come in and line the walls with bricks to stop the dug-out tunnel section from collapsing.



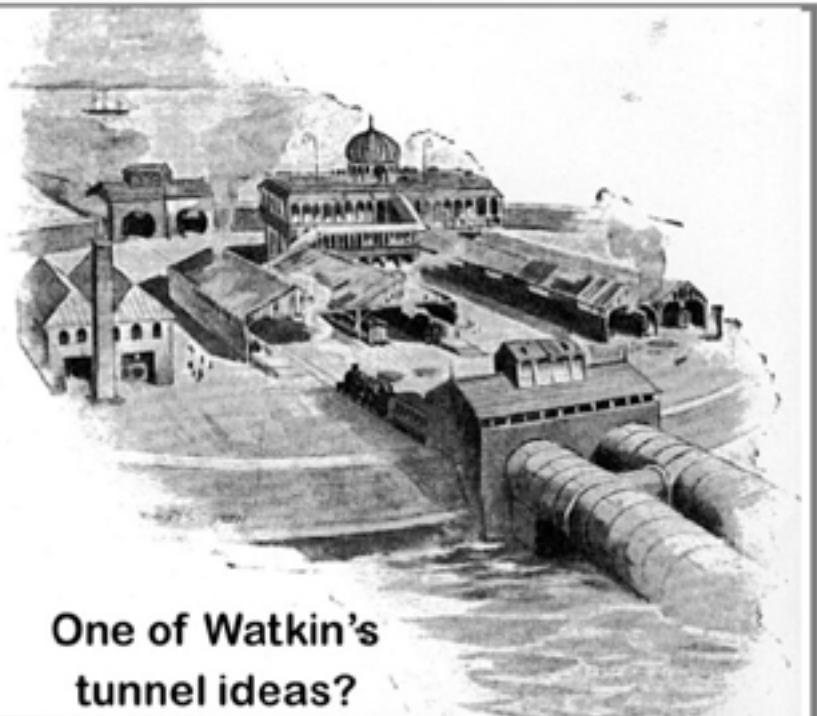
The tunnellers dug out the mud and soil then other men carried it

## The Tunnel - NON!

Edward Watkin [1819-1901] was a railway visionary; he was responsible for the last main line into London - Great Central Railway. BUT DID YOU KNOW that he proposed that this line should continue to Paris via a Channel Tunnel?

He was on the board of the *CHEMIN DE FER DU NORD*, and actually set up the *SUBMARINE RAILWAY COMPANY* to carry out the work for this underwater link. Also a one mile plus test bore was made under the sea from beneath the cliffs near Dover to assess the project's feasibility.

However Watkin's grand plan was blocked because our government's War Office raised an objection that a foreign army could invade Great



One of Watkin's tunnel ideas?

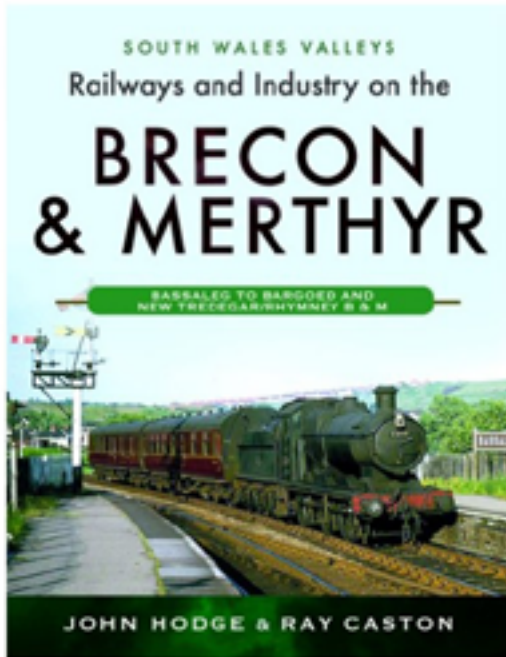
Britain through the tunnel. Of course what a better place to trap an invading army but in the confines of a subterranean tunnel - memories of Moses crossing the Red Sea, maybe? The day was won by *xenophobia* and Watkin's tunnel scheme was abandoned in the 1890s.





**I SPY  
WITH MY  
LITTLE EYE...**

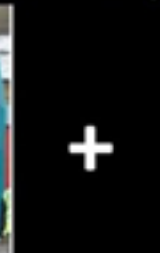
**A  
B  
O  
U  
T**



This book [*the first of three*] on the B & M - published by PEN and SWORD with its authors {John Hodge & Ray Caston} and published by PEN and SWORD is giving AVRS subscribers a SPECIAL DISCOUNT.

This first book [out on 31st May] covers the southern section of this railway - Bassaleg to Bargoed AND the New Tredegar/Rhymney B & M branch. The second book [out in October 2022] continues the B & M route from Bargoed to Pontsticill Junction *plus* Pant to Dowlais Central. AVRS DISCOUNT CODE - AVRS25 giving a discount price of £26-25.

## Apocryphal or not apocryphal, that is the question!



Several years ago, it is said that a well-known bus operator installed several of its buses with domestic three-pin sockets so that customers to charge their phones.

One day a lady decided to make use of this facility - she plugged in her hair-dryer and then went to use it! The resulting electrical load was far greater than the bus system could endure. The result was that there was damage beyond repair - but this 'story' [*true or made-up?*] doesn't tell us whether the bus was so damaged or the lady's hair-dryer!

\* \* \* \* \*





Didn't we have  
a lovely time  
the day we went to

**TORPANTAU**

We all caught the 12.15pm train at PANT. Our part of the carriage was reserved and the train was hauled by a Baldwin Steam Loco as in the picture, and as it chuffed up the line the splendid surrounding scenery became apparent to all. Mountains, lakes, fresh spring like growth on the trees and lineside flowers created a wonderful atmosphere for this little railway.

The train continued to the end of the line without stopping and at TORPANTAU, the railhead, we had time to admire the little loco and have a group photo taken - *see above*. Then we watched the engine run round its train and recouple for the journey back. On the way back, the train stopped at PONTSTICILL - *see below left*, and there we were treated to a chat by Michael Hills, one of the directors and driver of the day, about the railway set up and its aims for the future.

Time pressing we then returned to PANT where we had our pre-arranged dinner served by the friendly staff. After our excellent meal, time was our own to wander around the station and view what we could of the sheds - *see below right* - before later heading home. The weather changed for the worse on the journey home, giving us a good wash and entertainment with thunder and lightning. This however did not spoil the splendid day had by one and all.





## Steamback before Cashback!

Was Glasgow the only UK city where Steamback took place before Cashback?

**What's the Editor trying to say?**

**Read on to find out, please.**

The speed with which the operating authorities re-assembled rolling stock for a substitute steam service on December 12th 1960 [*little more than hours after the decision to withdraw the Glasgow suburban electric units - as shown above - had been taken earlier the previous day*] did those authorities considerable credit.



V1 had 190lbs boilers. V3 had 200lbs boilers



Ivatt Class 4 2-6-0

Fleets of taxis were summoned to collect railwaymen - at first unaware of the nature of the crisis - for emergency Sunday work.

All the depots to which Parkhead [65C] had transferred locomotives acted promptly during the Sunday and by

8 p.m. that day the 'exiles' had been gathered from as far afield as Edinburgh, Hurlford, Cockerhill and Ayr. The coaching stock had been dispersed over the West of Scotland for storage and after its re-assembly had to be cleaned and heated before it was placed at the correct starting points for the Monday working; correct marshalling was evidently



J37 0-6-0

impossible in the time available, and some formations appeared with only one guard's brake in the middle of the train.

With a few modifications, the timetable operating before November 7th was reinstated with the same V1 and V3 2-6-2Ts and the standard and Ivatt class 4 2-6-0s that had been drafted in to the line in the last few months before electrification before the removal of water standpipes had caused the Gresley tanks some embarrassment on the longest through runs.

In addition, Parkhead turned out a large number of its Class 37 0-6-0s at the start of the makeshift service. Some temporary signalling arrangements were desirable. The colour-light system was modified in the tunnel to restore block working and prevent departures from any station until the section ahead had been cleared; station starters could as showing a red aspect, even though the next signal in advance was showing a double yellow. Class A headcodes were being displayed on all trains to avoid locomen coming too close to the overhead wires in fixing a class B headcode.



## AVRS FUTURE MEETINGS

May 18th -

The Breakneck & Murder Railway  
Ken Mumford - Our Editor

June 15th

The Somerset & Dorset Railway  
Michael Clemens

July 20th

To be confirmed

August 17th

Last Dinner on the Titanic  
John Perkin

September 21st

The Vale of Rhediol Railway  
Gareth Jones

## OUR VENUE

British Legion Hall  
Victoria Street  
Aberaeron



Further details

Steve Parr - see back page

Western Main Lines

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subscribers:-  
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### From around October 1959

It was confirmed that 9F 2-10-0 No. 92250 was fitted with a Giesl Oblong Ejector. After exhaustive tests on the Rugby Testing Plant, 92250 has been allocated to Banbury [84C] and is working iron-ore trains from there to South Wales.

At Swindon frames were laid or cut by October 26th up to D825 of the diesel Hydraulic "Warship" class and work had begun on the last 9F 2-10-0 No. 92220.

The latest "Castles" noted with double-chimney arrangements were 5026 and 7029.

D808 failed near Maidenhead with trouble in one of its engines while hauling the down 'BRISTOLIAN' on October 23rd; the Reading down line pilot ['Hall' No. 4951 was summoned to assist and double-headed the diesel on to Bristol.

Seen at a  
'STRAWBERRY & STEAM'  
rally in Wiltshire  
many years ago!

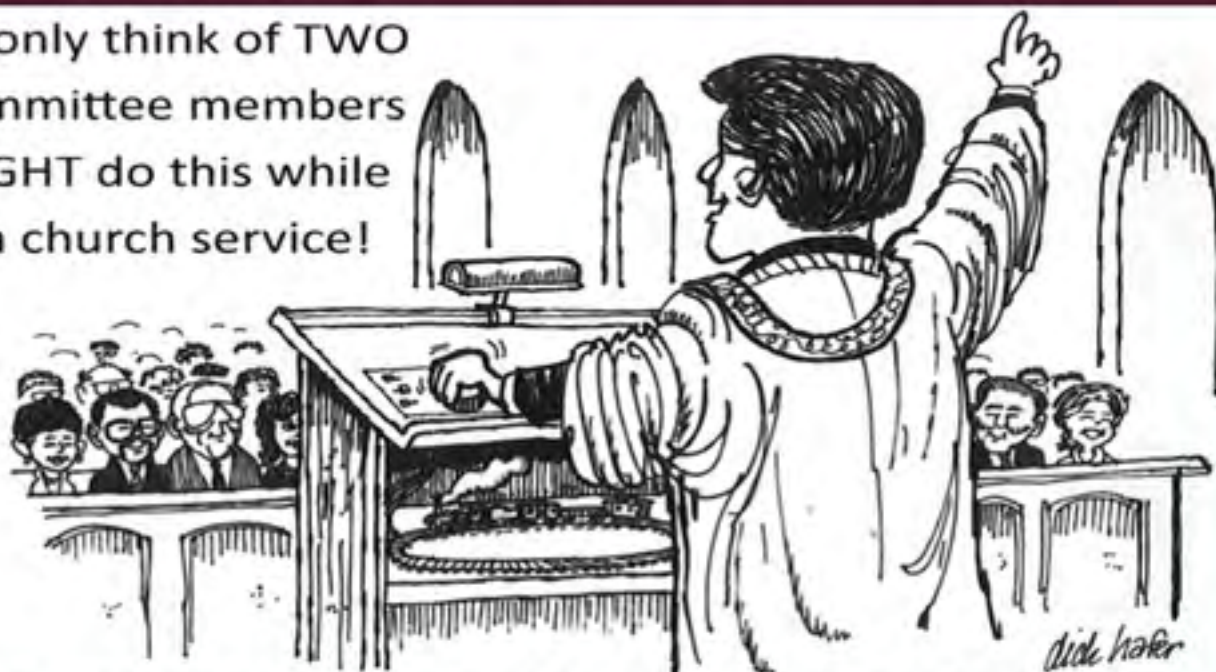






6233 'Duchess of Sutherland' storms speedily through Swindon [instead of stopping as once planned] on the UML [Up Main Line] just over 30 minutes EARLY with the *RAILWAY TOURING COMPANY* Penzance to London final section of the GREAT BRITAIN XII tour.

One can only think of TWO AVRS committee members who MIGHT do this while taking a church service!



*"The next hymn will be the one that contains the words - O what transport of delight, from thy pure chalice floweth."*

*"Darling,"* said Jeremy her boyfriend, *"I'll follow you to the ends of the earth - BUT not if your Mother is driving!"*





**OUR  
VOICE**



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Victoria Street

SA46 0JA

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**ENTHUSE AND ENCOURAGE FOLK IN THE  
AERON VALLEY. . . .AND BEYOND  
TO SUPPORT THE AVRS.**