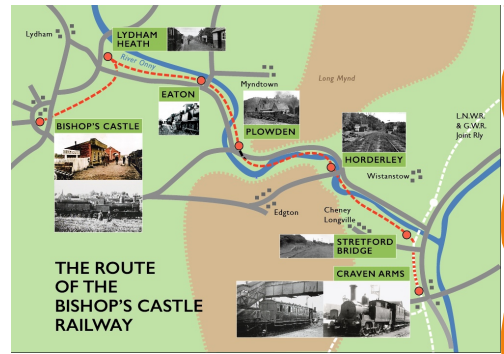


B.C.R.S. June 2021

NEWS No. 54

The Monthly Newsletter of The
Bishop's Castle Railway Society



SOCIETY UPDATE

The BCR artefacts have been collected from the House on Crutches Museum and taken to the weighbridge, where most of them were put on display for the recent open day. As the House on Crutches is not intending to open this year, reinstating another display in there can be undertaken later in the year.

Most of the artefacts stored in Ron Davies's old shop have been collected and brought to the weighbridge. The Craven Arms ticket office frontage and hopefully the Craven Arms

and Stokesay totem are still remaining and very

inaccessible, so have been left until later when they can be reached more easily! Also, the items stored in the late Graham Lloyd's garage have been collected and brought to the weighbridge.

We now have the paperwork from the old museum in our possession and have unwrapped all the items. There is some confusion about the numbering and derivation of some of the items which we are endeavouring to resolve.

The items in storage in the Heritage Resource Centre have been examined and were not as extensive as first thought. Whether any of them should be on display in the weighbridge will be discussed by the Director/ Trustees who continue to meet on a regular basis.



Volunteer Malcolm Reeves continues to painstakingly apply a second coat of paint to the window frames, his expertise making the job look easy. To the relief of other volunteers, who definitely did not want that job!

The doors require one more coat of grey paint and then all the painting is complete.



It's your Society..... tell us what you would like!

The directors of the Society are looking for your ideas on what you would like from the Society. We would like to have regular talks and meetings as before, but the format could be changed to suit a wider audience. We are very aware that members want different things from the society and we would really like to make meetings available to all our members when we can. With this in mind, please let us know of any areas you are particularly interested in, not necessarily directly railway oriented, so we can put together a programme of speakers with as wide a range of topics as possible. We are looking into using Zoom, or something similar, so that more distant members, who cannot attend the meetings in person, can watch them live. If we were to do this, then we should be able to record these so you can watch them at your leisure and archive them to form a library. It would also mean non-members could watch for a small fee.

We would still hold meetings locally, probably at the Church Barn, which has a good broadband connection, or the Methodist Hall. If there are other local venues that would be suitable, then please let us know that too. We are very conscious of the expense of having speakers, particularly if they have to travel a fair distance, so we might be looking at having remote speakers occasionally, showing us their projects live as an alternative.

We are also very conscious of the fact that the social side of the meetings is important for our local members and it has been suggested that we might alternate speakers, with just a social gathering at the weighbridge every fortnight or so. If we made this a regular fixture, it would enable us to put out our Society leaflets with dates on them, so people will know when the weighbridge is open to visit.

With this in mind, when do you think would be the best times for talks and social meetings? Evenings in the winter can be rather bleak, so afternoon meetings and gatherings might be a better option. Maybe a Saturday during the day might be an option too.

Maybe you would be interested in occasional visits to suitable places, and perhaps the model railway enthusiasts amongst you would like to use the venue and have themes to suit them.

As you can see, there is quite a lot to think about in all this, and please do say what thoughts you have for our future direction.

We would like to start the talks again in the autumn, but perhaps social gatherings could be started before then.

Please send any thoughts you have to David O'Neill at bcrscontact@gmail.com and we will look at all your ideas before any decisions are made.

Weighbridge update

It remains a busy time for the volunteers at the site. During the past month both the rainwater and the kitchen waste water drainage systems have been completed and approved by building control. The next step is to level the ground to the side and rear of the building in readiness for the marquee to be erected.



Plans have been drawn up for the new entrance gate. Our designated entrance is 3m wide, which is three quarters of one half of the existing gates, therefore agreement needs to be reached with Ransfords as to how they wish to complete the remaining entrance to the left of our new gate. Once agreement has been reached, quotes will be obtained for the gate and the fencing required to finally secure the boundaries and create an ambience within the site.

The Open Day on the 30th May was very successful. A warm sunny day saw over 100 visitors with everyone willing to cooperate with the track and trace system in place. The second hand books were very popular, thanks to member Ian Cross coming from Derby with boxes of surplus books donated by the Historical Model Railway Society. Ian says there are plenty more available when we have the space to accept them, for which we are very grateful.

Refreshments were served to visitors for the first time from the new kitchen area and were well received by many. The total amount banked from the day was a very respectable £452. Thanks go to everyone who helped out both before and on the day. It was nice to see some of our younger members getting involved and sharing their enthusiasm with the visitors.

Once the site has been levelled, and the marquee erected, further open days are planned, including a members and guests invitation day with light refreshments, a bonanza book sale, and a micro model layouts exhibition. On the 18th September we will open for National Heritage Open Days, their theme this year is Edible England. This will be an interesting exhibition to put on, highlighting the goods brought into and taken out of BC station.

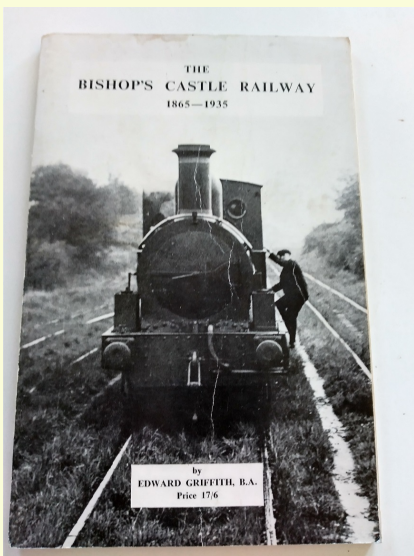
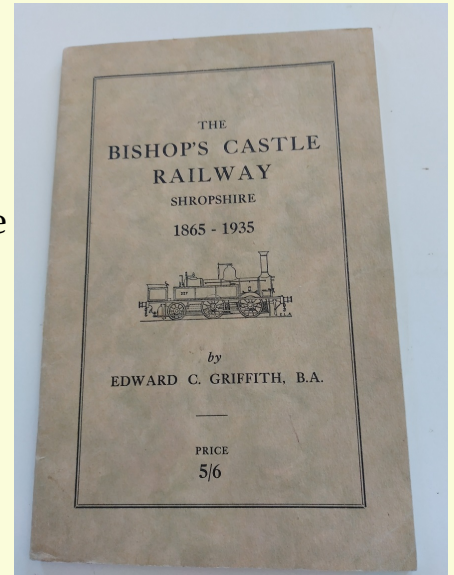
There has also been a suggestion that if Covid restrictions allow, the weighbridge building would make an ideal Santa`s Grotto one weekend in December. Reindeer or sheep wearing antlers, carols, mulled wine, coffee and mince pies have all been mentioned.

BCR Related Items for Sale

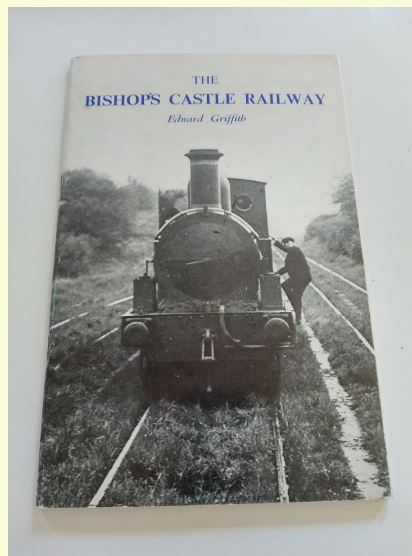
Member Richard Newcombe is offering his collection of four Edward Griffith's books for sale with the proceeds going to the Weighbridge Project. They can be sold as a collection, or individually, if you just want one or two to complete your set.

Please contact Richard on 01938 580340 if you are interested in making an offer.

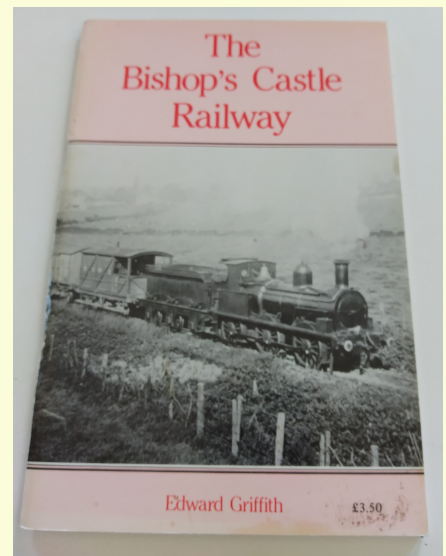
The original edition was first published in 1948 (photo right)



2nd edition published in 1969



3rd edition published in 1977



4th edition published in 1983

Richard is also offering for sale this original postcard of Bishop's Castle Station. Dated 25th September 1916, it was sent by "David" to his mother in East Dulwich and is complete with a franked half penny stamp.



Bishop's Castle Railway Signals

Peter Featherstone writes..... I have recently become interested by the signals of the BCR. It is remarkable that these signals survived seemingly unaltered except by age, from the 1860s to 1930s. This was long after such signals, manufactured by Stevens & Co., had been upgraded or superseded on other railways. The key design features are:

- A lattice post formed of four outward facing angles with strip riveted to the flats in a double zigzag slightly tapering to the top.
- A separate arm and spectacle-plate with one or two spectacles (red, or red and clear).
- No ladder!
- A signal lamp, lit by a long, spring-loaded candle, raised and lowered by chain and T section guiderail.

Email exchanges with Albyn Austin, Mike Christensen and Peter Thorpe of the National Railway Museum have helped greatly in getting this far but the more one delves the more questions arise. I am corraling what photos I can from books, BCR Journals and the above sources. I have found pictures of signals at Bishop's Castle, Lydham Heath, Plowden and two at Horderley. So, if anyone has already done some work on this then it would be good to hear from you to avoid repeating previous work. Some of the questions that occur are:

- How many signals were there and where?
- Did the BCR signal post now in the NRM store come from Bishops' Castle itself or another station?
- Are there drawings of any of the signals?
- What colour were the arms?
- Were some used to signal trains from both directions?
- What height were they; maybe 30ft plus finial?
- Was the Lydham Heath signal modified at some time to a fixed arm at a lower level?

A starting point would be to catalogue the photos, adding information (firm or speculative). Having joined the BCRS only a few years ago I do not have earlier copies of the Journal and I expect that these contain more information.

For modellers, lattice posts resembling the BCR ones are available in various scales from Wizard Models Ltd made by MSE. I have a 30ft post that I hope will form the basis of a 7mm:ft representation of the Horderley (platform) Signal. The same suppliers do an etch of signal parts



that include appropriate arms and spectacles, plus cast lamps and finials.

Let us share any information that members have gleaned.

Peter Featherstone

Jim`s monthly selection of videos.....

This is a link to a silent amateur film from the 1960s showing the Cambrian Railway at Aberystwyth, Borth, Dovey Junction, Welshpool etc. Running time 4:40. Pity about the captions and the watermark but still worth a look.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IrmAoLfliMQ>

So, where's the world's oldest working railway, dating from 1758? Running time 17:34

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IHjDrUnlaL0>

Next a link showing visits to five heritage railways during August 2019. The railways are the Epping-Ongar, East Lancashire, Severn Valley, North Norfolk and finally the Mid-Norfolk. Running time 22:58

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OPYNqk0j3pE>

This is about the recent restoration of the Severn Bridge Junction signal box at Shrewsbury. It's a listed building dating from 1903. Running time 2:19

<https://youtu.be/aKlIrpAQsoj0>

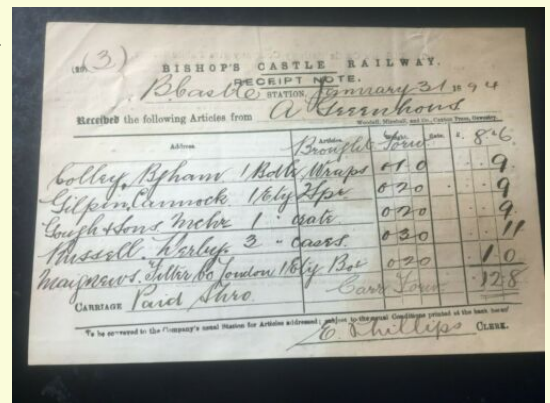
To close, here's record producer Pete Waterman's latest layout - 64 feet long! Running time 10:01

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=i1OXWBMNZn8>

Here are some BCR items recently sold on eBay

A BCR receipt for goods sent by A.Greenhous in 1894 fetched £12.50 (photo right)

A Third Class Child's ticket from Craven Arms to Lydham Heath sold for £13.28



A First Class ticket from Craven Arms to Plowden went for £19.58

A £10 share certificate issued in 1876 measuring 21.5 by 16 cm yielded £73.99!

(photo left)

If you have an item for
the Newsletter
please send to Lin Dalton at
socialmedia@bcrailway.co.uk
by the 1st of each month

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