THE COWBRIDGE RAILWAY: A VICTORIAN BUSINESS FOLLY

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ABSTRACT

In 1861, the prospectus for the Cowbridge Railway was published and the first train ran between Llantrisant, at the junction of the South Wales Railway, and Cowbridge in January 1865 (Chapman, 1984, pp.6-12).

This dissertation has two primary objectives. First, it provides an understanding of the social, political and economic processes which were to lead to the building of the Cowbridge Railway and second, it evaluates some of the socio-economic effects of its construction in the period ending in 1875. In that year, the Cowbridge Railway lost its already notional independence to the Taff Vale Railway. The study achieves its twin objectives by:

- considering contemporary local social, political and economic patterns;
- examining and evaluating the imperatives for building the railway, taking account of both pro-active and re-active processes;
- assessing the commercial success of the railway from its opening until 1875;
- explaining the impact of the railway on the local community in the period ending 1875.

Significant processes of social and economic change had been underway in industrial South Wales, just 20 or so miles from bucolic Cowbridge, for the best part of a hundred years before the railway was built and further extensive changes were imminent with the large scale exploitation of the coalfield. These changes impacted on the Cowbridge Railway and, in a small way, the railway impacted upon the wider industrialisation of the region. Whilst railways were crucially important to the transport of industrial goods and minerals they were also important conduits for the supply of the necessities of the industrial workforce. Railways, in turn, impacted upon domestic agricultural practices, yet some farmers were critical of the way that railways assisted the penetration of British food markets by external competitors. Consideration of these types of patterns of interactive change is an aim of the study.

The study is structured along empirical lines. Ideally an element of quantitative analysis would have been employed to enhance the dissertation but whilst G.R Hawke's (1970) work remains impressive within the context of England and Wales, writers like Baber and Williams (1986) have noted the problems of the scarcity of data when trying to write a 'new economic history' of South Wales.

CONTENTS

Page No.

CHAPTER 1 : INTRODUCTION & LITERATURE REVIEW

The Cowbridge Railway was a little over 5 miles long, beginning at a junction with the South Wales Railway, near Llantrisant station and terminating at the eastern end of Cowbridge. The railway passed through sparsely populated agricultural countryside with initially just one intermediate station at Ystradowen, a small hamlet.

The *Cowbridge railway prospectus* was published in 1861, and in the same year, the Taff Vale Railway received Parliamentary approval for a new line beginning near Llantrisant station and ending at a junction with its main line just south of Treforest. Once both these plans were fulfilled, they provided a railway route from Cowbridge to the Rhondda, Aberdare and Merthyr valleys via Llantrisant, Treforest and Pontypridd. In 1892, the Cowbridge and Aberthaw Railway extended the original Cowbridge Railway by a further 6 miles, south, to a new terminus on the Bristol Channel. This latter venture ran through an area with an even lower density of population than the Cowbridge Railway and was never a financial success. The Cowbridge and Aberthaw Railway closed in 1932, just 40 years after it was opened (Chapman, 1984, pp. 67 & 102-103).

In 1875, low revenues, high operating costs and a precarious balance sheet led to the operation of the Cowbridge Railway being taken over by its much larger neighbour, the Taff Vale Railway Company. Passenger services to Cowbridge continued until 1951 and goods traffic ended in 1965, except for about 1.5 miles of track, which linked the iron ore mine at Llanharry with the South Wales main line, until the mine closed in 1975 (Chapman 1984, pp.12-37). The base timeline of this dissertation is set early in the third quarter of the nineteenth century and it concludes in 1875.

One of the reasons for undertaking this study is to further understand the processes and the outcomes of social and economic change in a rural and, before the railway

was built, somewhat isolated part of South Wales in the third quarter of the nineteenth century. Rapid social and economic change was continuing in the upland areas of Glamorgan and Monmouthshire as a result of iron and coal but, as Harold Perkin writes albeit in an English context, the old society survived much longer in the countryside and the new came to birth much more slowly in some towns than in others (2002, p.177). As an example of the contrasting speed of economic change between the industrial and rural areas of South Wales, the South Wales Railway was incorporated in 1845, with capital of £2.5million, equivalent to almost £110 million at 2005 prices (www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/currency) and by 1850 the eastern section to Swansea was complete (Barrie, 1994, p.38). Yet, according to Jones (2006), a director of the Bristol and Gloucester Railway wrote in 1844, '… it has been reported that the proposed (South Wales Railway) railroad will run through the coal works about 5 miles to the north of Cowbridge and that the good people of that ancient borough are well pleased to be left undisturbed as no symptom of any wish to have the railway nearer had been evinced' (p.127). Having made that point, by 1861 a prospectus to build a railway linking Cowbridge to the British railway network had been published by the contemporary 'movers and shakers' of the town. Clearly, something(s) had changed and understanding the causes, processes and outcomes of these changes will be fundamental to the dissertation.

David Cannadine notes that 'political history, economic history, constitutional history and diplomatic history…have been joined by social history, urban history, family history, women's history, the history of childhood, the new economic history and a host of others'. Whilst Cannadine acknowledges that these sub-specialisms have made a significant contribution to history, he argues that, in his opinion, they also lead to

demarcation disputes, inflated claims and to a loss of the complexity and diversity of the history process (2005, p.5).

This dissertation attempts to avoid the demarcation lines which concern Cannadine and it follows an empiricist methodology. Alun Munslow sees empiricism as knowledge acquisition through the use of the senses as we observe and experience life, or through statements and arguments demonstrated to be true (2006, p.88). Empiricism is both a theory of knowledge, an epistemology, and a method of historical enquiry. John Warren (2003) uses Elton's model to identify the appropriate professional tools which the well trained historian must use. First, historians are bound by the authority of the sources and must assume that the sources contain the truth. Second, the sources must be approached with a question in mind but never with a particular answer in mind. In Warren's opinion, Elton recognised that historians can never be wholly objective but can guard against the reading into the past of his/her own value systems (2005, p.123). Arthur Marwick (2001) rejects Elton's emphasis on the ability of historians to generate the 'truth' and in its place he sees historians as producing 'knowledge' about the past; a knowledge that must be based on evidence. Marwick also believes in the production of history as a collective exercise and accepts that some of the evidence will be obtained from the works of other historians. However, Marwick sees the achievement of historical knowledge as being dependent on highly skilled and difficult work among the primary sources but, at the same time, he dismisses those critics who see modern historiography as being a consequence of 'the cult of the archive' or, a 'fetishism of the documents' (2001, p. xiii). Marwick stresses the importance of the Rankean approach for its emphasis on primary sources and its insistence on historicism but he refuses to accept Leopold von Ranke as the founder of the modern discipline of history. For Marwick, historicists see the past as

being different from the present but stress that there are processes of change linking past and present (2001, p.66).

Marwick sums up by writing that history has to be a scholarly discipline based on a thorough examination of the evidence combined with precise language (2001, p.273), and as Munslow is forced to acknowledge, '…the Elton legacy continues to propagate itself in the hothouse of the empiricist history intellectual Establishment in both the United States and the United Kingdom' (2006, p.88). Elton shaped my view of historical methodology at A Level, and my empiricist perspective was reinforced by Professor Marwick at the Open University. Although Alun Munslow sees Elton and Marwick sharing a 'naïve empiricist' outlook (2006, p.194), empiricism is the methodology that underpins this dissertation. However, it should be noted that writers like Keith Jenkins totally reject the empiricist approach with objectivity at its centre. Jenkins believes 'the facts do not speak for themselves' and that, in reality, sources are skewed to fit predetermined arguments and documents might be withheld (1991, p. 45).

Cliometrics, or New Economic History, offers an alternative perspective by which the importance of railways in the nineteenth century can be considered. In Alun Munslow's opinion, Cliometrics as a methodological development led to the recounting of the past in order to stiffen history's most basic epistemological principles through the study of the sources (2006, p.57). Like mainstream empiricists, new economic historians have been criticised for their alleged subjective use of representative sources and also for their focus on economics and statistics, to the detriment and downgrading of the impact of the social and political. Marxist historiography, like Cliometrics, is also analytical but its reliance on historical determinism can have the effect of dictating both the problems and the answers to

them. A Marxist approach to the questions raised in this dissertation does not seem to fit comfortably with the circumstances. By way of example, Harold Perkin's hypothesis that change was much slower in the countryside seems to provide a better fit than the ideas developed by E.P. Thompson (1991). Whilst Thompson places the growth of working class awareness during the industrial revolution in a wide context embracing religion, popular culture, leisure and the growth of trade unionism, he portrays the state as both menacing and as an instrument of class control. Thompson's approach seems to have little direct relevance to Cowbridge in the 1850s-1870s, although David Jones' observation that the borough's civic leaders attempted to keep the population below 1,500 does leave a question mark. Furthermore, the (albeit wasteful) laissez faire approach to railway construction in nineteenth century Britain seems to be more suited to a classical economic perspective of competition at work than to a Marxist interpretation.

The narrative and quantitative approaches can be considered from another perspective. S.M. Beaudoin (2000) suggests that there are two schools of thought on the speed of change during the industrial revolution. First, that which depicts industrialisation as a fundamental and relatively rapid transformation and second, the gradualist approach. Gradualists argue that growth rates were lower than previously believed and that technical change and productivity gains were restricted to a limited number of industries, like cotton. Importantly, gradualists portray change as originating with supply side issues such as population change (p.7). The rapid change school has been reinvigorated by writers such as M. Berg and P. Hudson (1992). Berg and Hudson make the point that the historiography of the industrial revolution moved away from viewing it as a unique turning point in economic and social development and a more gradualist perspective came into vogue. This post-Marxist perspective

sees social change, for example, as a continuum starting from the eighteenth century attack on the 'Old Corruption' and progressing to Chartism and beyond (1992, pp.24-25). However, the authors make the case that leading contemporaries, like Robert Owen, reported the changes as rapid and believe that it is time for the term 'industrial revolution' to be rehabilitated (1992, p.26). They conclude that the macro-accounting framework is too narrow a vision for these changes (1992, p.44).

Despite the re-emergence of the 'revolution' school, Knick Harley and Crofts (2000) use econometric models to support their contention that trade patterns during the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries were largely influenced by population growth and demographic changes. In their opinion, British agriculture, with limited land resource, experienced diminishing returns and rising costs despite impressive technical change. As a consequence, food prices rose rapidly and it was exports from the leading industrial sectors that paid for them. Knick Harley and Crofts see the industrial revolution as a process of rapid structural change driven by falling agricultural employment. The conflicting views on speed of change and demand and supply side drivers of change are not simply abstract issues. They manifest themselves throughout the dissertation.

Many of the popular books on railway history concern themselves with little more than a brief outline of the rationale for the construction of the line(s) being studied, the operating history and, in many cases, the subsequent decline and closure. The works of Colin Chapman on the railways of South Wales, including his book on the Cowbridge Railway (1984), are exceptions. Chapman provides a fascinating insight into the development of the Cowbridge Railway, its impecunious operating history and its eventual decline and closure. Although this is primarily a 'railway book', and it certainly includes a great deal of technical detail, it is also a study in local history.

The impact of economic, social and environmental changes on the railway and vice versa is not ignored. As an example, Chapman writes that the South Wales Railway opened between Chepstow and Swansea on 18 June 1850 with a station at Pontyclun, about 5 miles north of Cowbridge. Less than three weeks later, the extensive mail coach services which operated through Cowbridge to, and from, West Wales were withdrawn and with them went many of the associated livery businesses and passenger catering and accommodation businesses that previously existed in the town (p.7). One shortcoming is the lack of references in large sections of the book.

By way of contrast, D.S.M. Barrie's (1994) work largely ignores the local historic detail captured by Chapman and uses a broad geographical east-west approach before concentrating on sub-regional railway hubs to drill down to local lines. That said, Barrie makes a number of interesting points on profitability. For example, he mentions the Barry Railway paying a dividend of 8.50% for 28 years while the Taff Vale Railway's dividend fell below 10% only once between 1870 and 1888 reaching a maximum of 17.50% in one year. By way of contrast small, rural lines in Wales like the Neath and Brecon and the Brecon and Merthyr knew the rigours of receivership (p.18).

At the macro level, Joel Mokyr (1989) makes the point that whilst Britain at the time of the industrial revolution was not a laissez faire economy in absolute terms, compared with Prussia or the Hapsburg Empire the government generally left its businessmen in peace to pursue their affairs (p.12). Mokyr bends toward Harold Perkin's view and believes that almost all the major entrepreneurial figures of the industrial revolution took enormous risks, worked long and arduous hours and rarely enjoyed the fruits of their efforts until late in life (p.19). In a later work, Mokyr (2009) argues that railway engineers, like Stephenson and Brunel, were profligate with

investors' money. He adds that Stephenson estimated the costs of the London-Liverpool line at £21,000 per mile, whereas the outturn was over £50,000. Mokyr acknowledges the separation between railway contractors and risk takers and believes that a substantial volume of the stocks and bonds, which backed railway finance, were owned by merchants and landowners. Whilst merchants and landowners were not necessarily the group that had been most active in heading the industrial revolution, they were perhaps the ones that gained the most indirect benefit from it (p.215). A.G. Kenwood (1965) presents a different view. He sees the railway boom of the 1860s as being dominated by an investment wave provided by railway contractors rather than a separate group of specialist investors. Kenwood also sees this investment boom as being concentrated in Wales, Highland Scotland and London (p.318). In B.R. Mitchell's (1964) opinion, British railways were built with existing traffic very much in mind and he suggests that the estimates of potential revenues shown in many prospectuses reinforce the point. Not surprisingly, Mitchell adds that these estimates of income often exaggerated the possibilities rather than underrating them (p.316).

To some extent, Mokyr follows E.J Hobsbawm (1969) who emphasises the point that in Britain, resistance to capitalist development was largely over by the end of the seventeenth century, that the aristocracy was almost a form of the 'bourgeoisie' and that two revolutions had taught the monarchy to be adaptable (p.16). Crucially, Hobsbawm finds no evidence that poor transport had an effect on general industrial development and he suggests that many of the railways remained quite irrational by any transport criterion and never generated more than a very modest level of profit (p.111). Given his Marxist leanings, it is of no surprise that in Hobsbawm's opinion, it was an excess of capital that caused money to be 'insanely' invested in railway development. He writes that 'Britons with surpluses, encouraged by projectors,

contractors and others whose profits were made not by running railways but by planning or building them, were undeterred by the extraordinary swollen costs of railways' (p.113). To summarise, in Hobsbawm's opinion, it was not always the rational calculation of profit and loss that drove railway development. The romantic appeal of technological advance which the railways symbolised, according to Hobsbawm, brought out the economic dream (p.114). More of this later.

Like Hobsbawm, Christopher Hill (1967) promotes a Marxist view of history and he argues that some of the capital for the industrial revolution flowed from overseas and originated in the slave trade, tea and tobacco for example. However, Hill adds that much of that capital was squandered on conspicuous consumption and on buying political immunity (p.200). Hill believes that the savings of freeholders and farmers were also important capital sources but he emphasises the role of members of sects, like the Quakers. In Hill's opinion, the group loyalty of these sects, developed during the days of persecution, meant that they were likely to deposit their savings within the confines of their group whilst their dislike of conspicuous consumption and their exclusion from the world of politics reduced the temptation of sons to dissipate family wealth (p.201). Phyllis Deane (1979) identifies the provision of 'social overhead capital' as critical to industrial development and she continues by writing that in Britain most of the social investment for railways came from individuals rather than the state (pp.72-73). Other writers have argued that personal investment in railways was wasteful and inefficient and Deane makes the same allegations about the earlier development of canals which she says resulted in a lack of integration and capital wastage (p.83).

Like Hobsbawm, Deane believes that from the 1830s through to the 1860s, not only was a huge supply of capital made available to British industry and commerce; at

articulated in terms of rank, order, status and degree and sometimes expressed in terms of class (p.104). Hobsbawm takes a much more polarised view than Cannadine and argues that despite a 'fairly large number of levels of income, status and snobbery' there were only two classes that counted, the working class and the middle class (p.16). John Davies (2007) argues that matters were soon to change. He writes that in 1850 almost all Welsh parliamentary constituencies were represented by the landowning class but, by 1913, only 3 MPs were of gentry stock and only a handful of landlords sat on local councils. By contrast, in Richard Griffiths' (2005) opinion, conflicts of interest between men of business/political/social standing were 'not so much an exception as the rule' in late nineteenth century South Wales (p.100). Griffiths' article now forms part of his larger work, *'The entrepreneurial society of the Rhondda valleys'* which considers the role of the Mathias family initially as coal prospectors then, later, successful coal owners and civil engineering contractors. The article links William Henry Mathias' role as the contractor for the Cowbridge-Aberthaw Railway with his position on the Ystradyfodwg Local Board, one of the antecedents of Glamorgan County Council. Griffiths writes that as a member of the Ystradyfodwg Local Board, Mathias 'never seems to have declared an interest and he often accepted membership of sub-committees that to a modern eye seem inappropriate' (p.99).

According to a contemporary diarist and chronicler, David Jones of Wallington, Cowbridge in the 1860s was a stagnating town and Jones attributed that stagnation to the determination of local landowners to ensure that the borough's population remained below 1,500 and, as a result outside the scope of the Reform Bill, thereby protecting their personal interests in the administration of the borough's affairs. According to Jones, Cowbridge's sole economic function in the mid nineteenth

century was as a centre for agricultural trade (Williams, 1967, p.92).Fortunately for Cowbridge, the local agricultural trade was becoming increasingly important. Baber and Williams (1986), see the improvement of farming in Glamorgan, in the mid nineteenth century, as a response to the growing demand from the neighbouring industrial and mining communities. Critically, they add poor transport facilities in the pre-railway era considerably reduced the impact of the local markets (p.83). D.W. Howell (1974) also makes the point that before the construction of an adequate rail network the impact of industrialisation on farming in South Wales was restricted and he provides two relevant examples. First, the distance from Cowbridge to Aberdare was 24 miles, which meant that drovers would spend 2, or 3 days on the road. Frequently, this trip was too arduous for fat cattle and they had to be slaughtered en route. Second, before the building of the Cowbridge Railway, cattle had to be driven to Llantrisant or Bridgend and then taken by train to Merthyr via Neath. Because of the roundabout journey, and its reputation for delays, dealers preferred their cattle to be driven to the 'works' (p.46).with their more assured markets for meat and dairy produce. As a result of urbanisation and the spread of railways, Welsh agriculture changed markedly between 1851 and 1871. However, Hobsbawm points out another agricultural dimension and notes that the richest individuals in Britain continued to be large landowners until deep into the nineteenth century. Hobsbawm argues that the landlord interest did all it could to maintain its economic, social and political position and its traditional influence as well as its political stranglehold over the nation. Until 1885, large landholders continued to form an absolute majority in Parliament (p.196).

Hawke (1970) believes that whilst many farmers welcomed the extension of railways into agricultural districts, there were complaints that railway rates favoured imported agricultural products (p.101). Railway managers, on the other hand, were equally

agreed that agricultural produce was of little importance to their businesses (p.102) and English rural districts were usually thought unable to provide significant railway traffic (p.103).

D.C. Coleman's (1992) work comprises a number of diverse essays looking at the myths of the industrial revolution and in one, 'Gentlemen and Players', he considers the competence levels of businessmen in late Victorian England (p.123) amplifying Dean's approach to Victorianism. Coleman makes the point that before 1860 it was difficult to criticise the enterprise of industrialists because there were no standards; no one had seen the like of industrialisation previously (p.124). The period after 1860 is seen to be one of absolute and relative economic decline and Coleman attributes this to the growing absorption of the earlier revolutionary entrepreneurs into the 'gentlemanly ideal' portrayed by writers like Samuel Smiles (p.132) and the flood of entrepreneurs' sons to the public schools from the mid nineteenth century onwards (p.139). The views of the revolutionary entrepreneurs became increasingly diluted as they entered the world of the gentleman and absorbed a vague but persistent belief that 'some things were more important than profits' (p.150).

Harold Perkin (2002) takes an holistic view of social history by including subjects such as economics, culture, religion and politics. In Perkin's opinion, the modern English class system originated in the industrial revolution and he believes that the industrial revolution had a profound effect on the ways of living and the perceptions of the English people. Perkin argues that every class represents its interest as the common interest and 'universalises its own ideal'. Effectively, the class which manages to impose its ideal upon the rest becomes the de facto ruling class, and in Victorian England it was the entrepreneurial class that ruled through the power of its ideal over the landed aristocracy, although the latter occupied the main positions of

power until at least the 1880s (pp. 271-272). Perkin continues that the entrepreneurial ideal of capital and competition was accepted by a great majority of the rest of society as a consequence of the entrepreneurs winning the 'battle of the heart' for control of the prevailing system of morality, the 'battle of the mind' by controlling education and the 'battle for the State' by controlling the legislative and administrative systems (pp.272-273). To a considerable extent the views of Coleman and Perkin are in accord.

Julie Light (2009) examines the role of the middle classes as the urban elite in South Wales and argues that they played an important role in industrial and commercial development as well as in politics and aspects of social and cultural life. Light makes the point that although there is a significant volume of literature on the working classes in Wales, there is little on the middle classes and part of her investigation is aimed at discovering the reasons for this apparent gap in Welsh historiography.

Light believes that the Welsh middle classes had lower income than their English counterparts (p.35) but she also makes the point that the role of the 'public man' provided a more significant social identity than class. In Light's view, the middle classes were united in their belief in public service in their local town and they frequently defined themselves in terms of their usefulness and contribution to the local community (p.49).

A specific objective of the dissertation is an assessment of the success of the Cowbridge Railway. Keith Robbins makes the point that there is a great multiplicity of factors which contribute to the success or failure of a business venture. Failure can be due to marketing, finance or a management malfunction for example, but no ranking of these factors is universally applicable. Furthermore, Robbins writes, successes and failures are not easy to measure and it may be that the ability to adapt

and refine an existing business strategy may be even more important than the ability to innovate (p.51).

CHAPTER 2: DECLINE & PROGRESS

David Jones of Wallington painted a picture of decline in his writings about Cowbridge in the mid nineteenth century. According to T.J. Hopkins (1967, p.92), Jones and his mother lived in temporary accommodation in the town between 1863 and 1865. Hopkins (2009) writing in the *Dictionary of Welsh Biography* gives Jones' occupation as a clerk in a firm of London merchants and adds that 'despite the fact that he published nothing beyond a few articles in various periodicals and newspapers – David Jones is regarded as one of our chief authorities on the post-mediaeval history of Glamorgan'.

Jones (p.9), wrote that the old mail coach route from Cardiff to Swansea divided Glamorgan into the 'hills' and the 'vale' and he added that the northern 'hills' had been transformed since about 1780 'yielding in most cases large fortunes to the adventurers' and the 'native population of the soil'. To the south, Jones continued, is a rich agricultural district producing corn and pasture and he added that 'the temperate western breezes …cool the heat of summer and temper the cold of winter'. However, Jones qualified the idyll by noting that the winds 'sometimes bring with them more moisture than is altogether agreeable' (p.6).

Although Jones wrote from his own observations he confidently made the point that few of the inhabitants of the Vale could trace an agricultural connection further back than their grandparents and, he continued, 'Valemen are a fine, well formed, healthy race, intelligently quiet in their manner' and were 'content with their position as tiller of the ground'. Jones also noted that the Vale was an area where people were superstitious but that old customs and beliefs were 'crumbling into decay' (p.11). Apart from market day, Jones saw Cowbridge as a 'sleepy place'. For instance, he wrote, there was 'no manufacture' in the town and he pointed out that its sole trade

was derived from it being the centre of an agricultural district (p.12). Jones contrasted Cowbridge with the distant Glamorgan mountains 'where at night above their breezy summits, a glow of light reveals where the manufacture of iron goes increasingly on…' (p.15). He became increasingly critical of the town which he saw as being in gradual decline from a 'kind of county town' which he again contrasted with the fast growing population of the hills. The processes of industrial growth in north Glamorgan and Cowbridge's decline occurred, Jones (p.19) wrote, over the previous 60 to 80 years. Specifically, he ascribed the lack of development of Cowbridge to the refusal by the inhabitants to allow the South Wales Railway to run through it and noted that the prosperity of agriculture in the Vale of Glamorgan was dependent upon the growing population of the hills. Jones added that whilst a railway to Cowbridge would have joined the agricultural and industrial interests, 'the inhabitants of Cowbridge, true to the tradition of the place, have been, and are, more inclined to throw cold water on the scheme than give it a helping hand'.

In 1851, Cowbridge could demonstrate a large number of businesses, relative to its population, and it seems likely that it retained its place as an important local commercial centre at that time (See Appendix 2). However, Williams (1980) estimates that in 1831, the Vale of Glamorgan had 14,436 inhabitants and he adds that this increased by just 500 over the next 30 years. Williams attributes the stagnation to population drift to the iron works and mines of north Glamorgan. Appendix 1 shows Cowbridge's population level relative to other urban centres in Glamorgan in the first half of the nineteenth century.

B.L. James and D.J. Francis (1979) believe that the heyday of Cowbridge came to an end sometime between 1830 and 1850 and they attribute the decline to changes in local transport infrastructure. First, the primary coastal road from east to west Wales

was improved, west of Cowbridge, and diverted through Bridgend which then became the commercial focus for the western part of the Vale of Glamorgan and, second, the South Wales Railway was opened. James and Francis include a quote from the *Cardiff and Merthyr Guardian* in 1853, 'The want of railway accommodation reduces Cowbridge and its delightful environs to a state of hopeless isolation and cuts them off from the rest of the world …The absence of the greatest improvement of the age confines Cowbridge to the humble position of a small country market town and there is not at present any hope of its advancement' (p.84).

The Cambrian (13 February 1852, p.3) included the following extract in a report about the opening of lead mines in the area: 'Since the opening of the South Wales Railway, Cowbridge has been as it were shut off from view and almost forgotten but should these mines turn out to be profitable it is to be hoped this town will again be what it was'. Yet there was sporadic progress. The opening of a gas works in Cowbridge was reported in *The Cambrian* (24 February 1854, p.5), but an attempt to develop a corn exchange (*The Cambrian* 2 October 1857, p. 1) came to nothing.

The story that the South Wales Railway was designed to pass through Cowbridge, but was defeated by the inhabitants of the town is still heard today, yet Chapman (1984, p.7) quotes David Jones as writing: 'No one had ever believed the action of the Corporation to have compelled the South Wales Railway to pass by Cowbridge. The point of the accusation against them was that, under the force of apathy, they were hostile to the railway when as guardians of the welfare of the town, they should have taken active steps in getting the railway to enter their neighbourhood'. However, the *Prospectus of the South Wales Railway* told a somewhat different story. According to the *Prospectus,* I.K. Brunel's proposed route had been designed to minimise civil engineering problems, whilst maximising the potential for the transport of minerals

and agricultural products from South Wales, and providing a link from Southern Ireland to London and the other industrial towns of England (p.1). The *Prospectus* continued, 'From Cardiff, the Railway passes, by the valley of the Ely, through a rich agricultural district adjacent to Llantrisant, Cowbridge, Bridgend, Porth Cawl (sic) and Pyle, the produce of which would thus be rendered available towards the supply of the surrounding manufacturing population' (p.2). The optimism of the promoters was evidenced by the emphasis on both the business potential and simplicity of construction of the railway and a similar, optimistic tone is apparent throughout much of the pre-construction phase of the Cowbridge Railway, as will be seen later. By way of example the *Prospectus* made the point that the civil engineering 'will be remarkably easy for the first 60 miles' whilst the other 88 miles will not cause 'any peculiar difficulty or any great expense' (p.2). The critical point is that the South Wales Railway was to run along the Ely Valley, some five miles north of Cowbridge, which not only provided the easiest civil engineering option, but also gave access to both the potential of the upper Ely Valley for coal mining and to the agricultural lands to the south. There is no support here for the suggestion that it was the townspeople of Cowbridge who were responsible for the South Wales Railway by-passing the town.

One of the earliest references to a railway to Cowbridge appeared in *The Cambrian* (30 March 1816, p.1) and concerned the letting of a colliery in Llanharry 'directly on the line of a tramroad to be made from that part of the country to Cowbridge'. (Note: Llanharry is at the extreme southern outcrop of the South Wales coalfield about 4 miles north of Cowbridge and according to David Francis (1969, p.171), this colliery dates back to at least 1775). In *The Cambrian* (26 November 1825, p.1), there is another reference to the '...projected Tramroad or Railway from...Llanharry to the town of Cowbridge' included in a notice for a proposed meeting of interested

landowners and a follow up meeting was arranged in December 1825 (*The Cambrian* 24 December 1825, p.1). *The Cambrian* (28 January 1826, p.1.) reported on yet another meeting held on 24 January where attendees were told that the railway would commence from the 'Field of Coal' and would be 'of great public utility' and where it was proposed that 200 shares of £50 each could be applied for. This meeting was chaired by Thomas Edmondes (See Appendix 4 and Appendix 6), and a vote of thanks was given for his able conduct of the meeting. A notice of sale of a farm, at Llanharry, published in *The Cambrian* (7 October 1826, p.2) contained both disturbing and favourable news for Cowbridge. First, the notice made the point that Mr Telford had recommended a new mail road between Cardiff and Swansea which was to run through Llanharry, by-passing Cowbridge. According to Williams (1980), in 1823 the Post Master General instructed Thomas Telford to survey a new mail coach route across South Wales to connect with a proposed steam packet service between Milford Haven and Waterford. Although a number of surveys were undertaken and a Bill prepared, Williams writes that little occurred (p.439).Second, on the positive side, the notice of sale added that the site included a 'colliery now at work… (from which by tramroad to Cowbridge, the greater part of the Vale might be supplied with good coal at a very low rate)'. For whatever reason the tramroad was never constructed and no further references to it have been found in the course of research for this dissertation.

The Cambrian (27 October 1854, p.5.) illustrated the pace of growth of railway traffic in South Wales. The Vale of Neath Railway's takings for the week ending 15 October 1854 were £819, an increase of 316% over the same week in the previous year whilst the South Wales Railway's income increased by £1,326 to £5,166 over the same period. On the same page of the newspaper, a somewhat cryptic, unattributed

comment appeared ' a branch railroad from the Llantrisant Station to Cowbridge is much talked of here...for this town is worse off now than when the coaches were running. The only way to and from the station here is now on "Shanks Pony"'. The following year, *The Cambrian* (30 November 1855, p.4) included a notice signed by a number of inhabitants of Cowbridge requesting the Mayor to convene a public meeting to consider a railway from the town to the South Wales Railway to correct 'the great existing deficiency at present felt in this neighbourhood in reference to railway transit'. At the end of the same notice, the Mayor of Cowbridge appended his agreement to the request and arranged a meeting for the following week. Clearly, time was now of the essence.

The subsequent edition of *The Cambrian* (7 December 1855, p.5) carried an extensive report of the meeting. Interestingly, the Mayor, R.C.Nicholl Carne esq., made the point that 'whatever views some short-sighted persons formerly held' he thought that past experience had now shown them that the advantages offered by railway communication must be taken as well established facts and he continued, that 'no sooner did small villages become the site of railway stations then they rapidly grew up into populous towns'. The Mayor added that Cowbridge tradesmen suffered because of high transport costs, that dealers in agricultural goods could not easily get to the town and that it was difficult to transport agricultural goods without a railway.

A number of possible routes were considered. First, a line from the port of Aberthaw to Bridgend via Cowbridge which was criticised because of the physical difficulties involved in building a good harbour at Aberthaw. Second, a route from Cowbridge to the South Wales Railway at Llantrisant was suggested but it was argued that such a line would not generate sufficient passenger traffic. This point was countered by a suggestion that the railway would generate its own passenger traffic, as had happened

elsewhere and, furthermore, that passenger revenues would be supplemented by the carriage outwards from Cowbridge of agricultural products and the movement of coal inwards. An amendment that the railway could be worked more effectively by horse power rather than steam was met with the retort that local farmers were adopting steam power for threshing corn and that their horses were idle in the fields and this led to considerable laughter.

One speaker, Daniel Ithiel Edwards, a surgeon, favoured the Llantrisant-Cowbridge route and his position was supported by an analysis of potential income, (see Table 1) although he added that his figures were deliberately understated:

Table 1

	£ p.a.
300 passengers per week	585
Goods traffic	412
Hay, cattle & agricultural implements	150
16,000 tons of coal	1,600
781 tons of corn	117
	2,864
Working expenses 40%	1,135
Profit	1,729

Mr Edwards went on to suggest that the profit provided a yield in excess of 5% on his estimated capital cost of construction of £30,000 and he used his estimates as the basis for his criticism of the other two schemes. (Note: £1 in 1860 = £43.16 in 2005. www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/currency).

The third proposal involved building a loop line off the South Wales Railway beginning at Peterston-super-Ely, about 5 miles north west of Cardiff, and then continuing via Cowbridge to Bridgend. The Chairman disputed the figures prepared by Mr Edwards and added that although he favoured option three he did not care which scheme was carried out but he 'wished to obtain the best accommodation for the public at large'.

Yet another potential route, to link Cowbridge to the British railway network, was proposed in a letter to the editor of *The Cambrian* (14 December 1855, p.8). This latest suggestion proposed a line beginning at Pontypridd, then via Llantrisant, Cowbridge, Colwinston and Brocastle to Bridgend. This option, it was claimed, would better serve the western Vale of Glamorgan and provide an outlet for 'coal and iron found in abundance between Newbridge (i.e. Pontypridd) and Llanharran (sic)'. The author of the letter under the nom de plume 'A Well Wisher' concluded that the cost of his proposed line would be 'trifling'.

In *The Cambrian* of 21 December 1855, (p.4), a notice of a further meeting of the proposed Cowbridge Railway appeared and Daniel Itheil Edwards was named as chairman of the Provisional Committee. By 1 January the Provisional Committee had received a letter of support from the South Wales Railway, for the Cowbridge Railway, and the Committee agreed to commission a survey of the route and provide an estimate of the capital costs (*The Cambrian* 4 January 1856, p.4). On 28 March 1856, the Chairman was able to report the receipt of just over £97 in subscriptions from individuals towards the preliminary expenses of the line and he confirmed payment of that sum to the National Provincial Bank at Cowbridge. The Chairman also asked for views on the suggestion that the line be extended from Llantrisant station to Pontypridd. This proposal, he said, would allow the transport of agricultural produce from Cowbridge to 'the Mineral district of which Pontypridd is a nucleus' and that as it will then pass 'through a very rich mineral district it cannot fail to be otherwise than highly remunerative'. Furthermore, the Chairman added that the line 'will prove relatively inexpensive in point of construction'. Mr Edwards was of the opinion that the junction of the Cowbridge Railway with the South Wales Railway would benefit the shareholders of the latter company as 'it will at once facilitate the

influx of a large amount of coal traffic from a most important district the riches of which, are at present to a great extent, unavailable to the owners thereof from deficiency of output' (*The Cambrian* 28 March 1856, p.1).

It seems that the proposal for a new railway from Pontypridd to Cowbridge had won, at least for the moment, but the process that led to the elimination of the other routes detailed in *The Cambrian* of 7 December 1855 was not explained. However, a very significant public meeting of the grandly titled Cowbridge and South Wales Junction Railway was held on 26 May 1856 and reported in *The Cambrian* in the 6th June edition (p.3). One difficulty faced by the meeting was clearly a shortage of attendees which the Mayor attributed to the 'exceeding wetness of the day' although, he added, that despite the low attendance it was held to be 'sufficiently influential to show the interest felt'. Daniel Edwards (Chairman of the Provisional Committee) was also at a loss to explain the low attendance but he, too, considered unfavourable weather at a busy time for farmers combined with an 'absence of that amount of knowledge which was necessary to convince people of the necessity of the thing to be accomplished'. Mr Edwards stressed that he was undertaking his role as Chairman to 'improve the welfare of the community' and, he added, that his 'motives were correct' and that he acted not from a 'selfish interest but for the public good'. Mr Edwards claimed that he was under personal attack from an unnamed but wealthy inhabitant of the town and, he added, that old people could not say that things had to continue as they had in the past and that the duty of all was to 'develop those schemes by which the onward improvement of communities might be secured'.

Undaunted, Mr Edwards went on to summarise progress. First, the South Wales Railway was actively trying to increase traffic which, he added, would be further improved by the completion of the docks at Neyland and the onward connection by

steam ship to Ireland and America. Second, he claimed that most landowners of the district were in favour of the extended line from Cowbridge to Pontypridd and he outlined the report of the engineer to the line. The engineer's proposed route passed Crawshay's ironworks at Treforest and a number of developed and developing collieries on the southern outcrop. He continued that whilst a railway to the junction with the South Wales Railway at Llantrisant would be profitable, the returns on the extended line to Pontypridd would be much greater and there would be an additional benefit for Cowbridge if coal was brought direct from the 'pit's mouth'. Mr Williams, the engineer, projected the cost of the line at £25,000.

Mr Edwards emphasised the low construction costs and the benefits of the Pontypridd extension. Farmers, he said, 'would be induced to bring their corn to Cowbridge seeing that they could get their coal there'. He estimated that the extended line would carry three times more traffic than the shorter line to the South Wales Railway junction at Llantrisant yet, 'working expenses of the larger line would be nothing more than the short one'. To add weight to his argument Edwards had sought the views of the ironmaster, Francis Crawshay, who agreed that a line from Cowbridge to Pontypridd was the best option but that an extension to Aberthaw, would combine 'the mineral interests on the north with the seafaring interests on the south and thereby secure a good return'. A motion proposing that the railway be extended to Pontypridd was passed by the meeting and in response to the vote of thanks, the Mayor assured the meeting that 'it always afforded him great pleasure to render any assistance for the benefit of the town and the neighbourhood'.

However, by late 1856, it seems that apathy ruled and it was accepted that the proposed Cowbridge and South Wales Junction Railway could not attract sufficient financial backing to allow Parliamentary proceedings to take place. There was also a

wider, national concern about the financial affairs of railways. A pamphlet, *Railways and Shareholders* (1849) reported the Chancellor of the Exchequer as accusing railways of mismanagement and dishonesty (p.1) and the pamphlet added, 'No one can help what has been done, the money that has been wasted, the families that have been ruined, the lines that have been ill-laid out' (p.4). Criticisms of railway affairs may have had an adverse effect on potential investors. Cowbridge Corporation recognised the continuing isolation of the town from the railway network and in January 1860, it made a grant of £10 to support an omnibus from the town to Llantrisant station, twice a day (Chapman 1984, p. 9). However, the issue of a railway to Cowbridge would soon manifest itself again and the *Cowbridge Railway Bill* was published on 13 November 1861.

The *Bill* provided extensive powers for building, maintaining and operating a main railway from Cowbridge to Llantrisant station together with three shorter lines, one of which was to make a connection with the newly formed Llantrisant and Taff Vale Junction Railway, providing the sought after through link from Cowbridge to Pontypridd. The *Bill* also empowered the Taff Vale Railway Company to 'subscribe towards and take shares in the intended undertaking of the (Cowbridge Railway) Company, or any part thereof, to the extent of five thousand pounds'. The Taff Vale Railway was also empowered to 'appoint directors, or additional directors, to the Company'. There seems to have been some doubt about the ability of the Cowbridge Railway to operate as a financially viable and independent organisation at this very early stage in its life. The Taff Vale Railway consented to these arrangements and the other provisions of the *Bill* at a meeting reported in *The Bristol Mercury* (1862). The *Bill* also set out the rights of the Cowbridge Railway to use the equipment and tracks of both the South Wales Railway and the Ely Valley Railway within certain

prescribed limits. *The Morning Post* (1862) confirmed that the *Cowbridge Railway Bill* had received the Royal Assent. The Taff Vale Railway subsequently purchased 500 £10 shares in the Cowbridge Railway and this holding is recorded as number 86 in the *Cowbridge Railway share register* (1887).

At a meeting of shareholders reported in *The Cambrian* (p.3) on 5 December 1862 unanimous agreement was obtained to proceed with land purchase to enable railway construction to begin the following Spring. On 12 June 1863 *The Cambrian* (p.3), reported the cutting of the first sod by J. Nicholl Carne esq. The article went on to confirm that the object of the railway was to open up communications with the 'mineral and manufacturing districts and so to procure a more extensive and profitable market for the agricultural produce of the neighbourhood'. The newspaper also noted that the intention was to extend the railway to Aberthaw to 'secure the transport of limestone for which the last named place is celebrated'. Mr Carne was reported as saying that 'No sooner does the iron horse enter any place that that place begins immediately to improve in all moral and social respects - it becomes rapidly a place of great trade and it becomes a place of wealth and prosperity'.

The Cambrian of 29th September 1865 (p.6) not only reported on the opening of the Cowbridge Railway but also asked a series of questions such as 'Why had the railway taken so long?' The article also suggested, 'Perhaps things in Cowbridge went pretty smoothly and the tradesmen and inhabitants generally were quite content to jog along in the comfortable steps of their forefathers…' Others, the article continued, 'discarded the old fashioned notions of their grandmothers' and it went on, 'The determination of the promoters of the scheme overcame the apathy and indifferences of the inhabitants and at length the railway was opened with some little éclat'. However, the article criticised the operation of the railway, especially the excessive

waiting times for main line connections at Llantrisant station and it made the point that because of the inconvenience many hired horse and traps to make the trip from Cowbridge to Llantrisant while others preferred to walk. 'This must be remedied before the proprietors of the Cowbridge line can expect to receive any return on their expended capital' *The Cambrian* concluded. The financial success of the railway on the locality and vice versa is another issue and, even at this early stage, the outlook for the Cowbridge Railway did not seem particularly good. Despite a great deal of bullish sentiment it is hard to determine any real financial commitment.

CHAPTER 3: HOPES & REALITIES

In the *Glamorgan Gazette,* 16 May 1932 (p.2), retired local solicitor, E. W. Miles, wrote, 'I have a faint recollection of the cutting of the first sod of the Cowbridge Railway'. He continued, 'there was great enthusiasm locally and many tradespeople ventured to invest £50 in shares and lost the greater part of their investment for the company worked the line at a loss'. Mr Miles went on to write extensively about his reminiscences and added, 'Great expectations were aroused by tradesmen from this acquisition but in course of time it proved detrimental to their business by taking people out of the town and district, rather than bringing them in'. He also suggested that the subsequent construction of the Vale of Glamorgan Railway led to the development of livestock sales at Llantwit Major and this deprived Cowbridge of its predominance.

Appendix 3 shows that population growth in Cowbridge between 1851 and 1881 was generally modest, although there is a more noticeable increase in the decade after 1871, coinciding with the development of the railway. However, the increase in population after 1871 was not accompanied by the same proportionate rise in the number of dwellings and it seems unlikely that the coming of the railway impacted on household formation levels. An analysis of the distribution of trades and professions in Cowbridge in 1859 and 1875 (See Appendix 2) shows little significant change, except for the emergence of coal dealers.

Undoubtedly, the Cowbridge Railway had a significant impact on some occupations. William Linnard (1987) writing about a farmer, John Perkins of Llantrithyd, describes in some detail the process of manufacturing lime used for improving soil fertility. (Note: Llantrithyd is a hamlet about two miles east of Cowbridge.) Linnard estimates that Perkins' farm would need 18 tons of coal, say 10 cartloads, to burn the lime

needed (p.31) and he goes on to suggest, 'The coal for all this lime burning was carted to the farm from several different pits on the southern fringe of the coalfield, about 7 or 8 miles distant from Llantrithyd and, after 1799, also from the Glamorganshire Canal at Llandaff. One of the farm servants was sent with a cart, oxen and/or horses, and as often as 3 or 4 trips were made in a week during periods when lime burning was in progress on the farm and large quantities of coal were being consumed' (p.32). Howell (1974) suggests that the cost of overland transport of lime and coal, before the railways arrived, was one of the most serious handicaps to agricultural improvement in Wales (p.58). Once coal could be brought by the railway wagon to the railhead at Cowbridge the saving in manpower and the associated productivity gains across all the farms in the surrounding area must have been substantial.

Howell (1974) also notes that until the opening of the South Wales Railway, agricultural output from West Wales was shipped to Bristol but increasingly ended up in the growing industrial towns of Glamorgan and Monmouthshire. Specifically, he adds that much of the corn from the Vale of Glamorgan was sent to Bristol and subsequently returned to Cardiff, as flour or malt, for consumption in Merthyr Tydfil. The growing industrial market did little to change agriculture in South Wales until the development of the railways (p.58). Baber and Williams (1986) provide two examples which help portray the scale. John Nixon, a coal proprietor of Mountain Ash bought almost 400 tons of hay a year for his horses and as late as 1861 this was taken by cart from Cowbridge to Cardiff where it was transported north by the Glamorganshire Canal or Taff Vale Railway. Second, the Dowlais Iron Works purchased 1,800 tons of hay a year and the company was willing to buy it from Cowbridge if it was cheaper than that available from Ireland (pp.85-86).

The railway also had an impact at a significantly higher commercial level as the comparison of two related land transactions demonstrates. *The Times* of *20* March 1862, (p.18) included a notice of sale of the Llanharry Haematite Iron Ore mine and the notice made the point that it was '...most advantageously situated in the rich coal fields and mineral district of the county of Glamorgan having railway communication, by means of the South Wales and Ely Valley Railways, with the neighbouring iron works of South Wales, those of Staffordshire and the best shipping ports of the district.' The notice of sale predated the building of the Cowbridge Railway. *The Times* of 31 July 1865, (p.4) carried an advertisement for the flotation of The Llanharry Coal and Iron Company. The area of the property is given as 322 acres in both this and the previous advertisements and so it seems highly probable that the references are to the same plot of land. The second advertisement emphasised the fact that 'The Taff Vale Extension and Cowbridge Railway (just completed) passes over the estate through which a tramway has been made... so that the coal and iron can be loaded into railway trucks and sent to Cardiff and all parts of the country at small cost'. The authorised capital of the new venture was to be £60,000 including £20,000 in debenture stock carrying a coupon of 10% pa. The sum of £60,000 in 1865 is the equivalent of £2.74 million at 2005 prices (www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/currency). It was intended that the new venture would produce 400 tons of pig iron a week and it was suggested that this could be extended to include 'working up the iron into bars, plates etc.' As well as producing 20,000 tons of pig iron, 52,000 tons of coal were expected to be mined. Whilst the prospectus is fanciful, importantly it could not have been prepared without the availability of a transport infrastructure, in this case, provided by the building of the Cowbridge Railway.

The Morning Post of 13 December 1865, (p.1) advertised the flotation of The Trecastle Coal and Iron Company Ltd. which was located close by the Llanharry Coal and Iron Company's property. Again, the proximity of both the South Wales and Cowbridge railways is emphasised in the advertisement which included an estimated production of 91,000 tons of coal a year, 15,000 tons of iron and in excess of one million bricks. Substantial revenues would have been generated for the Cowbridge Railway had these grandiose plans been realised. Unfortunately, for the railway, they were not. According to David Francis (1969), coal mining at Llanharry ended shortly after 1865 (p.171). Francis adds that iron ore extraction flourished at both the Llanharry haematite mine and the Trecastle iron works. However, the latter mine was not opened until 1878 and although 120,000 tons of high quality ore was extracted from one pocket, the mine closed in 1891 because of competition from cheaper Spanish ore (Francis,1969, p.173).

The *Cowbridge Railway prospectus* (1861) did not include a projection of income and on the issue of costs, whilst the *prospectus* was in no doubt that 'the works required (to build the railway) will be very light and can be executed at far below the average costs of Railways in this district' it provided no actual data on the anticipated level. The absence of data must have been a concern to potential investors.

The *prospectus* sought to raise £30,000 through a share issue and, it appealed, 'The Promoters of the Line have every reason to believe that this undertaking will meet with the general and liberal support of all parties residing in and connected with Cowbridge' (p. 2). The Promoters also tried to convince potential shareholders that the 'railway will be productive of great advantage to all classes of the community' it added that because the '… Iron Works in the North of the South Wales coalfield are situate being of a barren nature as regard the production of agricultural produce' much

of the hay and grain needed was brought from Somersetshire (sic). By this time, Somerset was an important source of agricultural produce for the South Wales market following earlier improvements to the docks at Cardiff and the completion of the Glamorganshire Canal to Merthyr Tydfil via Pontypridd. The *prospectus* was certain that the construction of the Cowbridge Railway would enable local farmers to compete for this business and it also noted that the price of coal in Cowbridge currently exceeded £1 per ton whereas in Cardiff it was 11 shillings (£0.55) per ton and as a consequence the railway would carry 16,000 tons of coal to the town annually. It continued by arguing that a similar reduction in cost could be extended to all other goods as a result of saving 7 miles transport. The potential of the income from the iron ore mine at Llanharry is noted and the *prospectus* added, 'If the property is worked to the extent it is anticipated, considerable revenue will be produced from Iron Ore alone'. Interestingly, the Provisional Committee included C.H. Waring whose occupation was given as 'Director Llanharry Iron Ore Company'. See Appendix 4 for a full list of Provisional Committee members.

Although minutes of meetings after 1875 are available (*Cowbridge Railway minute book*, 1875), only work books are available for earlier periods (*Cowbridge Railway rough minute book*, 1863). The rough work books are mainly concerned with housekeeping matters such as payments to creditors, unpaid calls on shares and the work of contractors rather than strategic issues or relationships with customers.

The half yearly *Cowbridge Railway directors' report and accounts* for the period ending 30 June 1864 show a poor capital position with only £11,365 received from shareholders for calls, whilst costs to date were £12,116. Although the *directors' report* showed that '...your Railway is very nearly completed', the Company had been forced to issue bonds to contractors for unpaid construction works, payable in

two, or in some cases three, years' time. The *directors' report* at 31 December 1864 confirmed that the line had been opened to goods and mineral traffic but the Government inspector had refused to permit passenger traffic. By this time, £12,200 in Lloyd's Bonds had been issued to contractors and calls on shares had risen to £14,883. However, capital costs still exceeded calls paid on shares and loans raised to date by £7,013. The directors also confirmed that the Taff Vale Railway Company had agreed to operate the line at cost. (Note: H.J. Tarrant's (1867) pamphlet, (pp. 8-9) described Lloyd's Bonds as a new form of financial instrument which effectively increased a railway's borrowing powers above its statutory maximum. The Bonds were issued to railway contractors, for work done, in lieu of cash. Lloyd's Bonds were generally disliked by shareholders because they were frequently issued at a large discount).

By 31 December 1865, capital costs of the railway had escalated to £44,068 and whilst calls to shareholders had produced £17,488 and the issue of further tranches of Lloyd's Bonds had brought their total to £16,200, £10,380 remained due to creditors. Passenger traffic was reported as greater than anticipated, subject to the caveat 'considering the season of the year', whilst mineral and goods traffic 'has also been very good considering the nature of the district'. The *directors' report* dated 23 February 1867 sounded an ominous note: 'Nearly all the Lloyd's Bonds given by your Directors to the Contractors who made the Line having become due, your Directors thought it advisable to call a Special Meeting for Shareholders... (to take) into consideration the best means of satisfying such Bonds...and your Directors hope a large number of the Shareholders will attend on the occasion'. By the end of June 1867, judgements against the railway had been obtained by some creditors. The *directors' report* for the period noted that The Sheriff had sold all the moveable goods

of the railway to satisfy Guest and Company's unpaid bill for rails, and to keep the railway operating, the Chairman had personally bought a number of the company's assets which he intended to rent back to the railway. The *directors' report* detailed the Chairman's purchases as including 'the large Turntables, carriage shed and Water Tank and Pump' all of which must have been quite fundamental to the operation of the railway. Another unnamed person had bought the office furniture which had also been made available to the company. Appendix 5 shows the main income streams of the railway together with the operating surplus. The operating surplus for the period of the review averaged £482 pa, or just over £22,000pa at 2005 prices (www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/currency), whilst the income streams show a gradual, if erratic, increase over time. At some time between 30 June 1867 and 30 June 1871 the company was placed in the hands of a Receiver appointed by the Court of Chancery and that situation continued to exist at 30 June 1875.

In practice, Mr Edwards' estimated revenue streams for passenger traffic were indeed significantly understated (See Table 1, Page 22). Between 1867 and 1874, annual passenger revenues never fell below £1,000. (A summary of revenue and costs for the period 1 July 1866 to 30 June 1875 is provided in Appendix 5). In 1873, passenger ticket sales of £1,637 were generated and in the following year £1,570.Mr Edwards had estimated passenger numbers at 300 a week, substantially below the actual numbers of 40,000 to 50,000 a year, shown in Table 2 below.

Table 2
Passenger Numbers

Six Month Ending	First	Second	Third	Parliamentary	Total
30 June 1871	472	893	17,549	102	19,016
31 December 1871	681	929	17,968	1,470	21,048
30 June 1872	613	931	16,389	1,443	19,376
31 December 1872	715	1,305	14,973	4,545	21,538
30 June 1873	633	1,060	14,732	4,377	20,802
31 December 1873	679	1,441	18,007	5,491	25,618
30 June 1874	740	1,534	17,527	5,989	25,790
31 December 1874	686	1,471	17,162	5,958	25,277
30 June 1875	584	1,794	15,351	5,550	23,279

(Source: *Cowbridge Railway directors' reports and accounts)*

Notes:

1. In the original documents some of the totals shown differ from the aggregate of the individual elements.

2 Published figures for 31 December 1871 show 101 Excursion tickets as having been sold. For simplicity, these have been amalgamated with the Third class figures in the Table above.

For a town with just over 1,000 inhabitants, passenger numbers appear strong. Mr Edwards' estimate of income for goods, hay and cattle and corn totalled £679pa. In most years between 1867 and 1874, the actual income derived from goods traffic was at least double Mr Edwards' estimate and exceeded £1,400 each year from 1871 onwards. However, there were major shortfalls in the estimated figures for mineral traffic and working expenses. Mr Edwards postulated income of £1,600 from minerals

whereas, in reality, it only exceeded £600 in one year between 1867 and 1874. Working costs were always in excess of £2,000pa compared with the budget of £1,135, based on an unrealistically low estimated operating ratio of 40%. As a consequence, the annual surplus was usually between £500 and £600 and it was this sum that was available to provide for the interest on bonds and debentures, leaving nothing for the payment of dividends to shareholders.

The higher working costs relative to those estimated may have, in part, been affected by timing. R.J. Irving (1978) suggested that the operating performance of railways began to deteriorate from the 1870s. Over the previous two decades, the operating ratio (i.e. the ratio of expenditure to income) had been stable at less than 50% but as a result of higher costs it rose steadily during the 1870s (p.48). Irving attributed this decline not exclusively to the traditional view of the cause, i.e. excessive capital expenditure, but rather to a 'failure to offset rising costs by improving techniques of operation' (p.46). Those who support the 'over capitalised' view argue that much of the railway construction undertaken in the third quarter of the nineteenth century was 'relatively uneconomic' and consisted of a network of rural branch lines where demand for railway services was irregular (p. 47).

Financial problems were not unique to the Cowbridge Railway. J.R. Brandon (1870, pp. 5&6) wrote from an excess of capital perspective and advocated a form of nationalisation of the railways to guarantee '…to the shareholders the interest on their shares' and to the creation of a new form of government stock which would be '…more saleable, more secure than the present railway shares'. Brandon summarised the cause of the problem that he was trying to resolve '…the returns made for railway investments have not been at all such as might have been expected from capital laid out' and he added that many railway shares were currently valueless.

There is no evidence in any of the *directors' report and accounts* studied that a dividend was ever paid by the railway, and cash flow and profit levels were too meagre to permit repayment of the Lloyd's Bonds. Since the Bonds were usually issued for a period of two to three years, it seems likely that they were rolled over at maturity and, in that case, subject to an ever widening discount. Only three of the original landlords had been paid for their land by 1873 and according to Chapman (1984, p.37) matters came to a head the following year when the railway was sued for non-payment of land used for building the line. Finally, on 1 January 1876, the Cowbridge Railway was leased in perpetuity to the Taff Vale Railway and at the same time the outstanding creditors were settled by a new tiered issue of debenture stock.

The Western Mail (6 May 1875, p.1) reported on the Extraordinary General Meeting of the Cowbridge Railway held two days earlier at which the Taff Vale Railway set out its payments under the proposed lease. In the first year the rent payable by the Taff Vale was set at £7,500, followed by £1,000 in year two then on a sliding scale to reach £2,000 in year seven and subsequent years. The Meeting was told that at 31 December 1874, debts were £27,000 at 4% pa, the company's liabilities were £50,000 and traffic receipts £3,000, although the last figure seems overstated. Chapman (1984) notes that the Taff Vale Railway sponsored a private Act of Parliament in 1889 to reorganise its capital structure and as part of that exercise the Issued Share Capital of the Cowbridge Railway amounting to £18,850 was exchanged for £8,310 of Taff Vale 4% Debenture Stock (p.51). Clearly, the railway was far from being a financial success but it is difficult to produce definitive proof as to the causes. Was it Victorian over-optimism, or a lack of support from local worthies to provide financial backing? Undoubtedly, the absence of a realistic financial plan was a major omission and the

statement by Mr Miles referred to earlier that many tradespeople lost the greater part of their investment in the railway seems to be valid.

CHAPTER 4: TOADYISM & REFORM

The point has been made earlier that David Jones of Wallington believed that members of Cowbridge Corporation were not in favour of the South Wales Railway passing through the town and rather than promoting the benefit the railway would gain from its association with Cowbridge, and its environs, the Corporation was apathetic.

Jones (p.26) also wrote critically about the local landowners 'preventing the increase in house accommodation and are accused of more illiberal motives for so doing'. Jones attributed the reluctance to expand the town's population to the 'Reform Bill' which he suggested had an impact on boroughs with a population exceeding 1,500 (p.12). Somewhat scathingly, David Jones wrote of the Cowbridge Corporation ' … it is a corporation which has now dwindled down to a snug little family party who look after the town funds of about £300 a year as so much private patrimony'. Jones added that 'freemen of the town are elected by the members of the Corporation and they take care to adjure themselves by subjecting the aspirant to municipal honours to a long course of "toadyism"' that none but 'fit and proper persons to serve their interests are admitted' (p.13). He continued in full flow, 'To preserve such a state of things the loving members of the Corporation who are the chief owners of the little land comprised in the parish of Cowbridge willingly sacrifice their goodly addition to their income that the granting of building leases would produce in order that the town may be preserved from the chance of falling under that terrible destroyer of peace and quietrap "the Municipal Act"' (p.14). Jones added that the office of Mayor of Cowbridge was derived from that person's position as Constable of Llanblethian castle and the function of Constable was, in turn, under the gift of the Lord of the Manor and was an appointment for life.

The Charter which applied to Cowbridge for much of the nineteenth century was granted in the 'thirty third year of the reign of King Charles II' (? Thomas, 1753). The Charles II Charter designated Cowbridge a '... Free Town of itself' and the Bailiffs, Aldermen and Burgesses would form '... one Body Corporate and Politick in Deed and in Name' (p.1). In addition, the Charter conferred on the Bailiffs, Aldermen and Burgesses the right to 'have acquire and possess Manors, Messuages, Lands, Tenements, Liberties, privileges, jurisdiction, Franchises and other Hereditaments...' (p.2). The Charter also set out the constitution of the Common Council and its powers. The Charter made reference to two Bailiffs as the primary officers of the town, who were superior to the Aldermen and Capital Burgesses, 'that the Aldermen and Capital Burgesses ...shall be from time to time adjusting and helping to the Bailiffs' and that the 'Aldermen, Capital Burgesses and Bailiffs are to use themselves for the further publick good common utility and good Government of the town' (p.3). The Charter also made the point that the Bailiffs were chosen from, and elected by, the Aldermen who were, in turn, appointed for life unless they cause 'ill Government or misbehaviour' (p.5).

Appendix 6 lists the Mayors and Bailiffs of Cowbridge for much of the nineteenth century and it demonstrates some of the concerns expressed by David Jones. The Mayor was in post for life whilst the Bailiffs appeared to be a self-perpetuating clique, many of whom were substantial landlords in the town. *Cowbridge buildings and people* (1999) includes details of some of the holdings of those who occupied the role of Bailiff. By 1843, the Ballard family, for example, owned 1 and 3, 5 and 7-11 High Street Cowbridge (p.12-14) and Edward Ballard also owned the Horse and Groom Inn (p.16), the Duke of Wellington Inn (p.69) and the Butcher's Arms (p.82), at various times. The Taynton family are described as being among the 'crachach' of Cowbridge

and the Rev. Francis Taynton had been curate of six Vale of Glamorgan parishes (p.18). Rev Thomas Edmondes was vicar of Llanblethian and his forbears had owned a number of inns and malt houses, in Cowbridge, from the mid eighteenth century (p.43). By the 1840s, Vicar Edmondes had moved to Old Hall Cowbridge, one of the town's largest and grandest houses, and as squire/parson he and his wife played a significant role in the social life of Cowbridge. In addition to owning buildings and land in Cowbridge and Llanblethian, Rev. Edmondes owned coal mining interests in the Rhondda Valley, where Edmondestown carries the family name (pp.57-58). Thomas Llewellyn is described as a banker, landed proprietor and retired corn merchant (p.101). There is also a direct link back to the railway. In the *Cowbridge Railway book of references* which accompanied the Notice of the proposed Parliamentary Bill and dealt with the land to be acquired by the railway for construction, Rev. Edmondes is shown as the owner of two properties. The first is described as comprising a house, garden and outhouses and the second, a pasture field, road and footpath. The latter plot was to become the site of the Cowbridge railway station. These were clearly people of social, financial and political importance both individually and collectively.

David Jones referred to both the 'Reform Bill' (p.12) and to the 'Municipal Act' (p.14) and it seems probable that he was actually making reference to the Municipal Corporations Act, 1835 which was frequently known as the Municipal Reform Act. The Municipal Corporations Act, 1835 was an early attempt to reform the medieval system of local government that still existed in many urban areas of England and Wales in the early nineteenth century. Cardiff, Swansea and Newport boroughs for example were reformed under the Act but Cowbridge escaped, Jones claimed, because of the artificially restricted availability of building land. However, some of

Llanelli's inhabitants were enthusiastic for reform and *The Cambrian* (5th September 1835) noted on page 4 that a petition, in favour, had been sent to Lord John Russell. The petitioners of Llanelli wrote '...Llanelly (sic) contains about 5,000 inhabitants; and presuming from its immense mineral resources, the establishment of extensive copper, iron and other manufactories and the many important improvements taking place in the town and its vicinity, that its population will continue rapidly to increase which consideration renders it still more necessary to place our borough under the proposed Municipal Reform Law'. Despite the enthusiasm of the town's inhabitants, the town's growing industrial importance and its population being 4 times larger than Cowbridge, Llanelli's local government was not reformed until 1894 (Strauch, 2003). Cowbridge received a new *Charter of Incorporation* (1886) under the Municipal Corporations Act 1882, and this largely swept away the old regime and introduced a local democracy, albeit with a restricted franchise. The old charter and its government system, so despised by David Jones, were finally eradicated. The Schedule to the 1835 Act specifically named those towns/boroughs that were to be at the vanguard of local government reform and according to Perkin (2002), there were only 178 boroughs in England and Wales that fell within the Act's scope. The omission of a rapidly growing town like Llanelli from the scope of the 1835 Act suggests that it was never intended to reach down to small towns and Cowbridge, with a population of around 1,000, was a small town. Even if the supply of building land was controlled as Jones argued, his suggestion that this was done to prevent the Borough falling within the ambit of the Municipal Corporations Act, 1835, seems a little too Machiavellian. Furthermore, Appendix 3 shows a small decrease in the number of persons per dwelling between 1851 and 1871 which might suggest a low level of demand for additional housing in the town.

CHAPTER 5: FINANCE & ROMANCE

From a shareholder's perspective, the Cowbridge Railway was not successful, but no suggestion that it was promoted for the improper financial gain of any individual, or group of individuals, has been found. On the contrary, the Mayor, for example, bought some of the railway's assets in an apparently altruistic attempt to keep it operational. David Jones' argument that the landowning members of Cowbridge Corporation conspired to keep the town's population below 1,500, seems somewhat too Machiavellian. By most measures, Cowbridge was far too small and unimportant, compared with the new settlements in the established manufacturing regions of England and Wales to be included within the Municipal Corporations Act, 1835. Furthermore, if Jones was correct why would the Tayntons, Edmondes, Ballards, Bradleys and Bevans have had such a change of heart between the 1840s and 1860s?

A more probable explanation is that the railway was built as a consequence of (Victorian) over enthusiasm. The South Wales Railway had passed by the town which led to the immediate withdrawal of the stage coach service. At a time when communication was improving nationally, Cowbridge suffered from increased isolation. A railway must have seemed a good idea, it was perceived as a symbol of modernity, and a potential catalyst for municipal growth. The industrial riches of the north Glamorgan ironmasters were about to be replicated on Cowbridge's doorstep, according to the promoters of some of the proposed new iron works. Once the railway concept was accepted, it developed a momentum of its own. Although the contemporary newspapers noted apathy, no significant adverse comments from attendees of the numerous meeting were reported. The promoters as a generalisation lacked commercial/business/entrepreneurial skills although two members of the

Provisional Committee (See Appendix 4) were directors of the Taff Vale Railway, and two others were also company directors, four were commissioned officers, three were clergymen, D. I Edwards a surgeon, and the Ballard family were landowners and local worthies.

Yet, the idea that the development of the railway was a product of a traditional social/political/economic elite contradicts Julie Light (2009). Light argues that there was a significant middle class presence in the towns of South Wales in the nineteenth century (p.29) and she continues that it was the middle classes who formed the urban elites and were active in the social, cultural, economic and political life of the towns (p.30). Light considers an assortment of criteria as qualifications for belonging to the middle classes (p.35), such as income and occupation but then abandons them in favour of a 'common sense idea of what is meant by middle class' (p.38). She continues by pointing out that the urban elites in South Wales were occupied in a wide range of middle class occupations from the professions, retailing and commerce (p.45) and that the creation of a 'public man' constituted an important stage in the claim for power and position in the town by the professional and middle classes. However, the draper, the grocer, the ironmonger and the greengrocer that Light suggests were important trades for the 'public man' in Pontypool, Penarth and Bridgend (pp.45-46), do not feature in the composition of the Cowbridge Railway's Provisional Committee. Harold Perkin's hypothesis that change was much slower in the countryside seems a better explanation for the coming together of long established local worthies in the shape of the Provisional Committee than a newly emergent middle class. Furthermore, the absence of entrepreneurial or business skills combined with the over exuberance typical of the time seem to be the most likely cause of the railway's lack of financial success.

In the opinion of B.R.Mitchell (1964), British railways were built with existing traffic very much in mind although he recognised coal to be an exception. The prospect of a new line, Mitchell suggested, often led to the sinking of new pits in hitherto untapped parts of the coalfield (pp.316-317). If iron ore is substituted for coal then Mitchell's hypothesis might have some relevance to the Cowbridge Railway. Mitchell also made the point that railways in Britain led to the development of the capital market and he quoted an 1845 edition of *The Economist:* 'Railway property is a new feature of England's social economy which has introduced commercial feelings to the firesides of thousands'. However, Mitchell also noted that while ordinary shares remained a speculator's buy until the final quarter of the nineteenth century, debentures offered a large field for those with the 'rentier' outlook (p.330). Perhaps this comment explains the failure of the Cowbridge Railway to attract the level of share capital that it needed. Not only were the costs of building the line higher than anticipated, most of the capital employed was in the form of debentures and Lloyd's Bonds.

A.G. Kenwood (1965) made a related point and argued that the railway promotion boom of 1863-5 differed from earlier booms. Kenwood went on to suggest that since private investors were wary of further heavy investment in railways, the investment wave of the 1860s was dominated by railway contractors. The railway contractor was determined to find work to enable him to maintain his permanent staff, equipment and an organisation built up during previous booms (pp.317-318). Again, these suggestions help to explain the reluctance of all but the smallest investor to subscribe for shares in the Cowbridge Railway and the ready acceptance of Lloyd's Bonds by the contractors.

Even if the promoters lacked business skills, they did have political and social status albeit within a restricted sphere. Trevor May (1995) quoted another writer in *The*

Economist who claimed that 'so great was the effect of conspicuous wealth upon social status that it would pay a millionaire to sink half his fortune in buying 10,000 acres of land to return only one shilling per cent and live upon the remainder than live upon the whole without land. He would be a greater man in the eyes of more people' (p.84). The 'movers and shakers' associated with the railway did not seem to have the level of wealth suggested in *The Economist* extract, with the possible exception of the Carnes, who, S.K Roberts (2006) wrote, 'were unexceptional Glamorgan gentry until one of them, Edward Carne, broke out of these territorial and social constraints to acquire lucrative office under James I' (p.27). Eric Evans (2001) disagrees with May and he quotes Earl Grey as calling the middle classes 'the real and efficient mass of public opinion without whom the power of the gentry is nothing' (p.214). Evans suggested that the period 1845-1870 was the zenith of the bourgeoisie. First, the dominant values of society reflected the attitudes of the middle class and second, whilst most M.Ps. remained landowners, they increasingly accepted that prosperity was to be achieved by adopting free trade and the fullest possible licence to competition both of which were middle class values.

The Cowbridge Railway share register (1887) showed Edward Ballard as still holding 10 shares in the Company, as did Thomas Edmondes. However, by this time, there were no Carnes, Edwards, Homfrays or Baileys and most of the other registered holders owned 10, or fewer shares. E.W. Miles (1930) seems to have been correct when he wrote in the *Glamorgan Gazette* that many tradespeople invested £50 in shares 'and lost the greater part of the investment'. The financial projections used in the promotions were inadequate and the basic rationale for building a railway, exceeding five miles in length, through a sparsely populated farming area to reach a town of approximately 1,100 people was ill conceived.

The inability of the Cowbridge Railway to attract sufficient ordinary shareholders and adequate ordinary share capital makes it difficult to find support, in this case, for Hobsbawm's (1968) view that it was an excess of capital that was the reason behind Britain's railway development. However, the Cowbridge Railway does provide support for another of Hobsbawm's hypotheses. By way of conclusion, it seems likely that it was the romantic appeal of technological advance that drove the development of the Cowbridge Railway rather than the rational calculation of profit and loss.

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APPENDICES

Page No.

APPENDIX 1

POPULATION CHANGE-SELECTED GLAMORGAN TOWNS

	1801 No.	1811 No.	1821 No.	1831 No.	1841 No.	1851 No.	1801-1821 % Change	1821-1851 % Change
Cowbridge	759	850	1107	1097	1080	1066	35.84	-3.70
Llantrisant	1715	2122	2585	2789	3222	4181	50.73	61.74
Aberdare	1486	2062	2782	3961	6471	14999	38.76	627.40
Merthyr	7705	11104	17404	22083	34977	46378	125.88	166.50
Cardiff	1870	2457	3521	6187	10077	18351	88.29	421.19

Source: Williams (1980 pp.315-316)

APPENDIX 2

SUMMARY OF TRADES AND PROFESSIONS IN COWBRIDGE

	1859	1875
Agents (Land)	5	2
Attorneys	3	3
Auctioneers	3	1
Bakers & Confectioners	7	6
Bank(s)	1	3
Blacksmiths	3	4
Boot & Shoe Makers	7	6
Brewers	-	2
Butchers	4	4
Cabinet Makers	2	2
Carpenters & Joiners	4	7
Chemists & Druggists	2	3
Fire (Insurance) Agents	8	9
Gardeners & Seedsmen	5	3
Grocers	15	11
Inns & Pubs	14	18
Beer Retailers	9	6
Ironmongers	2	2
Linen Drapers	5	5
Maltsters	4	3
Milliners & Dressmakers	5	6
Painters	2	3

APPENDIX 2 (CONTINUED)

Saddlers	2	2
Surgeons	4	3
Tailors	6	4
Toy Dealers	-	2
Agricultural Implement Makers & Dealers	-	3
Coal Dealers	-	3
Book Sellers	1	3

Notes:

1. Numbers adjusted to exclude neighbouring villages
2. Slater's Directory 1859, lists the following trades/ businesses which had become extinct by 1875:

Omnibuses:

To Cardiff every alternate morning at 8.30 and from the Duke of Wellington Inn every Tuesday afternoon at 5.00.
To Llantwit Major every alternate evening at 8.30

Carriers:

To Cardiff, Thomas Lewis from Cowbridge, Monday, Wednesday and Friday
To Llantrisaint (sic) John Thomas from Cowbridge, daily.

Sources:
Slaters Royal national and commercial directory and topography South Wales edition (1859, pp.48-49)
Worrills directory of South Wales & Newport Monmouthshire (1875, pp137-142)

APPENDIX 3

COWBRIDGE BOROUGH DWELLINGS & POPULATION

YEAR	NO. OF OCCUPIED DWELLINGS	POPULATION	REF
1851	224	1066	1
1861	235	1094	2
1871	247	1134	3
1881	254	1229	4

1. Population Tables I, Vol II England & Wales. Divisions VII-IX 1851 p.84
2. Population Tables England & Wales Vol I Index .1861 p.178
3. Population Tables England & Wales Vol I [Ancient] Counties 1871 p.530
4. Population Tables England & Wales Vol I [Ancient] Counties 1881 p.526

(Source: www.histpop.org/ohpr/servlet)

APPENDIX 4

COWBRIDGE RAILWAY PROVISIONAL COMMITTEE MEMBERS

R.C. Nicholl Carne	Mayor of Cowbridge
Rev. T. Edmondes	Bailiff of Cowbridge
Rev. F. Taynton	Bailiff of Cowbridge
R. Fothergill	Director Taff Vale Railway
T. Powell	Director Taff Vale Railway
J.W. Carne	Director Llantrisant & Taff Vale Junction Railway
J Homfray	
Col. R.Boteler	
T.D. Salmon	
W. Perkins	
Rev. E Morgan	
Captain N. Hewitt	
Lieut. Royds	
E. Ballard	
J. Ballard	
Lieut. J. Ballard	
D. J. Edwards	
C. H. Waring	Director Llanharry Iron Ore Co.

Source: *Cowbridge Railway prospectus* (1861, p.1)

APPENDIX 5

COWBRIDGE RAILWAY RECEIPTS, COSTS AND OPERATING SURPLUS

	R E C E I P T S				
Six Months Ending	Passenger	Mineral	Goods	Costs	Surplus
	£	£	£	£	£
31 December 1866	576	262	602	1052	388
30 June 1867	517	280	598	1094	301
31 December 1867	*	*	*	*	*
30 June 1868	545	208	737	1108	382
31 December 1868	586	288	565	1041	398
30 June 1869	514	249	622	1115	270
31 December 1869	584	270	534	1033	355
30 June 1870	513	229	625	1312	55
31 December 1870	*	*	*	*	*
30 June 1871	486	187	655	1094	234
31 December 1871	533	183	640	1225	131
30 June 1872	549	183	768	1202	298
31 December 1872	661	268	705	1320	314
30 June 1873	819	322	712	1528	325
31 December 1873	818	323	763	1711	193
30 June 1874	784	276	820	1808	72
31 December 1874	786	276	808	1768	102
30 June 1875	703	268	851	1781	41

Notes

1. * = data unavailable
2. Goods receipts includes livestock, parcels and mail where relevant

Source: *Cowbridge Railway directors' reports and accounts* (1866-1875)

APPENDIX 6

MAYORS OF COWBRIDGE

1817	William Nicholl
1828	Thomas Edmondes
1845	Robert Savours
1849	Robert Charles Nicholl Carne
1870	George Whitlock Nicholl

Source: James (1922, p. 63)

BAILIFFS OF COWBRIDGE

1840-3	Edward Ballard & Francis Taynton
1844	John Bevan & Thomas Edmondes
1845-6	Edward Ballard & Francis Taynton
1847	John Bevan & Thomas Edmondes
1848-50	Edward Ballard & Francis Taynton
1851	John Bevan & Thomas Edmondes
1852	Edward Ballard & Edward Bradley
1853	Francis Taynton and Thomas Edmondes
1854	Edward Ballard & John Bevan
1855	Francis Taynton & Thomas Edmondes
1856	Edward Ballard & John Bevan
1857	Francis Taynton & Thomas Edmondes
1858	Edward Ballard & John Bevan
1859	Edward Ballard & Francis Taynton
1860	Edward Ballard & Thomas Edmondes
1861-3	Thomas Edmondes & Francis Taynton
1864	James Ballard & John Gibbon
1865	Thomas Edmondes & John Gibbon
1866	Thomas Edmondes & James Ballard
1867-9	John Gibbon & James Ballard
1870-1	Thomas Edmondes & Thomas Llewellyn
1872	John Gibbon & Thomas Llewellyn
1873	Thomas Edmondes & John Ballard
1874-7	Thomas Llewellyn & Edward Bradley (jnr.)

Source: James (1922, pp. 64-5)