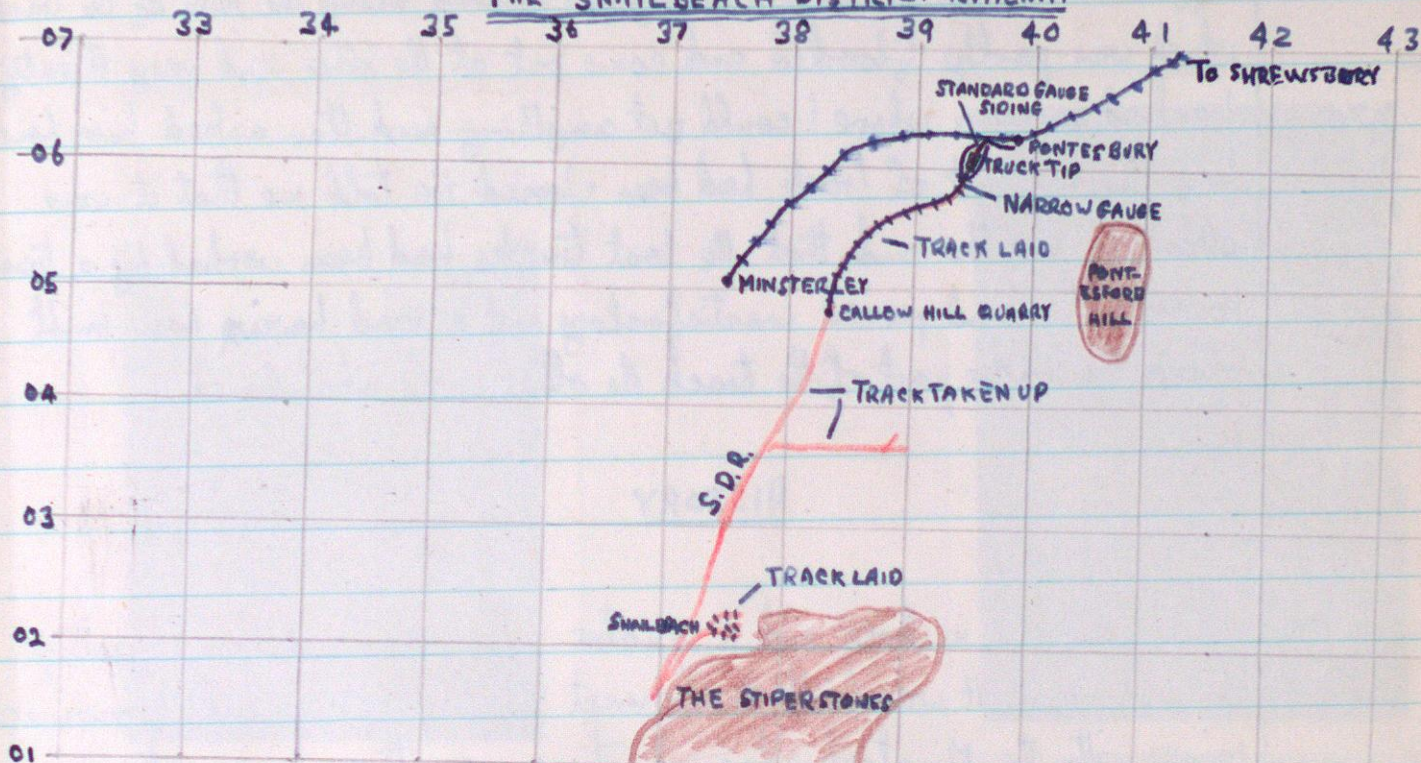


AGENTS OFFICE:

PONTESBURY JUNCTION
BALOR

THE SNAILBEACH DISTRICT RAILWAY



Description of Exploration - 20 & April May 1959

To begin with I had thought this railway to be standard gauge because it is marked on the map joined to the Minsterley branch. Unshown on it is a truck tip from narrow gauge to standard.

My first intention, after visiting the line on my bike on a Sunday, had been to try and find a truck at Snailbeach and roll down the line but on the whole holiday it poured. I had also intended to climb the Stiperstones but with this weather it was out of the question.

On getting to Snailbeach the only rails were at a porcelain mine and were detached. I walked down the railway track to Callow Hill quarry and found that the lines remained here. By this time I was pretty wet and so I didn't try to find any trucks. I was also rather disheartened at being kept

off about a mile of the old railway. I walked along the rest of the track which was partly flooded and came out at the other end very thirsty. I asked a man where I could get anything and then asked him how long the last bit of track had been closed. He told me that it was about 12 months and that the last trucks had been worked by a tractor. However this had proved unsatisfactory and a road having been built along the older part of the track the other was abandoned.

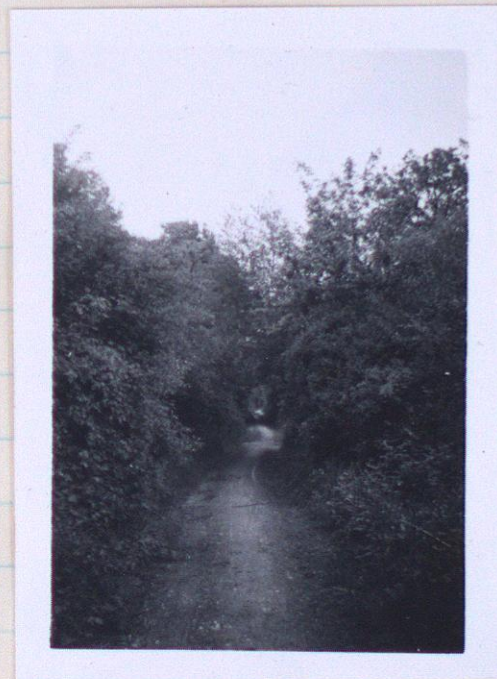
HISTORY

This railway is three and a quarter miles long and has a gauge of 2 ft. 4 in. It was built to connect the Stiperstones and Crownstret mines with the Minsterley branch. There were three locomotives - a "Kerr Stuart" and two "Baldwins". It was taken over like a few other branch lines (S+MR) by Colonel Stevens. The reason for this nobody quite seems to know.

1960

On 10th July Ratcliff and myself^{+ Posnan} went along to see what we could find on the line and to collect as much information as we could from the old agent's office at Pontesbury. We collected hundreds of letters addressed to a certain Junction Man Jones including several from the late H.F. Stephens in 1926. We also found a minute book, an old plan, and a stamp as at the top of p. 44. We also pushed a truck a little way up the line but couldn't get it up to the last point owing to a truck which had been derailed in the way. Next Wednesday we went to the Berrough library and found a history of the line, which I will presently summarize at the back. Other books we found were a history of the S+MR and a handbook for the same railway; also a history of the Bishops Castle railway. See p 140.

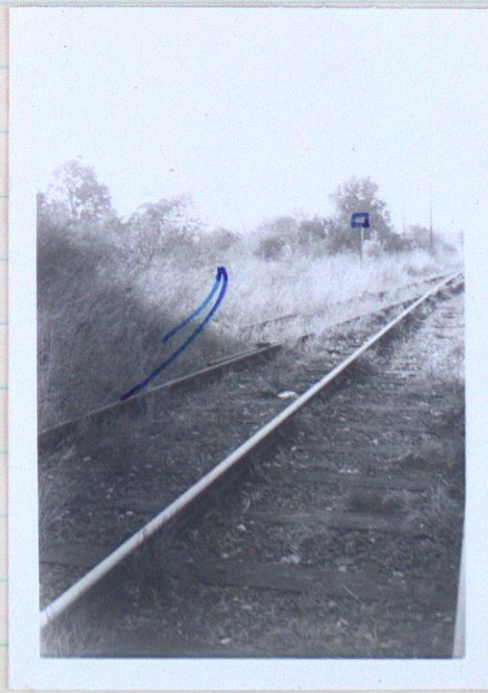
Photographs



ABOVE. A typical stretch of track with foliage causing a tunnel over the line.



ABOVE. For my own use! The track left. The supports across are the supports for the rails. I was standing on the standard gauge track but, as the photo shows, all is very much overgrown.



LEFT. In the rough are a trespassing notice and the rails. The rails are still there but one has to dig to get to them.