

Embark on a Nostalgic Journey: The Story of Mid Wales Slate Railway Narrow Gauge Railways



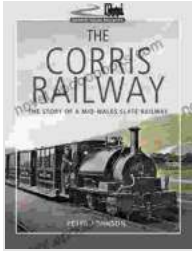
Nestled amidst the picturesque landscapes of Mid Wales, the Mid Wales Slate Railway was once a bustling hub of industrial activity. Its narrow gauge railways played a pivotal role in transporting slate, a valuable building material, from the region's quarries to destinations far and wide.

The Corris Railway: The Story of a Mid-Wales Slate Railway (Narrow Gauge Railways) by Peter Johnson

★★★★☆ 4.9 out of 5

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Screen Reader	: Supported
Enhanced typesetting	: Enabled
Word Wise	: Enabled
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A Legacy of Slate

The Mid Wales slate industry has its roots in the mid-19th century, when the region's vast slate deposits were discovered. The tough and durable nature of Welsh slate made it highly sought after for roofing, flooring, and other building applications.

As the demand for slate grew, so did the need for efficient transportation. The construction of narrow gauge railways emerged as the ideal solution, allowing for the movement of heavy slate loads over steep and rugged terrain.

The Narrow Gauge Network

The Mid Wales Slate Railway's narrow gauge network consisted of several interconnected lines that extended over 50 miles. The railways were built to a gauge of 2 feet 3 inches (686 mm), narrower than standard gauge railways, enabling them to navigate tight curves and gradients.

The main line ran from the quarries at Corris to Aberllefenni, a distance of approximately 12 miles. Branch lines connected to other quarries in the region, including the Penrhyn Quarry in Nantlle and the Oakeley Quarry in Blaenau Ffestiniog.

The Trains and Locomotives



The Mid Wales Slate Railway used a variety of locomotives to power its trains. These included steam locomotives, diesel locomotives, and even a petrol-electric locomotive.

The steam locomotives were particularly well-suited to the steep gradients of the railway. They were typically small and compact, with powerful engines and sturdy frames.

The diesel locomotives were introduced later in the railway's history. They were more efficient and reliable than the steam locomotives, but lacked

their charm and character.

The Slate Trains

The slate trains consisted of a series of open wagons, each capable of carrying several tons of slate. The wagons were often covered with tarpaulins to protect the slate from the elements.



The slate trains were hauled by locomotives up steep inclines to the quarries, where they were loaded with slate. The trains then descended back down to the main line, where they were coupled to other trains for the onward journey to their destinations.

The Decline of the Slate Industry

The Mid Wales slate industry began to decline in the early 20th century. The development of alternative roofing materials, such as concrete tiles and asphalt, eroded demand for slate.

As a result, the Mid Wales Slate Railway gradually fell into disuse. The last slate train ran in 1946, and the railway was officially closed in 1950.

A Legacy Preserved

Despite its closure, the legacy of the Mid Wales Slate Railway has been preserved through the efforts of dedicated volunteers and enthusiasts.

The Talylyn Railway has restored and preserved a section of the former Mid Wales Slate Railway between Tywyn and Abergynolwyn. Visitors can experience a nostalgic journey on a steam-hauled train, passing through stunning Welsh countryside.

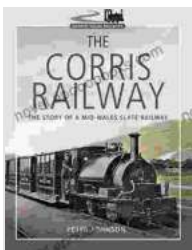


The Welsh Highland Railway has also restored a section of the former Mid Wales Slate Railway between Caernarfon and Beddgelert. This railway offers a scenic journey through the Snowdonia National Park, with panoramic views of mountains and lakes.



The Mid Wales Slate Railway played a vital role in the development of the Welsh slate industry. Its narrow gauge railways transported millions of tons of slate from the region's quarries to destinations across the country.

While the slate industry has declined, the legacy of the Mid Wales Slate Railway lives on. The preserved sections of the railway offer visitors a unique opportunity to experience the history and romance of a bygone era.



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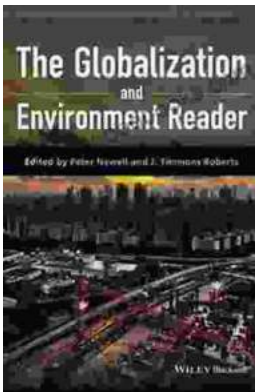
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