



News from the St. Tudy History Group Research Team ...

On doing a trawl through E-Bay, I noticed a print for sale entitled "Mounted Railway Print GWR Locomotive Class 1400 passes St. Tudy Church, Cornwall". What!

This painting was done 35 years ago and the artist himself has said that he has used "artistic licence" in putting a steam train travelling next to a lane leading to St. Tudy Church lit at night. It is a lovely painting, but not accurate at all. If it was, the train would be steaming down past Garlands and the War Memorial and then Redvale Road.

This got me thinking about our foe commonly known as "Dr. Beeching". As a result of his report, eight local stations and ten sidings were closed, but we did gain the Camel Trail and the wonderful Bodmin and Wenford Steam Railway, so all is not lost.

Looking at the list of disused railway stations on the Bodmin to Wadebridge Line, there is one name I really hadn't thought about a lot, Shooting Range Platform. This part of the line was built around 1880 to serve a firing range, with trains only stopping with written permission from the army. Periods of use centred around the Boer War and WW1, and the range ceased after that time, but the platform itself was still used until 1947, although it originally never had a sign, and was known locally as "Target".

During WWII an armoured train was based at Wadebridge to patrol the "Bodmin Stop Line" which covered the whole of the Bodmin and Wenford from Padstow to Bodmin, and also the line from Bodmin to Fowey. The engine was constantly "in steam" until 1941, and was crewed by the Royal Tank Regiment and the Royal Engineers and Polish Soldiers. The railway did not escape the war unscathed, as an attack on the 7th of August 1941 resulted in bomb damage to Bodmin North Station and an ammunition train was attacked by low flying aircraft whilst climbing from Boscarne Junction towards Bodmin General.

The trains linked the quays at Wadebridge with the town of Bodmin and also to quarries at Wenfordbridge. It's intended traffic was minerals to the port of Wadebridge and sea sand, used to improve agricultural land.

I can just see a researcher looking into their family history of St. Tudy from somewhere the other side of the world, and coming across this painting, assuming it was an accurate depiction of our lovely village. In research, you have to make sure you check your information, or you may go off the rails, and be "taken for a ride"!

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