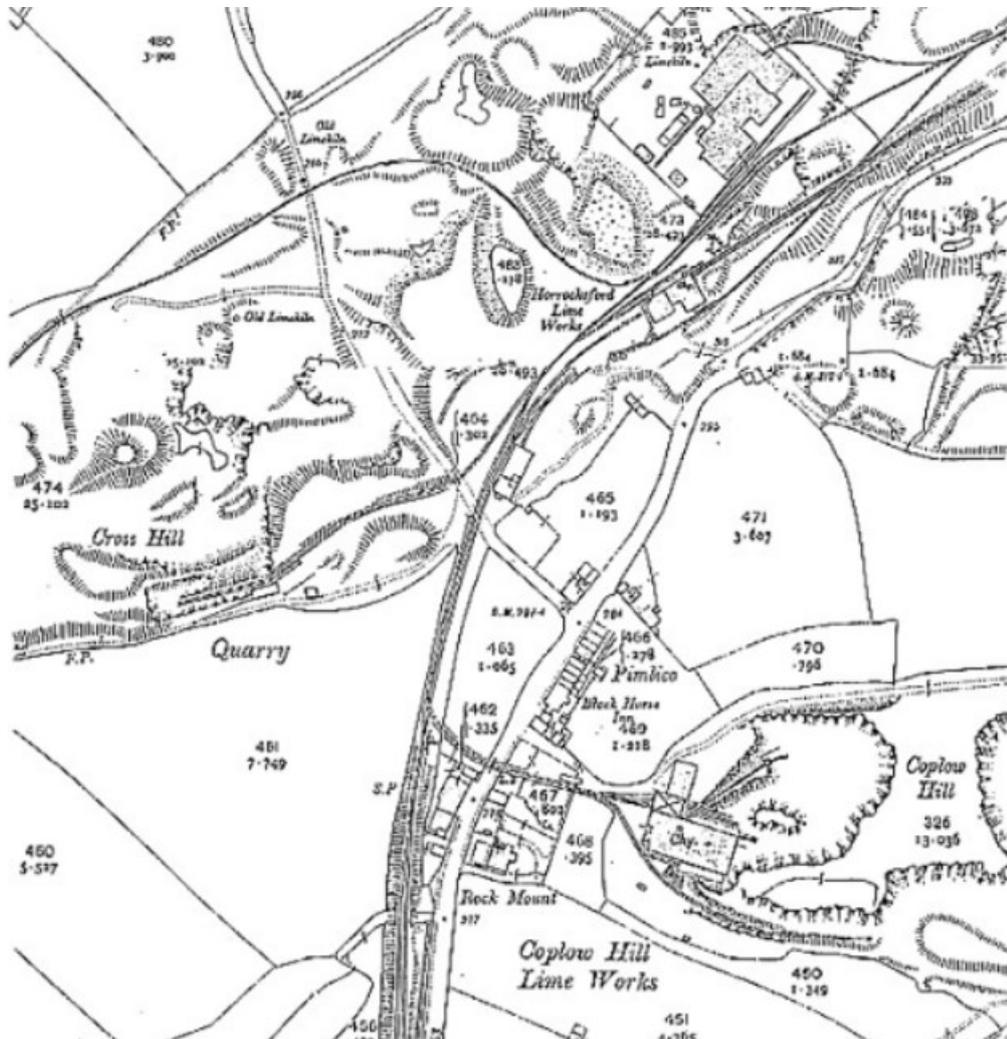
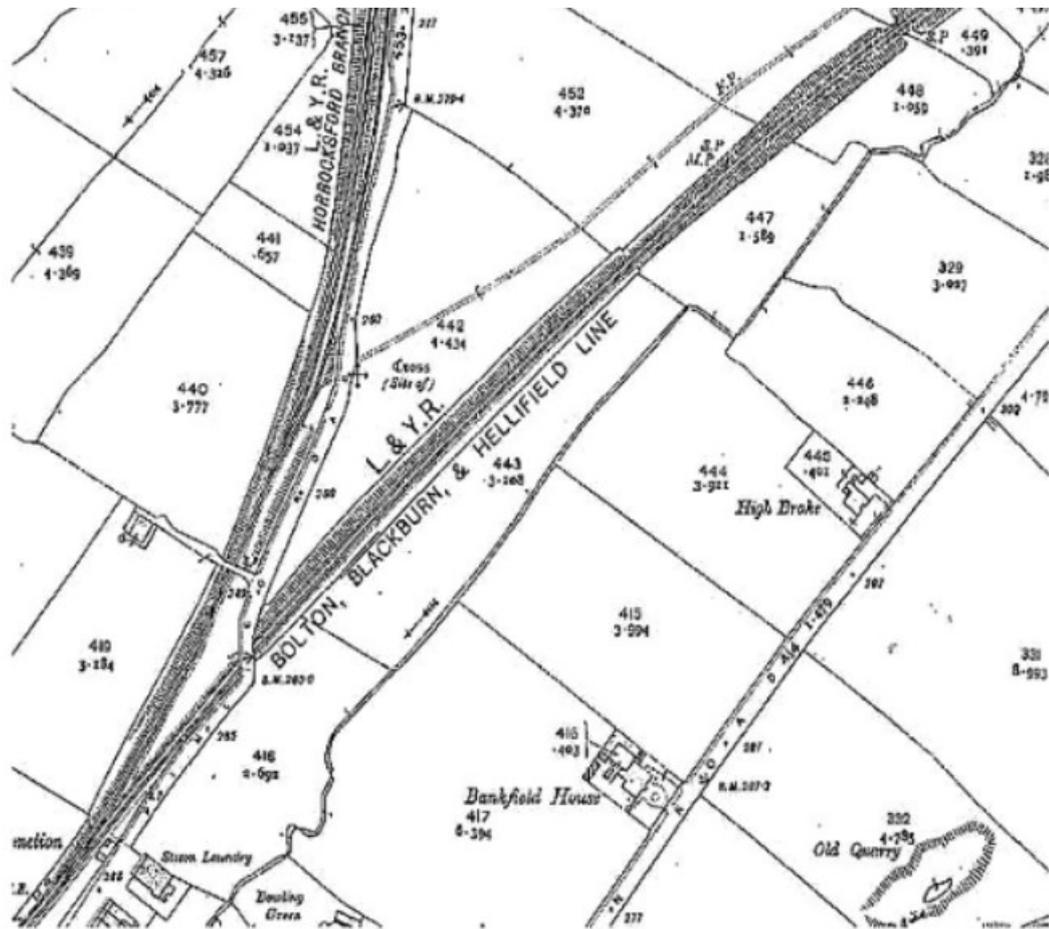


Cement From Horrocksford

Incorporated in the Blackburn, Clitheroe and North Western Junction Act of 27 July 1847 was the power to construct the Horrocksford Branch which would serve Old Bank Lime Works at Horrocksford. It duly opened on 21 June 1850 and no doubt the first traffic over the branch was lime!





The above maps show that lines rapidly radiated from the original branch to serve the Coplew Hill Lime Works, the Isis Cement Works and Cross Hill Quarry as well as Horrocksford Lime Works.

Tramways connected into the various sidings and it must have been a hive of activity! Quite what the original wagons that served the branch line looked like is open to conjecture but by the time that Ribblesdale Cement Works was established one particular type of wagon was used for cement traffic.

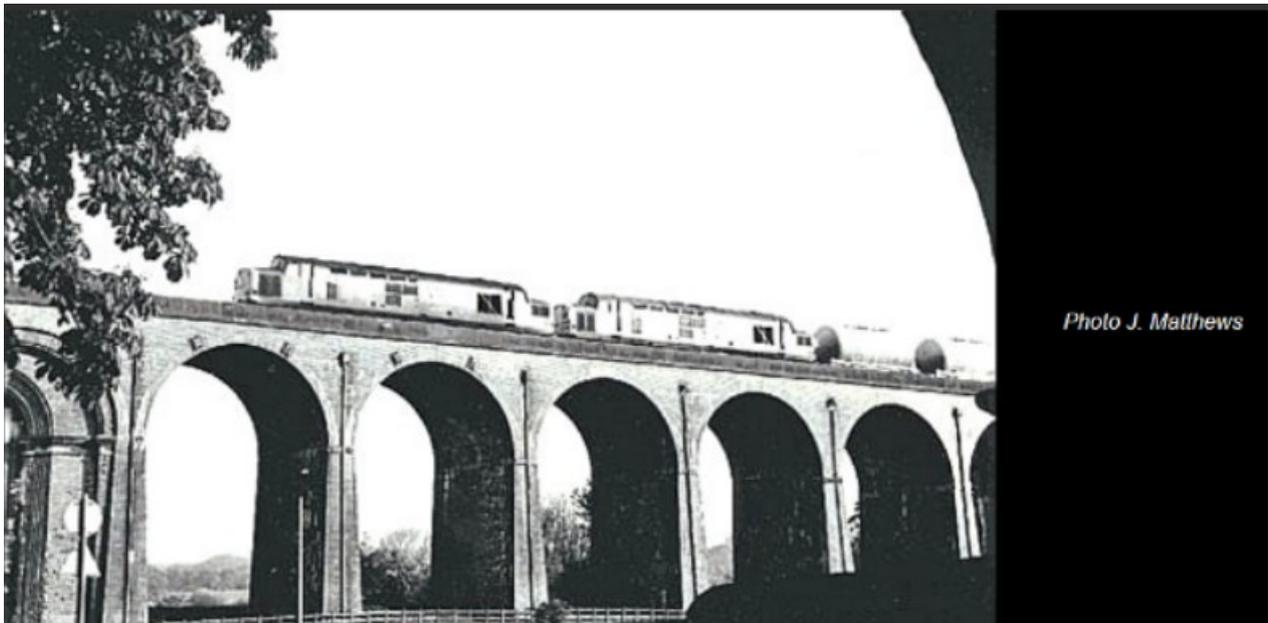
Just prior to the Modernisation Plan of 1955, British Railways had identified powdered materials as a positive freight growth area and, following a period of development, the Presflo wagon emerged in 1954. This type of wagon was designed specifically for carrying bulk powders including cement. The wagon was loaded by gravity through two roof hatches, and compressed air was used to aid discharge. The wagons were vacuum-braked with shoe suspension and a ten foot six inch wheelbase. Each wagon carried 22 tons and were designed to run in a block train.



Over the next few years, 1891 of these wagons entered British Railways service and many worked into Horrocksford. These wagons ran in service until around 1984 when more modern air-braked stock started to appear.

Standard Wagon Company built a batch of 13.45 ton two-axle Presflo PCA cement tanks specifically for Ribblesdale Cement in 1977, number series RBL 10400/RBL 10443. These vehicles were fitted with two discharge pipes and regularly worked into Horrocksford.

I always felt that the livery – light grey and featured a red castle on a white background with black lettering and a green sole bar – was particularly pleasing to the eye. This type of wagon can be seen in John Matthews' excellent photo (below) of Class 37s 37259/37038 crossing Whalley Arches on 27 May 1987 heading a Clitheroe – Blackburn yard trip working.



In the 80s Clyde Cement ran a fleet of 88 bogie Presflo cement clinker wagons which operated as a block train from Horrocksford to Coatbridge.

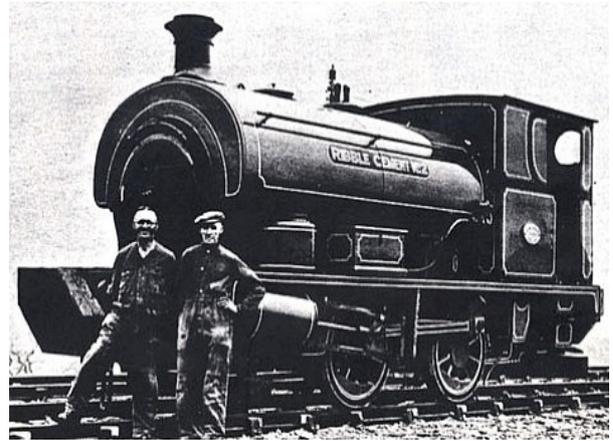
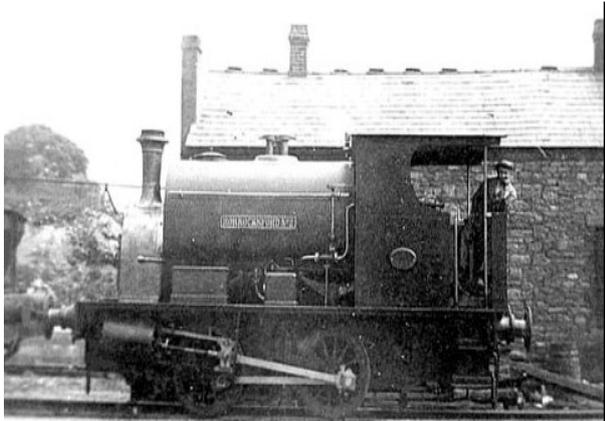


Unfortunately cement traffic out of Horrocksford by rail ceased in the early 90s, and the sound and sight of two class 37s pounding up Langho Bank is a thing of the past. For some years the branch saw use in the form of coal traffic to feed the cement kilns before cement traffic re-started in March 2008. Class 37 locomotives no longer haul the trains, Class 60s were used for a while, but currently trains are usually hauled by Class 66 locomotives.

Below is a selection of photos taken around Horrocksford or relating to cement traffic.

For those interested in cement wagons, two books are recommended – *British Railway Wagons* by Don Rowland and *Modern Private Wagons* by David Ratcliffe.

Brian Haworth



The above two photos courtesy of Ribble Cement. These locomotives were replaced by diesel shunters -



The above two photos date from the late 1990s and the below were taken about 20 years later -





Class 60 60029 visited Horrocksford to be named 'Clitheroe Castle' on 4 July 1998

These were the new wagons used when cement traffic re-started in March 2008 -





Finally, here are a couple of examples of recent cement traffic -

