

Chrilvinton Road

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Chrilvinton Road represents one of those typical small village branch lines that the Great Western Railway threaded through the Devon and Cornish countryside. The branch is connected to main line at a point just south of Truro but was prohibited from coming into the village itself as the main landowner at the time objected to the thought of smelly, noisy steam engines passing through their village. With all the legal paperwork passing to and fro time was lost and by the time approval in the 'House' was sought the GW broad gauge was being replaced so this branch was laid in standard gauge. The railway company compromised with the landowner and the station finished up about 1 mile away from the village leaving the people a bit of a walk to reach the train.

The station opened on 13th May 1893 and traffic was steady but freight was the big winner as farmers used the Company's generous schemes to get the animals to Truro's markets. Passenger numbers remained just in profit with the Saturday morning special to Truro proving popular with the locals. A local businessman saw the railway as a cheap way of getting his goods to London instead of the slow canals so he built his factory near the station. His factory was situated in the shadow of the remains of Chrilvinton Castle which was destroyed by the Roundheads as it was a Royalist stronghold. The 1939 war saw the branch very busy as an army camp was opened 2 miles down the road so troops used the train to get to and from camp.

In 1948 the GWR was swallowed up into the new British Railways and the traffic on the branch continued to keep up with demand although some of the passenger trains had been removed from the weekly timetable and the weekend trains were cut by a half. As the car began to take over from the train to get around and take the family on holiday the nail was in the coffin for this small branch. The locals tried in vain to keep the line open but there was no-one with any money to invest in this small rural railway.

Passenger trains were withdrawn from the branch first as the receipts being collected did not meet the costs of running the branch. This left freight to linger on until final closure took place on 13th May 1963. This was marked by some special trains down the branch to cater for the all enthusiasts and the press. After they had all gone the track was lifted, buildings demolished and all the land sold leaving no trace of the railway's existence. Indeed the station site at Chrilvinton Road is now an Industrial site.

The layout represents the period near the end of the line's operation with both GWR and BR engines providing the passenger and freight motive power. Some diesel motive units can be seen on the branch as money was tight and coal was in still in short supply. The castle has a fair going on to raise funds to ensure the walls don't decay any further and the construction of a new information building for visitors.

The name 'Chrilvinton' comes from..... well you will just have to ask one of the operators!!