

LUNDY QUARRY RAILWAYS

The Lundy Granite Company was registered in July, 1863, and was wound up in November, 1868. During this short period of active existence the company opened and worked quarries on the East Side of Lundy between Quarter Wall and Halfway Wall.

The finances of the company were irregular to say the least, and when the company was wound up all record books were ordered to be destroyed and the paper to be sold as salvage (for 30s.) to help meet the creditors.

Because of this loss of first-hand records, the only way to reconstruct the working of the quarries is to draw on eye-witness accounts, papers and maps and then to make a careful study of the remains on Lundy today.

In June, 1962, Peter Cole and I discovered clear traces of the route taken by the quarry tramway and slipway from which we have been able to build a clear picture of the working method used.

The Site. Dwellings and Paths

The quarry workers were housed firstly in wooden huts near the present High Street farmyard. Later they were housed in stone buildings just north of Quarter Wall, the foundations of which remain. The "Hospital" and Officers' Block are still standing though ruinous. Footpaths from these dwellings lead to a point at the south of the southernmost quarry. From here a bridge (now gone, but shown in the O.S. map of 1884) passed to the small levelled site of the time-check office. From here the workmen passed northwards down the steep path to the terrace and then on to the quarries.

There were two other footpaths. One passed along the edge of the plateau northwards to the northernmost quarry, and the second is the zig-zag path from the Terrace to the Beach.

Quarry Levels

There are two levels of working. The southernmost quarry at 360 feet above sea-level is some 80 feet higher than the nearest main quarry. The main quarries range from 345 feet for the small cut at the northern end of the quarry path, 319 feet for the large northern quarry, 283 feet for the V.C. quarry and 278 feet for the big quarry just south of this, and finally to the Terrace which is at 275 feet above sea-level. The significance of this carefully graded slope is shown later.

Earthworks. Terrace and Timecheck Platforms

There are two large earthworks in the quarry area. The largest is the Terrace (now partly occupied by the LFS trap), which has been carefully built, is level, and shows the remains of two buildings. The second, the timecheck platform, is equally well-built and carefully battered for strength. Both these structures had important uses.

There are also traces of straight paths, the highest passing just north of the timecheck platform down to the Terrace and the second passing at another angle from the Terrace to sea-level.

Tramway

As the weather had been dry in June, 1962, the vegetation was rather stunted and we were able to trace quite clearly the route taken by the tramway by studying the sleeper grooves left in the railbed. These grooves were roughly three feet apart, varying an inch or two either way, and the sleepers seem to have been about 4ft. 3in. long. This would suggest a gauge of about two feet. The railbed had been made up between each sleeper to provide a smoother path for horses. This spacing of sleepers was so regular that a track could even be detected by the feet in those places that were a little overgrown.

General Working

1. *Northern End of Quarry Path.* The path has quite clearly been built up at one point here to provide a continuous gradient, and from the remains of the sleeper beds it is clear that the tramway extended to a point on the plateau some 364 feet above sea-level. This terminus could have been used as a place to change horses or as a loading site for heavy materials brought over the Island and intended for the quarries.

LUNDY QUARRY RAILWAY

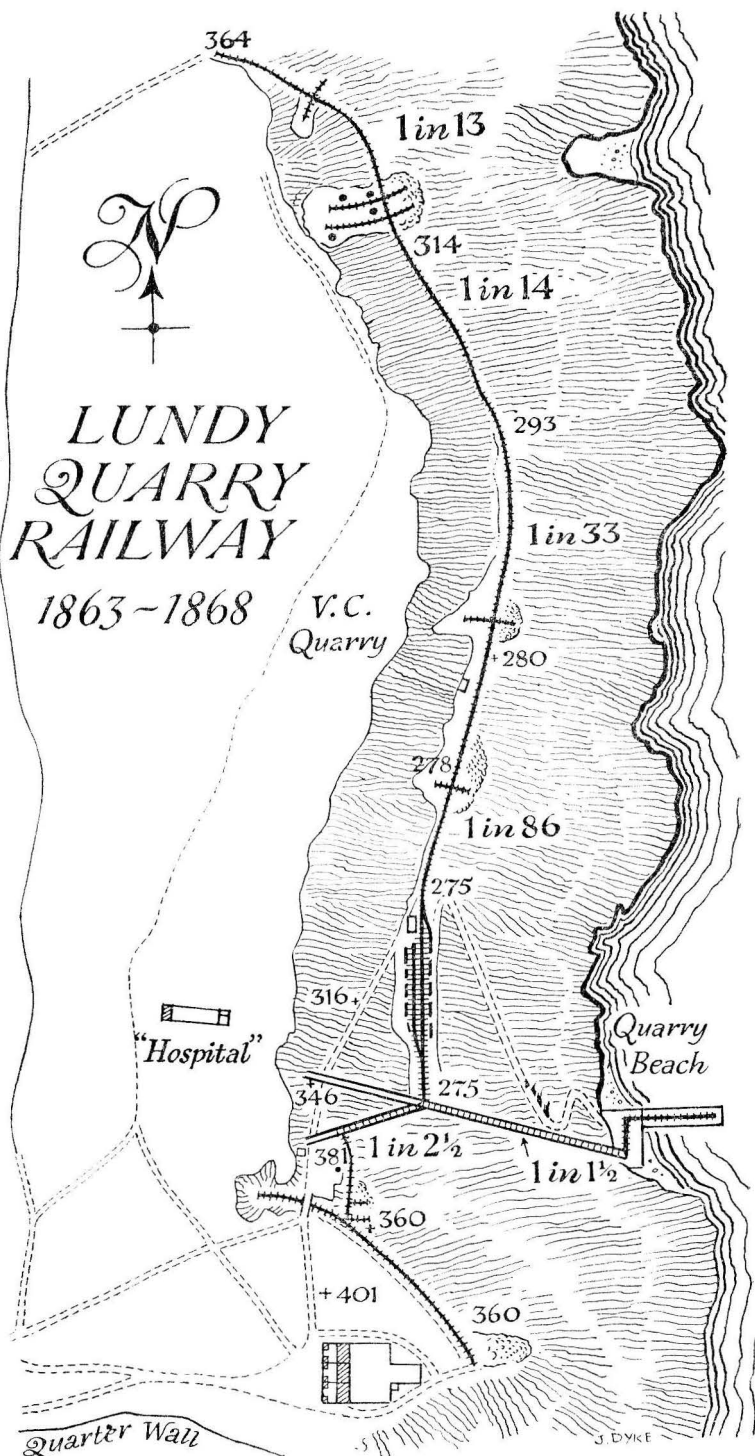
1863-1868

V.C.
Quarry

"Hospital"

Quarry
Beach

Quarter Wall



J. DYKE

2. *Small North Quarry* (350 feet). There was one tramway in this small working and one spoil heap. The actual tramways in the quarries ran outwards to spoil heaps where the chippings were thrown over the cliff. Where these small lines crossed the main north-to-south line there was a probably a small turntable.

3. *Big North Quarry* (328 feet). This large working had two small tracks leading to two spoil tips. These pass close to four mounds each about five feet high which would seem to have been bases for derricks used to load stone onto the trucks.

4. *V.C. Quarry* (285 feet). One track. One spoil tip.

5. *Lowest Quarry* (278 feet). One spoil tip but probably two tracks.

6. *Terrace*. The two ruinous buildings could have been stables. Here there was a marshalling area and evidence of four parallel tracks.

7. *The Southernmost Quarry*. This is the quarry at a higher level than the others. This would seem to have been an older working than the others. Spoil was removed by a single track which emptied over the edge where there are traces of two small spur lines. These were abandoned quite early (as the spoil heaps are small), probably because there was some risk of the spoil falling down onto Quarry Beach. To overcome this a line was built southwards where the spoil was tipped at a point under the quarry officers' buildings on a promontory just north of Quarter Wall. Worked stone was carried northwards on an almost level track which ended underneath the timecheck platform.

From this it can be seen that short lengths of line carried the waste stone out of each quarry to a spoil tip and that useful stone was carried always down a gentle slope, probably by gravity alone, either to the Terrace where the loaded trucks were stored, or in the case of the high southern quarry, to a point under the timecheck platform which is immediately above the Terrace.

Exporting

Stone was carried to Quarry Beach down two inclines. The higher ran from the north edge of the timecheck platform at a gradient of 1 in $2\frac{1}{2}$ to the southern edge of the Terrace. Whether the wheeled tubs were run down these slopes or whether stone was transferred to sliding wheel-less containers is not certain. The only clue we discovered in June, 1962, was a longitudinal grooved timber where the line met the Terrace. The purpose of the well-built timecheck platform is now obvious as a derrick must have been used to transfer stone from the high tramway to this upper incline. Progress down the incline was presumably controlled by a cable running over a pulley at the top and counterbalanced either by a weight or empty truck. At the end of this incline, that is at the south end of the Terrace, the longer steeper incline ran in a slightly different direction down to Quarry Beach carrying the entire output of all the quarries. This lower incline had a gradient of 1 in $1\frac{1}{2}$, the controlling cables of which ran up to a point in the sidings about 360 feet above sea-level.

Beach

At the beach stone was carried by a horizontal tramway to the jetty, and then loaded into waiting ships. The works on the beach suggest a granite quay (keyed stones still show the outline) from which a wooden jetty ran out to sea. Evidence for this can be seen in the length of rusting rail on the beach, and the presence of a large granite rock in which two cleats have been arranged as a pile base.

The Granite Company owned a 35 h.p. steam tug, *The Vanderbyl*, of 56 tons, which had been built in 1864 and plied regularly between Lundy and Fremington Quay, where the granite was unloaded and probably dispatched by rail to its destination.

A. F. LANGHAM.