

## 5 The lower Conwy valley – Llanrwst to Glanconwy: Short Introduction



Llanrwst is an old market town, the most interesting feature of which is the magnificent three-arched stone bridge over the Afon Conwy, built by Sir Richard Wynne in 1636. Inigo Jones was reputedly employed as designer (see plaque on the centre arch) and the third arch, away from the town, was rebuilt in 1702. Ty Hwnt I'r Bont, the house next to the bridge, is a seventeenth-century stone

cottage, formerly the Magistrates Court but now in the care of the National Trust.....

.....Forestry was a thriving industry long before the coming of the serried ranks of conifers administered by the Forestry Commission, being developed mainly by the larger landowners of the area. The buildings of the Gwydir Estate Sawmills survive.....

....On the opposite side of the road is a grain dryer, of a type once common in wetter districts where a late harvest had to be gathered damp or not at all. The lower part of the building contained a brushwood fire oven, whose heat penetrated the upper floor of perforated tiles on which the damp corn was spread.....such a drying kiln was essential since damp grain would clog the mechanism of the grinding stones during milling.....

.... The old Conwy Road, still on the west side of the river, passes an old but well preserved tollhouse at Pant-y-Carw before entering the village of Trefriw.....

.....In Edwardian times well-heeled but ailing gentlefolk ventured up the River Conwy from Deganwy quay by way of Conwy and Talycafn to Trefriw aboard a paddle steamer; their goal was the Chalybeate wells. The present grey-granite pump rooms were constructed in 1873, situated an invigorating step of some 1¼ miles from the steamer quay..... Prominent yellow-glazed stoneware balustrading and the grand staircase lead from the main road.....

.... A steep inclined plane originally served the workings of the Cae Coch sulphur mine, off to the north side about 2/3 of the way to the summit drum house. The adits should be approached with extreme care, as the wooden roof props have been rotted by the drainage water issuing from them.....even today the water has a strong odour of dissolved

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sulphuric acid..... the more prominent remains in the vicinity of the incline, a crushing mill, workshop with hand crane, and the drum house itself higher up, are from a much later working for granite..... another small tramway served the water company's chlorination house near Dolgarrog (built 1930), running a few hundred yards down to the roadside buildings by the bridge (774863), where also may be found the long derelict remains of the Dolgarrog Woollen Factory.....

The penultimate road crossing of the widening Conwy estuary is by means of the unusual Victorian 3-span lattice girder bridge at Tal-y-Cafn.....near the village of Glanconwy is a notable group of three extant mills; Felin Isaf (corn, at 803750) retains its two waterwheels, together with one complete set of machinery and stones.....

....Nearby Felin Uchaf (805747) was also a corn mill, but is now a dwelling with no mechanism remaining. Above, its leat may be followed back to an old timber sawmill "Felin Llifio", where there is another waterwheel of 10 ft diameter.....the unusual cast iron notice warning against trespass will be noted beside the entrance gate.

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