

LLANELLI RAILWAY STRIKE

It was Saturday, August 19th, 1911, the third day of the national railway strike. There were 370 soldiers in the town who ensured that trains driven by blacklegs got through. A train had been standing on the town platform for some time, and was of concern to the Strike Committee. The train moved off at 2:30 pm, followed by a crowd of at least 250 people who had gathered at the Heolfawr crossing. It got within 200 yards of Union Bridge when it stopped because the Old Castle crossing gates were shut. Pursuing railway men climbed onto the engine footplate and raked out the fire, thereby immobilizing the engine. Within minutes Major Stuart arrived on the scene with 80 soldiers of the Worcester Regiment. They cleared the track at bayonet point and the crowd scrambled up the embankment. As a result of some stone throwing, Stuart ordered a firing squad to shoot at the young men sitting on a low wall in the garden of 6, High Street. Two men, Jack John and Leonard Worsell, were killed, one other severely injured and one shot in the hand. The soldiers were promptly marched back to the station. The soldiers remained inactive while looting later took place in Market Street and in the siding beyond the goods shed. An explosive truck blew up on the sidings, killing four people, before soldiers cleared the area just before midnight. 300 more soldiers of the Sussex Regiment arrived to help clear Market Street. There were over 700 soldiers in the town by this time. This was the worst day in the life of the Llanelli people.

LLANELLI RIOTS

