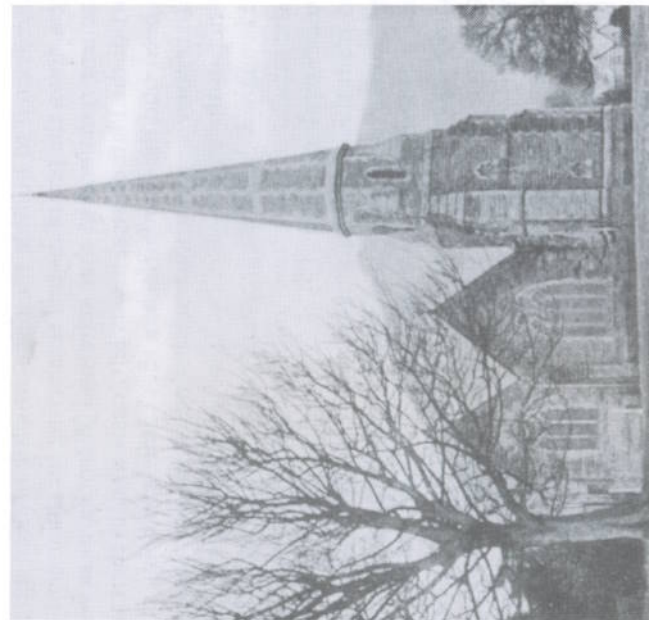




Christ Church, Llanfairfechan.

railway station at Llanfairfechan was soon remedied by the now person of consequence who, other factors apart, it will be remembered, was a director of the London & North Western Railway Company. The Chester & Holyhead Railway Company had never possessed engines and rolling stock of its own, from the outset, the trains had been operated by the London & North Western Railway. The station at Llanfairfechan was stone built, making it superior to the other stations along the line, and was positioned as near as it could possibly be to Bryn-y-Neuadd. It was to have a relatively commodious goods yard to handle the considerable quantities of equipment and materials brought to furnish and supply the estate, much of which came from the Works at Oldham. Also, he found there was no church at Llanfairfechan where he and his family could worship in English as other people of English origin, who had preceded him, had found. The services at St Mary, the parish church, were conducted exclusively in Welsh because the vast majority of the parishioners was solely Welsh speaking. Already, the English people had subscribed to a fund, with Richard Luck playing the leading part, to build a second church in Llanfairfechan where they could have the services conducted in

English but, at the time of John Platt's settlement in the village, the fund was still short for building to commence. John Platt came to an arrangement with these people that he, entirely at his own expense, would build the church and the moneys so far subscribed would be used to endow it. He commissioned George Shaw – the noted Saddleworth architect, already responsible for Ashway Gap House and other commissions for him – to draw-up the plans which were to include for a striking spire. He provided the land which lay at a short distance, across a small field, from the Front Lodge at Bryn-y-Neuadd. A carriageway was made across the field to lead into the drive which was to encircle the church – an arrangement to avoid the horses and carriages having to be turned. This arrangement was a repeat, in much more picturesque surroundings, of the one which existed at St Thomas Church, Werneth, in the building of which church John Platt had been involved some ten years earlier. (A model of the Werneth church was preserved by the Platt family). The second church at Llanfairfechan was completed in 1864 with the Platt family pews placed at the extreme east end of the south aisle. John Platt had presented the organ, with which he had coupled the undertaking to pay the organist's salary, and Alice Platt had presented the communion plate and the whole of the church furniture. The church was called Christ Church and was consecrated by the Bishop of Bangor in the August, the event being followed with a celebratory luncheon at Bryn-y-Neuadd.

Lord Penrhyn, John Platt's near neighbour to the west, and the other great landowners of Caernarfonshire, initially, must have had misgivings about this self-made man who had settled in their midst. The source of his undoubted great wealth was industry which, if not a cause for distaste, had, at least, to be regarded with caution for such was the convention of the day. Above all, these great landowners were Tories of the most diehard ilk and for them John Platt's political views must have been alarming in the extreme. But John Platt soon came to be recognised as a man of sound vision and impeccable integrity and was accepted into their ranks, so that within the first four years of his entry into Caernarfonshire life he was made a Justice of the Peace and Deputy Lieutenant and, in 1863, held the office of High Sheriff of the County.