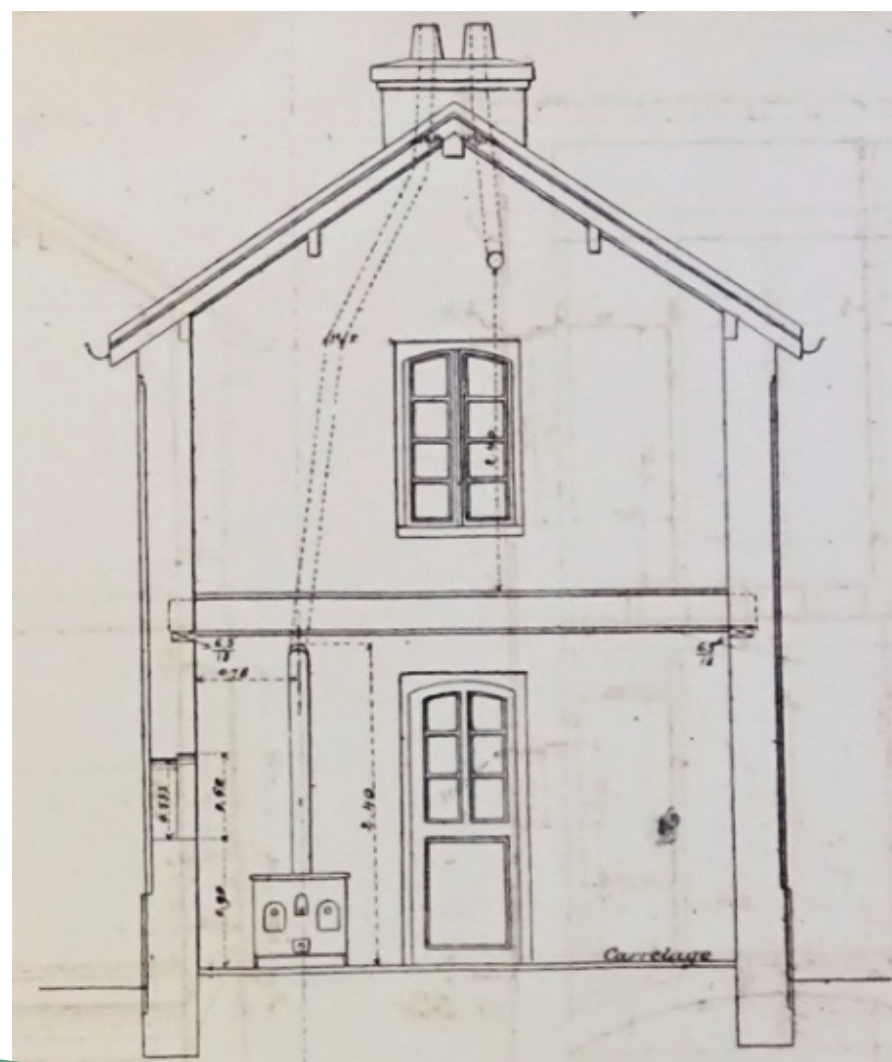
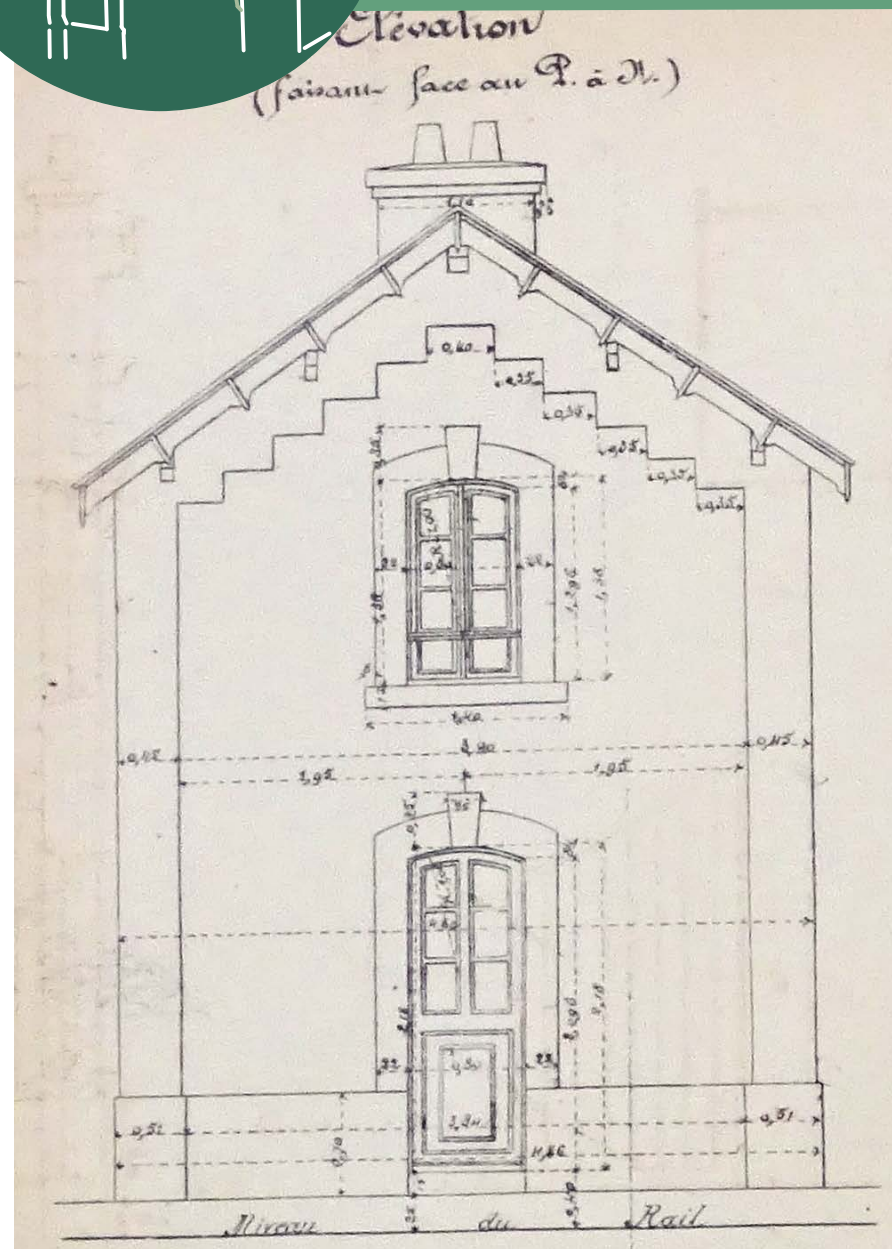




# The crossing-keeper's house



Who would have guessed that this ordinary house used to be that of Acquin's crossing-keeper?

### An exception that proves the rule

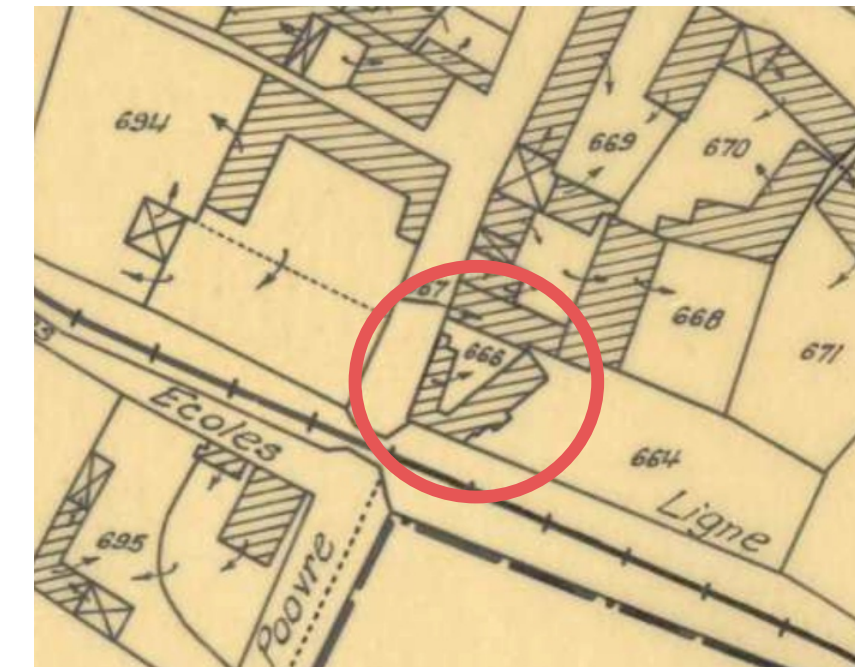
When the Anvin-Calais railway line was opened, there needed to be a crossing-keeper's house **at each intersection with a main road**. On 21 August 1878, Acquin town council asked the local interest railway company (V.F.I.L.) to install a 2-metre barrier to be manned by a crossing-keeper: this tied accommodation was built in **1883**.

Crossing-keepers' houses often had an upstairs floor and at least three rooms. But the one in Acquin is quite different: it is a **small, rectangular bungalow**.

### Available at all hours

As was often the case, **Acquin's crossing-keeper was a woman**. Lydie Bodart, and her successor Madame Hochart, used to know the train times by heart. Both **during the day and at night**, they had to be at the crossing to lower the barrier each time a train passed, thus avoiding accidents. Every day, there would be **six passenger trains and two mixed trains** (passengers and freight), not to mention **some extra carts** of sugar beet at harvesting time, from October to January.

The crossing-keeper's husband would more often than not work on the line. He would maintain the section of rail track that went through the village. Between shovelling gravel to shore up the **ballast**, and cleaning the **ditches**, he was always busy!



The crossing-keeper's house, with barn, in 1935 AD62, 3P 008/5).

