

# FORWARD 178



## Front cover caption

GCR class 3 2-4-2T no.577 comes off the Stalybridge line at Ashton Jnc and enters Guide Bridge station with a Stalybridge - Manchester London Road local. No.577 had been built by the MS&L at Gorton in 1889 to a Parker design. The original stovepipe has been replaced by the more elegant Robinson chimney but not yet rebuilt with a Robinson boiler and Belpaire firebox (1915). Became LNER class F1, survived WW2, and was withdrawn in 1948 carrying no.7097.

When the first section of the SA&M opened on 17<sup>th</sup> Nov. 1841 between Manchester and Godley, Guide Bridge station was named Ashton. When the 2¼ mile branch to Stalybridge opened on 23<sup>rd</sup> Dec. 1845 (the same day that trains started running through to Sheffield on the main line), intermediate stations were opened at Dukinfield and Ashton (Park Parade) with the former Ashton station being renamed Guide Bridge (after a bridge over the adjacent canal). *photo: unknown*



# The Journal of the Great Central Railway Society

No. 178 ~ December 2013

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## Editorial by Bob Gellatly

2014 will be the fortieth anniversary of the Great Central Railway Society. To mark the occasion we are chartering the heritage dmu at Loughborough for a trip over the Great Central Railway. This will be in the afternoon of Saturday 17<sup>th</sup> May, following our AGM at Lovatt House in the morning.

An interesting development in the HS2 story involving the GCRS occurred at the end of October. On Sun. 27 Oct. an article by Tim Ross and Andrew Gilligan appeared in the *Sunday Telegraph* that revealed that certain Labour politicians were supporting an alternative to HS2 that used the trackbed of the former Great Central Railway. *The Daily Mail* also featured the story on Mon.28<sup>th</sup> Oct. and included the following: ' "So much of the railway still exists, and it would be billions of pounds cheaper to build than HS2", said Brian Holyland, a member of the Great Central Railway Society who worked on the line before it was closed.' On the same day, James Clayton, a researcher for the BBC Newsnight programme, was desperately trying to contact any member of the society who could be filmed stood by a disused section of trackbed in Buckinghamshire and talking about the merits of the Great Central Railway as an alternative to HS2. As it turned out the plug was pulled on the story when Ed Balls announced that the Labour party was fully behind HS2. An interesting critique can be found on p36.

Where do we stand as a society on HS2? Richard Butler, who is an HS2 watcher, has worded the following statement for the society: "The Great Central Railway Society exists primarily as a society to record and discuss the past years of the railway and all its various aspects. The society has chosen not to get involved with future developments, but to leave that to the railway professionals and stakeholders concerned. Members of course are completely free to have their own views on the HS2 project. Some may well be for the scheme, others undecided or against it. We will of course watch the situation and record developments, as appropriate, in our magazine." I think that sums it up pretty well.

This year has been a memorable one for the number of books published or about to be published that relate to the GCR. The list of authors includes Will Adams, Richard Hardy, Stephen Chapman, Stephen Done, Chris Booth, Ken Grainger (twice!), John Quick and Bob Pixton. Most of these are members of our society and hopefully the interest generated in the GCR by their books will attract further members. If I had to pick out just one book as being particularly significant it would be John Quick's *Robinson's Locomotive Liveries on the Great Central Railway*. A review can be found on p25.

As was announced before the last AGM, Tony West is happy to stand down as Model Steward if anyone is prepared to take on the job. Please contact Tony in the first instance if you are interested.

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## The Great Central Railway Society Annual General Meeting Sat. 17th May 2014

### At Lovatt House, Wharncliffe Road, Loughborough LE11 1SL

The venue is adjacent to the Great Central Railway station. Street parking is available. The Network Rail station is 20 min. walk away.

10:00 - Doors open with tea and coffee available. Sales and displays.

11:00 - AGM

12:30 - Break for lunch.

Afternoon (departure time to be confirmed) - "The 40th Anniversary Special" private charter on the Great Central Railway using the heritage dmu. Tickets for the charter will only be available at the AGM at £12 per head.



The heritage dmu is waiting for us at Loughborough.

## **Annual General Meeting 2014**

In accordance with Section 7(a) of the Society constitution, notice is hereby given that the Annual General Meeting of the Society will be held on **Saturday 17<sup>th</sup> May 2014** at Lovatt House, Loughborough, starting at 11.00am.

Under Section 9 of the constitution proposals for changes to the constitution, properly signed by the proposer and seconder, should be sent to the secretary to reach him no later than Friday 4<sup>th</sup> April 2014.

Under Section 5(c) nominations for the committee, signed by the proposer and seconder and made with the agreement of the nominee, should be sent to the secretary to reach him no later than 25<sup>th</sup> April 2014.

Proposers and seconds must be paid up members of the Society.

Only proposals made in accordance with the constitution will be accepted for the Annual General Meeting.

*Brian Slater, Secretary*

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## **An appeal from the Archivist for volunteers**

This note is an appeal for GCRS members who would like to help manage the archive so that it is available to GCRS members and visitors.

The archive is situated in the new Immingham museum. Most of the archive is in labelled boxes which are stored in a large wooden cupboard on the first floor, which was purpose built by a local carpenter. The remainder of the archive (mostly books) is in the downstairs library, where the GCRS has also installed an internet connected computer. The museum curator has the key to the archive storage cupboard. The downstairs library area is always open.

The museum is open to the public on five afternoons, Tuesday to Saturday. How often we could open the archive depends on the number of volunteers we get. If each volunteer was able to do one session every four weeks we would need twenty volunteers to open every day. The priority would be to open on Saturdays and then expand from there. The immediate locality of the museum includes an excellent sandwich shop and a supermarket.

Please would volunteers for this task contact me by email or snail mail (details inside front cover of *Forward*) indicating which days they would prefer and how often they would be willing to attend and I will try and put together a schedule so that the archive can open from early 2014.



*Geoff Burton, Archivist*

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## **Annual membership subscriptions for 2014**

Memberships are due for renewal on 1<sup>st</sup> April 2014. The new subscription rates will be £16 (UK), £21 (Europe) and £24 (rest of the world). An early-bird discount of £1 will be allowed for any renewal before 1<sup>st</sup> April. Please send a cheque, made out to 'GCRS', with your membership details to the Treasurer.

*Eric Latusek, Treasurer*

## Fairfield Station

by Paul White

### *Part 1: .. and the Fallowfield Loop*

Fairfield Station on the Woodhead line was opened by the Sheffield, Ashton and Manchester Railway in 1841 and as such was one of the original stations on the line. It was first situated on Manshaw Road, off the A635 Manchester Old Road in Higher Openshaw, right on the border of Manchester and Audenshaw. Fares to Manchester at the opening were 1<sup>st</sup> - 8d, 2<sup>nd</sup> - 6d and 3<sup>rd</sup> - 4d. Unaccountably the 1<sup>st</sup> class fare only was raised to 9d on 28<sup>th</sup> December 1842. The original station building was probably a wooden shelter as by January 1846 Henry Worth of Sheffield was given a contract for buildings at Fairfield, Hadfield, Penistone and Oughty Bridge for £94 each. However, towards the end of 1847 even these modest works were temporarily stopped due to the company's financial problems.

What form the permanent 1846 version of the original station took is unknown to me - I have never seen an illustration of it. We may assume that it was a small affair, probably constructed of stone like its contemporaries. However, it was destined to have quite a brief life, as in 1886 the proposal for a new line from Fairfield Junction to Chorlton Junction, known as the Fallowfield Loop or Manchester Central Station Railway, was given Parliamentary approval. This line was to meet the Midland at Chorlton Junction, the continuation via Chorlton-cum-Hardy via Throstle Nest Junction and on to Manchester Central Station being incorporated in the Cheshire Lines Committee. The plan was to involve the resiting of Fairfield station to its present site, about 500 yards east of the original station. The new station opened on May 2<sup>nd</sup> 1892 having been constructed at a cost of £13,025 by J.D. Nowell, the contractor who had built the branch at a cost of £138,088. It had four platforms, two for the main line and two for the branch. Widening and re-signalling of the GC main line between Ardwick and Hyde Junction between 1905 and 1907 resulted in Fairfield Station having six platforms.

The great length of the platforms and their large number gave rise to a local legend that the station had been built so generously in order to accommodate race traffic from a racecourse to be built on the site of Fairfield Golf Course (of which more later), but I have never been able to find solid evidence of this. Despite closure and resiting over 120 years ago, reminders of the original station remain in the shape of "The Railway" on the short Manshaw Lane, a magnificent and thriving Joseph Holt pub with a slightly inappropriate sign depicting a 'Black 5'. At the junction of Manshaw Lane and Ashton Old Road there is a parade of shops bearing the name Station View!



*The Fallowfield Loop platforms and station building on Booth Road in 1976.*



*Detail over the entrance to the station building on Booth Road in 1976.*

As with many such schemes in the later years of railway expansion, the local services provided by the line could not really compete with the more convenient trams, and more recently the buses, and services between Fairfield and Manchester Central were considerably reduced by the LNER in the lean years of the 1930s. However, the line was extensively used for through passenger services, especially those with an east-west orientation, in particular the Harwich-Sheffield-Manchester-Liverpool boat trains. The Fairfield-Hyde Road-Gorton triangle was used for engine-turning purposes and with the 1954 electrification an ultra-modern maintenance depot was opened at Reddish (near Hyde Road on the Fallowfield Loop) to service the EM1 and EM2 locos and the Class 506 EMUs. Consideration was given to electrifying the branch all the way to Manchester Central Station but was in the event not undertaken. In fact the line began to go into a decline from the mid-fifties with the sparse local passenger service being withdrawn in 1958.

Right up until the closure of Manchester Central in May 1969 passenger trains used the Fairfield Loop to gain access to this, one of four main line stations in Manchester at the time. With the closure of the Woodhead line in July 1981 Reddish Depot lost most of its work, having been the dumping ground for a number of years for redundant EM1 locos in various states of disrepair, and was finally closed in 1983. The Class 506 EMUs were serviced at Longsight for their short remaining lives, all being withdrawn in December 1984 following the conversion of the Hadfield-Glossop-Manchester section to 25,000V AC traction. The site was cleared and redeveloped for housing some years ago.



*Fairfield station in 2013 with just two platforms on the main line. The steps down from the bridge are in the same position as in the 1976 view but there is no station building and the Fallowfield Loop lines are long gone. The other two main line platforms were to the right.*

The line has two other claims to fame. The Granada TV programme "Blues and Gospel Train" was broadcast from Wilbraham Road Station on May 7<sup>th</sup> 1964. When the train pulled in at Wilbraham Road, the audience poured out and found seats on the platform.

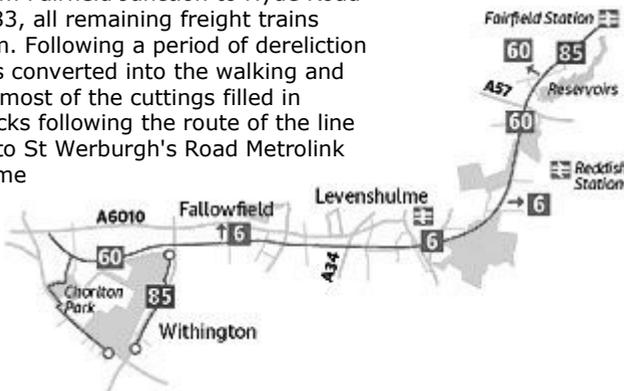
The opposite platform, decorated to look like an old railway station in the American South, served as a stage for a line-up of blues artists including Muddy Waters, Sister Rosetta Sharpe, Sonny Terry & Brownie McGhee, Cousin Joe, Otis Spann and Reverend Gary Davis. This concert is still available to watch on DVD, and shows little regard for health and safety!

Its second claim to fame was its use in March 1987 as a demonstration track open to the public to see how the "Project Lightrail" would look in practice. A tram, borrowed from the new Docklands Light Railway carried passengers along a 1.6km length of track under a temporary overhead power line between Hyde Road signal box, where a temporary Debdale Park Halt had been constructed, to Reddish Depot and back. The demonstration was opened by the then transport Minister, David Mitchell, and ran over a period of five days. The tram was stored in a siding overnight to allow the remaining freight traffic on the line, mainly freightliners from Trafford Park, to pass by. There was also a small exhibition built on the site where models and maps of the Manchester tram system proposal could be seen.



*Debdale Park Halt and a Docklands Light Railway tram in March 1987.*

In 1988, the year following the tram demonstration, the Fallowfield Loop finally closed. The section of the triangle from Fairfield Junction to Hyde Road had been out of use since 1983, all remaining freight trains proceeding via the Gorton arm. Following a period of dereliction after track lifting, the line was converted into the walking and cycling route it is today, with most of the cuttings filled in and gently graded tarmac tracks following the route of the line from Debdale Park in Gorton to St Werburgh's Road Metrolink station in Didsbury. The scheme was built by Sustrans and is part of Routes 6 and 60 of the National Cycle Network.



## *Part 2: ...and the J.G. Robinson connection*

The late David Jackson wrote briefly of the Robinson's domestic arrangements following his appointment to the GCR in his book *J.G. Robinson - A Lifetime's Work*. On p183 he states that "on his appointment....he moved his extended family...into *Lorneville*, a large detached residence opposite the LNWR's Heaton Chapel Station in Manchester, convenient for London Road, a change of trains onto the GCR and then a short ride to Gorton". Convenient enough, but it wasn't long before the family moved to an even more convenient company-owned home. That home was *Boothdale*, next door to Fairfield Station and but one stop away from Gorton and Openshaw station. The house is described as "... set in its own grounds in open, unspoiled countryside and only a moment's walk from the station". The Robinsons lived at *Boothdale* from 1902 to 1914. When Frank Williams, the retired accountant for the company, but still acting as a consultant, died, the Robinsons moved into *Mere Bank*, Williams' old house, which was next door to *Boothdale*. They lived there until Robinson's retirement in 1922.

When I first visited Fairfield Station in 1976 I was unaware of the above information. The station appeared to be much too generous for its location - there was a small estate of houses on Booth Road, but this finished at the station - beyond was the Golf Club and a wooded area. By then the station buildings were on their last legs. Similar in many ways to the buildings on the London Extension, it had its name and building date of 1892 carved into the stonework on the Booth Road frontage and MS&L delicately carved in decorative lettering in the woodwork over the entrance. By then in a ruinous condition, the booking office staff were protected from the leaky roof by a temporary corrugated iron structure built inside the building, which was demolished in 1979. Such was the "crumbling edge of quality", to use Sir Peter Parker's memorable phrase, on BR at the time. *Boothdale* is now the clubhouse of the Fairfield Golf and Sailing Club. so I approached the Secretary with a request for information.



*'Boothdale', the Robinson family home 1902-14. (Photo from Fairfield Golf and Sailing Club 1892-1992 Centenary Programme.)*

The Club Secretary, Mr John Paton, could not have been more helpful and showed me around the clubhouse. There have been a number of alterations over the years, most notably the rear extension overlooking the golf course which was opened on April 24th 1971 by Sir Matt Busby. This rear extension totally alters the rear view of *Boothdale* depicted on p184 of *J.G. Robinson* .... The Fairfield Golf and Sailing Club Centenary

Programme from 1992 provided some brief information of the building's connection with the GCR and its successors. According to the booklet *Boothdale* was built in 1872 by Henry Hall, a solicitor and the steward of the Manor of Audenshaw. He moved to Styal in 1888 and the house was left vacant until it was purchased by the MS&LR in 1895. The house was purchased "...for use as a residence...for senior executives at Gorton Locomotive works". According to the Centenary Booklet "...it was used for this purpose until 1920 when Fairfield Golf Club took over the tenancy".

By 1920 the Robinson family were in residence at the next-door house *Mere Bank*. In 1960 the Golf and Sailing Club were offered both houses and their land for the paltry sum of £3,500. *Mere Bank* was demolished many years ago, and sadly there seem to be no photos extant of the building in its latter years, but at present the gate posts bearing the name still stand.

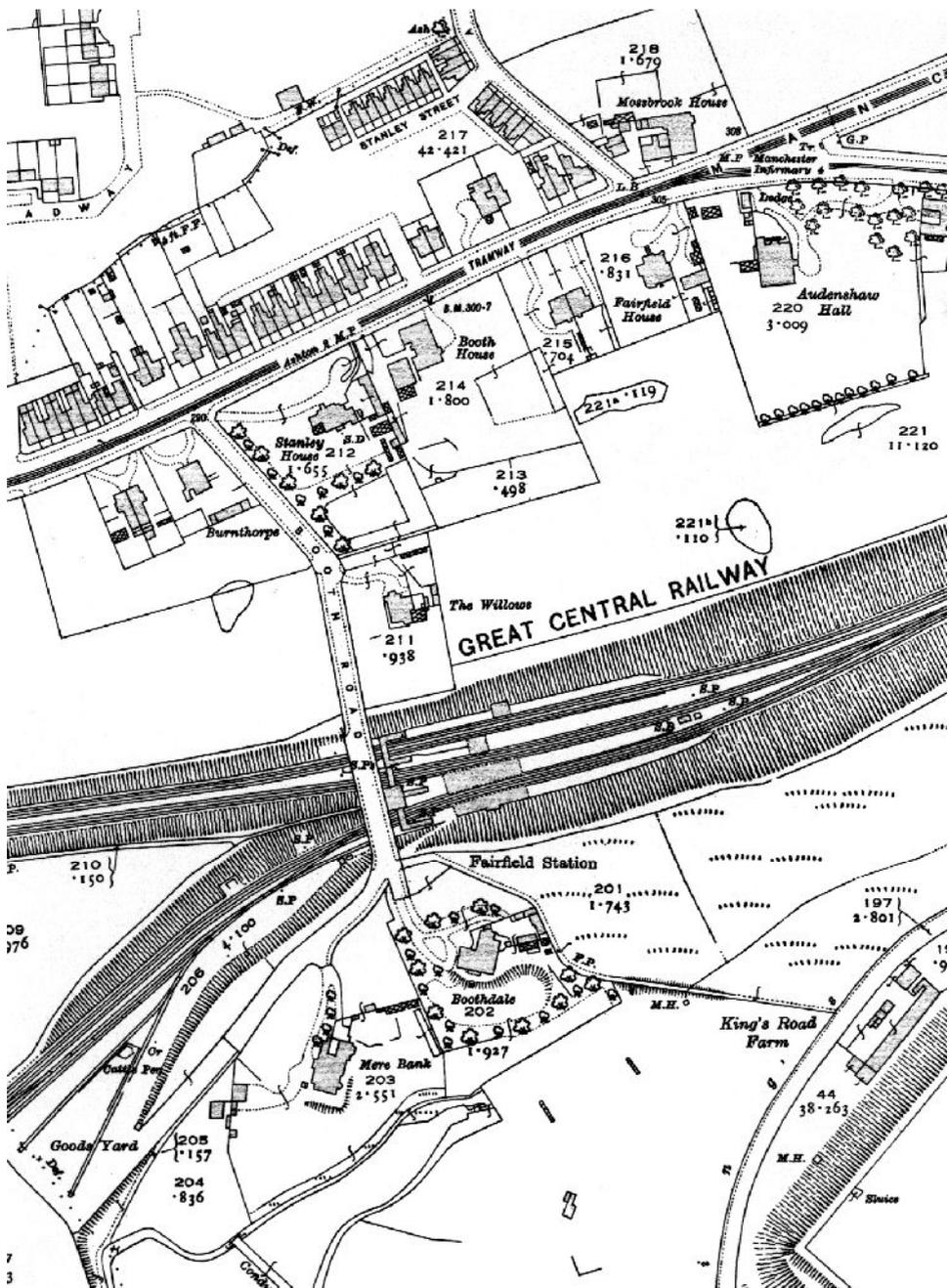


*The surviving gate posts at 'Mere Bank'.*

Mr Paton took me on a conducted tour of the clubhouse, which is a strange mixture of ancient and relatively modern. It is obvious that the public areas of the building have had a good deal of money spent on them over the years, but when one explores the further reaches an all-pervading sense of Victoriana seeps in. Many of the upstairs rooms have been used for no more than storage over many years, and still bear traces of antiquated painting and decorating. Most of the rooms have fireplaces, the pattern of which seems to follow the curved pattern of the outside windows. There are reminders of what a grand house it must have been with its own staff when one sees a laundry room, obviously disused for many years, two sets of stairs, one probably "back-stairs" for staff, and a dumb waiter. In places coloured and decorated glass remain in the windows. One may still imagine Robinson pondering some aspect of cylinder design or superheating in an out-of-the-way room in this great house surrounded by trees, with the sound of the company's own trains disturbing a rural calm a mere couple of miles from the noise of Gorton Loco Works.

All this is due to change in the not too distant future. Mr Paton mentioned that the club was seeking to build a new clubhouse and in early July of this year the local paper carried the headline "Plans for more than 100 new homes are given the go-ahead". Fairfield Golf Club was to be the site of 27 of them, involving the demolition of *Boothdale* and the building of a new clubhouse. So of the Robinson residences while he was at Gorton, one, *Mere Bank* is long gone, while another, *Boothdale* may have been demolished by the time this article is read.

However, his first Manchester residence, *Lorneville* survives and prospers, albeit under another name. According to David Jackson "...when Robinson took up his appointment at Gorton Works.....he moved his extended family into *Lorneville*, a large detached residence opposite the LNWR's Heaton Chapel Station". On visiting the area recently I found the house with some difficulty. It was in fact an enormous semi-detached house, the other half being *Roseleigh*. The two houses are now merged into one very extensive



The cluster of well-to-do houses around Fairfield station can be appreciated from this 1922 OS map.

and upmarket apartment block with its own car park, going under the name of *Roseleigh Court*. However, at the further end of the building is a bricked-up driveway entrance, bearing on both gate pillars the name *Lorneville*.



*Half of the present day 'Roseleigh Court' was once 'Lorneville'.*

*photos: Paul White*

It was an interesting and enlightening experience tracking down the Robinson residences and to be re-acquainted with Fairfield Station, and I am glad to have caught up with *Boothdale* before its imminent demise. A shadow of its former self in so many ways, Fairfield station still gives the impression of great length, and is still set in sylvan surroundings. Its timetable has shrunk to virtual non-existence, only the Marple and Rose Hill services now calling. Though the legendary racecourse never appeared there was a local speedway track later used for "trotting" races at Moorside, and this may indeed possibly be the basis for the racecourse story. A further local story has it that the station is haunted by a green EMU that disappears if you approach it while a disembodied voice calls out "Mary"! It is certainly a very quiet and eerie place between trains.

#### *References and acknowledgements*

George Dow *Great Central Vol 1* pp36, 40, 82.

George Dow *Great Central Vol 2* pp57, 29.

David Jackson *J.G. Robinson A Lifetime's Work* pp183-185.

Fairfield Golf and Sailing Club 1892-1992 Centenary Programme

The article "A Commuter on the Great Central Railway" by Paul White in *Forward* 9 (June 1976).

I would like to thank Mr John Paton, Secretary of the Fairfield Golf and Sailing Club, for his help in supplying me with information about *Mere Bank* and *Boothdale*, and for giving me a tour around the clubhouse.

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#### **Welcome to the following new members**

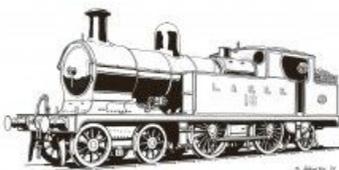
Mr W. Platt, Runcorn, Cheshire

Mr K.M. Livesley, Ufford, Cambridgeshire

Mr M.E. Hall, Cheltenham, Gloucestershire

Mr P.H. Dench, Horley, Surrey

Mr G.M. Nissen, Chiswick, London W4



## **The GCR 567 Locomotive Project - Design Progress** **by Andrew Horrocks-Taylor**

### *Frames*

The drawings are complete (over 40 drawings) apart from possible adjustments to tolerances requested by the contractors. The cylinder block will be mounted using doubler plates which take into account the slightly greater width of the donor block and this will also add much more strength to the front of the frames which is a region where damage is visible on some of the historic photographs of this locomotive class.



GCR 567 Loco Group

Two members of the Committee who are responsible for the engineering have visited Boro Foundry at Stourbridge and were greatly encouraged to see a significant number of new steam locomotive components in manufacture including a dragbox casting and the driving wheels for the 82045 new build project based at the Severn Valley Railway. We are now in regular contact with Boro Foundry as they develop the methods they will use to manufacture the frame plates.

A second visit to Boro Foundry is now planned to discuss manufacturing details and tolerances. These must be agreed, documented on drawings released back to Boro before manufacture can commence.

### *Bogie*

Barry Nurcombe has commenced work to bring the bogie design used on the later members of the class to a standard suitable to manufacture with parts using modern standards/practice. Some of the information needed to manufacture the bogie (such as the centring spring loads) are not on the original drawings and so have to be re-calculated.

### *Motion*

Examination of the drawings has established that a number of components are dimensionally identical to parts used on more modern industrial steam locomotives.

### *Manufacture*

Initial manufacturing work has now commenced with a number of small components being made. A review of the sand box drawings has taken place and manufacture of these is planned to start in November.

### *Tender*

The tender tank drawings have been completed by Chris Reed from Loughborough Works and are still awaiting review. An examination of the underside of the tender has established that the leading dragbox will need replacing. However the rear dragbox appears to be in a satisfactory condition

### *Forthcoming Events*

5 Dec 2013 (Thursday): Presentation by Andrew Horrocks-Taylor to the Lutterworth Railway Society, United Reform Church, George Street, Lutterworth, Leicestershire. LE17 4EF. 7.30pm.

10 Dec 2013 (Tuesday):- Presentation by Andrew Horrocks-Taylor to the RCTS East Midlands Branch, The Mechanics, 3 North Sherwood St, Nottingham NG1 4EZ. 7.30pm.

For more details please visit our website [www.gcr567loco.co.uk](http://www.gcr567loco.co.uk) which contains further details on upcoming events. Alternatively you can follow us via Facebook and Yahoo Groups (search for 'GCR 567 Loco').



## **On Great Central lines today**

### **by Kim Collinson**

Sunday 4<sup>th</sup> August saw the Class 150 track recording unit 950001 work from and to Neville Hill over the Penistone branch and unusually it stopped and reversed at Silkstone Common before returning via Penistone at 12:54.

The 11<sup>th</sup> August was the 45<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the official ending of BR steam in 1968 and to mark this event a special ran from Liverpool to Carlisle and return, but due to engineering work in the Manchester Victoria area was routed over the CLC route via Warrington Central and through the MSJA platforms at Oxford Road and Piccadilly to the loops at Longsight for a loco change. This brought the rare site of steam operation over these routes. The train was hauled by 'Black 5' 45305 to Manchester and 70013 *Oliver Cromwell* forward to Carlisle.

During August there were several interesting locomotive combinations on workings through Guide Bridge. On the 14<sup>th</sup>, 37605/08 worked a Worcester to Durham return excursion followed a week later by four locos 66613/70003/66532 and 66554 working the 09:40 Hunslet to Crewe hauling 8 hoppers. Class 37s appeared again on the 31<sup>st</sup> with 37423/37605 working a Crewe to Yarmouth return excursion with 47808 on the rear.

Due to the continuing dry hot weather during the month the Fridays only steam hauled Crewe to Scarborough and return has had a diesel attached with the train engine, either 46233 or 60009, in light steam only. Class 37 37516 has been utilised on this duty during the month.

These days it is very rare to see three different coal workings at the same location within 15 minutes, but this occurred at Hatfield on the 21<sup>st</sup> August. 66742 arrived at 14:45 with empty box wagons to be loaded under the colliery bunker. This was followed by 66848 passing the colliery at 14:50 with a trainload of coal from opencast mines in Durham loaded at Wolsingham for the coke ovens at Scunthorpe. Then at 14:55 66527 passed through working imported coal from Immingham to Drax.

On Saturday 14<sup>th</sup> September the first electric locomotive to pass through Guide Bridge for several years was 90043, which was hauled dead in a convoy from Crewe to Leeds Midland Road for tyre turning.

Class 20s, 20302/4/8/12 worked through Guide Bridge on Friday 4<sup>th</sup> October from Crewe to York for the forthcoming leaf fall season trains.

There have been several loco hauled workings through Penistone this Autumn as follows; on the 2<sup>nd</sup> September 66068/66095 top and tailed an engineers train unloading rails at Barnsley. It was observed at Silkstone at 00:02 and returning at 03:16. There have been three Network Rail test trains during the Autumn, testing new lineside communication equipment and all worked by Class 31 locos, the most seen on the branch since the 1980s. 31465 passed Penistone working to Barnsley at 15:18 on the 24<sup>th</sup> September, 31285 passed Silkstone at 22:31 on the 4<sup>th</sup> October, returning south at 00:40, and 31233 passed Penistone at 15:20 on the 9<sup>th</sup> en route from Halifax to Wakefield.

The first jetting train of the leaf fall season was on the 7<sup>th</sup> October, passing Silkstone at 03:45 and worked by 20304/10.

Class 37 locos made several appearances on GC lines around Sheffield during September as follows; on the 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> 37405 and 37409 were used on route learning runs from York to Deepcar and return for the forthcoming leaf fall season. Then on the 30<sup>th</sup> 97303 and 97304 passed through Woodburn Jn on a test train from Derby to Ferrybridge.

Monday 22<sup>nd</sup> October saw the evening Aldwarke to Deepcar steel train worked by 66004 slip to a stand at Neepsend around 18:40 and was assisted in the rear to Deepcar by 60 040 sent from Tinsley. This occurred the day before the first leaf fall train to Deepcar which again was worked by DRS Class 20 locos 20305/09.

Severe Autumn storms on Mon 28<sup>th</sup> October caused major disruption to all Chiltern line services out of Marylebone with numerous fallen trees blocking the routes and it was not until the afternoon that services slowly began to be restored. As a result of the disruption to Chiltern Rail services, the Class 117 3-car heritage DMU 960301 passed through Sudbury and Harrow Road at 12:06 towards Marylebone returning around 30 minutes later on water jetting and track assessment duties before the route was reopened. It is interesting to note that Chiltern Rail is now the only operator of heritage DMUs, using the Class 117 unit on departmental work and the 121 units on the Aylesbury to Princes Risborough shuttle service.

*If you have any news of current activity on ex-GC lines please let me know -  
Kim Collinson, 18 Close Hill Lane, Newsome, Huddersfield, West Yorkshire HD4 6LE  
or by e-mail: kim.collinson@btinternet.com.*



*Tony Gee's EM gauge layout 'Tickhill & Wadworth' was featured in the Nov. 2013 issue of 'British Railway Modelling' [BRM]. Tickhill & Wadworth was a station on the South Yorkshire Joint line. The era portrayed is 1913. A GCR class 9J (later LNER J11) 0-6-0 passes through with empties for Maltby colliery while a GCR class 9H (later LNER J10) 0-6-0 shunts the yard. photo: Tony Wright*

**Looking for a good walk?** If you take the train to Penistone (hourly Sheffield-Huddersfield service) you can walk the Trans-Pennine Trail along the trackbed of the Woodhead line either up to Dunford Bridge towards Manchester or down to Deepcar towards Sheffield (where you can continue through Wharnccliffe Woods to reach Oughtibridge). And then walk back again! You could even take a bike if you prefer to cycle.

Trans Pennine Trail



above: BR class O4/3 2-8-0 no.63783 at Pontefract in May 1958. Built by the North British Loco Co. in May 1918 for the ROD as no.1880, it entered LNER ownership in Feb.1928 as O4/3 no.6589 (distinguished from O4/1 by not having a vacuum brake pipe on the buffer beam). It became no.3783 in 1946 and no.63783 in 1948. It remained unrebuilt and was withdrawn in Dec.1962. Note the bent frame at the front end, a common feature of the O4s.

photo: G.W. Sharpe

below: On the Derby scrap line on 31<sup>st</sup> Aug.1963. The connecting rod is on the wheel splasher and secured to the handrail by ropes. At least four other items are missing and perhaps a few more might be after the 'spotters' have finished their visit.

photo: Richard Postill



## **Walter Freeman of Grimsby** **submitted by Ken Pudsey**

*This article is taken from the series 'Stories Behind Some of the Headstones in Cleethorpes Cemetery' published in the magazine of the Grimsby & District Archive Club (www.gycodehead.co.uk) and reproduced with permission*

IN AFFECTIONATE REMEMBRANCE OF  
WALTER FREEMAN  
WHO WAS FIREMAN ON THE  
M.S.&L. RAILWAY,  
AND WAS ACCIDENTALLY KILLED BY HIS  
HEAD COMING IN CONTACT WITH A BRIDGE  
AT STURTON, NEAR GAINSBRO,  
ON JUNE 1ST 1884,  
AGED 25 YEARS.

Walter Freeman was born and brought up in Swinderby, Lincolnshire in 1859. He lived there with his grandparents John & Jane Freeman. In 1871 at the age of 11 years he was working as Farmer's Day Boy. By 1881 he had moved to Grimsby. He was a single man aged 21 years and was a boarder in the home of William Simpson, an Engine Driver at 61 Willingham Street. Walter's occupation was given as Railway Stoker.

His death was a great tragedy and an inquest held at Gainsborough was reported in the *Grimsby Observer* of June 4<sup>th</sup> 1884:

**SHOCKING DEATH OF A GRIMSBY MAN** - An Inquest was held on Monday at Gainsborough upon the body of Walter Freeman, a Grimsby stoker on the M.S. and L. Railway, who was killed at a bridge about two miles from the Gainsborough station on Sunday morning.

George Stamp, Grimsby, said he was the driver of a goods train which left Ardwick, near Manchester, at 8.55am on Sunday morning. The deceased was fireman with him. When going down Claxbro cutting and near Sturton station the deceased went upon the top of the tender to get something to eat out of the box. Witness (*George Stamp*) saw him before they got to the bridge. On looking round again shortly afterwards, Freeman was not to be seen, and witness going to look for him found him lying on the waggon immediately following the tender. His forehead was beaten in and blood was flowing freely from the wound. The driver said the train would be travelling from twenty to thirty miles an hour when the accident occurred. Deceased had been with witness about four months as stoker, and had from that time gone over the same journey daily.

William Henry Clayton, locomotive foreman for the district, said the bridge would be about 15ft above the four-foot upon which the train had to travel. The distance from the coal to the brickwork would be about 5ft. The Company had had no accident like this during the last seven years. Verdict - "Accidental Death".



*Sturton station near Gainsborough where the fatal accident took place.*

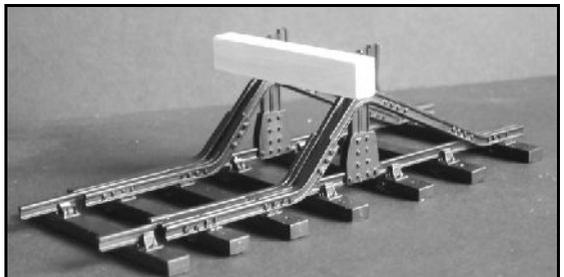
## Modellers' Corner by Tony West

Another welcome addition to the Bachmann 4mm buildings range is a GC 'Type 4' signal cabin. The 'Type 4' is of course the version used on the London Extension. Based upon the sole remaining example at Loughborough it represents the most common size that is fitted with a forty lever frame so is suitable for most station cabins. Unfortunately the adjacent lamp hut that accompanied the vast majority of these boxes is not included. Newton Sidings box just north of Rugby didn't have one and I'm sure there must have been others. Anyway it appears to be a fairly accurate model with even the correct chimney stack detailing on the back wall of the box. A slight amount of modeller's licence appears to have been taken with the representation of the sliding windows at the front corners but all in all a very pleasing representation. All that is needed now is some rolling stock to go with the locos and the station buildings.



*The Bachmann 4mm GCR Type 4 signal box.*

In 7mm scale Ragstone Models have introduced a white metal kit for a MS&L/ GC railbuilt buffer stop (code LS080), based on an extant example of one at Marylebone and an 1895 dated drawing. It is a nicely detailed set of parts and is very welcome. Ragstone have also announced their intention to produce a kit for the 40 ton bogie coal wagon, hopefully for next year.



*The white metal GCR bufferstops in 7mm from Ragstone Models.*

Staying with 7mm, the proprietor of Gladiator Models, Geoff Stratford, is hoping to retire in about eighteen months time and is looking to slowly reduce the range. He has assured me that the J10 will be produced before then. Geoff is looking for someone to take on the business....any takers?

Transfers...finally HMRS have seemingly resolved their paper issues and have started to ask for information. I have supplied them with the relevant information as requested. The position now is that costings have to be supplied for the amount of colours needed and the colour separation processes involved. This will then be presented to the

executive committee who will then decide whether it is seen to be a viable proposition. If the go ahead is given then they will be available in 4 and 7mm scales.

Finally if you havent already bought it, invest in John Quick's book on GC loco liveries..its simply the best single reference book on the GC for years. Although aimed at the modeller it's equally relevent for the historian. An essential purchase indeed for the student of the GCR.

I would just like to wish all readers all a peaceful and healthy Christmas and New Year. Santa has already been instructed to leave both of Ken Grainger's new books in my stocking....bliss!

#### *contact details*

Ragstone Models: 26 Wadham Close, Rowley Regis, West Midlands B65 9SH

e-mail: [orders@ragstonemodels.co.uk](mailto:orders@ragstonemodels.co.uk)

web site: [www.ragstonemodels.co.uk](http://www.ragstonemodels.co.uk)

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### **Model railway exhibition diary**

*Some events that may interest our readers*

Sun 8<sup>th</sup> Dec: Hinckley MRE at Ashby Road Sports Club, Hinckley LE10 1SU.

<http://hinckleymre.webs.com>

Sat 11<sup>th</sup> & Sun 12<sup>th</sup> Jan: Chiltern MRA at The Alban Arena, Civic Centre, St Albans AL1 3LD. [www.cmra.org.uk](http://www.cmra.org.uk)

Fri 17<sup>th</sup>- Sun 19<sup>th</sup> Jan: London Model Engineering Exhibition at Alexandra Palace, London N22 7AY. [www.meridienneexhibitions.co.uk](http://www.meridienneexhibitions.co.uk)

Sat 18<sup>th</sup> & Sun 19<sup>th</sup> Jan: Pennine MRS at St Philip's Community Centre, Briarlyn Road, Birchencliffe, Huddersfield HD3 3NL. [www.freewebs.com/pmrs](http://www.freewebs.com/pmrs)

Sat 25<sup>th</sup> & Sun 26<sup>th</sup> Jan: Normanton & Pontefract RMS at New College, Park Lane, Pontefract WF8 4QR. [www.nprms.org](http://www.nprms.org)

Sat 15<sup>th</sup> Feb: Milton Keynes MRS at Shenley Brook End School, Walbank Grove, Milton Keynes MK5 7ZT. [www.mkmrs.org.uk](http://www.mkmrs.org.uk)

Sat 15<sup>th</sup> & Sun 16<sup>th</sup> Feb: Syston MRS at Sileby Community Centre, High Street, Sileby LE12 7RX. [www.systonmrs.org.uk](http://www.systonmrs.org.uk)

Sat 22<sup>nd</sup> Feb: Risborough & District MRC at The Community Centre, Stratton Road, Princes Risborough HP27 9AX. [www.rdmrc.org.uk](http://www.rdmrc.org.uk)

Sun 23<sup>rd</sup> Feb: Ilkeston (Woodside) MRC at Trowell Parish Hall, Stapleford Road, Trowell NG9 3QA.

Sat 8<sup>th</sup> & Sun 9<sup>th</sup> March: Macclesfield MRG at Tytherington Hiogh School, Manchester Road, Macclesfield SK10 2EE.

Sat 22<sup>nd</sup> March: Chesham MRC at The Elgiva Theatre, St Mary's Way, Chesham HP5 1HR.

**The Gainsborough Model Railway**, at Florence Terrace, Gainsborough DN21 1BE, is open to the public (1.30pm-6.00pm) on Sun 8<sup>th</sup> Dec, Sat 28<sup>th</sup> Dec and Sun 29<sup>th</sup> Dec.

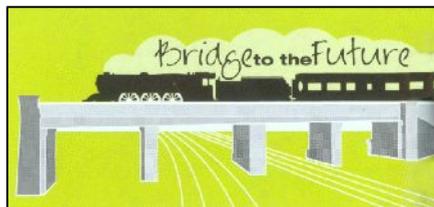
Visit [www.gainsboroughmodelrailway.co.uk](http://www.gainsboroughmodelrailway.co.uk) for more information.



**FOR ALL THE EXHIBITIONS CHECK**  
[www.ukmodelshops.co.uk/events](http://www.ukmodelshops.co.uk/events)

## The 'Bridge to the Future' appeal – an update by Tom Ingall

A momentous few months have passed since my first article appeared in *Forward 177*. We're proud to report that preparatory work on the new infrastructure has already begun! At the same time, fundraising continues at a pace. In the last article we had reached £148,000. Now the total is £280,000, boosted by a generous grant from a Leicestershire charitable foundation.



Let's deal with the boots on the ground first. The two bridge decks recovered from Reading station have been surveyed and preliminary reports show them to be in good order. I'm writing this at the start of November, but by the time you read it the civils team will have returned to remove the waterproofing from the decks, carry out a more detailed inspection, then make them secure, prior to shotblasting and painting next Summer.

The decks will be placed end to end to create the single track link line, supported on new abutments and a central pier, between the fast and slow lines of the Midland Main Line. Test drilling is scheduled for this month (Nov.) on both sides of the Midland line, to inform the design of the new abutments. Network Rail have also started a signal sighting exercise to ascertain what work might be required while the bridge is being built and when it is in place. They expect to have submitted a planning application to Charnwood Borough Council by the end of the year.

Behind the scenes and less visible, many meetings have taken place with the stakeholders touched by the work. There will be an immediate impact on the southern side, where the owners of the Preci Spark factory have kindly agreed to allow the test bore holes to be driven in their car park! Meanwhile, local education and training providers have been briefed about the scheme, building bridges with the local community too. We want them to regard the project as a resource which might inspire students and apprentices in future.

Network Rail is not contributing any public money to the project, however it acknowledges it has a major role to play in supporting community projects and initiatives that can stimulate engagement between the public and business community. It's encouraging its staff to support the scheme and staff in the Derby office will be donating their time to help deliver the bridge.

Alan Kemp, a director of Great Central Railway Nottingham said, "It has been an unbelievable year. From a long term aspiration twelve months ago, the reunification project is suddenly real and making rapid progress. The support from across the heritage rail sector has been extraordinary. In 2014 we need to keep our fundraising up to ensure the bills can be met as they arrive."

Of course, having a £15,000 grant land on the desk, from the Edith Murphy Foundation has been most welcome and gratefully received. Cheques and standing order instructions are arriving weekly, pushing the total upwards. The Friends of the Great Central Main Line (FoGCML) have also been on the road with an impressive new display stand, rattling the bucket and receiving donations.

Members of the Great Central Railway Society have been most generous after the article appeared in *Forward 177*. Naturally we hope you'll want to continue that support. Through the good offices of your Editor and Chairman, we have been able to include an appeal form in this issue. While making a donation is very much a personal choice and naturally reflects your means, we are asking people to consider setting up a monthly standing order. A donation of £10 a month for the next 20 months soon adds up. If you

can make the gift aid declaration as well, the government will add an extra 25% to your donation at no extra cost to yourself. To set up a standing order, fill in the lower half of the form and send it to Bridge Appeal, Lovatt House, 3 Wharncliffe Road, Loughborough, Leics. LE11 1SL. One off donations can also be made using the form or online at [www.gcrailway.co.uk/unify](http://www.gcrailway.co.uk/unify). It worked to build a brand new steam locomotive - it can work for the bridge if lots of us join in!

Finally, if you are stuck for a Christmas present, how about ordering one of our fundraising DVDs. We produced a film of the Swithland Gala this year which showcases the double track, the 'joint line' style signalling and our visiting locomotives. The highlights run 75 minutes in length and on the same disc there is an exclusive mini documentary about the revival of the Mountsorrel Branch Line. While not strictly London Extension of course, the work done will delight and inspire! The collection is rounded off by a look in our recent archives at the visit of A3 Flying Scotsman in 1992. Not only do you get to see the locomotive in action, its a superb chance to see how far the GCR has come in 20 years.

The DVDs cost £25 and ALL THE MONEY goes to the Bridge appeal. To order, send a cheque made payable to the 'David Clarke Railway Trust' to Swithland DVD Offer, Larford House, Hand Lane, Crane Moor, South Yorkshire S35 7ER.

Many thanks for your support. Together we are going Forward - and we will see substantial construction works on the new bridge next year.



*The GC bridge across the Midland before demolition in the early 1980s. Loughborough station platforms can just be seen on the left and beyond is the Brush Works. photo: Nigel Tout*

## Memories of Summer 2013



During 'Steam on the Met' on 26<sup>th</sup> May, Chiltern Railways 165028 passes the 17:08 Amersham-Harrow on the Hill worked by class 20 no.L150 in red livery with steam at the rear. The first coach is the Metropolitan Jubilee Coach no.353 dating back to the 1890s. photo: David Hanger



Members of the Sheffield branch of the GCRS enjoyed an evening walk from Kiveton Park station along the Chesterfield Canal on 1<sup>st</sup> August. photo: Mel Luff

## Some recent items from Talisman Railwayana Auctions

Auctions are held at the Newark Showground. See [www.talismanauctions.co.uk](http://www.talismanauctions.co.uk).



GCR Appleton's Patent 3-aspect handlamp. Body brass plated "GCR 7341 Tinsley" and "F.Goodchild". Top has steel plate "7341" and aspect turning propellor stamped "Appletons Patent". Complete with vessel, burner, reflector and all glasses although the bullseye lens is damaged. Sold for **£480**.



MS&L signalman's high backed stool with original Rexine upholstered seat. Clearly stamped MS&L twice on the legs. Sold for **£100**.



Pair of GCR cast iron gradient post arms from the LD&ECR at Skellingthorpe. Sold for **£140**.



Carriage Print "Immingham Docks Lincolnshire" by Frank Mason from the LNER 1947 series and in an original type glazed frame. Sold for **£90**.



**Dunford Bridge in the snow.** It is January 1970 and an unidentified class 76 Bo+Bo passes Dunford Bridge station after emerging from the Woodhead tunnel with a Manchester Piccadilly to Sheffield Victoria service. Now that the long descent to Sheffield has started the loco will be putting juice back into the wires through regenerative braking. Passenger services over Woodhead were withdrawn on 5<sup>th</sup> January 1970 so this scene must have been taken on the last day or very close to it. Passengers between these two major cities would soon have to travel via the Hope Valley which was longer in distance and time taken. The promise that the Woodhead route would be developed as a freight artery didn't materialise and the route closed completely in 1981. Today the trackbed on the closed section between Penistone and Hadfield is still intact and used as part of the Trans-Pennine Trail. The 'new' Woodhead tunnel is in good condition but now occupied by electricity cables transferred from the old tunnels, a major obstacle to re-opening the line. *photo: Robert Carroll Collection*



**A look at some of the locomotives on John Quick's 4mm workshop layout.**

*above:* GCR class 9J 0-6-0 no.976 in ivory black picked out with red panel bands and white lines and a cabside brass number plate with a red ground. The tender carries a transfer of the company's coat-of-arms with the company name either side in gold with red shadow.

*below left:* GCR class 9F 0-6-2T no.773 in MS&L middle chrome green with gold lettering (faded to yellow!) without shadow. Number painted on cab side. The GC lettering has been applied without a livery change. Soon to be painted black by Robinson. *below right* GCR class 9N 4-6-2T no.168 in Brunswick green. The smokebox and cab roof in black. Frames and steps in crimson lake. The lining consists of twin white lines with black centre. The brass number plate on the tender has a black ground. The coat-of-arms and lettering are on the tank side.

*photos: Bob Gellatly*



## Arrivals on the bookshelf

### "Robinson's Locomotive Liveries on the Great Central Railway" by John Quick

Published by Lightmoor Press ([www.lightmoor.co.uk](http://www.lightmoor.co.uk)), 2013 at £19.50.

ISBN 9781 899889 75 4. Hardback 136 pages.

These are heady times for Great Central enthusiasts. Modellers of the GC are being supported by a growing range of quality products, which in turn is encouraging even more interest in the Great Central, and all backed up by an excellent library of Great Central literature to which this book is a worthy addition. Researched and written with the thoroughness that those who know John Quick would expect, this will undoubtedly remain the standard work on the subject.

After describing the background to his work and introducing John G. Robinson, John identifies the sources consulted, which underlines that few stones can have been left unturned. He then details the GC's basic green and black livery styles, their bordering and lining, lettering, insignia and splasher styling, well illustrated with colour panels.

Chronologically, chapter by chapter, John then details the black and green liveries as applied to each class, identifying variations within the class and for individual locomotives, before signing off with a useful bibliography, a reminder of just how well served with literature we of a Great Central persuasion are.

John's book is excellently illustrated throughout, mostly with black-and-white photographs which are well reproduced on good quality art paper. They have understandably been selected for their depiction of livery detail, though they also illustrate that, for goods engines at least, there were distinct exceptions to the immaculate turnout popularly supposed from that era!

Essentially, this is a reference work which will prove invaluable to modellers of the Great Central, but John has woven the data into an eminently readable narrative without which, modeller or not, no Great Central enthusiast's bookshelf will be complete. At a very reasonable price for a quality hardback, it is unreservedly recommended.

*Ken Grainger*

### "The Lancashire Derbyshire & East Coast Railway vol.2" by Chris Booth

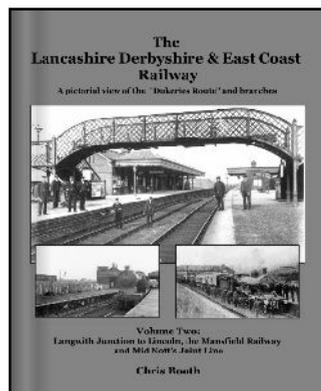
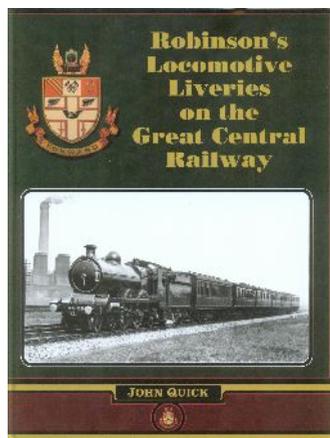
Published by Blurb, 2013 ([www.blurb.co.uk/bookstore](http://www.blurb.co.uk/bookstore)) at £27.50 - £34.50

Hardback/softback 8"x10", 108 pages.

The author is a professional railwayman and regular contributor to Forward. Continuing on from Volume 1, this book covers the remaining section from Dukeries Jn to Lincoln along with the Mansfield Railway connection and the Mid Nott's Joint Railway. This end of the route was mostly intact until the 1980s and some of it is still in use today, doing the job it was built for, the movement of coal, albeit from the one remaining colliery at Thoresby.

The photos are a mix of old and new, monochrome and colour. Signal box diagrams and old OS maps help to paint the picture of this fascinating railway.

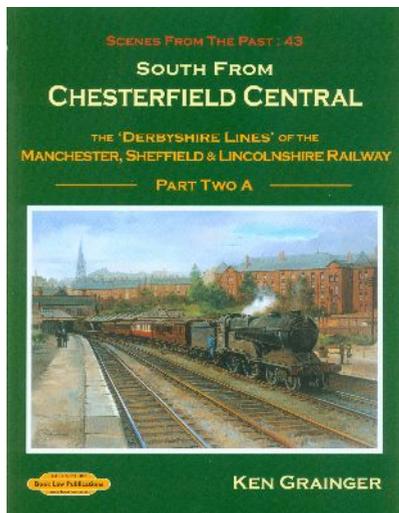
*information from Blurb*



## "The 'Derbyshire Lines' of the Manchester, Sheffield & Lincolnshire Railway Part Two A - South from Chesterfield Central" by Ken Grainger

Published by Book Law Publications ([www.booklaw.co.uk](http://www.booklaw.co.uk)), 2013 at £19.99  
ISBN 978-1-909625-10-5. Softback 112 pages.

Ken Grainger will need no introduction to readers of *Forward*. His many contributions to this journal and his active participation in the running of the GCRS will be well known to its members. Also evident is the extensive and meticulous research which characterises his work on the history of the Great Central Railway. His recent work on the Great Central war memorial published in these pages bears ample testimony to this. Those of you who have the first volume of *The Derbyshire Lines* (and I hope that is most of you) will have been waiting ten years in eager anticipation of the second instalment. The long wait is now over and has been well worth it. The first part took us on the journey from Sheffield Victoria to Chesterfield Central. The wealth of material and Ken's determination to do justice to it means that the concluding volume covering Chesterfield to Nottingham Victoria has been split into parts 2A and 2B. It is the first of these which is reviewed here. By the time this review appears in print, part B will also have been published.



The tone of the volume is set by the quality of the cover illustration, a magnificent study of D11/1 *Gerald Powys Dewhurst* at Chesterfield Central by David Charlesworth GRA. The rest of the contents live up to this high standard. The geographical area covered is from Staveley in the north to Annesley tunnel in the south including the rest of the Chesterfield loop to Heath. The book covers infrastructure and traffic with a fair sprinkling of facsimile original documents relating to the line. The photographs show all aspects of the line with each station comprehensively covered together with the infrastructure of signal boxes, loco sheds, goods yards and all the associated paraphernalia of the steam railway. The photographs of the traffic concentrate not only on the more glamorous passenger trains, but also describe in detail the life blood of the MS&L Derbyshire lines, the goods (I refuse to call them freight) trains. The atmosphere of the system, in what we now know to be its swansong when a seemingly endless stream of coal and goods trains clanked up and down the lines, is accurately conveyed. The grim landscape of the Derbyshire coalfield is realistically reflected. For those of us who knew the railway then, the book transports us back to those times. It is hard to imagine the grime and all-pervading industrial atmosphere of those days in today's landscape where in most places, all traces of the railway have been swept away to be replaced by housing estates, industrial units and retail parks.

The photographs are backed up by extensive and informative captions. Ken's highly readable style brings to life the operation of the railway, with detailed notes on the infrastructure and operation put into historical perspective. Locomotives, rolling stock, operation, traffic are all covered, together with the backbone of the railway, the railway staff. Together they provide a comprehensive review of the Derbyshire lines in early BR days as well as setting it in its historical context. The mention of the old Tibshelf timber bridge (page 80) brings back a vivid childhood memory of having to dismount from the bus and walk over the bridge as it was deemed too dangerous to allow a bus full of passengers over the rickety bridge. What consideration was given to the poor driver I do not know, perhaps he was considered expendable!

One notable departure from the first volume is that the track diagrams have been replaced by facsimiles of the original track plans from the building of the line. Whilst these are a little more difficult to follow than the excellently drawn diagrams of Part 1, (a reading glass helped in my case), the amount of historical detail these contain compensate for this. I believe any railway history without maps is like roast beef without horseradish sauce.

It is Ken's attention to detail which lifts this book out of the ordinary pictorial railway album category, and goodness knows, there are plenty of those around, and puts it into the category of the serious railway history. I can guarantee that even the most knowledgeable student of the GCR will find something here which will be new and of interest. It deserves a place on every reader's bookshelf. By the way, if you have missed the first volume in the trilogy, it is still available on the publisher's website.

*Dave Bell*

### **"The 'Derbyshire Lines' of the Manchester, Sheffield & Lincolnshire Railway Part Two B – Forward to Nottingham Victoria" by Ken Grainger**

Published by Book Law Publications ([www.booklaw.co.uk](http://www.booklaw.co.uk)), 2013 at £19.99  
ISBN 978-1-909625-11-2. Softback 104 pages.

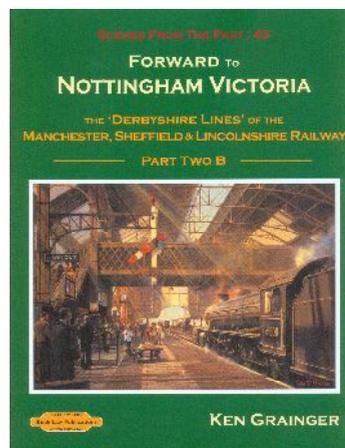
This is the third book of Ken's journey down the GC main line from Sheffield Victoria to Nottingham Victoria along the 'Derbyshire Lines'. Strictly speaking this section is the first part of the London Extension for which the Derbyshire Lines was the springboard.

It is a photographic journey with very knowledgeable and sometimes lengthy captions in the style familiar to *Forward* readers. Not here are the short and often inaccurate scribbles of other publications. The cover picture sets the scene, Nottingham Victoria by Philip Hawkins, the cathedral of the GC. The journey starts at the southern portal of Annesley Tunnel, with sections for Annesley Shed, Hucknall Central, Bulwell North Junction, Bulwell Common, Bagthorpe Junction, New Basford, Carrington and Nottingham Victoria.

The majority of locomotives included are ex-LNER, although some BR Standards make an appearance along with a few English Electric Type 3s and a few ex-LMS types. Thankfully we are not treated to a continual procession of Black Fives. The famous Annesley 'DIDO' makes numerous appearances. Many of the photographs have been seen before, but this section of the line was not extensively photographed, especially in GC days. There are many new photographs to me, including pre-war and even some pre-Grouping.

I am particularly interested in the line immediately to the north of Nottingham from a modelling standpoint and so I was pleased to see some photographs of the infrastructure around New Basford, including photographs from the camera of Henry Priestley, amongst other fine photographers. The book is very well produced with the quality printing expected from the Amadeus Press. I was looking forward to seeing the book, which has had a long gestation, and I was not disappointed. Ken has compiled an excellent collection of photographs and I cannot recommend it too highly if you are interested in this northernmost section of the London Extension. Even if you are not, you will be sure to find it informative and a good read. Perhaps Ken Grainger can be persuaded to continue the journey further south.

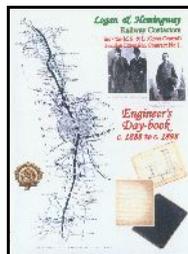
*Brian Slater*



## "Great Central the Remains of a Railway" and "Engineer's Day Book" PDF files on CD

These titles are CDs consisting of pdf files made from scans of the original documents. They were featured in the previous issue of Forward (p30). The pricing is now available.

"Great Central the remains of a railway" is a record of the GC through Nottingham made in 1979-80. It was originally published by the Dept. of Adult Education at Nottingham University.



"Engineer's Day Book" consists of notes made by a junior engineer working for Logan & Hemingway on the section of the GCR's London Extension through Nottingham.

The cost of each CD is £7.99 (post free to UK) with £2.50 from each sale being donated to the Patriot Project (see [www.lms-patriot.org.uk](http://www.lms-patriot.org.uk)).

Please send a cheque made out to Bruce Baker-Johnson with your order to Bruce Baker-Johnson, 4 Trimaran Road, Warsash, Hampshire SO131 9BG.

e-mail: [brubaker45@gmail.com](mailto:brubaker45@gmail.com) tel. 01489 581213

## "Peter's Railway Hits the Jackpot" by Christopher Vine

Published by Christopher Vine ([www.petersrailway.com](http://www.petersrailway.com)) 2013 at £11.99. ISBN 978 0 9553359 90. Hardback 96 pages.

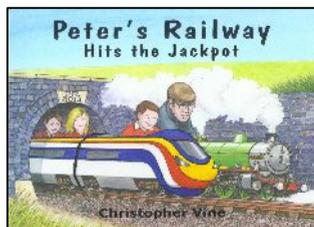
This is the 5<sup>th</sup> in the series of *Peter's Railway* books for children aged 6-12 years and it tells the story of Peter and Grandpa's most ambitious adventure yet!

Peter, the book's hero, becomes an entrepreneur as he and his grandfather take on the challenge of extending their lovingly hand-built line from Crosssacres Farm to carry children to and from the local school in Yockletts.

The story follows Peter and his Grandpa every step of the way, from planning and commissioning a new electric train to building a railway bridge over the River Wye and even managing to secure backing from the Minister of Transport!

One of the features of the series is the simple but accurate explanations of how things work. In this book we see what is involved in building a railway tunnel and shown how railway brakes work.

All books in the *Peter's Railway* and *Little Peter's Railway* series are self-published by Christopher Vine and illustrated by John Wardle.



*Publisher*



## Central station totems

These two totems were part of a large collection on display at Barrow Hill on 28<sup>th</sup> September. Why was the placing of CENTRAL different between Staveley and Chesterfield? What was the significance of CENTRAL being used in a station name? Did it describe the geographical location or the railway company?

## Memories of Woodhouse by Dave Bell

Woodhouse is the second station, after Darnall, on the GC main line out of Sheffield Victoria. Woodhouse Grammar School occupied a prominent position overlooking the station. In September 1948, after passing my 11+ exam, I started attending the grammar school. This was my introduction to the magical world of train spotting. Previously my experience of railways had been limited to the occasional trip, either on holiday or to visit relatives in Scotland, but wartime and post-war austerity meant that train travel was a luxury and living about a mile from the nearest railway in the village of Aston, I never developed an interest in trains. This was soon to change.

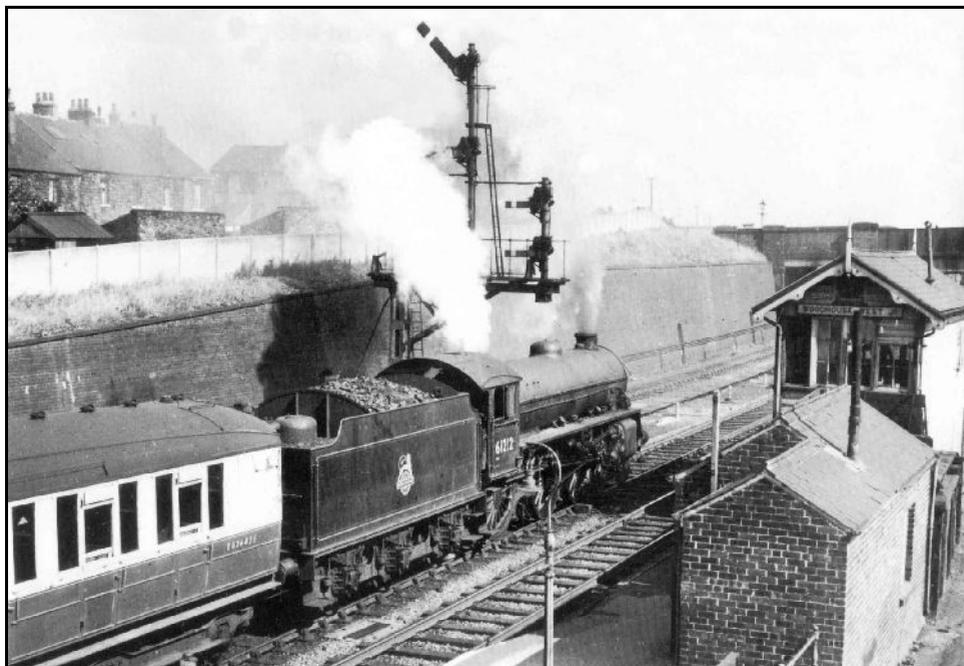
I made friends with several enthusiastic spotters and spent all lunchtime and a good deal of school time watching the railway scene. Several of the classrooms had a superb view of the station and its approach from Sheffield and I earned several reprimands for watching out of the window when I should have been concentrating on the lessons. The line in those days was very busy with a constant stream of freight and passenger services. The station itself had two platforms served by the main lines with the goods lines passing either side of the station platforms and buildings which meant that the platforms could only be accessed by a footbridge.

The fledgling British Railways was then only eight months old and many of the locos were still in LNER livery. Great Central locomotives were still very prominent with the majority of freight being handled by the Robinson O4s in their various forms and the class J11 'Pom-Poms'. Many of the class B7 4-6-0s were still around as were some other surviving remnants of the Robinson 4-6-0s, notably class B8 no.61357 *Earl Roberts of Kandahar* and class B4 no.61482 *Immingham*. These two once illustrious locomotives were in an indescribably filthy state with steam issuing from every unlikely place. They were obviously not long for this world and soon disappeared from the scene.



*Woodhouse station in the early 1950s looking west towards Sheffield from Furnace Lane bridge. The original station only had the two platform lines with quadrupling taking place in 1912. The small goods yard on the left was accessed from the down slow line. The signal box at the platform end is Woodhouse West Junction.*  
photo: Stations UK

The class D10 & D11 'Directors' were prominent on stopping passenger services although we could not understand why we never saw any with Scottish names - the first locos shed book was still two years in the future and shed allocations were a mystery to us. The class C13 4-4-2T tanks were also much in evidence on local trains. These well-loved locos were usually smartly turned out and seemed to go about their business without any fuss. Most of the expresses were in the hands of the Thompson class B1 4-6-0s which were still being produced at that time, signing the death warrant of the few remaining Robinson 4-6-0s. One of these, no.61212, was a regular and was known as 'Whitehall' by the spotting fraternity after the well-known telephone number of Scotland Yard. (*Also known as the 'Retford Rocket' - Ed.*)



*BR class B1 4-6-0 no.61212 sets off from Woodhouse with a local from Sheffield Victoria. It was shedded at Retford (GC) throughout its life. Furnace Lane bridge is in the background. Date unknown but could be late 1950s. Photo: Alan Rowles collection*

Of course we must not forget the ubiquitous WD 2-8-0s, grimy and unloved by spotters but apparently quite well regarded by the footplate men. They were always unbelievably filthy and if you could read the number you were lucky. I remember seeing one of these workhorses grinding its way up from Beighton to Woodhouse with 22 ancient coaches behind it, presumably bound for the scrap yard.

On the south side of the station was the yard which at that time was quite busy. After school I would often squeeze through a gap in the fence and sit on the embankment watching the activity in the yard and of course, on the main line. The yard was normally shunted by a class J11. I had my first footplate ride on this yard shunter after being invited up by the driver and spent a happy hour riding up and down the yard.

To the east of the station the lines to London and Retford diverged as did the branch to Birley Colliery. This was worked by an 0-6-0 saddle tank, known to us as *The Rocket* although I believe its proper name was *Orient*. Our sports field was at the bottom of Junction Lane and we had to cross the Birley Branch line to get to it when we went down to the sports field on Wednesday afternoons. If we were lucky we would see the engine

fussing around the yard or traversing the branch with a few coal wagons for the land sale site at Birley West.

The highlight of the day, and the only bit of glamour, was provided by 'The Master Cutler' being worked by an A3 Pacific. Although the up working was well before school time and the down working well after, it was well worth the effort to see it if you had been told it would be a 'cop'. The other named train was 'The South Yorkshireman' originating in Bradford which came through late morning. This was in those days invariably worked by a B1 but there was a good chance of it being a namer. The other namer you could bank on was the Harwich boat train which came through about 3.20pm, worked by a B17 'Sandringham' or a B2 'Footballer'. These were invariably well turned out in their green livery and were a welcome change from the overall black which seemed to pervade everything else. This was in contrast to the carriage stock which went through a variety of experimental colour schemes in early BR days - blood & custard, chocolate and cream, Midland maroon and of course the LNER teak were all in evidence, very often in the same rake.



*An A3 Pacific on the up 'Master Cutler'. No.60059 'Tracery' just south of Rickmansworth station with a rake of blood & custard stock.  
photo: L.V.Reason ©M&GN Circle*

Now for the day we stopped the 'Cutler'. In the summer of 1949, although I can't recall the actual date after this length of time, our chemistry teacher arranged a trip for first year pupils to London to 'see the sights'. This was quite an adventure for most of us as we had never been to the capital. The trip took place on a Saturday and was to be by train, on no less a train than 'The Master Cutler'. Two carriages were reserved for us and it was arranged that the train would stop at Woodhouse station to pick up the party. This must be the only occasion when this prestigious train stopped at this station. We stood in trepidation on the station platform hoping that the driver would remember to stop as the signals were clear for it to pass through as usual. We needn't have worried as we watched the A3 Pacific no.60061 *Pretty Polly* (I think it was) approach and duly stop in the appointed place. This was my first and only trip over the GC main line to Marylebone. The return trip was on the Midland line behind a 'Black 5' on the late night newspaper train. This achieved some spirited running south of Leicester and we timed it at just over 80 mph at one point, although I doubt that our timing achieved the accuracy

of the redoubtable Cecil J. Allen. Some ten years later I travelled on the 'Cutler' again, by then an all Pullman train, from Kings Cross coming home on leave. The supplement was half-a-crown and I felt very much out of place amongst the smart suited businessmen in my battledress uniform. I could not afford a meal and had to make do with a cup of coffee.

Some lucky pupils, or so I thought, who lived in Dinnington, Anston or Kiveton Park, travelled to school on the train from either Kiveton Park or Kiveton Bridge stations. This was a Retford local and invariably worked by a C13 tank. The logic behind this arrangement escaped me as the bus they used to get to the stations eventually passed the school anyway. One of the rakes of carriages sometimes used on this service had a pair of articulated coaches which originated from the pre-war streamlined sets used on the East Coast main line, still in its original livery. There was always a scramble to get into these coaches as they were perceived as the height of luxury. I did manage to travel in them on a trip from Woodhouse to Sheffield and seem to remember them having individual seats upholstered in leather.

On the subject of buses, the rail service between Sheffield and Gainsborough was duplicated by the no.85 bus route, always known locally as 'the railway bus'. This was operated by the Sheffield Joint Omnibus Committee with buses owned by the LNER. Return rail tickets could be used on the buses and return bus tickets could be used on the trains on payment of a supplement. I remember new buses appearing after the war in the Sheffield livery but carrying the LNER logo. After nationalization they carried the ownership details of 'The Railway Executive of 222 Marylebone Road'.

Whilst our family did not often travel by train, the post war coach services run by Sheffield United Tours to the main holiday resorts were much cheaper, there were a great many cheap day excursions from Sheffield to places such as Cleethorpes, Blackpool, Skegness etc which were well patronised. These picked up at all the local stations and provided a good cheap family day out. It inevitably meant an early start, a three or four mile walk to the station and a late night or early morning return. Cleethorpes was the local favourite and on Sunday nights Cleethorpes station would be thronged with hundreds of people cramming the concourse and approach waiting for their return journey to be announced.

I well remember one particular excursion from Woodhouse Mill station (on the 'Old Road') to Morecambe. This was pulled by an ancient Midland 3F which was obviously not in good nick. Arrival at Morecambe was about an hour late but the return journey was excruciatingly slow as the loco struggled to get its train over the Pennines. Several stops had to be made to raise steam and arrival back was at around 4am just as it was getting light. We stuck to Cleethorpes after that!

As train spotters, the main object was to underline as many numbers as possible in your Ian Allan ABC and inevitably the opportunity for this at Woodhouse diminished as the months went by. I then started to venture further afield and would cycle the 18 miles to Retford or Doncaster to broaden my spotting horizons. Retford was better as you could access the station all day with a penny platform ticket. Doncaster was out of bounds to spotters unless you arrived by train, out of the question on my meagre pocket money. The best location in Doncaster was the disused St. James station in the angle where the GNR and GC lines met at Hexthorpe Bridge.

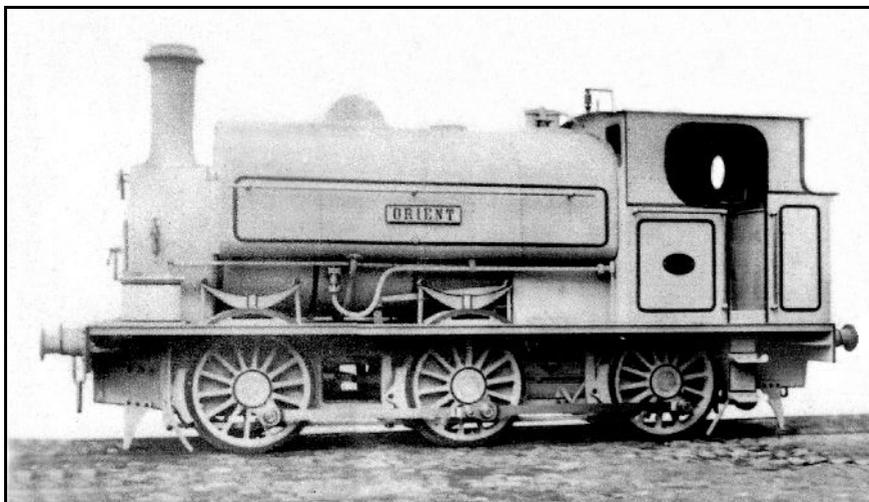
There was a day when the railway scene at Woodhouse provided plenty of surprises. This was 16<sup>th</sup> March 1951. The last lesson of the day was art and the art room had the best view of the line in the whole school. Idly looking out of the window to pass the time (I hated art!) imagine my surprise when I saw the unmistakable shape of an A4 'streak' approaching from Sheffield. This was followed by a stream of other unlikely workings, A3s, A2s, A1s, and V2s, in an almost constant procession. The excitement this produced can only be imagined and as soon as school finished I rushed down to Waleswood station where my friend's father, Seth Trethewey, was signalman and spent the whole

evening in the box watching the spectacle. Seth handled the extra work as though it was an everyday occurrence. The reason for the unusual traffic was a tragic accident at Doncaster which had blocked the main line at Balby Bridge resulting in the trains being diverted by the GCR line through Mexborough, Darnall Junction and on to Retford to rejoin the main line again. The extra traffic ceased about 9 o'clock so presumably the line had been cleared and normal working resumed. A far cry from today's situation where an accident means the line is closed for much longer whilst investigations take place.

During my time at Woodhouse, the Woodhead electrification scheme was progressing. The limit of the wires was just to the west of the station towards Sheffield and we watched with interest as first the posts appeared followed by the wires. Rotherwood sidings was the changeover point from electric to steam haulage for freight trains but by the time the line was fully operational in 1955 I had left Woodhouse and I never saw it in operation. The short life of the electrified Woodhead line was a national scandal but the death knell had been sounded before the line even opened. I well remember the government announcement that all future electrification was to be 25kv ac. Whilst technically this was the sensible option it left the Woodhead line out on a limb with no hope of integration into the future electrified network, although had the will been there it could have been achieved. I did have a trip to Manchester in 1961 on the electric service and was impressed by the both the standard of the rolling stock and the speed of the journey.

Today Woodhouse station is unstaffed but at least the buildings remain with some attempt to conserve them. Freight traffic has almost vanished although the yard remains as a reversal facility for coal trains from the Retford line to the Midland 'Old Road' via Beighton Junction, with the former down slow acting as a headshunt. Northern Rail 'Pacers' and, if you're lucky, 'Sprinters', provide the passenger service from Sheffield to Worksop, Retford and Lincoln, and to Cleethorpes on a Saturday. The Birley branch is now only a memory and has been virtually eliminated by housing and road development. Woodhouse Grammar School has long gone, replaced by a retirement village. I wonder if any of the residents remember Woodhouse in its glory days.

*Editor's note: More photos of Woodhouse can be found on pp47-57 of *The Derbyshire Lines Part 1: Sheffield Victoria to Chesterfield Central* by Ken Grainger.*



*The 0-6-0ST 'Orient' was built by Hudswell Clarke for Birley East Colliery in 1890 with works no.365. She worked the 'Orient Express' until 1951 when the landsale site at Birley West closed. She was transferred to nearby Brookhouse Colliery.*

*photo: Alan Rowles collection*

## **My day on 'The Cheshireman'** **by Pete Hackney**

A rail journey that starts on the Great Central at Cleethorpes with a destination on the Cheshire Lines Committee at Chester running via the Woodhead Route, now that's one I would jump at the chance to join! Sadly, as we all know, these days you have to travel via the Midland's Hope Valley line and Chester Northgate station is long closed. However on Saturday 19<sup>th</sup> October the Railway Touring Company's *The Cheshireman* rail tour did start in Cleethorpes, did run via the GC to Mexborough and did take the CLC from Cheadle Heath to Mickle Trafford. Plus it was hauled by 70013 *Oliver Cromwell* recalling the early 1960s when Britannias were shedded at Immingham and regularly ran over GC metals. So, still well worth signing up for.

As part of the 5305 Locomotive Association (the operators of 70013) support team, I had the privilege of being awoken at 2am on Saturday morning, together with the other four members of the team, to prepare 70013 for its 6.05am departure from Cleethorpes. We had spent the night in the up goods sidings at Barnetby after arriving engine and coach from London the previous evening. The transfer down to Cleethorpes was courtesy of two West Coast Railways class 47 diesels as we were travelling tender first. With Driver Mick Rawling and Fireman Roger Griffiths in charge we left Cleethorpes on-time, ten carriages and support coach in tow.

If you squinted in the darkness, you could almost believe that the abandoned New Clee sidings were full of coaching stock for the returning Saturday specials. In contrast to the dark silence at New Clee, Grimsby Docks were fully lit and as we took the sharp left-hand curve the closed level crossing gates by the Docks Offices held back a line of cars and trucks even at this early hour. I couldn't help thinking it would be better to have seen a line of fish trains waiting to depart the dock lines.

Grimsby Town station with its overall roof is an attractive location but at night, with 70013 filling the trainshed with steam and smoke, it really came into its own. The atmosphere was cut by the nostalgic sound of the chime whistle and we were away, next stop Scunthorpe. The soft welcoming lights of the many Great Central signal boxes we passed en route added to the magic, none more than from the massive box at Wrawby Junction together with its red and green semaphore lights glowing in the dark. Day, or what passed for daylight on this dismal morning, slowly dawned as we crossed the Trent on the King George V bridge and stopped at Crowle to pick up more passengers.

Here I should own up to being an Old Thornensian and being on the footplate of a 'Brit' through Thorne South and over Kirton Lane Crossing is as good as it gets even though the station is a pathetic shadow of what it was and Thorne Junction is now dominated by the M18 motorway bridge. Thankfully the Hatfield Colliery spoil slip that carried away all four railway lines earlier this year has been stabilised and the track work repaired so we could proceed at line speed on this fast level stretch to Doncaster where we paused for yet more passengers.

I have always found the journey west from Doncaster fascinating with its deep limestone cuttings, quarries, power stations and numerous coal mines and even though virtually all the industry has gone the rolling countryside overlooked by Conisbrough Castle is still attractive. At Mexborough, with its well kept 1871 station, we left the GC to take the spur up to the Midland route from York rather than using the original now-singled GC line by the River Don and past the site of Mexborough shed. At Aldwarke Junction we stayed on the Midland via Masborough to Sheffield with only a brief view of what had been Victoria station before entering the tunnels leading to Midland station.

From Sheffield we stayed on the Midland, turning off at Dore onto the Hope Valley line. We stormed up to Edale and joined the former St Pancras-Manchester main line at ChinleyNorth Jn. We continued along the former Midland main line (freight only after

Hazel Grove) to reach Cheadle Heath where we took water next to a Morrisons car park! The journey became interesting again, from a GC perspective, because after Cheadle Heath the line joined a section of the former CLC Godly-Glazebrook line at Northenden Jct. Lost in the rampant vegetation to the east and bisected by the M60 motorway was the site of Heaton Mersey CLC engine shed.

After slowly following the route to the site of Skelton Jn we turned south and ran alongside the Metrolink line to Altrincham on the MSJ&A. After passing Altrincham, where Metrolink terminates, the line is CLC again and 70013 was opened up. There followed twenty miles of fast running until having to slow for Mickle Trafford Jn where we joined the former Birkenhead Joint for the last few miles into Chester General.

On the return journey, crewed by Driver Peter Kirk and Fireman Charlie Barber, we retraced our CLC steps through the rain to Altrincham but rather than taking the Cheadle Heath line at Northenden Junction we ran on to Edgeley Junction, passing through Stockport and then taking the ex-LNWR line to Guide Bridge (the route known for its weekly Parliamentary). We stopped at the deserted Denton station in failing light to take water before regaining GC metals at Guide Bridge. The former Woodhead Route is still electrified but only as far as Hadfield of course. We forked right at Hyde Junction onto the GC&Mid Joint line to Woodley and Marple, regaining the Midland at New Mills for our return to Sheffield. 70013 pounded up the gradients and with clear skies, the full moon lit up the noisy proceedings beautifully. *The Cheshireman* completed its trip back to Cleethorpes diesel-hauled as 70013 came off at Doncaster and we ran up the ECML to stable at the NRM in York.

Considering how much of the original GC has been lost we managed to cover something like 150 steam-hauled miles over the former system in one day. Not only that but the present-day Great Central Railway had a leading role because all but one of the 5053LA support crew and both WCR firemen are based at Loughborough.



*Grimsby station in the early morning darkness seen from the cab of 70013 'Oliver Cromwell' on 'The Cheshireman' on Sat. 19<sup>th</sup> October.*  
photo: Pete Hackney

## Is there an alternative to HS2?

by Richard Fernandez

Reproduced with the author's permission from his 'Cafe thinking' blog on <http://cafethinking.wordpress.com>, dated 29<sup>th</sup> October.

As a paid-up gricer, I've been semi-idly wondering for a while whether the Great Central trackbed could have provided an alternative to HS2. I say 'semi-idly' because I got as far as trying to compare the southern end of HS2 to the old Great Central main line before coming to the conclusion that HS2 wasn't using as much of the old trackbed as it might. The GC closed in the late 1960s and there has been a fair bit of development over the old route. The last Labour government made noises about reopening the GC before giving its backing to what has become HS2.

Lo and behold, just as HS2 is due for debate in the House of Commons, the Great Central has suddenly been floated as an alternative. But I'm sorry to say that the article in the *Sunday Telegraph* (27 Oct) is so lacking in substance that the GC plan is made out to be a non-starter. Much of the article is devoted to Grant Shapps and an ex-minister insulting the Labour party in general and Ed Balls in particular. The section of the article that actually bothers to address the proposal describes the £6bn Great Central scheme as costing one tenth of the £50bn HS2. My calculations dispute this. Further, HS2 has been specifically designed to run through Birmingham, which the GC does not. The *Telegraph* reckon that the GC route 'closely resembles' HS2 which is only the case inasmuch as Leicester closely resembles Birmingham.

Now the plans for a new GC are almost certainly better prepared than the *Telegraph* have presented. But it is almost too late for them to receive a fair hearing. Both sides in the argument have, it seems, used a lot of steam, dodgy data and flawed arguments to further their case, and the result has been to muddy the ballast. To provide a different metaphor, the debate has become a comparison of lemons (HS2) with rhubarb (GC). It's probably now impossible to break the argument down into its core components, so if Ed Balls and Mary Creagh want to try, they need to do it quickly.

Personally, if I were them I'd throw out much of the analysis so far, such as the notion that time spent on a train is not available for work. The meat of the matter is whether the traffic forecasts are right when they suggest that the WCML is full by 2025, and, if the forecasts seem reasonable, what should be done about it. The question is both simpler and more complex than the current debate allows – and we can only scratch the surface. But forget the sophistry about the north-south divide, the pretty pictures and designs and the macho posturing about speed. It's all about linear programming and train paths. That's how line capacity gets worked out.

At this point the GC has a better case than the *Telegraph* lets on. If it became a freight only line, and if the WCML could become passenger only, then the number of additional train paths on the WCML would be greater than the number of paths vacated. The Birmingham question could be, er, shunted and made irrelevant. But some of the GC is still in use and pretty full as it is, and that's before we start talking about the bits that have been built over. The HS2 proposal makes the opposite offer: that the new line takes the fast paths and the WCML remains a general railway. There's some logic behind having it this way round: WCML will need to carry some stopping trains, and it's four-tracked for much of the route which is more useful to a general railway.

Which is a better proposal? GC would probably be cheaper but deliver less, and it may not be fully worked up. Then someone needs to work out what each delivers in terms of train paths. Actually, someone probably did, back around the time when the move was made away from GC and towards HS2. Lord Adonis, in Ed Balls' team, could probably find the previous working. Labour proposed HS2 but there's been so much counter-information thrown at the project – and the money has moved so much – that it's right for the party to have another, sober, look. Train paths are about as sober as it gets.

## Readers' forum

from Andrew West, Ipswich, Queensland, Australia

*Forward 169 p37*: 'The Pollard family railway history – part 12'.

John Pollard's discussion of the Appleton patent hand lamps was of considerable interest to me given that Appletons are a Brisbane company and that their hand lamps were standard issue on the Queensland Railways in the post World War 2 years until superseded by the battery type. They may have been issued earlier and I cannot say when the patent was granted. Earlier lamps were of a range of designs mostly imported from England. The Appletons seem to have been used widely in Australia. An image of one used by the Tasmanian Government Railways appears in *The Authentic Allan Carter Antiques and Collectables Price Guide 2005*.

The accompanying photographs (*on p38*) show an Appleton (*right*) in the Australian Railway Historical Society Queensland Division's Ken Rogers Memorial Library collection alongside a standard British Railways lamp (*left*). It can be seen that they are both roughly the same size although the Appleton has a smaller diameter body. The right hand side view shows the different shaped top handles. The photograph of John Pollard's lamp on p.37 of *Forward 169* shows a different shaped handle again on his Appleton. It is more square than the standard Queensland type, which is a definite circle. It also lacks the stiffening grip at the top. It can be seen that the wire bolts on the front door are different and rest opposite ways. The base of the Appleton is a projecting lip, absent on the BR example. Another difference is the arrangement of the rear handle and catch. Both handles are in the form of an inverted U. Apparently, the reason for this is to enable the lamp to be hung off one's belt so as to be able to keep both hands free. In one of the old British Transport Commission films there is a scene of a number taker carrying the lamp in just that fashion. I have tried it and come to the view that it is possible with a broad and thick belt on a greatcoat but not very practical otherwise. To come back to the photographs, they show that the BR handle is both broader and thicker than the Appleton and that the latter has a dished section to make it stiffer.

The back catches are also significantly different. The BR one is brass and attached to a stiff spring in the box at the back of the body. Obviously, this catch has to be fairly solid because it and the two lugs on the door retain the lamp interior/chimney. I assume almost everyone knows how these work, but for the few who do not (and for posterity) changing the aspects on the BR lamp requires a smart flick of the wrist left or right. The result is that the inner portion turns but the outer body does not. Changing the aspect on the Appleton simply involves using the thumb to turn the butterfly wheel at the top. These are made of brass and can become quite hot if the lamp is left standing for any great period. Because the inner body of the Appleton does not turn, a much lighter rear catch is possible. It comprises a length of spring wire attached to the body on either side of the rear handle at the base. This loops over the top of the handle. There is a tab attached to the top and behind this a pin which projects through the outer and inner



*The Appleton 'butterfly' hand lamp illustrated in John Pollard's article in Forward 169.*

bodies. It can be difficult to line up the holes, just as it can be difficult to get the front door bolt properly home. The illustrated example suffers from this problem and the rolled metal that the bolt is supposed to go into is worn away. This particular Appleton also suffers from the inner body being fractionally too big to easily go into the outer body, making the whole thing quite stiff and adding to the difficulties in lining up the pin holes. The story of George Howe's lamp coming apart (p37) does not surprise me, although we have not had that problem with any of the lamps in the collection.

The left hand side view is unremarkable. It shows the B.R. ownership marking on the standard lamp. On the QR the Appletons had a brass plate on top of the handle with the lamp number stamped on it. This can just be made out in the front and rear images. Unfortunately, I neglected to make a note of this one's number. It was possible for QR men to buy their own lamps and someone (perhaps not Appletons) offered a service of chrome plating them top to bottom! Otherwise the standard colour was black.

The interiors differ markedly. In the BR lamp the inner body forms a cage with three oval apertures. Behind each aperture is a curved spectacle fitted into a slot at the top and retained at the bottom by vertical flaps and bolts. The spectacles are clear, red and blue (yellow flame + blue glass = green light). On the Appleton the cage has a single aperture, but there is a separate inner



*Front view.*



*Right side view.*



*Left side view.*

cage connected to the butterfly handle. This cage contains red and blue spectacles, but no clear one. A slight advantage of the Appleton, therefore, was that you only had to open the front door to light it, rather than pulling the whole thing apart.

The cisterns differ in detail. The BR one has a pressed body with a pressed top brazed on and the aperture has a brass ring brazed in. On the Appleton the body is pressed with a pressed base brazed on. The Appleton also has a collar brazed on round the aperture. This forms a well in which the burner sits when pressed into the aperture. The ARHSQD has one of these lamps which has a nasty habit of accumulating kerosene vapour in the well. This eventually catches fire making the lamp quite dangerous. The burners are similar or except that the BR one (manufactured by S.POLKEY B'HAM – so marked on the knob) is a composite of brass and porcelain while the Appleton is all brass. Both have 1/4" wicks. The reflectors differ too. The BR one is a single piece of polished steel with a slide bracket on the back which fits over the tongue on the back of the cistern. The slide has L.M.S. stamped on it. The tongue has a wire handle projecting upwards. The Appleton reflector and tongue are similar except that the tongue is just bent over to form a handle and the reflector has rolled edges. The cisterns are both secured inside the lamp by a bracket which fits over a tongue on the base of the lamp. On the BR lamp (looking in from the front) the tongue is at the back at the 12 o'clock position. In the Appleton it is offset to 10 o'clock.

To round out both sides of the story, the BR lamp was a gift to me from Jimmy Wilcox who was a shunter at Godley Junction. He and his wife lived in Fountain Street and were customers in my parents' shop in High Street, Godley. They had no children of their own, and were highly regarded for their kindness in the neighbourhood.

Appletons are still in business trading as Appleton Traffic Equipment – a Division of A.S.P. Group Pty Ltd at Darra, a suburb of Brisbane. As the name suggests, they now make road signs, traffic lights etc. It would be interesting to know if the British Appletons were an attempt at an export industry or were manufactured under licence in Britain.

*Editor's note:* By coincidence an Appleton hand lamp appears as one of the auction items on page 21.



*Rear view.*



*Dismantled.*

**from Paul Davies, Ewloe Green, Deeside, Flintshire**

*Forward 177 p25: 'Memories of the Buckley Branch'.*

One Saturday in the 1990s I saw three John Astbury & Son brass plates measuring 28cm x 15cm in an antique auction in Mold, Flintshire, and I bid against one other interested party to buy them for the princely sum of £27. I assumed that I had bought the only three that existed until my eldest son spotted another on ebay in 2011 and I successfully bid to buy it so that we now have a set of four.



Presumably they date back to the 1905–23 era when the Great Central Railway controlled the Buckley to Connah's Quay Branch line. This line passed through the village of Northop Hall and served railway sidings connected with the Northop Hall Collieries. The Astbury family had business interests in coal mining in the Ewloe, Buckley and Northop Hall area for many years, in particular the Galchog and Northop Hall Collieries. Their family name can be traced back in census records as far back as the 17<sup>th</sup> century in this area. The collieries in Northop Hall ceased operations around the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century but the Astbury family continued to supply hardware to the industry for many years after.

Although early traders using the services of the Buckley Railway Company owned their own rolling stock, as far as I can establish locally the Astbury family don't appear to have done so. The use of wooden shipping boxes was commonplace by Buckley traders; maybe these plates were originally affixed to shipping boxes used to carry the explosives in transit by rail? I guess whilst today the carriage of explosives might seem a daunting task, in those days it was vital to the coal mining industry and I daresay railwaymen took it in their stride.

Any information readers may have on the subject would be much appreciated. I would think that we now have the full set of four but I still keep an eye out on ebay just in case!

**from John Bateson, Buckley, Flintshire**

*Forward 177 p25: 'Memories of the Buckley Branch'.*

I really enjoyed the article 'Memories of the Buckley Branch' having lived in Buckley for 45 years and having tried from time to time to follow the route through old maps and a couple of very good books including the one from the Buckley Society.

If the author correctly identified the train engine as a former GER tank it may have been a class J67. According to *LNER Vol.8A* (p86), two ex-GER class J67s no.7191 (68598) and no.7354 (68531) were reduced in height in 1939 to work the Buckley branch. They were withdrawn in



*Ex-NER J72 0-6-0 tanks nos.68727 and 68714 at Bidston shed in Sept. 1959. Both have reduced height chimneys for working the Buckley branch. photo: H.C.Casserley*

1957 and 1951 respectively. Other candidates could have been an ex-NER class J72 because according to *LNER Vol.8B* (p22) four members of the class were reduced in height in 1948 to enable them to work the Buckley branch. I have included a photo of two of them at Bidston shed.

As to the date of the photo of the 'Dockers', *LNER Vol.8A* (p67) states that class J63 no.68209 went to Wrexham shed in 1951 and was withdrawn in 1955.

On a slightly different subject, it is interesting to note that the plans for redeveloping the area just north of the Dee have as their boundary the old track bed of the route from Chester Northgate via Sealand and Queensferry to Buckley and Wrexham. It's almost as though they are protecting the route for future resurrection rather than just for the benefit of cyclists.

### from John Ambler, Wisborough Green, West Sussex

*Forward 177 p24:* Auction items.

I see that you reported on the auction sale of the North British Locomotive worksplate no.22017 of 1918.

In the same sale there was another worksplate from a Robinson 2-8-0. This was Robert Stephenson & Co no.3773 of 1919. This ROD loco spent time with the GWR before being acquired by the LNER to become no.6307 (BR no.63731).

I was the successful bidder for both of these plates. They now take their place alongside another NBL worksplate no.21893 of 1918, which came from Robinson ROD 2-8-0 which became LNER no.6518 (BR no.63807).



I have also recently purchased a small brass plate on ebay. It is inscribed "GCR C.447" and measures 4.25" by 2.5" approx at widest points. Can any reader identify it? Does 'C' stand for crane?



## from Ron Gee, Sidcup, London SE9

*Query:* Location of the original Beighton station.

Please find enclosed copies of some extracts from the 25" OS maps of Beighton, dated 1875 and 1897, which I scanned at the British Library on a recent visit. Both the 1875 and the 1897 maps show the Beighton MS&LR station located immediately to the north of the Rotherham Road crossing and in both cases complete with platforms and sidings. The track layout in the 1897 map is identical to the map on p62/3 of Ken Grainger's book *The Derbyshire Lines Part 1: Sheffield Victoria to Chesterfield Central*. The track layout in the 1875 map is simpler and the station only has one building but is still in the same location north of Rotherham Road. To my mind the new buildings on the 1897 map were for the "new station" opened in 1893 for the Derbyshire Lines.

However, in Dow's *Great Central Vol.2* it states on page 235 that the new station was opened 1<sup>st</sup> Nov. 1893 and it was six chains nearer Woodhouse Junction than the old station. Subsequent books and articles have repeated this information eg Ken Grainger on page 60 says that the new station was "north of the original station which stood on the 1849 link to the Midland". The implication of this being that trains on the newly constructed Derbyshire Lines would not be able to pass through the old Beighton station, being south of the junction, so a new station had to be built north of the junction.

Looking at the 1875 map, there is no sign of a station or the remains of a station south of Rotherham Road. I would have expected the old station to have had road access but there is no indication of any road other than Rotherham Road itself. To check that the 1875 date on the map was correct I returned to the British Library to look at the map again and there was no mistake.

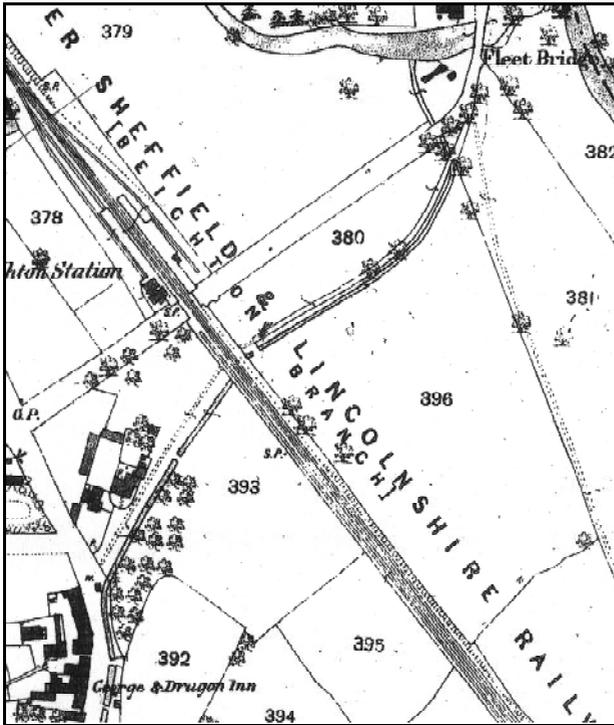
So what made me investigate these maps in the first place? It is now 70 years since I was standing on the bridge over the River Rother at Killamarsh looking north over the flood plain towards Beighton. I had been evacuated as a child from London during the war with my mother. I would have liked to have explored the railways of the area but with maps forbidden during war time and only being aged six or seven it wasn't possible. Only more recently have I become aware of the tangle of railway lines between Killamarsh and Beighton as described in Ken Grainger's book. This prompted me to visit the British Library to look at maps of the area.

So who is correct? The surveyors of the 1875 OS map or Dow's source?

*Editor's note:* The Beighton track plan referred to on p62/3 of Ken Grainger's book shows the Derbyshire Lines continuing along a straight alignment which must have originally been the alignment of the Beighton branch to the Midland. The branch has been slewed to the east to allow this. This is shown to good effect in the photo at the top of page 61 (see right). This is not so apparent on the 1897 OS map where both the Derbyshire Lines and the branch to the Midland appear to be 'off centre' with respect to the original alignment with both lines running parallel before parting company a little further on.

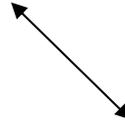


*Beighton station looking south towards Beighton (GC) junction where the Derbyshire Lines appear to go straight on.*

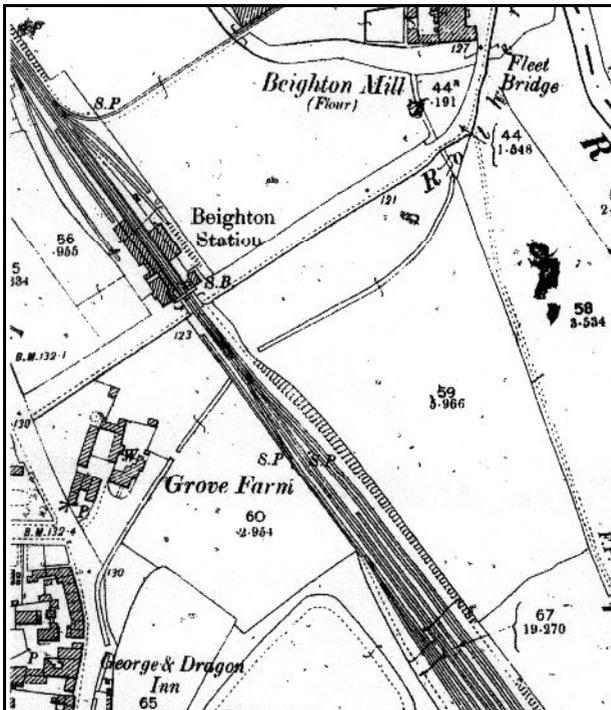


1875 OS map

Beighton station has one small building on the down platform. The line is labelled 'Beighton Branch'.



6 chains = 132 yards



1897 OS map

Beighton station now has buildings on both platforms and a signal box.

The new junction for the Derbyshire Lines is approx. 50 yds south of Rotherham Road where a mill stream runs under the line.

Another change is the transformation of two fields at the bottom of the map into a recreation ground.

## from Fred Hartley, Newark, Notts

*Query:* Lincoln and Barnetby Railway.

Recently I was re-reading an old favourite of mine, *The Chronicles of Boulton's Siding* by A.R. Bennett, and I was puzzled by his references to the Lincoln and Barnetby Railway. Apparently Mr Bolton dispatched his chain-drive loco *Rattlesnake* from Ashton under Lyne in May 1874 to a contractor, James Myres, who was building this line. Another loco, ex-LNWR no.1816, was sent the following month, and is said to have been kept by the railway company until December 1876 in order to run service trains after the line was completed.

The Lincoln to Barnetby section of the MS&LR was opened in 1848, and there is no other line between these two places, so the contract was presumably for this route, but there is no mention of it in George Dow's *Great Central* trilogy.

I wonder if there is a connection here with a feature of the intermediate stations on the line. All the surviving buildings, at Reepham, Langworth, Snelland, Holton le Moor, Moortown, North Kelsey and Howsham, have an original "L" shaped building with one gable facing the line, and an extension

with a second gable obviously built later in a matching style. Was Mr Myres actually contracted to extend all of these stations rather than actually to build the railway?

*Rattlesnake* had apparently at least one other link with the MS&L for Bennett says that she was used on the contract for the joint line from Hyde to Marple in 1865, and recounts that there used to be a photograph of her on this contract, which was displayed for many years in the waiting room at Marple station.

Does anyone have more information on these subjects?

*Editor's note:* *The Chronicles of Boulton's Siding* by A.R. Bennett was first published by the Locomotive Publishing Company in 1927 and reprinted by David & Charles 1971, ISBN 0-7153-5318-7.

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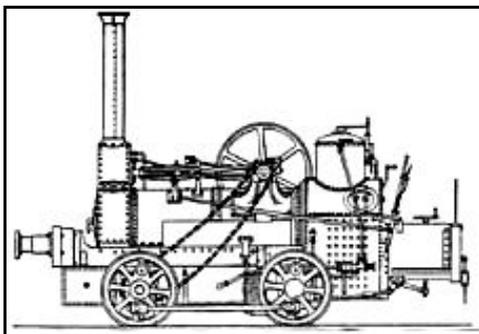
### Rear cover caption

The GCR class 8M 2-8-0 was designed by J.G. Robinson and built at Gorton works, the first no.412 appearing in Jan. 1918. However it is no.417 that is shown here posed in photographic grey.

The class totalled 19. Similar to the more numerous class 8K 2-8-0, the 8M had a larger boiler (same as those fitted to the three class 8N 4-6-0s, also built in 1918). It was found that the larger boiler was unnecessary as the standard boiler carried by the 8Ks was quite adequate for the work they were called upon to do. Rebuilding with standard boilers began in 1922 and continued through to 1941. Under the LNER the 8M class became O5 and the rebuilds initially became O4/1 but were given their own part as O4/6 in 1938. The rebuilds could be recognised by their narrow cab spectacles.

No.417 became LNER no.5417 and was rebuilt as O4/1 in 1937 and reclassified O4/6 in 1938. It survived as BR no.63906 until Jan. 1965 when it was withdrawn at Frodingham.

*photo: NRM*



*Isaac Boulton's chain drive loco "Rattlesnake".*

