



## Newsletter - June 2016



Not all excursion trains on the Bentham Line are hauled by steam locomotives. On Saturday 14th May 2016 a Leicester to Leeds excursion was hauled by a GBRf Class 66 locomotive No.737.

© Mike Pridmore

### RAIL TOURS AND EXCURSIONS

The major landslip near Armathwaite has meant that there have been a number of trips diverted along the Bentham Line, including the excursion above.

'The Great Britain IX' steam rail tour, (*envelope photograph*), on its ninth and final day from Grange-over-Sands to London King's Cross was also diverted, this time from the Roses line, through Burnley and Hebden Bridge. The tour which started at London Victoria had been to Penzance, Bristol, Newport, Chester, Carlisle, Edinburgh, Aberdeen, Inverness, Wick, Kyle of Lochalsh and Perth.

No doubt there will be more excursions over the summer, along with locomotive and rolling stock movements, which will set shutters clicking and video cameras rolling.

## LAUNCH OF FOREST OF BOWLAND AONB - GATEWAY STATIONS

In bright sunshine on Tuesday, 24th May new information boards were launched at Giggleswick, Clapham, Bentham and Wennington railway stations. These signpost the opportunity to explore the Forest of Bowland which has been an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) for over 50 years.

Lancashire County Councillor Albert Atkinson and Karen Booth, Interim Community and Sustainability Director for Northern, jointly unveiled one of the large information boards at Clapham. As well as a map and photographs these show suggested walks and cycling opportunities, together with local businesses which provide places to visit, eat or stay.



Gerald Townson, chair of the Bentham Line Community Rail Partnership speaking at the ceremony at Clapham Station attended by community groups, tourism, rail and local authority representatives commented, “The Bentham Line makes it easy for people to visit the Forest of Bowland and help keep their journey environmentally friendly. These areas of unspoiled natural beauty need to be maintained that way, for future generations, and using the train helps to achieve that. They offer a wealth of opportunities for everyone to enjoy them and help look after them. Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty are dynamic, living landscapes that underpin the economy and the health and wellbeing of society.”

Hetty Byrne, Forest of Bowland AONB Sustainable Tourism Officer based in Dunsop Bridge said, “We need to champion the Forest of Bowland and help keep it a beautiful place. This is one of the most beautiful and cherished landscapes in Britain. It needs to be cared for, now and in the future.”

“Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty are vibrant landscapes. They offer a wealth of opportunities for everyone to enjoy them and help look after them. We want to promote environmentally friendly tourism with information about walking and cycling routes into the AONB so that it remains unspoilt. The railway provides the perfect gateway into the area.”

Gerald Townson added, “This is the start of a good partnership with our friends in the Forest of Bowland AONB and follows on positively from the ‘A Day in the Life of Bentham’ photographic project, last summer, which was initiated by the Friends of Bentham Station, with support from Champion Bowland. It is hoped that this will also act as a catalyst to develop new friends groups at stations along the line such as we have at Bentham, Bare Lane and Morecambe.”

This initiative is part of the much larger ‘Rail to Trail’ scheme launched last summer, being developed by the CRP in conjunction with LASRUG and Northern, encouraging walking and cycling from all the stations on the Bentham Line complemented by the scenic rail journey itself.

### Continuing our occasional series featuring people who work or have worked on the Bentham Line.

#### MICHAEL ELLIS - MY EARLY DAYS ON THE RAILWAY

I believe my interest in railways was cultivated by my father working in the goods office at Lancaster Castle station and by living at Scale Hall with nearby views of three rail routes. Trips out to York and Chester plus holidays in the south of England introduced me to steam trains in different regions. Also holidays with British Rail Touring Club to France and Switzerland opened my eyes even more, so it was only natural that, on leaving school in 1967, the only place I wanted to work was on the railway.



I managed to secure an interview with BR for a job at Lancaster goods and, on passing, was offered a job in the Booking & Parcels office at Carnforth station subject to passing a clerical test.

It was with a mixture of excitement and trepidation on Monday 12th August 1967 that I caught a train hauled by a Black 5 from Lancaster to Carnforth, where I had to report to Joe Taylor, father of future West Ham footballer Alan Taylor, over on the engine shed. He welcomed me, introducing me to Alan Earl, the station manager, and my new colleagues.

As a junior clerk my job entailed a number of duties, including issuing tickets, handling phone enquiries, listing and sending of parcels, dealing with left luggage, making up and paying wages and some work in the goods office. All this on a station with six platforms, refreshment rooms and bookstall, with ticket collectors and a large platform staff.

After a few weeks' training I was deemed capable of taking my place in the shift system. This involved biking from Morecambe for early turn to the exotic journey back from late turn, which included taking the Barrow-Euston sleeper with a Class 47 diesel loco to Lancaster, connecting with the steam-hauled 'Belfast Boat Express' from Lancaster to Morecambe Promenade Station, then walking home.

After a few months I spent a week at Crewe on a very enjoyable residential induction course, followed a few months later by a four-week accountancy course to clarify the very complex accountancy associated with Edmondson card tickets.

On a lighter note, a highlight of middle turn was visiting outstations to check books. All these stations sent their takings in leather cashbags sealed with string and wax by train to Carnforth for banking. Bentham being busiest was visited the most, and a welcome by friendly porter Walter Glasby was assured. Trips to Wennington were also welcome with not much to check, so a walk down to the tunnel with David Newton to change the signal lamp filled the time in well, in those days before Health and Safety. Hest Bank and Bolton-le-Sands visits were the domain of the chief clerk, with responsibility for the camping coaches at the former, although I did visit both occasionally. Ticket sales at Bolton-le-Sands were very low, and porter/signalman Jim Tunks' main priority was working the busy crossing gates.

Having by now become a keen railway photographer, I found myself in the right place at the right time for the last year of operational steam on BR, for Carnforth was one of three depots retaining steam until the end. Whenever I took time sheets over to the shed office I would take my camera, though the cost of 36 slides bit deeply into my wage of under £5 a week. I would have earned more if I had had the required O levels, so I enrolled in an evening class to get the elusive mathematics, but football and work denied me this.

Carnforth became a mecca for rail enthusiasts in this period and lasting friendships were formed. 'Brief Encounter' was often talked about by people who had witnessed the filming of it. One of the ticket collectors related the story of how his colleague had doubled up for Stanley Holloway when he couldn't jump up onto the platform from track level right at the start of the film, although he did the final take. In those days the film

wasn't regarded as the classic it is today. Other film highlights included BBC TV doing an episode of 'A Spoonful of Sugar', pictures from which appear in Carnforth Heritage Centre. Presenter Keith Macklin came into the office for a chat before filming began on platform 1 granting a wish of a boy with spina bifida of a footplate ride to Morecambe. Another film was the widely acclaimed 'Black 5' by Paul Barnes made in summer 1968.



No. 92012 pauses at Carnforth station in July 1967.  
Courtesy of Tom Heaviside.

All too soon August 3rd came and I filmed the last steam locos returning to have their fires put out for ever after work, then in the evening travelled from Preston to Blackpool South on the penultimate BR timetabled steam-hauled train. Next day I went round Lostock Hall shed and Blackburn station to see about six special trains. The next weekend I caught the bus to Ingleton and walked to Blea Moor to see the '15-guinea special', the final steam train on British Rail.



No. 45025 at the head of the Euston to Heysham Port, 'Belfast Boat Express', about to depart from Preston, one of Michael Ellis's finest photographs.

Unlike in the case a lot of fellow employees the passing of steam traction didn't directly affect my job. However, four years later, owing to decreased workload and staff reductions, there were only two turns, and, when it was reduced to one, that was me displaced. Fortunately, I was offered a summer job at Morecambe Promenade station, where I stayed, working on the railway for 42 years all told until retirement.

Michael Ellis

### DALES RAILCARD RENEWALS - Special Offer

From 15th May until 31st August 2016, inclusive, Northern are offering free renewal of Dales Railcards expiring in the past six months, to support communities whilst the Settle - Carlisle line is closed north of Appleby.

Complete a Dales Railcard application form as normal, attach the expired railcard, but post to: **Specialised Sales Office, Northern, City Station, Leeds, LS1 4DY**. A new card will be issued within seven days of receipt.



## TWO LOST LINES, 50 YEARS ON

### I - CLAPHAM: A JUNCTION NO MORE

To anyone standing on the platform at Clapham Station today, it is hard to imagine what a busy place this once was. On the 19th of June it will be 50 years since the branch line to Ingleton and on to Low Gill on today's west coast mainline was finally closed. It was put out of use just over a month later on the 26th July 1966. This meant the points and signals were disconnected from the signal box which used to stand between the Ingleton and Morecambe lines. The signal box itself didn't last much longer, as rail traffic was dropping off so fast at this time.

The end of the line to Ingleton and beyond was the end of a story that began over 100 years before in the 1860s when the Midland Railway started to plan and then build the Settle-Carlisle railway. This was because in the late 1840s the North Western Railway was formed to build a line from Skipton to Low Gill to connect up a route to Scotland from the West Riding of Yorkshire to today's west coast mainline, they also planned a branch to Lancaster which remains in operation today.

The line was eventually opened through to Low Gill on the 1st October 1861; trains north of Ingleton were operated by the London & North Western, and Ingleton to Clapham by the Midland. This created the situation that drove the Midland to build its own 72-mile mainline to Scotland from Settle to Carlisle rather than compromise and use a 22-mile long line that was already there. From the opening of the S&C in 1876 the line to Ingleton became a quiet branch until such times as it was used as a very useful diversion route when the S&C was blocked either by accidents or severe weather, as occurred for long periods in 1947 and 1963. Sadly, this was not to spare it; the regular branch passenger trains were withdrawn on 1st February 1954. Having said that, the line was maintained to the end as a double track mainline and even had a lot of new rails laid in the late 1950s when, for a time, British Railways considered closing the S&C and equipping the line with colour light signalling to use it as the main freight line to the north. Alas this was not to be, as the famous Beeching report of 1963 considered most of the lines north of Leeds should close. By this time there were just the diversions and occasional special trains and a 3-times-a-week pick-up goods train using the branch. On the 1st October 1964 this too was withdrawn north of Ingleton. 25th January 1965 saw the goods yard at Clapham close, then from 1st March 1965 Ingleton station closed to goods. From then on the line saw very little use. One of the last specials to use the line was the 'Pennine Tour' on the 4th September 1965, an 11-coach train pulled by Flying Scotsman.



An 'Illuminations Special' from Leeds to Morecambe negotiates Clapham Junction in September 1963.

*Courtesy of Peter Sunderland.*

The branch was closed in June 1966 and the track was lifted the following summer.

*Colin Price*

## II - GREEN AYRE ROSE SUCCESSFULLY AND RAISED £4,700



Above: Lancaster Green Ayre modelled in O gauge.

Right: A detailed model of a local coal wagon.



Below: One of the station history posters created for the event.

**THE LITTLE NORTH WESTERN'S HISTORICAL STATIONS**  
**LANCASTER GREEN AYRE STATION**

**A BRIEF HISTORY OF LANCASTER GREEN AYRE STATION**  
Lancaster Green Ayre was the third station to open in the city, after the original in Cornhill, Ribblesdale and Lancaster Central. It was designed by Edmund Sharpe for the Morecambe Harbour and Railway Company. Green Ayre opened on 1st June 1861. The line originally ran from Lancaster to Morecambe Harbour.

Within a year the company was amalgamated with the "Little" North Western Railway which continued the line westward from Green Ayre, along the south bank of the River Lune, in November 1861 to Halifax, Caxton, Horby, Wennington and Beetham to join the line it had constructed westward from Skipton at Clapham. The completed line between Morecambe and Leeds opened on 1st June 1865.

A connecting curve, with a relatively steep gradient, was built between Green Ayre and Castle stations, opened on 18th December 1865. Immediately west of the station was the junction between the connecting curve to Castle and Green Ayre's engine shed and the Leeds - Morecambe line, which then crossed the Lune via the Greyhound Bridge.

The "Little" North Western Railway was formally taken over in 1874 by the Midland Railway, which had previously operated through the line, from its early days and became a significant route for that company, giving access from its Yorkshire base to the Lancashire coast in an area dominated by its water rival, the London and North Western Railway.

The Lancaster-Morecambe section of the line was electrified in 1928. This was the first high-voltage overhead electrification of a line in the United Kingdom and was at 6,600 volts AC, 25Hz. It was the intention for the system to be extended to a level for further mainline electrification by the Midland Railway. In 1934 the original rolling stock was replaced and new steam traction took over for a short while and then the power supply was upgraded to 25kV and seven new stock introduced, that was to act as a test-bed for further mainline electrification in the United Kingdom. This section of line became particularly busy.

The line between Wennington and Skipton, via Green Ayre, fell victim to the Beeching Axe. It closed to passengers on 31st January 1964, although the line through the station continued to be used for freight until 1st March 1970. The station was demolished that year. The Greyhound Bridge was converted for road use in 1972.

The Green Ayre Rises exhibition, organised by David Chandler, was held on the 1st and 2nd of May at Lancaster library. It was an extremely successful event with over 2,000 visitors and £4,700 raised for the local St. John's Hospice. The centre piece of the exhibition was a 40' by 20' scale model of the station and surrounding area with accurately built locomotives and rolling stock.

LASRUG and the LLMCRP were pleased to support and take part in the event. Five historical station posters and a slide presentation on the former Wennington - Green Ayre - Morecambe Promenade route were created by Jack Warbrick and Gerald Townson, especially for the occasion. The groups also donated prizes to the raffle.

Our congratulations and thanks go to David for creating a first-class

## PASSENGER ROLLING STOCK ON THE BENTHAM LINE – PART 2:

By way of a postscript to the article published in the last newsletter, the Managing Director of Arriva Rail North has now confirmed that the Class 144 Pacers are likely to go throughout the Northern franchise area in the autumn of 2018 while the Class 142 units will follow by the end of 2019 – perhaps not the sequencing of withdrawal we were expecting! Meanwhile the refurbished DDA compliant 144e unit mentioned in passing last time has made some visits to the Bentham line. We still do not know exactly what the standard replacement stock will be on Leeds-Morecambe services or the date of its arrival but the units will almost certainly be refurbished versions of one of the types covered in this piece and it is probably sensible to assume that their arrival will coincide with the introduction of the promised timetable changes.



In the first article we covered the innovative thinking behind the introduction of the Pacers at a time when investment cash was scarce and there was to be one further experimental type of diesel unit that came out of this period of change – Classes 153 and 155. The 153 is a single car unit which was designed for use on its own on less densely populated routes, but can also be used in multiple (including through gangways) with other 153s, and indeed with most of the other classes mentioned here. The 155 is a 2-car multiple unit utilising the same basic design. As with the Pacers, these classes embraced the concept of shared 'bus type' bodywork components but employed bogie frames, with more powerful under floor engines, and were intended for longer journeys: they were provided with more comfortable seating – 2x2 with the odd table - as well as more storage space and luggage racks, including a lockable area for parcels/mails – soon to be rendered redundant as REPS/Royal Mail abandoned use of provincial passenger services. The units look something like long Leyland National single-decker 'buses on rails and cannot be said to possess the most aesthetically pleasing of appearances. However they are sturdy enough, have high capacity, flexibility in terms of train length, and possess good riding qualities. Some of the 155s were originally turned out in West Yorkshire PTE red – underlining the important part PTEs played in supporting the 1980s DMU modernisation programme - and plied the Blackpool to York 'Roses' route. The 155 is essentially a 'down-market' version of the class 156. The disadvantages of the 153/155 class are the relatively cramped seating and internal layout, rather high windows unaligned to seating, fairly primitive ventilation and slow loading/unloading through the relatively restricted electrically operated end doors. Single car 153s have also been rostered for inappropriate services on occasion, leading to severe overcrowding. Every weekday afternoon a class 153 unit can be seen in multiple with a 142, 144 or 150 on the Bentham line being hauled for duty on the Morecambe or Furness lines. Sometimes, usually when a through gangway with a 150 can be established, the conductor/guard lets passengers on, sometimes not! 153s are also occasionally rostered to the line on their own.



The hybrid conceptual thinking that produced the 141-144 and 153-155 classes had enabled some serious gaps in the fleet to be plugged but had been running in parallel with other more conventional in-house design work. British Rail Engineering had developed considerable expertise in all-steel bodywork and bogie design through the production of its later MkII and its MkIII passenger coaches and of new electric multiple unit stock and this technology could easily be applied to the provision of a new DMU fleet. Once British Rail, under Robert Reid, had apparently largely sorted out its day-to-day operational financial cost problems and persuaded its government paymasters of the need to retain and invest in the rural and commuter networks outside London, it was only a matter of time before the nettle of investing in a new fleet of conventional diesel multiple units for commuter and cross-country services was grasped – thus the Class 150 'Sprinter' and Class 156 'Super Sprinter' was able to go into large-scale production.

Class 150, introduced from 1987, and built at BREL York, are 2-car DMUs with a modified existing railway design bodyshell (similar in appearance to several EMU types), bogies and under-floor engines, two double sliding doors on each car side for passenger access/egress, a separate door at each end for driver/conductor access/egress, 2x3 but comfortable seating, toilet and luggage racks. The trains are capable of fairly sharp acceleration and speedy loading/unloading, ride well, and are ideal for commuter services. They are able to work in multiple with other types and - apart from some prototypes – possess through gangways. They unfortunately share the disadvantages of their sister classes of the era – all except class 158 - of fairly primitive ventilation and under floor/external noise. Nevertheless they markedly improved performance on many regional railways services and gave a much better experience to passengers than they had been used to. We have seen them relatively often in recent times on our line where they essentially share duties with the Pacers and proudly declare themselves to have been built at York.



The class 156 2-car DMU was designed for longer distance routes and has one sliding door on each side at each end of each car. It is a remarkably robust, speedy and efficient machine and with its similarity to MkIII coaches – 2x2 with some tables and reasonable luggage and toilet facilities – the class has given good service over the years in a variety of scenic areas and on cross country services. Often seen around the NW, we did use to see them occasionally on the Leeds-Morecambe line, for which they are ideally suited, and it was thought we were going to receive them as of right some years ago when 158s displaced the 156s on the Settle and Carlisle line but the DfT, alas, changed their minds. It is somewhat poignant to recall that on the Community Rail Partnership's inauguration day, one Saturday in 2006, the train operating company managed to allocate a couple of 156 sets to the line on that day – it is extremely fortunate we did not decide to hold our breath!



Almost the final act in the pre-privatisation replacement of the first generation DMUs and most residual loco-hauled services was the advent of the 'Express' Class 158 from 1989 – this is a similar design to Class 159 introduced at the same time for Waterloo services. Air-conditioned, smooth-riding, 90 mph vehicles, with a well-planned layout and improved doors, these units have been highly praised, despite initial teething

problems with the air-conditioning. Most of the sets (built at BREL Derby) are 2-car but there are fifteen 3-car examples. They are currently the staple motive power of the Settle-Carlisle, and Blackpool-York routes. They occasionally turn up on the Bentham line and when they do the quality of their ride and their quiet running qualities can be savoured.

So what the Bentham line services currently enjoy is a mixture of 25 to 30 year old intensively used stock in various states of refurbishment/refreshment running on track which can be anything from one to sixty one years old. Some of the units definitely look 'tired'. The Sprinters, Super Sprinters and Express classes are however well constructed. have certainly proved their worth and are capable of refurbishment – hopefully taking into account the needs of different lines in terms of seating layout, luggage and bicycle storage etc. Perhaps the line will eventually receive a high quality set of units more appropriate for its standard needs which will better enable it to fulfil its potential.

*David Alder*

## NEW EDITION FROM MARTIN BAIRSTOW

We were pleased to hear from Martin Bairstow that he has nearly completed work on a new edition of his book *The 'Little' North Western Railway*. First published in 2000, this excellent and well-illustrated history of the line is being updated and enlarged, and we look forward very much to its appearance. We hope to have more details in the next Newsletter.



**LASRUG Coffee Mornings**  
10am to 11.30am

**Gargrave Village Hall**  
Saturday, 18th June 2016

**Bentham Town Hall**  
Saturday, 19th August 2016



## EXPLORING SOME RAIL TO TRAIL WALKS

On Friday, 13th May 2016 (hardly auspicious) I took the train to from Giggleswick to Lancaster and set off on Walk 2 from the station. After inspecting the Roman bath house I crossed the Millennium Bridge and set off to walk by the Lune. The path swung away to become part of the Lancashire Coastal Way and looked very much like the old railway line it is. This was often shaded by trees and in the clearings were butterflies such as the orange tip and the speckled wood plus a couple of cabbage whites all feeding on the nectar of jack-by-the-hedge growing there. The trackway crosses the Morecambe to Heysham line and I was soon at the new Morecambe station. My first call was the lovely old Midland Railway station reflecting the days when everyone who was anyone arrived by rail.

I was now at the beginning of Walk 3 from Morecambe to Bare Lane which I started by walking out to the stone jetty and enjoying my sandwiches as well as glorious views of the Lake District. Further along the Promenade, I soon came across the familiar statue of Eric Morecambe followed by an upstanding three-dimensional guide to the view of the Lakeland panorama, but I found it too difficult to correctly assign the view to the metal guide in front of me. Having passed that part of the promenade where flood defences are being reinforced, I was nearing the end of this walk.

I had put the guide for Walk 4 - Bare Lane to Carnforth - in my rucksack as an afterthought but realised I was walking fast enough to walk it easily in time for the last train from Carnforth. However, I decided to aim for the late afternoon service, as I felt I had enough time to do that. In reading the guides, I realised I need not go to Bare Lane station. I skirted the golf course through bushy lanes and before long the catenary of the West Coast Main Line appeared overhead. Soon I joined the Lancaster Canal and counted my progress by spotting the bridges numbered like railway bridges. Progress became slower and I took advantage of the seats along the canal, as I neared the end of my journey. In the end I was now only a few minutes from Carnforth station and easily made my way there. The train was just a few minutes late and I was the only one to alight at Giggleswick, home in good time to make dinner.

So, if you add together the given lengths of the walks plus one-and-a-half miles to and from Giggleswick station and some distance walked for lunch on the jetty, I must have walked fourteen miles, the longest I've managed for many years. In spite of tiredness towards the end of the third walk I'm looking forward to doing more of these walks this summer.

*Robert Starling*

*Ed. Well done, Robert: to complete three of the Rail to Trail walks at one go is beyond the call of duty for any committee member.*

## TIMETABLES ON THE LEEDS-MORECAMBE LINE

### 5: Into the Beeching Era.

#### Excursions

The late 1950s and the early 1960s were the heyday of day trips by train. In summer special trains ran to Morecambe from all over the north of England. Bank Holidays saw excursion trains to both country and coast: on Easter Monday, 7 April 1958, two trains headed for Ingleton. One began at Bradford (Forster Square) and picked up at Shipley and Bingley before running non-stop to Gargrave. It then called (to pick up and set down) at Bell Busk, Giggleswick and Clapham, before arriving at Ingleton at 9-46. The second train left Leeds (City) at 8-05, picked up at Kirkstall, Calverley & Rodley, Newlay & Horsforth, Apperley Bridge & Rawdon, Keighley, Steeton & Silsden, Kildwick & Cross Hills and Skipton, then the same stops to Ingleton (10-06). Fares to Ingleton were 10/- from Leeds, down to 2/- from Giggleswick. (Bell Busk station closed in May 1959.)

FROM	Departs	RETURN FARES (General Class)					
		Gargrave	Bell Busk	Giggleswick	Clapham	Ingleton	Return
Bradford (F. Sq.)	8-05	4/6	5/6	6/6	7/6	8/6	12/6
Shipley	8-15	4/6	5/6	6/6	7/6	8/6	12/6
Gargrave	8-25	4/6	5/6	6/6	7/6	8/6	12/6
Bell Busk	8-35	4/6	5/6	6/6	7/6	8/6	12/6
Giggleswick	8-45	4/6	5/6	6/6	7/6	8/6	12/6
Clapham	8-55	4/6	5/6	6/6	7/6	8/6	12/6
Ingleton	9-46	4/6	5/6	6/6	7/6	8/6	12/6

Children under three years of age, free; three years and under four years, half fare. Tickets can be obtained IN ADVANCE at the Stations or authorised rail ticket Agents.

Further information will be supplied on application to the Stations, Agents, Mr. D. Hill, District Passenger Superintendent, City Station, Leeds, Telephone No. 31711 (Day Shift) or Mr. T. H. Peck, General Passenger Manager, L.N.E.R. House, Back, Roundstone St. Telephone No. 844 300 (Eve. Shift).

NOTICE AS TO CONDITIONS: The conditions of use apply to the National and Continental Railways' Regulations and Rules applicable to Great Britain. A copy of these regulations may be obtained from the Railways' General Manager, London, at a charge of 1/- per copy.

Printed at Leeds Railway Station, Leeds, England. Printed by the Leeds Railway Station, Leeds, England.

A few months after the introduction of diesel trains on the Airedale and Wharfedale lines, on Sunday 26 April 1959, the North Eastern Region proudly advertised a 'Diesel Excursion' to Lancaster and Morecambe. This started from Leeds (City) at 10-35, ran to Bradford (Forster Square) where it reversed (easy with a diesel unit), picked up at Shipley, Bingley, Keighley and Skipton, then sped non-stop to Lancaster (Green Ayre), arr. 12-35, and Morecambe (Promenade), arr. 12-44. The return working left Morecambe at 19-35 and arrived at Leeds at 21-48. Fares were 9/- from Leeds to Lancaster, 9/6 to Morecambe, down to 6/- and 6/6 from Skipton.

Day "excursion" fares to Lancaster and Morecambe were also offered on regular trains. These were available from stations as far away as Huddersfield and Wakefield, as well as Leeds, Bradford and all local stations, including the Ilkley-Skipton line and the Oxenhope branch. The return fare from Leeds was 12/6.

#### Sunday Trains

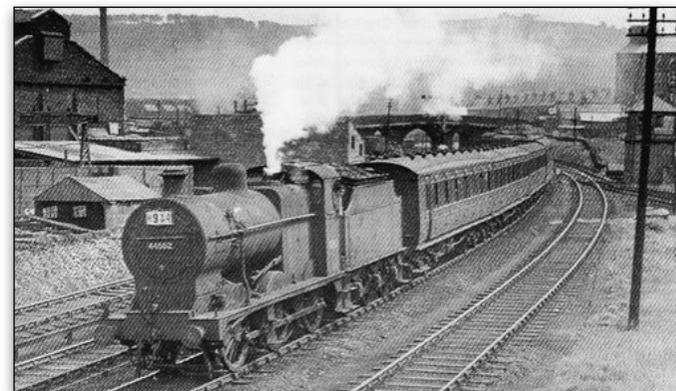
As an economy, to save staffing signal boxes between Settle Junction and Lancaster, from September 1963 the two winter and four summer Sunday trains were diverted to run from Skipton to Morecambe via Colne, Preston, Lancaster (Castle), and Bare Lane. These called at Colne, Accrington, Blackburn and Preston, but not of course at Gargrave, Hellifield, Long Preston Bentham or Wennington. Quite a few more miles for your money, but also around twenty extra minutes journey time, end to end.

#### Beeching and After

The Beeching Report was published in 1963. One target was what were seen as duplicate routes and the report recommended "modification" of the Leeds-Morecambe service west of Skipton. Trains would be diverted to run from Wennington to Carnforth and then down the West Coast main line to Hest Bank and Morecambe.

The direct line from Wennington to Morecambe would close, along with the stations at Halton, Lancaster (Green Ayre) and Scale Hall; Hornby and Caton had already closed. The Lancaster Castle-Green Ayre-Morecambe-Heysham electric service would cease. Also to close were the stations at Gargrave, Hellifield, Long Preston, Giggleswick, Clapham, Bentham and Wennington. (The three stations between Wennington and Carnforth - Melling, Arkholme and Borwick - had already closed.) At that time there was still regular freight traffic between the West Riding and Barrow, and this tilted the balance in favour of the Carnforth route. The freight subsequently disappeared, and eventually the though Barrow lines at Carnforth were lifted.

East of Skipton, only Keighley, Bingley, Shipley and Bradford (Forster Square) stations would remain open – the last temporarily, until expresses were diverted into Exchange station. The reprieve of the Ilkley line saved Forster Square, and a service to Keighley continued.



A Morecambe excursion in 1954, leaving Keighley, with a rake of Midland Railway coaches. *Courtesy of Peter Sunderland*

Nationally, many of the proposed closures of lines and stations were implemented, but (strangely?) no proposal

was ever published to close the stations between Skipton and Carnforth. The summer 1966 timetable shows 6 trains each way on Mondays to Fridays between between Leeds or Bradford and Morecambe, calling at all stations between Skipton and Carnforth. Additional limited-stop trains ran on Saturdays. A major drawback was that passengers to and from Lancaster now had to change at Carnforth on to a train from Barrow. By way of compensation, travelling to and from Castle station facilitated main line connections there. Previously, a local electric train had to be taken between Green Ayre and Castle.

On Sundays there were two through trains each way between Leeds and Morecambe, reversing at Bradford (Forster Square); as before, these ran between Skipton and Lancaster (Castle) via Colne and Preston. This practice ended with the closure of the line from Skipton to Colne in 1970; the trains now ran non-stop from Skipton to Lancaster, where they reversed to proceed to Morecambe. By 1976 the two trains were calling at Carnforth; in summer the morning outward and evening return trains called also at Giggleswick and Clapham.

In 1970, the main line platforms at Carnforth were demolished, meaning on weekdays a change at both Carnforth and Lancaster for passengers travelling to Windermere or Carlisle.

Beeching also spelled the end for most excursion trains: he maintained that it was uneconomic to retain carriages, however ancient, just for occasional use. *John Bearpark*

## BOOK REVIEW

### THE RAILWAY TRAVELLER'S HANDY BOOK (1862)

I have only just come across this fascinating little book, which was re-published in 2012, its sesquicentenary. It consists of 'hints, suggestions and advice' to Victorian railway travellers for before, during and after their journey, a sort of Rough Guide of its day.

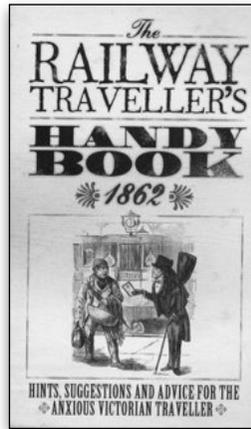
It advises on railway guides (Bradshaw or ABC), luggage (weight was the main consideration as in modern air travel), ticketing (returns were a 'privilege'), type of train and class (very important).

The nature of rail travel in the 1860s is laid bare. There are several references to the threat to health posed by the 'extraordinary momentum', which could be as great as 40 or even 50 miles per hour.

The wealthier passenger is reassured that in the express trains 'every precaution is taken to avoid collision with other trains' and that the employees on these trains are 'the most intelligent and trustworthy which the management can select'. And, since there is 'a certain amount of hazard in railway travelling', one could purchase an insurance ticket with one's travel ticket. The wealthier passenger came off better here too, getting £1000 worth of cover for 3 pence compared to the 3<sup>rd</sup> class passenger's £200 worth for 1 penny. Ladies and the delicate or sickly are advised to go first class, the excess fare being trifling compared to the doctor's bill consequent upon the ill-health that would surely follow travelling 2<sup>nd</sup> or 3<sup>rd</sup> class.

There is lots of advice on the choice of carriage (middle of the train safest), choice of seat (corner furthest from the door), and retaining a seat (a newspaper on the seat in 1<sup>st</sup> class will suffice but a large portmanteau is required in 2<sup>nd</sup> or 3<sup>rd</sup> class). The traveller is told how to purchase a ticket and how to look after it (inside of the left-hand glove is recommended). Having absorbed all this and more before you get on the train, you must next understand how to behave on the journey. A railway rug, ingeniously adaptable, was the most important piece of kit 'and none should be without it'. In 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> class an air-cushion was preferred to combat the hardness of the seats. It is recognised that 'with regard to conversation the English are notoriously deficient in this art' but, should you risk opening your mouth, you are advised not to 'engage in discussions political or theological' to avoid giving pain to others. Talk of railway accidents – not then uncommon – is not recommended, especially if old ladies are listening.

Recreations such as reading (choose large clear-type print and, to counter the vibrations of the train, support the book 'by muscular power' not by the elbows), chess and card playing (but beware of swindlers and of missing your station), musing and sleeping are suggested means of passing the time. As regards refreshment Victorian trains often had longer waiting times at larger stations to allow passengers to get out and use the refreshment rooms. There is advice even here: warning, for example, that drinks are often served so hot that it is 'utterly impossible for a person to swallow them unless his throat be sheathed with iron'. The best advice seems to be to have a good breakfast before setting out and to take your refreshment with you. (Probably still the best advice!)



In addition to many, perhaps most, of these tips that we might now find nannyish – 'The proper place for the head is inside not outside the carriage' (How many times have I heard that in my youth!) - there are pieces of practical railway information that modern travellers might do well to know. It explains the difference between the up and down lines, how to read signals and to recognise different railway officials, and what to do in emergencies. Some things sound very modern: the advice, for example, to ladies on how to deal with difficult situations vis-à-vis male passengers when travelling alone or in tunnels.

In fact, after thinking at first that the world and mentality of the people who bought and used this little book were very distant from our own, you may well sense that our own need for advice and reassurance when faced with the new and unusual is not so very different.

This Handy Book (in every sense) by that prolific author Anonymous is a jolly, entertaining read for a train journey and is published by Old House. There are new and second-hand copies available on-line, the latter for as little as £2.80. JSW

### The first in a new series about places to visit on the Bentham Line.

#### No 1. BARE

Instead of riding all the way into Morecambe, why not get off one stop before at Bare Lane, the station for Bare, one of the three former villages – the other two were Poulton and Torrisholme – that came together to form the town of Morecambe in 1889.

The station at Bare Lane, opened in 1861 by the LNWR, has become an agreeable destination thanks to the efforts of its adopters' group, which has worked hard to create a more attractive and inviting place for travellers, drawing local businesses and schoolchildren into the project. Colourful planting of flower tubs and children's art welcome us.

Turning right outside the station (the beginning of our Rail to Trail Walk 4 in effect) you are walking towards the centre of the ancient village of Bare. Little remains now of the old village, which began where the road narrows.

The road you are walking up was until the 1960s framed by 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> century houses. Now the only older buildings are the Dog and Partridge hotel, one of the oldest pubs in Morecambe, and Bare Hall, now a retirement home. The Hall is a 19<sup>th</sup> century rebuild but still has in its garden a curious survival in the form of a statue of a Roman soldier (usually nicknamed Hercules or Nicodemus by locals) moustachioed (!) in a striding forwards pose and with a grotesque amphibian on his helmet.



The road leads the visitor round a bend into Princes Crescent, a lovely sweep of excellent traditional shops, which include, in addition to a confectioner responsible for part of Princess Margaret's wedding cake and a butcher visited by Mrs Thatcher for his resistance to metrication, a ballet shop and a wine and beer specialist. It is in this crescent that it becomes clear that Bare was not going to be left behind as the 'new' Morecambe of the turn of the century evolved.

Reaching the Promenade – with Morecambe’s only high-rise building on your left – you have before you the wonderful panorama of the Lakeland hills across Morecambe Bay - first named by the Greek geographer Ptolemy. This end of Morecambe is, not surprisingly, a favourite spot for bird watchers.



If you turn right, after 200 yards lies Happy Mount Park, a place for both leisure activities and relaxation for all ages since 1927. This was the year in which Morecambe and Heysham became a borough and the LMSR named a Patriot class locomotive to mark the occasion.

The Park is attractively laid out and offers: bowling, putting and crazy golf, swing boats, tennis courts, miniature train rides, an adventure play area, a Japanese garden and conservation area, a modern safe Splash Park for children and parterres with seats for quiet relaxation.

Turning right outside the park, about 300 yards further along the promenade on the shore side is a mosaic sculpture by local Bare artist Shane Johnstone. Originally entitled, rather awkwardly, ‘Love, the Most Beautiful of Absolute Disasters’ it has become known locally as ‘Venus and Cupid’. But it has come to signify different things to different people: mother and child, freedom and innocence, holding onto what could be lost or, simply, ‘I am home’. At sunset its silhouette is appropriately striking, as it shadows the area of the Bay that took the lives of 23 Chinese cockle pickers in February 2004. (As Cedric Robinson, The Queen’s Guide, to the Bay, reminds us ‘the tide here can move faster than a horse can run’.)

If you still have energy and time left to enjoy a walk, about 200 yards beyond the high-rise block you will come to a three-storey house on the corner of St Margaret’s Road. Its name tablet reads “Olicana House 1898”. Those with some classical education might know that Olicana is the Latin name for Ilkley and is a reminder of those many ‘immigrants’ from West Yorkshire that caused Morecambe to become known as ‘Bradford by the Sea’.



Imagine old Bare in the year that it was built for a wealthy Yorkshireman as his luxury home, an ‘Ilkley by the Sea’. But the railway and the horse trams were already changing quiet Bare into part - albeit still the ‘posher’ part - of the busy seaside resort of Morecambe.

For meals and/or refreshments Bare offers four cafes, including one in Happy Mount Park, and the Dog and Partridge is open all day and serves meals until 9,00 p.m. Or you could picnic on the Promenade or in the Park.

Plenty, then, to see and enjoy, and you could always stay on the train into Morecambe next time.

*JSW*