

# EAST LANCASHIRE'S HISTORICAL COMMUNITY STATIONS

## BRIERFIELD



Brierfield circa 1910 - photo courtesy Lancashire & Yorkshire Railway Society



Brierfield circa 1965 - photo courtesy Noel Coates



Brierfield 10th Dec 2007 - photo courtesy Simon Clarke

### BRIERFIELD STATION

The first station on this site opened in February 1849 and was called Marsden Station serving a scattering of farmhouses that formed the township of Marsden. The construction of the Leeds Liverpool canal and the Preston Colne railway line led to the area around the canal and railway being quickly developed. Large mills were built with adjacent houses for the workers and in August 1857 the station name was changed to Brierfield. By 1900 the station was catering for passenger and goods traffic including livestock, prize cattle and horseboxes.

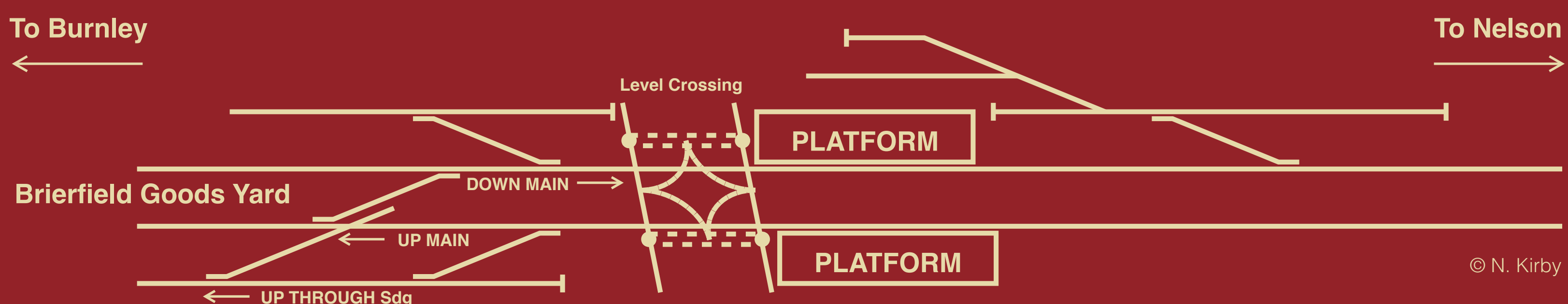
Massive amounts of market gardening produce, much of it produced by Duerden Brothers on Kings Causeway was loaded at the large goods yard located adjacent to the station behind the signal box and delivered to stations all over the country. It was said that at certain times of the year there was so much watercress stacked in the booking hall that it was like buying a ticket in a jungle clearing! The cobbled goods yard was equipped with a six ton crane. There were two private sidings listed in 1910 Hargreaves' siding and Tunstill's siding.

The Tunstill family were the main manufacturers and benefactors in Brierfield and they played a major role in ensuring the railway came to Brierfield to serve their mill and the town. At its peak Brierfield Mill built in 1834 by Henry Tunstill housed 87,000 spindles and 2,000 looms. The mill suffered a devastating fire in 1872 but was repaired and brought back into production. The impressive and imposing mill still stands today towering over the adjacent railway station.

To the left just beyond the station towards Brierfield Tunnel a small branch left the main line crossing the road to serve the gas works which was originally built by the Tunstill family who in turn sold it to the corporation in 1888. In the early fifties this branch was worked by two 0-4-0 Fowler diesel locomotives.

Adjacent to the station stands the brick built Saxby & Farmer type 8 signal box which in 1931 contained a 32 lever Lancashire and Yorkshire railway frame. After the line from Gannow Junction to Colne was singled in 1986 the remaining 12 levers were taken out of use and the signal box downgraded to gate box status. The two existing colour light signals are worked from a switch panel in the box.

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Brierfield track diagram circa 1953

