

# EAST LANCASHIRE'S HISTORICAL COMMUNITY STATIONS

## HUNCOAT STATION



Black 5 44845 heads a freight through Huncoat Station - Early 1960's - photo courtesy LYRS

### HUNCOAT STATION

The railway came to Huncoat on the 18th September 1848 two days after being inspected and passed for use by Captain Wynne. The first station was built closer to Hapton on Altham Lane and moved to its present site in 1902.

The station, two miles from Accrington, catered for goods and passenger traffic but the increases in industrial premises around the station saw Huncoat develop a very strong base of freight traffic. By 1904 the station boasted a large goods yard which dealt with mill traffic, coal and brick. Private sidings at Huncoat served Hargreaves G and Company, Accrington Brick and Tile Company, Whinney Hill Plastic Brick Company and Huncoat Brick and Terra-Cotta Company.

In 1912 the station was virtually rebuilt and the neat brick station consisted of a porter's room, lamp room, and ladies waiting room with toilet, booking office, parcel office, general waiting room and outside gentleman's toilet.



Huncoat Station Level Crossing - Late 1950's - photo courtesy LYRS



Huncoat Station Level Crossing - October 2012 - photo courtesy B. Haworth

By the early 1930s the three local collieries, Broadmeadow, Moorfield, and Whinney Hill; two coke works and the Nori Brick Works were all rail connected in a complex rail system that joined the main line at Huncoat and Within Grove. Part of the old embankment of this system can still be seen from passing trains.

Privately owned steam locos named after birds, Robin, Linnet, Lark, Raven and Kestrel worked the colliery branches. Whinney Hill Brick Works named their engine with the company name as did Nori.

At the Huncoat end of the system the branch spanned Clough Brook on an eight arched viaduct. Immediately to the rear of the Burnley platform were large coke ovens - all rail served.

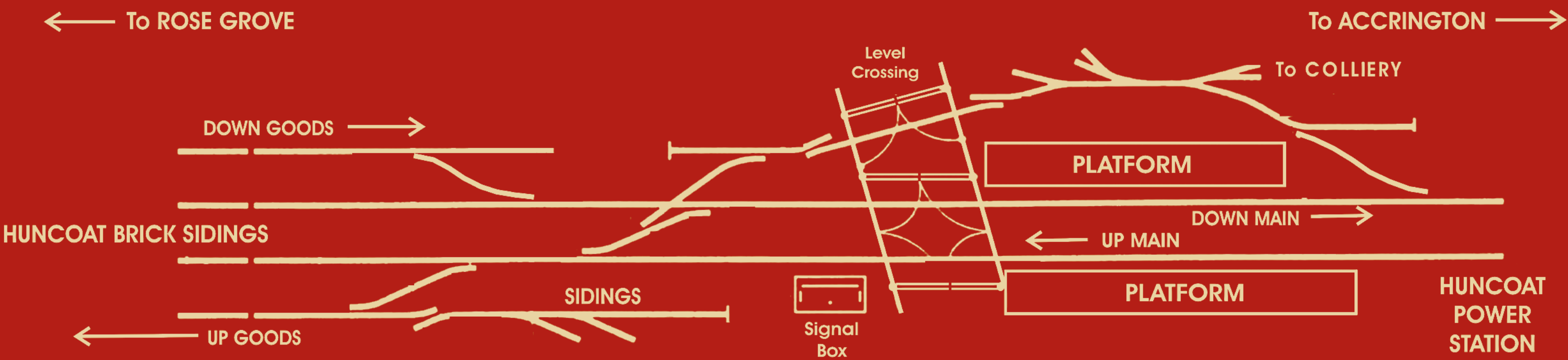


Huncoat Station March 2013 - photo courtesy B. Haworth

Just before war broke out in 1941 the station won a railway award for the tonnage of freight it handled reflecting how industry had developed around the station since the arrival of the railway. The Huncoat colliery reached its zenith of production in the early 1950s when 1300 tons of coal was mined in a day.

The construction of Huncoat Power Station between 1950 and 1956 brought even more traffic to the railway. The pit closed in 1960, the power station in 1984 and Huncoat Brick Works in 1992. Goods traffic was a thing of the past at the station which became a small halt with bus shelters replacing the old station buildings. The current station managed by Northern Rail has a very active group of volunteers 'Hands on Huncoat', supported by the East Lancashire Community Rail Partnership, who have breathed new life into the station and improved the ambience for passengers with their floral displays and presence at the station.

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