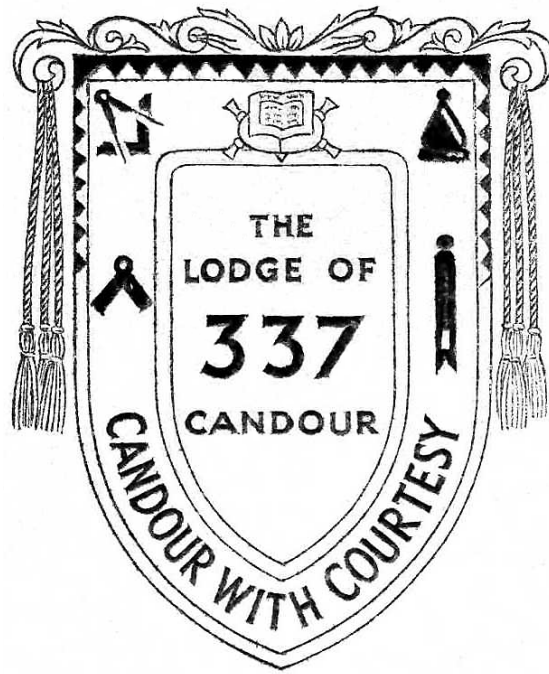


Saddleworth Historical Society Bulletin



Volume 49

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Bulletin of the Saddleworth Historical Society

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Cover Illustration:
Emblem of the Freemason's Candour Lodge, Uppermill

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ACTING CHAIRMAN'S ADDRESS TO THE AGM 2019

David J. W. Harrison

We are very sad to have to report that one of the new members of your committee, Peter Robinson, died last March. This was obviously a great loss to his family, and also to his friends, all to whom we extend our heart-felt condolences. Peter had only just commenced his service with the committee and was looking forward to help the Society grow. His loss is our sad loss.

Your committee is still struggling to operate as well as we would wish due to a reduction in the number of trustees. There just aren't enough to carry on the business of the Society properly. This year Charles Baumann has left the committee after many years of service when he undertook various tasks such as chairing lectures, organizing fund raising Flea Markets with me, publicising our events and other ventures as the need arose. He has however kindly agreed to continue with the publicity aspect of the Society's business and assist with Flea Markets should the occasion arise. Other recent fall outs from the committee include our hard working sales officer and newsletter editor, Meg Langton who, thankfully, has also offered to continue with those aspects of the Society's business she already took responsibility for as a trustee. Another who is to leave at this meeting is Brian Gibson, our secretary, due to family commitments. Brian has been most helpful with, apart from his secretarial duties, technical advice with regard to the Society's acquisition of the Greenfield property, Holly Bank. Brian has also fronted our programme of talks presenting the speakers throughout the present session with aplomb. His departure from office unfortunately leaves the Society with a large hole to fill at this most crucial time in its history when we have the newly acquired headquarters to convert for our use.

We have received one new application for membership of the committee, Keith Lucas of Diggle. We would thank Keith for putting his name forward to be a trustee and encourage the membership to vote him and the returning members to the committee later during these procedures. Even so this will still leave us with too few a number of officers to manage the Society. In other words we still need more trustees, particularly any who are prepared to take office.

The sad fact is that of the present members no-one is prepared to undertake the duties of the chairman and secretary, officers without which the Charity Commission may look askance at the prospects for the Society as a charity. I am standing in as temporary chairman for the purposes of this meeting but age and general health do not really permit me to continue in this role. This is a serious problem that your committee is bound to address at its first meeting of the new season. Whether a successful conclusion can be reached or not that might then require us to call an Extraordinary General Meeting in the new-year to consider the possible dissolution of the Society, yet remains to be seen.

At this point I must thank Charles Baumann, now not a trustee but acting as a general member of the Society for his help with publicising our events through the various local press outlets. This has conjured up excellent attendances for our series of lectures. His work, alongside trustees Duncan and Christine too, with the placing of posters throughout the villages has, as we have seen, also attracted many more to our talks. All such effort thus increasing our income and keeping the promotion of our many excellent lectures viable.

Many plaudits must also be directed to Ivan Foster for taking on the mantle of treasurer who, with his tenacity in gathering in information regarding the various disparate strings of our accounts and his immaculate record keeping, keeps your trustees in full knowledge of your Society's financial state. Ivan, too, has been most helpful with regard to the costings and budgetary investigations in connection with the new headquarters. Further to the above Ivan also continues controlling and monitoring the Society's website, a not inconsiderable

ADDRESS TO THE AGM

task in itself. In this context I would mention that the process of reforming the website has been put in hand and we hope that the results of this rehash will be seen in the not too distant future.

Mike Buckley has served the Society in many positions over the years and currently, like Charles a general Society member, he acts as acting membership secretary, recently our programme secretary, Bulletin editor, Society archivist and also runs the project being undertaken with the Saddleworth Civic Trust clearing the overgrowth at the unkempt cemetery at the Church Road / Gellfield Lane junction. If all this is not enough he has also taken the lead on the conversion of Holly Bank as the Society's headquarters and is managing all aspects of the property's conversion at the present.

Trustee John Curnow produced the programme of events for the current year, partly with Mike, and is to be congratulated on attracting such an erudite assembly of lecturers as I will be enumerating shortly. He has already assembled another full programme of speakers for next year and I, for one, look forward to hearing what they have to say.

Meg Langton attends to our book sales and is editor of the Newsletter as previously mentioned. She provides much of the content of the Newsletter herself. Many thanks therefore are due to Meg for that, her Society document delivery work and also for allowing the trustees to use her home for their monthly meetings where she 'waters' and feeds us at the same time.

Christine Barrow has taken responsibility for dealing with the refreshments provided at each meeting assisted by Lesley Brown both of whom also acting as distributors of the Society's publications, etc., as do Mike, Charles, Meg and myself, as necessary.

Duncan Anderson continues as our redoubtable gatekeeper, on the door at lectures and, with Ivan, sees to the raffles. He also operates as our event co-ordinator reminding speakers of their engagements and establishing their technical and other requirements.

Further, I would thank our redoubtable band of postal distributors who, together with some of the trustees as mentioned already, turn out to deliver Society material as and when required thus saving us much in the way of postal costs.

Finally, thanks must be offered too to the Saddleworth Museum and the staff. The museum trustees, curator Peter Fox, and Janet on reception who assists, though beyond her remit, with the distribution of our books as needed to visitors to the museum. The volunteer Friends of the Museum too have been most helpful with there always being someone available to assist on lecture nights, opening up and placing chairs. Thanks to you all. Oliver, who is on duty tonight, Charlie and Steve.

Indeed, thank you all whose efforts keep the Society going and viable.

Our programme of talks continued throughout the year with many splendid presentations.

At the last AGM in October 2018 Ivan Foster gave us his findings noted from local memorials and records detailing '*Saddleworth's Lost Servicemen of World War I*'. Some of those men, he noted, had not previously been generally acknowledged for various reasons, a deficiency Ivan hopes to put right by updating the public record.

In November we were entertained by a costumed 'Victorian' lady, Christine Widdall, who spoke of many local photographers from the dawn of photography in her lecture '*A Victorian Society: Oldham Photographic Society – the first 150 years*'. It was quite astonishing to hear that Oldham was in the vanguard of the art and science of photography with only a very few cities launching such groups prior to Oldham, the first town to do so.

December's talk was '*Forgotten Men? Prisoners of War in the Great War*' by Professor Bob Moore.

ADDRESS TO THE AGM

Our January talk '*The Changing Treescape of Saddleworth*' was by Dave Sanderson. Apparently this proved most interesting, I was told, as I had been unable to attend myself.

The February talk '*Traditional Farmhouses in and around the Lancashire and Yorkshire Pennines*' by Kevin Illingworth had to be cancelled due to the inclement weather at the time. However it finally went ahead in August and was well received by all and attracted much interest from outside the Society's membership.

The March offering by Neil Barrow '*Researching the Early Wrigleys*' This talk explored the various branches of this locally common family name and its origins and the extent of the spread of the Wrigley's throughout the country.

In April Dr Martin Dodge regaled us with his fascinating subject matter, to me anyway, '*Mapping Manchester – The Good, The Bad and the Missing Ones*' This talk embraced the whole gamut of maps of the city from the eighteenth century to the present day. From mapping the existing state to the various proposals for future enhancements to the city, many of which never coming to fruition. The mapping of incidences of diseases to determine the sources was highlighted in Martin's talk too.

May brought us '*The Standedge Tunnels*'. This was a joint meeting with the Huddersfield Canal Society and was presented by the canal Society's ever informative vice-chairman, Trevor Ellis, author of the book of the same title. Again, another well attended meeting.

In this bicentenary year of the Peterloo massacre our Bernard Barnes memorial lecture in June '*Peterloo: the View from Saddleworth*' was given by the eminent professor Robert Poole author of many historical articles and books, the most recent being *Peterloo: the English Uprising*. We could have had no more an expert on the subject to give us this exemplary detailed insight into this August 1819 event.

July's offering was also another inspired talk about timekeeping and navigation, '*John Harrison's Chronometer and Captain James Cook: their Joint Contribution to our Society*'. O.Howard Boyd was obviously a great fan of the subjects of his talk, and it showed.

During August we finally got to hear Kevin Illingworth's talk postponed earlier.

September brought us Dr Gervaise Phillips, who, without any reference to notes gave us a most detailed and fascinating insight to the nature of the principals involved with the American civil war and its ramifications on the cotton trade and slavery with his lecture '*The American Civil War, Lancashire and the Cotton Famine*'. Another brilliant offering well received by the approximately 80 members of his audience.

I look forward with much anticipation to the forthcoming season of yet more enlightening talks arranged by John Curnow starting with Mike Buckley's '*George Shaw: Architect, Antiquarian & Creator of Antiques*' talk later this evening.

As for the Society's main publication, the Bulletin, we trust that members have found the content to be of interest throughout the year and that production of it has been more timely than of late. The editor has been able to draw on content in a more stable atmosphere than last year and this makes all the difference. I would remind members that all are invited to submit articles of an historical nature for consideration to be published and would also mention that it is viewed by our peers as an exemplary publication of its type.

I would conclude with a big thank you to you, the members, whose support by your presence and financial contributions help with the promotion of the Society and its achievements. Your committee would ask too that members encourage their friends and acquaintances to join the Society and that members bring forward ideas and suggestions to the Society. Such would greatly help the trustees to improve the Society's impact on the populace at large, extending our membership and expanding our collective knowledge of Saddleworth.

David J.W. Harrison, 17th September 2019

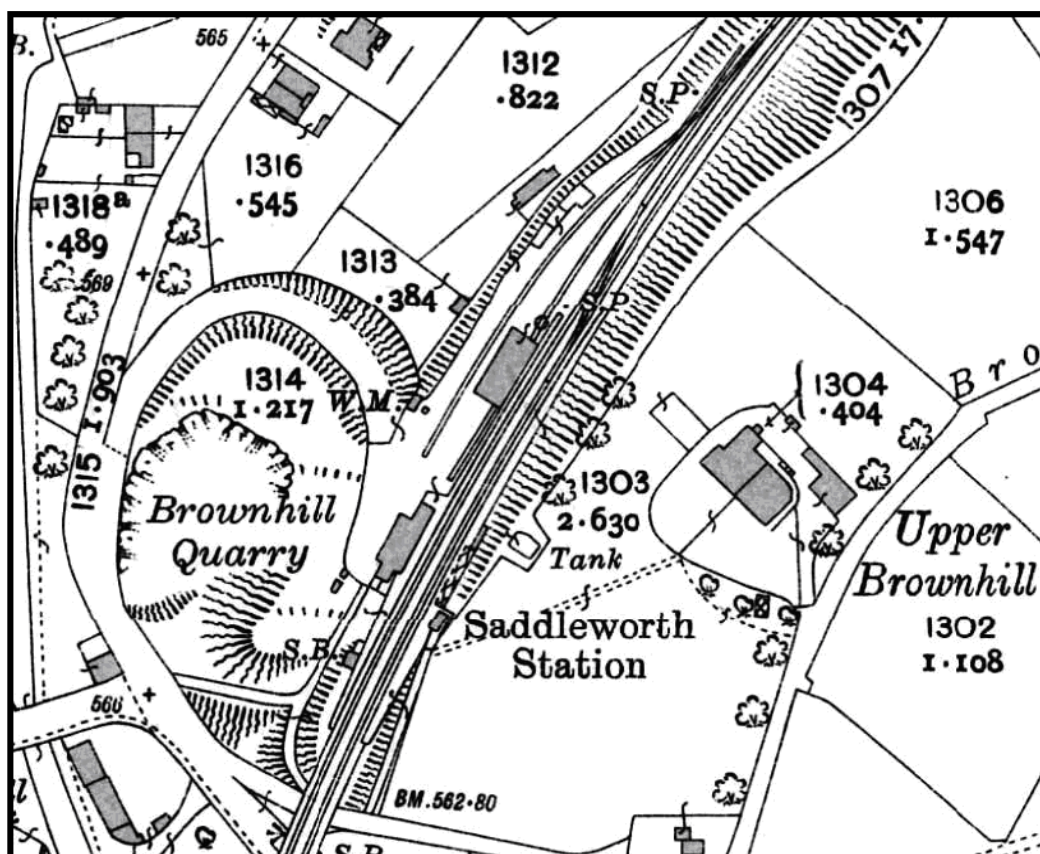
THE DEVELOPMENT AND DECLINE OF RAILWAYS IN THE SADDLEWORTH AREA - PART 4 of 4

David Wharton-Street and Alan Young

THE STATIONS AND FACILITIES IN SADDLEWORTH (CONTINUED)

Saddleworth Station

When the Huddersfield & Manchester Railway opened to passengers on the 1st August 1849 two of the stations were within the parish of Saddleworth; one was named Greenfield and the other Saddleworth. In the LNWR timetable of 1852 Saddleworth was named 'Saddleworth Upper Mill' but by 1864 this timetable had dropped 'Upper Mill' from the name. On the same route Diggle (also within the parish) was added in 1850. In 1851 a further station opened in the parish at Delph, with Grotton following in 1857. Thus, by 1871 there were five stations within the parish, and in that year Joseph Bradbury commented in his *Saddleworth Sketches* that the situation caused confusion to those unaware that Saddleworth station, despite its name, did not serve the whole of the parish. In his account, passengers would book journeys to Saddleworth station, and realise on arrival that they were several miles from their anticipated destination. Likewise, goods would be sent mistakenly to Saddleworth station, when this was inconvenient for many recipients. Bradbury concluded that, despite the clarity a name change would provide, 'it may fairly be doubted if anything short of Her Majesty's warrant could change it from Saddleworth to Brownhill station',⁶⁷



Ordnance Survey

Figure 38. Ordnance Survey Map of 1932 showing the location of Saddleworth Station

⁶⁷ J. Bradbury, *Saddleworth Sketches*, (Oldham, Hirst & Rennie, 1871), pp 208-212.

RAILWAYS IN SADDLEWORTH

The stations between Huddersfield and Stalybridge were described by the *Manchester Examiner*⁶⁸ as being ‘in the Tudor style’ and that they ‘will have a picturesque effect when completed; the pointed architecture harmonises so well with the abrupt pointed scenery around’. This description applies to Saddleworth inasmuch as its principal building was picturesque, and it harmonised with the surrounding scenery by virtue of being constructed of local sandstone - soon to be blackened by the atmospheric pollution that had similarly discoloured existing buildings in the neighbourhood. The station’s character was distinctly rural in comparison to the others on the line which were provided with substantial platform roofing.

The principal building adjoined the Down (Huddersfield-bound) platform and possessed considerable charm. The upper (attic) storey of the central section, containing the station master’s house, was aligned at right angles to the platform, its steeply-pitched, overhanging slate roof emphasised by decorated deep bargeboards with a pendant at their apex. A canted bay on the ground floor faced the platform. Single-storey wings extended either side of the central section, both with steeply pitched, overhanging roofs. Probably, added towards the end of the nineteenth century, a timber structure with its own pitched roof, stood in front of the southern wing, the roof distinguished by contrasting bands of plain and fish-scale slates; it was partly enclosed with a glass and timber screen and the remainder was left open as a passenger shelter. At one time the northern wing carried a decorated bargeboard of the style used on the main gable, but in later years this was removed and a plain one replaced it. From the curving drive, by which the station was approached, the station master’s house with its steeply-pitched roof and elaborate bargeboards and the well-proportioned wings extending on either side would appear both attractive and impressive.



Saddleworth Museum Archives

Figure 39. Saddleworth station (Down side) - the Huddersfield-bound platform

The station’s signal box was at first located on the Down platform north-east of the passenger buildings; however this was replaced by 1906 with a box south-west of the buildings. On the

⁶⁸ *Manchester Examiner*, 18 June 1849.

RAILWAYS IN SADDLEWORTH

Up platform were two timber structures of modest size which were both in place c.1900. The larger building resembled the timber addition to the main building, its pitched roof similarly formed of plain and fish-scale slates; it contained a booking office and an open waiting shelter with a very long bench. The smaller, very plain building - again under a pitched slate roof - was used as the ladies' waiting room and toilet.

North of the passenger station, on the Down side of the railway, were a stone-built goods shed and a cattle dock served by two sidings which trailed from points on the Down line. The Railway Clearing House Handbook of 1904 recorded that the station could handle livestock, horse boxes and prize cattle vans and that a 1 ton 10 cwt capacity crane was installed. However, unlike many stations it was unable to handle 'furniture vans, carriages, portable engines and machines on wheels'. From 1st July 1921 Saddleworth's goods facilities ceased



Saddleworth Museum Archives

Figure 40. Saddleworth Station (Up side) in 1960

to handle any traffic other than coal; such 'downgrading' was unusual, but larger goods depots were provided nearby at Uppermill and Friezland on the Micklehurst Loop and they would remain in use until the 1960s.

Access to the station building and Down platform at Saddleworth was by means of the drive from Wool Road as well as by a path from both Wool Road and Brownhill Lane. For many years there was no access to the Up platform except by crossing the line from the Down platform. Because of the pronounced curve of the railway through the station it was hazardous to cross the lines, and Wells reports a serious accident which illustrates the point.⁶⁹ On the 10th July 1880 the *Mossley & Saddleworth Reporter* referred to a 'shocking accident' in which an eleven-year-old girl, Elizabeth Brunsett of Diggle, was almost killed: 'It appears that as the girl was about to cross the line round the back of the 2.20 o'clock train from Leeds to Manchester ... the fast train from Manchester to Leeds ... which does not stop at Saddleworth, came up and knocked her down'. In March 1882 the newspaper reported that the girl was awarded £50 by the LNWR and condemned the dangerous means of crossing the line: 'There was no gate which might be closed in order to warn people that a train was coming or leaving. Indeed, there was no place marked for the purpose over the line except

⁶⁹ Jeffrey Wells, *Miles Plating to Diggle (via Ashton)*, (Challenger Publications, 1996) .

two or three small steps purposely made small to allow the carriages to clear them'. No footbridge or subway was ever provided to connect the platforms at Saddleworth station, but eventually the LNWR provided a path to the Up platform from Brownhill Lane.

In its early years *Bradshaw* timetables indicated that Saddleworth was one of the more important stations between Leeds and Manchester using bold type for the name and indicating (in the March 1850 edition) that all trains called, which was not the case for some of the other intermediate stations. The service of seven weekday and three Sunday trains (plus one which ran only on Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday only) was spaced fairly evenly throughout the day. The February 1863 and August 1887 timetables showed a similar frequency of service. In April 1910 the weekday level of service had improved with fourteen Up weekday and four Sunday departures; Down departures amounted to fifteen on weekdays and three on Sunday. At this time several trains ran via the Micklehurst Loop, calling at Uppermill station (close to Saddleworth station).

The station carried nameboards reading 'Saddleworth for Dobcross' for some time until the early years of the twentieth century, and *Bradshaw* timetables gave the station name in this form. However, when in 1912 the LNWR added three stations to be served by Delph - Greenfield - Oldham trains one of these was Dobcross on the Delph branch. Thereafter 'Dobcross' was dropped from Saddleworth's name, but it is not known how long it was before the station nameboards were altered or replaced.

As seen elsewhere in Britain, although competition from road transport was coaxing passengers from the railways, in the late 1930s some of the most intensive services of passenger trains were provided with no fewer than seventeen Monday-to-Friday and twenty Saturday northbound calls, but only four on Sunday.

During World War II, here as elsewhere train frequencies were reduced, but the June 1943 timetable indicates only a modest reduction, with fifteen northbound calls on weekdays, whilst there was an increase to five on Sunday.

Throughout its life Saddleworth station retained its Victorian rural character. The LNWR raised the low platforms to standard height. Gas lighting was retained, but casement lanterns were replaced with 'Sugg' lamps either by the LMS (which operated the station from the 'Grouping' of British railway companies in January 1923) or British Railways (London Midland Region) after Nationalisation in 1948; this style of lamp, seen on later photographs, was distinctive of LMS/BR(LMR) practice. BR(LMR) totem nameplates of a fully-flanged design were installed after 1957 together with running-in nameboards also in vitreous enamel. Black-and-white 'Corporate Identity' signage, introduced by British Rail in 1965, was not installed at Saddleworth.

The summer 1955 timetable showed a substantial list of departures from Saddleworth on weekdays and a similar Sunday frequency to previous years. However, more of the Up trains continued beyond the Manchester stations, two with Liverpool as their destination and three bound for Stockport. The Up afternoon service had, however, become threadbare.

The 'Beeching Report' of 1963 recommended Greenfield, Saddleworth and Diggle stations for closure as the only passenger services on the Manchester-Huddersfield-Leeds route would be express trains. Greenfield would be reprieved but not Saddleworth or Diggle.⁷⁰

Having been the first entry under the letter 'S' in timetables, both regionally and nationally, on 17th June 1963 Saddleworth plunged down to 15th in the 'S' index when BR(LM) decided, in defiance of alphabetical order, that 'Saint' names should precede it; St Albans Abbey now claimed first place. However in the BR(NER/ER) timetables, which also included the Leeds - Huddersfield - Manchester line, Saddleworth retained its premier ranking until closure!

⁷⁰ Richard Beeching, *The Reshaping of British Railways*, (HMSO, 1963).

The timetable effective from May 1968 would prove to be the last for Saddleworth. A long gap between the Down 08.14 and 15.39 departures on Monday-to-Friday was conspicuous and there was a four-hour gap in the afternoon in Up services. However, on Saturday, provision was made for shopping and leisure trips in the middle of the day. Perhaps ominously, this was the first timetable in which no service was provided on Sunday.

On Monday 7th October 1968 Saddleworth was formally closed to all traffic, the coal depot (all that remained of its goods facilities) having ceased to operate on 5th June 1961. On the same date several other stations on the Manchester-Huddersfield line closed: Clayton Bridge, Droylsden, Diggle, Slaithwaite, Golcar and Longwood. This was one of the closures which went unacknowledged in the BR(LMR) passenger timetable book, but a brief reference appeared in an amendments booklet, assuring would-be passengers that 'the area is suitably served by "buses"'. The buildings and platforms of most of the stations which closed with Saddleworth were demolished within several years; even the surviving stations at Marsden and Greenfield lost their buildings by the mid-1970s. The platforms at Saddleworth had been largely demolished by autumn 1970 and the buildings on the up platform had been removed, but the main building on the down platform has remained in place, no doubt because of its robust construction, architectural charm and suitability for the residential use.



John Alsop

Figure 41. Saddleworth Station on 29th July 1968, just prior to closure

Diggle Station

Diggle station enjoyed a highly distinctive location where the four tracks of the Huddersfield-Manchester line emerged from the southern portals of the Standedge Tunnels. The station opened about a year after the line itself, and at that time there was only a single-track railway tunnel. The opening date of 1st July 1850 is given by Quick,⁷¹ based on an entry in the *Times*. Research by Wells⁷² from *Huddersfield Chronicle* has turned up a reference to an excursion on 26th August 1850 from Mossley to York which called at Diggle, and the same author notes the content of a personal letter from a Delph mill owner who instructed the recipient to meet him at the station on the 16th October 1850. By the end of the year the

⁷¹ Michael Quick, *Railway passenger stations in Great Britain: a chronology*, (RCTS 2009).

⁷² Jeffrey Wells, *Miles Platting to Diggle (via Ashton)*.

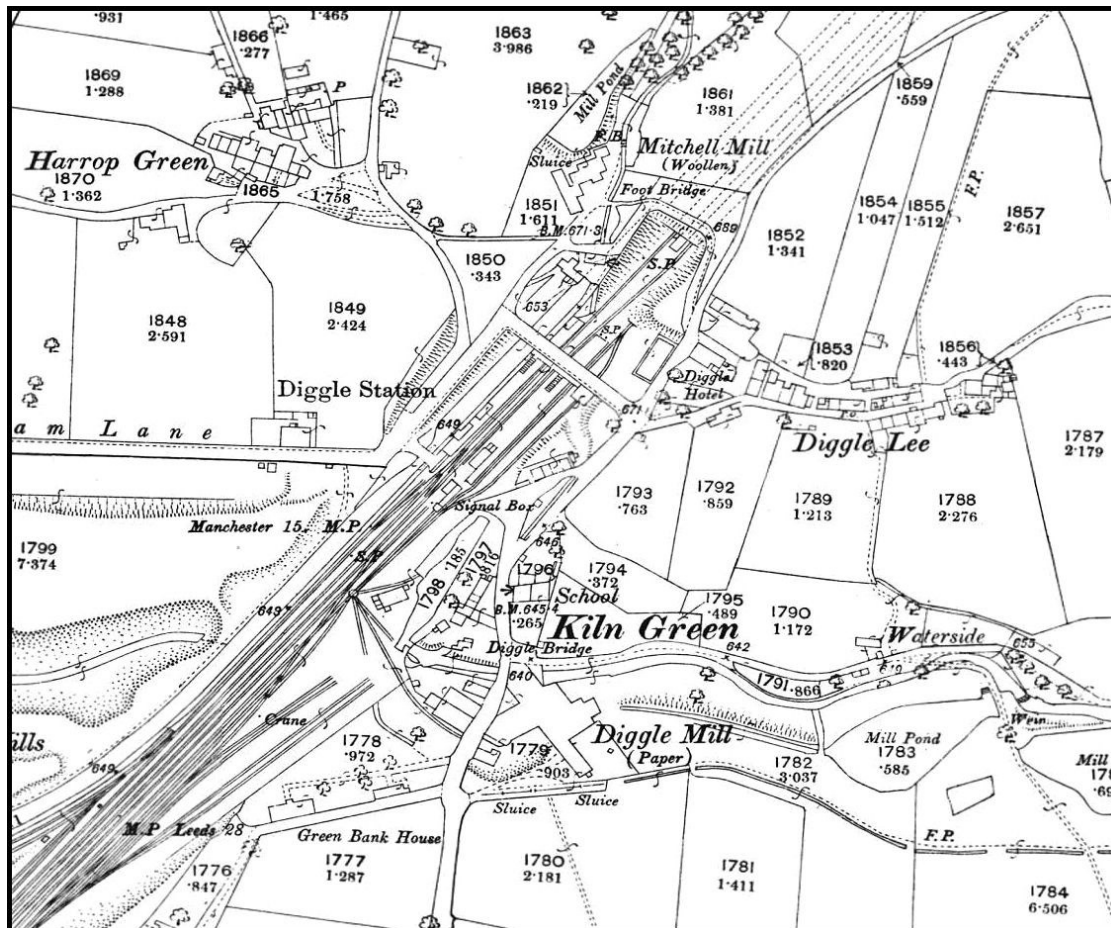
RAILWAYS IN SADDLEWORTH

station appeared in *Bradshaw's* timetable. The February 1863 *Bradshaw* showed a service of five Up departures from Diggle on weekdays and four on Sunday; seven Down trains called on weekdays (one extra on Tuesday and Friday) with four on Sunday.

The station at first possessed only a single short platform immediately north of a level crossing over Sam Lane. At what stage it gained a second platform is not known. However, after only two decades the LNWR in January 1871 was severely critical of its facilities describing its 'wretched accommodation' and noting its low platforms. In that year, when the second single-track Standedge Tunnel was opened, both platforms were extended up to the tunnel portals and the company expressed its intention to install additional sidings and a second signal cabin.

In the late 1880s the decision was announced to replace the existing Sam Lane level crossing at the station with a bridge over the tracks, a short distance north-east of the crossing, and the construction of another Standedge Tunnel. This new tunnel was to carry two tracks and would require the provision of a new four-platform station at Diggle. Carrying this exciting news the *Mossley & Saddleworth Reporter* on the 17th September 1888 opined with ill-concealed glee: 'verily, Diggle is becoming a place of great importance'.

Indeed, since 1886 Diggle had been the junction where the Micklehurst Loop left the original Huddersfield-Manchester line through Greenfield, and the extensive Marsh Sidings had been laid out on the north-west side of the running lines. Although the points to enter or leave the Micklehurst Loop were about ¼-mile south-west of Diggle (at Diggle Junction) the Greenfield and Micklehurst lines ran parallel for another ¼-mile before they parted company, the latter disappearing into Butterhouse Tunnel.



Ordnance Survey

Figure 42. Ordnance Survey Map of 1892 showing location and track of Diggle Station

In the late 1880s, prior to the reconstruction of Diggle station, buildings stood on both platforms and a signal box was located at the south-west end of the Up (south-east) platform. Staircases descended to each platform on the south-western side of the new Station Road bridge. Probably in anticipation of the 1890s reconstruction, a new booking hall was built to be entered directly from the south-west side of the road bridge. The new structure was of brick, with a hipped slate roof, and it straddled a siding behind the south-eastern platform.

The contract for the rebuilding of Diggle station was let to contractors Messrs. Holme & King in 1889. Four platform faces were to be constructed, two flanking and one island. The south-easterly platform extended further south-west than the others, but, unlike its neighbours, did not reach the tunnel portals. The booking hall, entered from the road bridge, was already in place, as stated above. The Board of Trade report noted the new arrangement and was satisfied with the 'good waiting rooms and conveniences for both sexes'. Each platform was given timber, hipped-roof structures which abutted the north side of Station Road bridge and carried flat awnings with serrated valances. The island platform building's awning extended not only towards the rails, but also on its northern side. These timber buildings were typical of late-nineteenth-century LNWR architecture which could be seen scattered across its sprawling network. Biddle ascribes their origin to the influence of the company's long-standing chairman, Sir Richard Moon, noted for his 'stern discipline, ruthless efficiency and, above all, economy', and describes their characteristic horizontal boarding, deep sash windows and full-length flat awnings, and their 'ungainly' appearance. Certainly in the local landscape of blackened sandstone buildings, at Diggle the utilitarian timber structures looked out of place.⁷³



Tony Harden, Saddleworth Museum Archives

**Figure 43. Diggle station of four platforms on the 6th September 1956;
looking towards the three tunnel entrances**

The clutter of 'permanent way' huts and sheds that appeared over the years towards the northern end of the island platform did nothing to improve the station's appearance, but they were necessary to store materials for maintaining the lengthy tunnels and tracks within them.

At the extreme north-eastern point of the island platform, between the 1871 and 1894 tunnel portals, was the iron water tank supported on a red-brick base - and it survives, although somewhat disfigured by graffiti. Because the tunnels were a level stretch on a hilly route, water troughs, supplied by the tank, were laid towards the south-western end to enable steam

⁷³ Gordon Biddle, *Victorian Stations*, (David & Charles, 1973).

locomotives to pick up water while passing through at speed. The troughs were no longer required when steam gave way to diesel traction.



Alan Young, Michael Schofield Collection

**Figure 44. Diggle station around 1958 looking towards Uppermill;
showing the 'huts' and water tank**

The new quadruple-track arrangement at Diggle was to designate the 1849 'Nicholson' tunnel as the 'Down Fast' line and the 1871 'Nelson' tunnel as the 'Up Fast', while the 1894 double-track tunnel handled 'Down Slow' and 'Up Slow' traffic. Much of Diggle station's business was to be handled at the two platforms serving the slow lines, as the optimistic prediction of its 'great importance' was misplaced. With few exceptions Diggle was served by trains which called at all of the neighbouring stations, and the opening of the Micklehurst Loop had negligible impact on Diggle's train service, as few local stopping trains would use the route and its four stations closed between 1907 and 1917. Some trains via Micklehurst in the early days of the service started or ended their journey at Diggle.

The Railway Clearing House *Handbook* of 1904 notes that Diggle's goods facilities could handle livestock and that a 5-ton capacity crane was installed. The station also supervised a siding that served the premises of Hutchinson Hollingworth & Co.

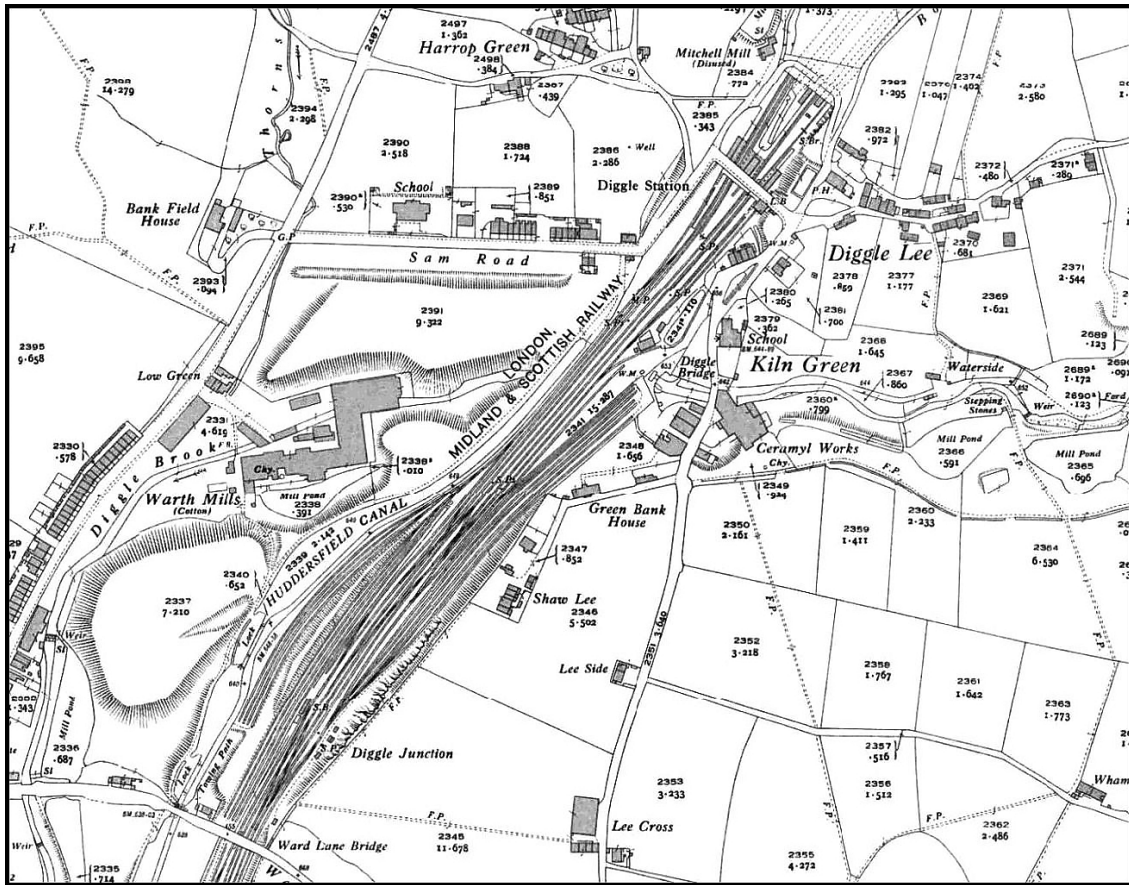
Bradshaw in April 1910 indicated that fourteen Up and seventeen Down trains called on weekdays, two in each direction using the Micklehurst Loop; three departures were shown on Sunday in each direction.

Under LMS administration from 1923 to 1947 little was to change at Diggle.

The 1938 timetable showed an increased frequency compared to the 1910 service, but trains called at irregular intervals. The LMS retained earlier LNWR station signage but the style of gas lamps was modernised by the LMS, the casements being replaced with the 'Sugg' design.

From January 1948 Diggle was within the new BR London Midland Region (LMR), which in England & Wales closely corresponded to the extent of the LMS network. However In April 1950 there were many regional boundary adjustments, one of which handed the Leeds-Huddersfield-Manchester route to the North Eastern Region as far south-west as the

RAILWAYS IN SADDLEWORTH



Ordnance Survey

Figure 45. 1932 Ordnance Survey Map of railways at Diggle showing extensive sidings

portals of the Standedge Tunnels at Marsden. The June 1950 timetable was not greatly changed in frequency in comparison to that of 1938. It remained irregular with some noticeable gaps in the late morning and mid-afternoon.

Diggle station closed on Sundays from 1956/57, whilst all of the other local stations retained Sunday trains for several years more. Although this measure must have been taken on economic grounds, it is surprising in the light of Wells' recollection that Diggle station was 'an ideal place to set off from for a day's walk in the surrounding hills or along the quiet lanes', an activity particularly suited to Sunday.⁷⁴ By 1958 the waiting room block on the Up Fast (south-east) platform had been demolished. It was probably little used if trains generally called at the Up Slow face of the island platform. On 1st February 1958 in a further regional boundary adjustment the Standedge Tunnels were transferred to the North Eastern Region, with that region's Chief Civil Engineer responsible for their maintenance, although the LMR Chief Mechanical & Electrical Engineer remained responsible for the water troughs and tank at the south end of the tunnel. At some date after August 1958 the LMR installed vitreous enamel nameboards and totem signs at its 'frontier' Diggle station but left the gas lighting in place.

Diggle was one of the stations earmarked for closure in the 'Beeching Report' of March 1963.⁷⁵ The proposals for the Huddersfield-Manchester route meant, in terms of passenger traffic, that all local services would cease and it would operate only as an inter-city line (though this term was not used at the time). Only Stalybridge would keep its station. On 4th

⁷⁴ Jeffrey Wells, *Miles Platting to Diggle (via Ashton)*.

⁷⁵ Richard Beeching, *The Reshaping of British Railways*.

November 1963 Diggle closed to goods traffic. The 'Beeching Report' did not list specific stations where goods traffic would cease to be handled, but there was a stated intention to modernise freight transport by rail which would spell the end of traditional small goods stations and 'pick-up' goods trains.

Whereas 'Beeching' closures to which objections had been received commenced in January 1964, the process was much slower for the Huddersfield-Manchester route, and the decision was eventually taken to reprove certain stations (including Marsden, Greenfield, Mossley and Ashton) but to close others, which included Diggle and Saddleworth. The Micklehurst Loop, lacking any intermediate passenger stations, apparently escaped the attention of Beeching's advisors, but it was swiftly closed to passenger traffic on 7th September 1964. Closure of the Micklehurst Loop to through goods traffic on 3rd October 1966 coincided with the closure of the two single-bore Standedge Tunnels. The closure of what had been the fast line tunnels made the corresponding platforms at Diggle station redundant. At an unknown date the waiting room block on the Down Slow platform was removed, so in the run up to closure passengers travelling to Marsden and points north had no shelter from the weather. Whilst British Rail - as British Railways had rebranded itself in 1965 - was keen to be perceived as forward-looking, sleek and innovative, in reality much of the infrastructure was jaded, neglected and shabby.

Clayton Bridge, Droylsden, Saddleworth, Diggle, Slaithwaite, Golcar and Longwood Stations are closed and passenger trains cease to call thereat.
The area is suitably served by 'buses

British Rail

Figure 46. 1968 Closure Notice for Diggle and Saddleworth stations

By May 1968 closure was confirmed, but a respectable number of train calls were still made at the station. However, the irregular intervals had always been a deterrent to potential passengers, and in the final timetable, except on Saturdays, no trains left towards Huddersfield between 08.17 and 16.42. On Monday 7th October 1968 Diggle station closed, the final trains having called two days earlier.



John Alsop

Figure 47. Diggle station in July 1968, just prior to closure

The old Down Slow and island platforms and station buildings at Diggle were demolished within six years of closure; the Up Fast platform survived until the 1980s. Where the booking hall building used to straddle a siding, a traditional-looking stone-built house now occupies

the site, abutting the road bridge. The station cottages are still in place immediately south-east of the station site; they look entirely in keeping with other houses in the neighbourhood, being built of local stone. Further south-west of the station the formerly extensive Marsh Sidings have been removed leaving only a long loop on the down side between Diggle Junction signal cabin and Station Road bridge.

MICKLEHURST LOOP STATIONS

General notes

The four stations opened on 1st July 1886 were named Uppermill, Friezland - both within the parish of Saddleworth - Micklehurst and Staley & Millbrook. Three of these in effect provided a second station for settlements which already possessed one on the original line. Uppermill station was $\frac{3}{4}$ -mile from Saddleworth station, close to the centre of Uppermill village and much more conveniently placed than Saddleworth to serve it. Friezland station was on the outskirts of Greenfield, but it served a nearby mill and cottages over $\frac{3}{4}$ -mile, via an indirect road, from Greenfield station. Micklehurst was an additional station for the town of Mossley; the original station was adjacent to the main shopping street, whereas Micklehurst was just $\frac{1}{4}$ -mile east and in a semi-rural setting. Staley & Millbrook did not duplicate an existing station, but although it was conveniently placed for a nearby mill, there was little residential population within a mile of the station.

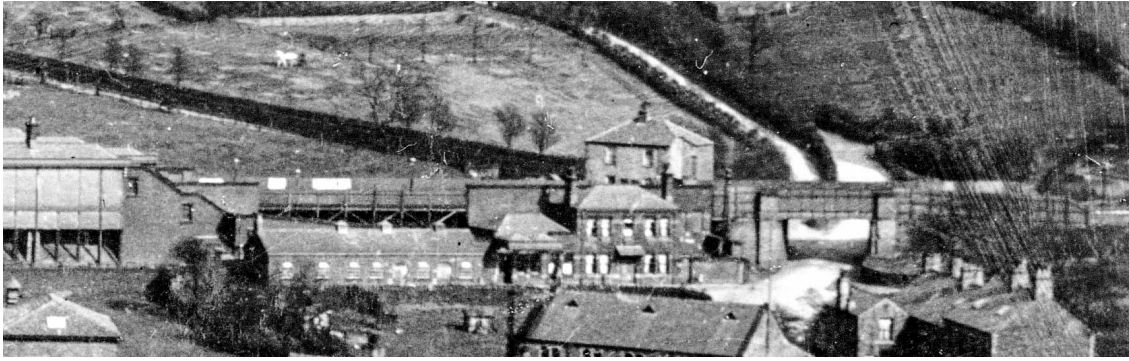
An unusual feature of the Micklehurst Loop is that the four stations' goods sheds and sidings were some distance from the passenger facilities; because the goods facilities at each station were extensive a precise distance from the passenger platforms cannot be stated, but at Friezland and Micklehurst the gap was in excess of $\frac{1}{4}$ -mile. The difficult topography explains this feature of the stations: wide areas of level land had to be available, or created, for the goods facilities, whilst the passenger stations could be accommodated on narrow sites, preferably close to the main centre of population. However, there was probably little benefit in combining the two functions on one site. At Uppermill the passenger station was north of Station Road bridge whilst the goods yard was about 250 yds to the south, where a broad embankment had to be constructed to accommodate it on the Down side of the running lines.

The stations on the Micklehurst Loop were constructed on a generous scale, with a standard two-storey station master's house and contiguous single-storey office range in dark red brick. Photographic evidence indicates that the platforms and platform buildings at all four stations were of timber construction. All or part of each station's platform stood on an embankment, and timber provided a much lighter load than masonry for an embankment to support.

Uppermill Station

This station (rendered as 'Upper Mill' on OS maps and in the Railway Clearing House *Handbook* of 1904) had two facing platforms on an embankment with the station master's house and office range at road level. The house was constructed of dark red brick with string courses of blue engineering brick and pale stone lintels. It was a dignified two-storey structure, almost square in plan and flanked by single-storey wings. The house roof was hipped and slated, with restrained cresting and finials, and a cornice was provided using a row of bricks set at 45° as dentils. The tall chimneystacks were of blue brick. The entrance from the road to the house was centrally placed and sheltered by a small sloping canopy, with pairs of tall rectangular windows either side. Apart from the opening above the doorway, other windows were also in pairs. The northern single-storey wing containing the booking hall was distinguished by a double-hipped awning, complementing the building's hipped roof. The rear of the house directly abutted the embankment.

The two elevated platforms were provided with timber waiting rooms, the longer one - which probably also contained a porters' room - being on the Down platform. Both buildings were fronted by verandahs of equal length, that on the Up platform being considerably longer than the building. It is assumed that access to the platforms was by staircases (as seen on

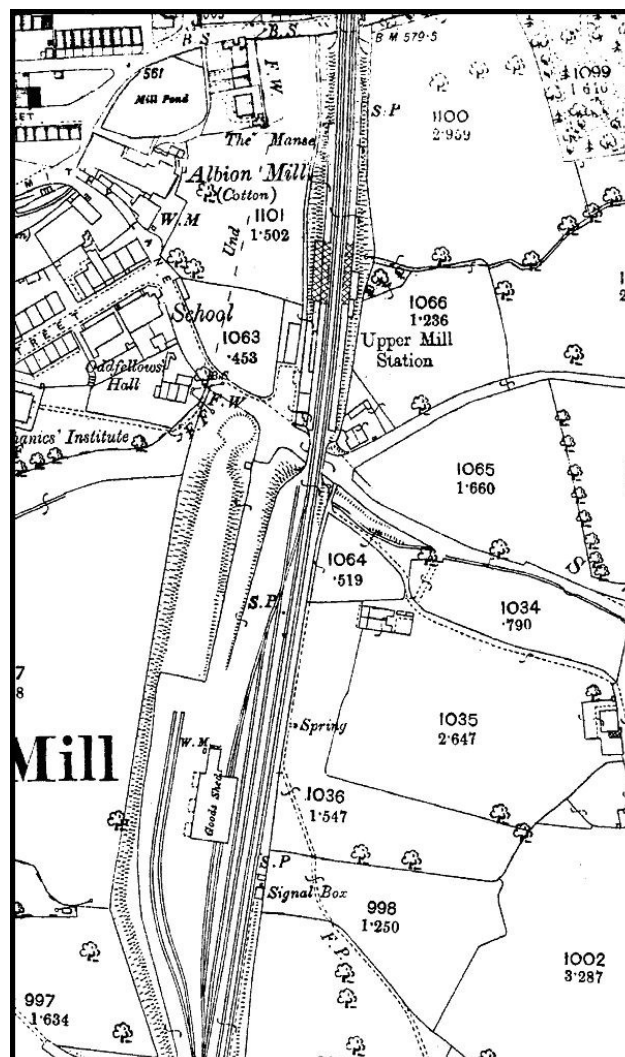


Peter Fox, 'Old Saddleworth' Collection

Figure 48. Uppermill station from the west

photographs of Micklehurst and Staley & Millbrook stations which also had a road-level main buildings and elevated platforms).

Uppermill's goods facilities consisted of several sidings and a large, two-storey, two-road



Ordnance Survey

Figure 49. 1893 Ordnance Survey Map of Uppermill station showing two platforms and Goods shed

RAILWAYS IN SADDLEWORTH

warehouse in blue engineering brick – as found at the other three stations - a 5-ton capacity crane and a weigh office. The signal box was on the Up side of the running lines.

The Micklehurst Loop was built primarily for through, rather than local, traffic; in summer



John Mann

Figure 50. Uppermill station house in November 1970

1887 Uppermill and the other three ‘Loop’ stations were provided with an infrequent weekday service of only five trains in each direction and none on Sunday.

The local passenger train service remained infrequent in the early years of the twentieth century, and the stations were lightly used. Micklehurst closed to passengers in 1907,



B Hilton

Figure 51. Uppermill Goods Shed and yard on the 5th June 1958

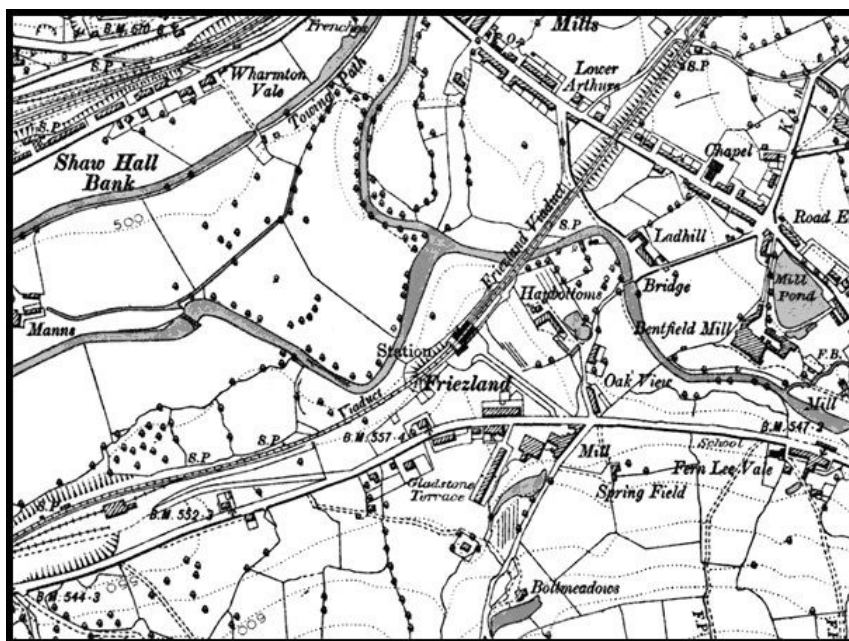
followed by Staley & Millbrook in 1909, but Uppermill and Friezland remained open for several years more. The April 1910 timetable for Uppermill showed only four Up and three Down departures on weekdays and none on Sunday.

On 1st January 1917 Uppermill and Friezland stations - along with a number of Britain's quieter stations - were closed. This allowed station staff to be relocated to other stations as many railwaymen had left to undertake military service in the Great War. Some stations re-opened after the war was over, but Uppermill and Friezland did not. Passenger trains continued to use the Micklehurst Loop, but no record has been seen of calls being made after 1917 at any of the intermediate stations, even for excursions. The timber platforms were demolished by 1926 as seen on an aerial photograph.

Uppermill station, reduced to a goods facility, was administered by the London, Midland & Scottish Railway from January 1923 and British Railways (London Midland Region) from January 1948. On 15th June 1964 the goods station closed, but the signal box was in use until 3rd October 1966 when the line closed entirely between Diggle and Hartshead Power Station. Nothing remains of the goods station; a football pitch occupies the site of the warehouse and the southern end of the goods sidings, just north of Rush Hill Road, is now used by Saddleworth Swimming Pool. The passenger station building, however, remains in residential use.

Friezland Station

When Friezland passenger station opened, Oak View woollen mill stood opposite the approach road; some recently built short terraces, forming the hamlet of Friezland, were within a few minutes' walk. Some larger villas and farmsteads were also in the vicinity of the station. Friezland passenger station was on the narrow area of near-level ground between two viaducts. Immediately north-east was Greenfield Viaduct (confusingly identified as 'Friezland Viaduct' on OS plans), 242 yds in length and with 16 arches one of which was a larger span over the brook. Friezland Viaduct was immediately south-west of the station, with 12 arches and stretching 187 yds. As with the other viaducts on the line they were constructed of blue engineering brick. The constricted site close to the mill and terraces could accommodate only the passenger station, so the goods station was ¼-mile south-west beyond Friezland Viaduct where a level site could be created by hollowing-out the valley side to the south-east



Ordnance Survey

Figure 52. 1906 Ordnance Survey map of Friezland passenger and goods stations

and embanking it to the north-west; just south-west of this site the railway disappeared into the Royal George Tunnel under a narrow spur of higher ground. Had the passenger station been built on the goods station site it would have been poorly sited to serve the local population.

The passenger station was reached by an unmetalled track known as Station Road. Whereas at Uppermill (and also at Micklehurst and Staley & Millbrook) the station house and offices were at road level and the waiting rooms and the entire length of the platforms were elevated on embankments, at Friezland the buildings were at ground level but the platforms extended onto an embankment; it was probably for the sake of design consistency with the other three Loop stations that the platforms and platform buildings were constructed of timber.



Peter Fox, 'Old Saddleworth' Collection

Figure 53. Friezland passenger station and viaduct, c.1910

A footbridge at Friezland provided access to the Up platform; at the other three Loop stations access from the main facilities to the platform on the opposite side of the track required passengers to walk beneath the railway, presumably via the road bridge at Uppermill and Staley & Millbrook and via the subway, shown on an Ordnance Survey plan, at Micklehurst.

Friezland station master's house and office range were on the Up (south-east) platform and a waiting shelter stood on the Down platform, displaced north-east of, rather than facing, the main building. Awnings were provided on both platforms. The design of the house was similar to that of the other three on the Micklehurst Loop. However, there is some doubt surrounding the detail of the building, such as the colour of the bricks and style of roofing of the single-storey sections, because no photographs have come to light showing the building clearly prior to closure. Today it is a private residence, but it has been considerably altered.

The passenger train service at Friezland was essentially the same as that of Uppermill (q.v.). Friezland station closed to passengers on 1st January 1917. After the station closed to passengers its footbridge was dismantled and a concrete footbridge was built by 1932 to enable pedestrians to cross the line which still carried freight and occasional passenger trains. Because aerial photograph evidence for Uppermill and Ordnance Survey map evidence for Micklehurst indicate removal of their platforms and platform buildings by 1926 and 1922 respectively it is probable that the similar timber structures at Friezland station would have been dismantled by the mid-1920s; the 1932 Ordnance Survey map shows no Up platform at Friezland and an indeterminate feature corresponding to part of the Down platform.

The goods station at Friezland remained in use for several decades after the passenger station

RAILWAYS IN SADDLEWORTH

closed. It comprised a large two-road warehouse (of similar design to the others on the Loop) 5-ton crane, weigh office and yard paved with stone setts. Road vehicles reached the yard along a lengthy lane. There was no signal box at the passenger station, but one stood on the Down side of the through lines at the goods station.

Early in the LMS era Mossley Gas Works became an important user of the Micklehurst Loop. Located a short distance south of the Royal George Tunnel, about ½-mile south-west of Friezland goods station the gas works was built between 1926 and 1931, on the Down side of the line. Sidings were installed to serve the works, with connections to the Micklehurst Loop in both directions; access was controlled by Friezland Gas Sidings signal box on the Up side of the through lines.

Under BR(LMR) administration, Friezland goods station closed on 27th February 1965. Friezland Gas Sidings signal box had already closed on 14th March 1962. The line through



John Mann

Figure 54. The remains of Friezland station in November 1970; looking north

Friezland closed entirely on 3rd October 1966 and the rails were removed by 1970. The concrete footbridge remained in place after track-lifting although it was clearly no longer needed. Unlike its neighbours at Micklehurst and Staley & Millbrook, the goods warehouse at Friezland has been demolished. Its site is now in the landscaped grounds of the Oldham & District Riding Club Friezland Arena.

DECLINE AND CLOSURES OF RAILWAYS IN SADDLEWORTH

Although the Micklehurst Loop served several population centres, as noted above they already possessed stations with more frequent train services on the original route between Stalybridge and Diggle. The local passenger train service on the Loop proved to be little used and unprofitable, and the four intermediate stations were very early closures. The first to close to passengers were the two stations outwith the parish of Saddleworth: Micklehurst on 1st May 1907 followed by Staley & Millbrook, on 1st November 1909. On 1st January 1917 the two remaining stations, Uppermill and Friezland - along with a large number of Britain's quieter stations - were closed, despite local objection. At the time the Micklehurst Loop was being heavily used by freight generated to support the war effort. Some stations re-opened after the war was over, but Uppermill and Friezland did not. All four of the stations on the Micklehurst Loop continued to handle goods traffic until the 1960s.

The passenger service between Delph, Greenfield and Oldham was withdrawn on 2nd May 1955, some eight years before the 'Beeching axe'. The Delph Branch closed to all traffic in November 1963 and to Oldham in 1964.

The Reshaping of British Railways ('Beeching Report') of March 1963 recommended that local passenger services on Manchester - Huddersfield line should be withdrawn, with the closure of thirteen intermediate stations leaving Stalybridge as the only station; the elimination of 'stopping' trains would clear the path for express passenger and freight trains. The 'Beeching Report' made no reference to the Micklehurst Loop, but this apparent oversight was soon corrected. More than a year after the official closure of the Loop to passengers on 7th September 1964, *Hansard* of 28th February 1966 reported that the Minister of Transport, Barbara Castle, had provided a list of proposed closures and how much progress had been made with enacting them. One of the entries in the list stated that the British Railways Board had given notice of a proposal to close 'Stalybridge-Micklehurst-Diggle' - with the footnote 'added since publication of the Reshaping Report' - and that no objections had been lodged to the proposal. In later years passenger use of the Loop had been occasional, chiefly excursions and scheduled diversions, but is not known when the last passenger train actually used the route.

The proposal to close the thirteen intermediate stations between Manchester and Huddersfield was published on 2nd October 1964 and the hearing of objections ended on 13th April 1965. After a lengthy delay, on 8th May 1968 the Minister of Transport, Richard Marsh, gave 'part consent' to the closure proposal. The plan to annihilate the local Huddersfield-Manchester train service was reined in, and several of the stations, including Ashton (serving a population in excess of 50,000), Mossley and Greenfield, were reprieved and are still open; however, the majority, including Saddleworth and Diggle, were closed on 7th October 1968.

The Beeching Report on Trunk Routes in February 1965⁷⁶ recommended closure of the Sheffield to Manchester route via Woodhead. Closure to all traffic between Penistone and Hadfield occurred on 18th July 1981, passenger services having ceased on 5th January 1970; however, because of the national decline in the rail freight business no additional traffic was brought to the Standedge route.

With the decline in industry in northern England mirrored by a reduction in activity in the ports of Hull and Liverpool, the volume of freight traffic by rail decreased dramatically. As an example, in 1952 at least thirty-seven freight trains were recorded passing along the Micklehurst loop in an easterly direction. This should be compared with the line between South Yorkshire and the Manchester area via Woodhead where the daily freight trains numbered in excess of seventy in each direction.

The introduction of air-braked trains and higher capacity wagons from the mid-1960s enabled greater tonnage to be conveyed per train. In the summer of 1969, the number of freight trains on the Standedge route was twenty and by June 1981 this had dropped to six in each direction.

With increased competition of freight by road, goods facilities at stations became uneconomic. The goods yards and depots on the Loop closed as follows: Micklehurst (19th January 1962), Staley & Millbrook (20th April 1964), Uppermill (15th June 1964) and Friezland (27th February 1965). On 3rd October 1966 the Micklehurst Loop was closed, but about a mile of track at the southern end of the Loop remained in use to carry coals to Hartshead Power Station (adjacent to Staley & Millbrook goods station). The remainder of the track was lifted and most of the structures had been demolished by 1970. Traffic to the power station on the final, southern fragment of the Micklehurst Loop ceased in 1972, but it was not until 14th July 1976 that it was taken out of use and the points at Stalybridge were clamped.

In a climate of pessimism which was resigned to the shrivelling of passenger traffic, it was decided that double track would suffice for most of the Manchester-Huddersfield route and that

⁷⁶ The National Archives, *Development of the Major Trunk Routes*, (British Railways Board, February 1965), Ref: ZLIB 6/354.

two of the three Standedge Tunnel bores could be closed. On 3rd October 1966 both of the single-track Standedge Tunnels closed.

Since 1991 the objective for this route between Leeds and Manchester has been to compete with the M62 motorway for speed between the two cities, and thereby attract additional customers to rail, as well as aiming to provide a 10-minute interval service between Leeds, Huddersfield and Manchester. Only improved acceleration through the benefits of electrification and new bi-modal rolling stock can provide the latter.

Whereas the West Yorkshire Passenger Transport Authority has over many years provided a good and regular local train service to Marsden (twenty-five trains in each direction daily), the Great Manchester PTA has introduced an adequate service at Greenfield (twenty-one trains in each direction daily) with further improvements in the December 2019 Timetable.

Since the May 2018 timetable change, TransPennine Express [TPE] provide the regular stopping service here (hourly each way to Huddersfield & Leeds and to Manchester Piccadilly), with Northern calls limited to a handful of stops at weekday peak periods. There are also no direct trains to Manchester (Victoria), so passengers wishing to travel there must change at Stalybridge. Other TPE services to and from Manchester Airport and Liverpool via Manchester Victoria pass through without stopping.

The reason for switching former local services to Manchester Piccadilly from Manchester Victoria is to allow for the increase in TransPennine Express services to the latter, as part of the diversion of trains to Manchester Airport via Victoria and Oxford Road; following the construction of the new piece of railway - the Ordsall Chord - linking Victoria to Piccadilly.

In 2018 the Leeds-Huddersfield-Stalybridge-Manchester route became the principal trans-Pennine passenger service with 210 trains daily. There are also an additional twenty freight trains, making the route the most intensively used since its construction. This has been made possible through improved signalling and higher line speeds.

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Saddleworth Museum

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SADDLEWORTH FREEMASONS

Lodge of Candour 1812-1851

Howard Lambert

Freemasonry is a fraternal order that has its roots in the late Middle Ages. The first Grand Lodge was founded in England in 1717; a rival Grand Lodge was established in London in 1751, and the two merged in 1813 to form the United Grand Lodge of England (UGLE). This is the governing body for freemasonry in England, Wales and certain overseas countries. Since 1768, each masonic lodge has been required to submit an annual membership list to the Grand Lodge. From these, the membership registers are compiled: details recorded are each member's date of initiation, his age, his full name, profession and residence. Additional columns show the subscriptions paid and occasionally, interesting remarks such as 'from a Lodge in Nova Scotia'. There are three 'degrees' in Craft Freemasonry: 'Entered Apprentice', 'Fellow Craft' and 'Master Mason'. Normally a man will pass through all three degrees, known as Initiation, Passing, and Raising. Once he becomes a Master Mason, he has the option to join multiple lodges.

In 1799, the Unlawful Societies Act banned secret societies for fear of revolution in the wake of the French Revolution, and for some years many professional gentlemen distanced themselves from freemasonry. If a freemason became ill or got into financial difficulty, his lodge would often render assistance. Such was the case with the author's great-great grandfather Charles Roads, (1810-1902), a wax chandler and oilman in Clapham, south London. In 1870 Charles' sister Susanna wrote to their elder brother George Roads: '... poor Charles worn out as far as his business capabilities and now I trust they are otherwise provided for by a stipend from the freemasons...'. This financial lifeline enabled Charles to continue trading for a few more years until the expiration of his lease.

Those wishing to delve deeper into this subject are directed to Dr David Harrison's work, *The Transformation of Freemasonry* published in 2010. There is much of interest concerning the Oldham Lodge founded in 1798, a prominent member of which was the local historian James Butterworth.

In 2015, two vast datasets of freemasonry records were uploaded to the Ancestry website, encompassing the names and personal details of over two million men. The larger set spanning the period 1751 to 1921, covers all masonic lodges in England and Wales plus some overseas lodges. The second set covers the thirty-two historic counties of Ireland for the period 1733 to 1923. This is a valuable genealogical and historical source; in effect a partial census of the merchant classes. The Charter for the Lodge of Candour was granted on the 12th February 1812. Surviving Minute Books from this period meticulously record all the Proceedings at Lodge Meetings. Peter Fearnhead was elected as the first Lodge Master. There were 11 members in 1812, rising to 37 by 1862. Freemasonry flourished in Saddleworth during this time. There were close connections and a keen interest in two 'daughter' Lodges: Halcyon Lodge and Tudor Lodge. The latter was consecrated on the 10th February 1841 at the Temple Inn, Waterhead Mill. For the first forty years, meetings were held at the Bell Inn, Delph, before moving to the Swan Inn at Dobcross in 1853. From 1861 the Lodge met at Uppermill.

SADDLEWORTH FREEMASONS

DATE OF INITIATION &c	AGE	NAME	PROFESSION &c	RESIDENCE
25 December 1812	36	John Buckley	Clothier	Blackheynook Saddleworth
25 December 1812	49	William Bell	Innkeeper	Delph do.
25 December 1812	42	Thomas Bradbury	Engineer	Broadhead do.
25 December 1812	51	John Scholfield	Merchant	Blackheynook do.
25 December 1812	34	Robert Platt	Clothier	Stonebreaks
24 March 1813	28	William Shephard	Clothier	Harrop Green, Saddleworth
24 March 1813	35	Abraham Gartside	Innkeeper	Blakehey Nook
10 April 1813	36	Robert Shaw	Merchant	Delph do.
11 June 1813	30	Timothy Bradbury	Auctioneer	Delph do.
11 June 1813	35	William Kenworthy	Clothier	Castleshaw do.
11 June 1813	34	Isaac Wood	Clothier	Harrop Green do.
6 August 1813	45	James Platt	Cotton spinner	Dobcross do.
6 August 1813	34	Edmund Wood	Stocking maker	Upper Mill do.
15 August 1813	29	John Marsden	Shopkeeper	Blakehey Nook do.
15 August 1813	26	James Broadbent	Clothier	Harrop Court do.
10 September 1813	69	John Broadbent (Senr)	Clothier	Tunstead do.
1 April 1814	26	William Rhodes	Merchant	Harrop Dale
29 April 1814	23	James Whitehead	Clothier	Denshaw
26 August 1814	28	Samuel Lawton	Merchant	Dobcross
28 October 1814	23	John Graham	Itinerant Draper	Mottram
28 October 1814	28	Joel Hawkyard	Land surveyor	Dobcross
17 February 1815	41	Michael Horsfall	Cloth dresser	Upper Mill
24 March 1815	32	James Kay	Reed maker	-
21 July 1815	23	John Bradbury	Clothier	Runninghill
13 October 1815	29	Dan Whitehead	Cordwainer	Blackhey Nook
15 November 1815	26	Joseph Thornton	Schoolmaster	Kiln Green
8 October 1818	34	Robert Turdoff	Innkeeper	Calfhey
-	-	John Broadbent	Clothier	Tunstead
22 June 1820	36	William Whitehead	Shopkeeper	Mans Wharf
14 December 1820	29	John Bradbury	Shopkeeper	Weaking
18 January 1821	33	Thomas Broadbent	Clothier	Marslands
15 February 1821	26	John Whitehead	Merchant	Denshaw
3 January 1822	27	Charles Harrop	Merchant	Dobcross
3 January 1822	23	Peter Stelfox	Merchant	Dobcross
7 March 1822	24	Edward Lees	Gentleman	Delph Lodge

SADDLEWORTH FREEMASONS

DATE OF INITIATION &c	AGE	NAME	PROFESSION &c	RESIDENCE
26 September 1822	28	Charles Fairburn	Card Maker	Clifton
28 November 1822	22	James Broadbent	Merchant	Carr
-	-	Samuel Harrop	-	-
17 July 1823	-	William Heginbottom	Clothier	Oxhey
1 January 1824	36	Charles Fozard	Dyer	Walk Mill
8 July 1824	24	John Lawton	Merchant	Green Ash
26 May 1825	24	James Harrop	Merchant	Tamewater
1 July 1825	29	Ben Lawton	Innkeeper	Dobcross
20 April 1826	24	Edward Blackburn	Joiner	Delph
8 May 1826	29	John Shaw	Painter	Delph
4 October 1827	-	James Law	Joiner	Thurston Clough
31 January 1828	25	Henry Blackburn	Innkeeper	Delph
27 March 1828	27	Charles Clifton	Merchant	Carrcote
21 August 1828	45	Mathew Driver	Merchant	Austerlands
21 August 1828	43	Joseph Tyas	Plumber & Glazier	Delph
18 September 1828	27	Charles Brook	Finedrawer	New Delph
23 October 1828	41	John Shaw	Painter	Delph
18 December 1828	32	Isaac Hall	Machinist	Dobcross
7 January 1829	49	Robert Buckley	Inn Keeper	Sholver Moor
7 January 1829	39	William Eastwood	Dyer	Walk Mill
13 August 1829	30	John Buckley	Shopkeeper	Dobcross
4 February 1830	49	Joseph Lees	Merchant	Waterhead Mill
4 March 1830	39	James Clegg	Coal Master	Water Leadings
8 April 1830	28	William Buckley	Clothier	Oxhey
2 September 1830	51	John Robinson	Shopkeeper	Stonebreaks
23 December 1830	30	Thomas Rhodes	Clothier	Stones
24 February 1831	-	John Buckley	Merchant	Hollingrove
15 March 1832	40	William Whitehead	Coal Master	Greenleach
10 May 1832	39	Patrick McClaverty	Painter	Lees
26 September 1833	39	Henry Hardiman	Innkeeper	New Delph
8 January 1835	25	William Bottomley	Merchant	New Delph
7 January 1836	26	Charles Kenworthy	Woolstapler	Dobcross
28 January 1836	27	Jeke Brierly	Engineer	New Delph
28 January 1836	40	John Turner	Cloth Drawer	New Delph
3 March 1836	31	John Hall	Innkeeper	Delph

SADDLEWORTH FREEMASONS

DATE OF INITIATION &c	AGE	NAME	PROFESSION &c	RESIDENCE
22 September 1836	48	Henry Schofield	Clothier	Grange
17 November 1836	23	Edward Fozzard	Dyer	Dobcross
19 January 1837	37	James Broadbent	Merchant	Delph
19 January 1837	29	Thomas Taylor	Ironfounder	Marsden
16 February 1837	32	James Rhodes	Merchant	Diglee
20 April 1837	45	Joseph Broadbent	Merchant	New Barn
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11 January 1838	29	James Yates	Cardmaker	Cleckheaton
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27 September 1838	37	Joseph Heginbottom	Woolstapler	Dobcross
27 December 1838	40	Wm Spencer Northouse	Pary Agent	Greenwich
27 December 1838	33	Thomas Lawton	Innkeeper	Dobcross
24 January 1839	65	John Bardsley	Grocer	Waterhead Mill
23 July 1839	27	John Wood	Clothier	Shaws
12 March 1840	32	Frederick Fielder	Merchant	Linfitts
12 March 1840	25	John Roberts	Merchant	Hill End
12 March 1840	23	Frederick Wm Roberts	Merchant	New York
24 February 1842	35	Samuel Bower	Dyer	Marsden
24 March 1842	30	William Hall	Innkeeper	Marsden
7 December 1843	25	Edward Fairburn	Card maker	Obelisk Grove
27 June 1844	32	Ben Haigh	Manufacturer	Dobcross
22 August 1844	33	James Mills	Cloth Dresser	Uppermill
11 December 1845	26	Joseph Hesslegrave	Surgeon	Marsden
25 November 1846	33	Joseph Shaw	Manufacturer	Delph
15 April 1848	30	Thomas Walker	Sup. Railway	Delph
21 March 1850	-	William W. Widdop	-	-
14 November 1850	29	Joseph Coates	Card Maker	Slaithwaite
10 April 1851	55	Isaac Bottomley	Engineer	Marsden
15 May 1851	-	John Wrigley	-	-
12 June 1851	-	Henry Lees	-	-

THE DOBCROSS LOOMWORKS SHUNTER OR 'THE DOBCROSS DONKEY'

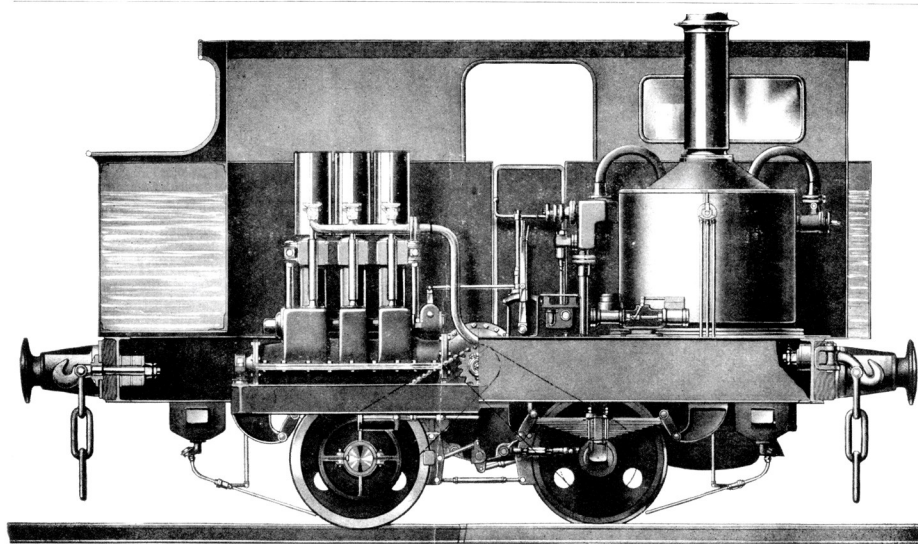
Peter Fox

The Dobcross Loomworks was built adjacent to the railway in order to despatch new looms and receive raw materials. The site was linked to the railway and possessed its own private siding which was listed in the Railway Clearing House, Handbook of Stations.

To operate the siding and move wagons around the use of horses had been the norm which wasn't uncommon. The company in 1931, however, replaced the horses with an engine which was second hand and had a curious origin.

The engine was based around a steam tractor built by the Atkinson Walker Wagon Company Limited (AWWC) a company based in Preston at its Frenchwood Works which had been established in the 1890s. The company was better known for the manufacture of steam wagons but did produce a limited number of railway engines. The engines they built were mostly used in industrial locations being small engines with a vertical boiler. Whilst most of the engines were built to standard gauge five were built to a narrow gauge of three feet, two of these engines remained in Britain having the works numbers of 111 and 114 and three were exported to Singapore.

THE "ATKINSON-WALKER" RAIL TRACTOR.



PART SECTIONAL GENERAL ARRANGEMENT OF ONE OF OUR RAIL TRACTORS.

Saddleworth Museum Archives, M/HUT/1.5/69

Figure 1. Illustration from Atkinson Walker Catalogue

The history of the Dobcross Loomworks engine starts in 1928 when the AWWC engine works number 114 was bought on trial by the Clogher Valley Railway (CVR), a three foot gauge railway serving that area of Northern Ireland. The engine proved unsuccessful and in February 1929 the CVR wrote to the company requesting that the engine was not suitable for their needs being deficient in power and speed. In March 1929 they asked the company to remove it but the manufacturers Atkinson Walker tried supplying a new boiler to see if this would improve its efficiency but this proved to no avail. The engine remained out of use and was no doubt confined to the Aughnacloy Engine Works of the CVR still in its 'works grey'.

In 1931 the engine was sold by the CVR to the County Donegal Railway (CDR). The manager of the CDR, Henry Forbes, in 1932 had the loco sent to the works of the Great Northern Railway in Dundalk to be rebuilt and fitted with a 6 litre Gardner diesel engine

THE DOBCROSS DONKEY

replacing the vertical steam boiler that had previously powered the engine. The engine continued in use on the CDR until 1962 when it passed to the Ulster Folk and Transport Museum.

The steam boiler and parts that had been removed from AWWC works No A114 were sold by the CDR to Titus, Thorp and Ainsworth of Preston. The parts were subsequently sold to Hutchinson & Hollingworth at Dobcross Loomworks.

Hutchinson & Hollingworth created a new engine using the vertical steam boiler on the chassis of another Atkinson Walker engine works number 101 which had originally been exported to Singapore but had been returned.

The rebuild by Hutchinson and Hollingworth created a unique looking engine with curved cab and porthole windows. Its rebuild had cost the company a total of £400.

In 1935 it took on the name 'Rocket' but acquired a local nickname the 'Dobcross Donkey'.

It remained in use at the Loomworks until 1962 when the private sidings were closed and dismantled by the company and the engine sold to an Oldham scrap dealer.

It is interesting that the archives of the Dobcross Loomworks held at Saddleworth Museum hold a catalogue for the Atkinson Steam Tractor Company which was the prompt for this article. The same file, interestingly, contains information and specifications on a rail mounted steam crane which the company no doubt purchased to work in conjunction with the shunter engine to unload raw materials and despatch looms by rail.

SOURCES

Saddleworth Museum Archives (SMA), Notes on Dobcross Loomworks Engine, M/HUT/1.5/69

SMA, Catalogue for 'Atkinson Walker Rail Tractors', M/HUT/1.5/69

Dr E.M. Patterson, History of Clogher Valley Railway, (David and Charles, 1972)

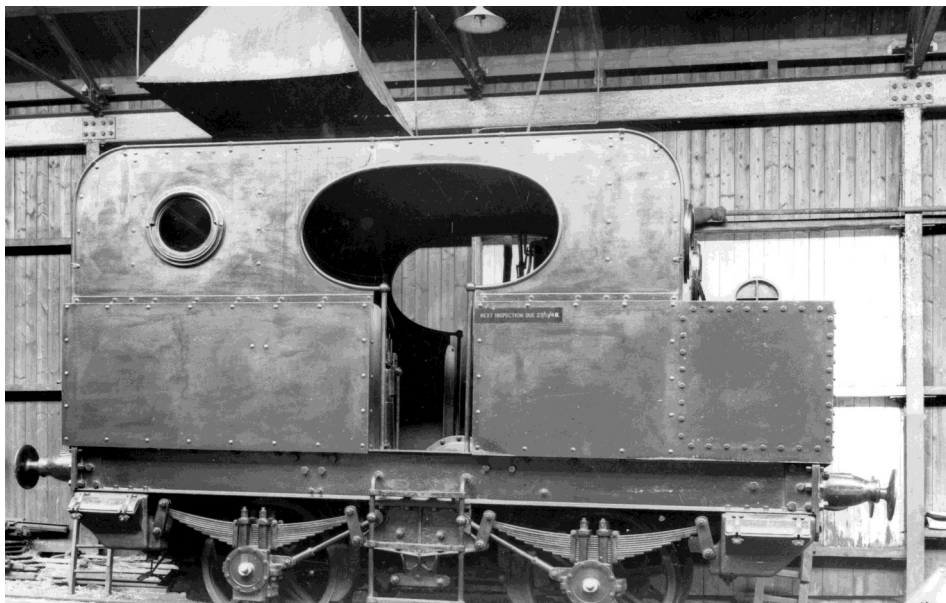
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Thanks to the following who freely shared what information they had:

Robert Darvill, Industrial Railway Society

David Beilby, Industrial Railway Society

Andrew Waldron, Irish Industrial Railway Society



C.A. Appleton

Figure 2. Dobcross Loomworks Engine from C.A. Appleton, Industrial Railway Society, 1948

ARTHUR HIRST'S DIARY - ERRATA

In the article on Arthur Hirst's voyage to New Zealand in 1913 (*SHS Bulletin*, Vol. 49, No 1, pp. 20-31) the some text was mistakenly omitted:-

In the POSTSCRIPT on page 29, after the paragraph beginning:- 'Arthur was a very active member of the Kaiapoi community...', and ending, '...at St. Paul's Presbyterian Church.' the remaining part of the article should read:-

Arthur was also librarian for the Kaiapoi Male Choir, a past Grand Master of the Loyal Kaiapoi Oddfellows' Lodge and a founder member of both the Kaiapoi District Historical Society and Kaiapoi RSA.

His sporting interests included the Kaiapoi Soccer Club, the Kaiapoi Tennis Club and the Kaiapoi Cricket Club of which he was a vice-president. He was also active in the Kaiapoi Golf Club and a member of the Canterbury Veterans' Golf Club.

Arthur married Doris Mary Stanton at the Kaiapoi Methodist Church on 28th December 1922. They had two children, Betty, (born 1924) and Jack (born 1926). Betty married 'Punch' Williams, son of a former Labour Party MP, and Jack married Helen Shuttleworth, a member of a prominent Banks Peninsula farming family. Helen is still living in Rangiora, and keeping very good health, aged 90. Their six grandchildren, are all still living in New Zealand, five still in the Canterbury area.

Arthur died at Burwood Hospital on 30th September 1966. Doris survived him, dying on 29 April 1982.

It wasn't until 1949 that Arthur's father, John Hirst, made a return trip to Saddleworth. His visit was reported in the local press.¹

TRIP AT 79 HASN'T CHANGED MUCH IN 36 YEARS

"I find the old village much the same as when I left it, but most of my old friends are now no more," says 79 year-old Mr. John Hirst, who is on holiday in his native Greenfield after 36 years in New Zealand.

"If there is any change, it is for the better," he added.

'He is staying until his return next September with his niece Mrs Oswald Platt, Shaw Hall Bank Road, and will celebrate his eightieth birthday in June there, but he would not like to think he was not going back to New Zealand.

"Over there," he told me, "is my house, Grenfild, and on the same section, which is owned by me, live my two sons and daughters, seven grandchildren and one great-grandson. So there is my home."

He is hearty and breezy of manner and has the energy of many a man twenty years his junior. During his stay here he will try and renew acquaintance with any who knew him in those far off days when he was an ardent co-operator and a member of the Spiritualist Church in Uppermill.

For 34 years before he emigrated he worked at Frenches Mill, Greenfield, in the cotton industry, under the late Captain G.A. Schofield, and when he left for New Zealand with his wife, two sons and daughter, he had no job to go to but soon found one on a farm. Later he set up as a newsagent and had a flourishing business, retiring about eight years ago.

Only Butter Rationed

The older generation of Greenfield will remember his brother Harold, who was a well-known member of Boarshurst Band and a prominent conductor in his time.

⁵ This article has not been identified, but must date from early 1949 (Ed).

ARTHUR HIRST'S DIARY

Mr Hirst recalled the presentation to him when he left Greenfield of a watch by the local co-operators and said he had carried it with him all those years but, when coming through the tropic zone of the Panama, the heat caused the spring to break. "So now" he added with a twinkle in his eyes, "I shall ask the Greenfield Co-operative Society if they can get it repaired for me."

"Prices in New Zealand are much the same as over here," he says. "The only thing now rationed is butter. Meat is plentiful and he mentioned casually how his son came home on a Tuesday with a quarter of a lamb on his shoulder."

As he was allowed to bring 50lb of food home with him he has not yet been affected by rationing here, and is not likely to be, seeing that other food is being sent to him from New Zealand. He left, for instance, 10lb. of honey to be posted to him.

Cigarettes don't trouble him because he has never smoked. "On the way over the captain offered me a cigarette, but I told him it was a bit too late in life for me to start smoking."

Gathering of the clans

"Two years ago in his house, Grenfild, there was a gathering of Saddleworth men which included Seth Schofield, who emigrated many years ago from Delph, George Dransfield, who went from Uppermill and who at one time worked at Frenches Mill with Mr. Hirst, and Amos Dobson from Delph, who is himself on holiday in this country at present. "We had a real chin-wag about old days in Saddleworth," said Mr. Hirst.

He recommends eligible and efficient men to emigrate to South Island, New Zealand. In Kaiapoi he does not know of a family that is waiting for a house, but things are not so good in North Island.

Glancing at the mist-covered hills of Saddleworth he told of the glorious atmosphere of New Zealand where the hills seventy miles from his home looked as clear as did Alderman from Chew Valley.

Mrs. Hirst, who before her marriage was Miss Hetty Bennett, of Greenfield, died twelve months ago.

John was a Justice of the Peace and served for a time on the Kaiapoi Borough Council. He died at his residence, 36 Ohoka Road, Kaiapoi on 20th August 1952, his wife, Hettie having pre-deceased him, dying on 19th November 1947.

John's presentation pocket watch, a treasured heirloom, is still in the possession of the family. It is inscribed 'Greenfield Cooperative Society Ltd. Presented to Mr John Hirst As a token of esteem By his colleagues on leaving for New Zealand September 8th 1913'. The family also have an oil painting by John of the Greenfield valley painted in 1944 and presented to his son, Arthur.

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