

The area between Hawick and Carlisle is even today thinly populated. When the railway was built it was even more so. One of the biggest challenges facing the navvies was the excavation of Whitrope Tunnel. At 1208 yards, this tunnel required the removal of millions of gallons of water and the installation of a complicated drainage system to cope with it afterwards. At some 1006 ft above sea level, the nearby Whitrope Summit provided plenty of operational challenges for decades to come.

Whilst today we can appreciate the scenic splendour of the area, it was often a bleak and lonely place. Sheep are the main inhabitants and the remoteness is best summed up in a small railway community of Riccarton Junction, which disappeared with the railway. It had no road access (although the Forestry Commission eventually built a track to the remains of it) and everything had to be brought in and out by train. It became the junction station for the Border Counties line to Hexham which opened on the same day as the main line to Carlisle on 1st July 1862.



Attempts are being made to preserve the remote station at Riccarton Junction

The village of Newcastleton provided the only main area of population between Hawick and Carlisle. It was by no means big and even today it only has a population of 800.

Early plans had envisaged the railway passing through the town of Langholm. The Border Union did not and as a result a branch line was constructed from the main line at Riddings Junction to the town itself.

Passing through Longtown, the North British Railway had to find a way of joining up with the unfriendly Caledonian Railway to access Carlisle. By acquiring running rights over the existing Port Carlisle & Silloth Railway and subsequently taking it over, it crossed the Caledonian main line and made its own way into Carlisle albeit over a longer and slower route into the city. The North British had at last reached its goal and it did so by only having to rely on the Caledonian for the last few hundred yards into Citadel station.

The arrival of the Midland Railway into Carlisle by the equally torturous yet very scenic Settle & Carlisle route in 1876 was to provide the North British with its own business partner for Anglo-Scottish traffic. Indeed on the night of 5th January 1969 when the last southbound train traversed the route before closure, London St. Pancras was to be its final destination.



NEWS

No. 144

SPRING 2007



Milton Keynes Model Railway Society is associated with:
The Chiltern Model Railway Association, The Model Railway Club, The World War
11 Study Group
Working within The Bletchley Park Museum

MILTON KEYNES MODEL RAILWAY SOCIETY FOUNDED 1969

The need for commitment and communication

Firstly I apologise for the delay in getting this issue of the quarterly newsletter to you. When I changed jobs early last year, I lost the train travelling time which allowed me to produce newsletters etc. on the laptop. Now that I drive for 75 minutes in each direction, I no longer have that time. If anyone would like to volunteer to take over the writing of the newsletter, I would be more than happy. Providing the words are handed over on a CD, then making it look pretty is the easy part and that can still be undertaken as it is now, along with the printing.

We are currently struggling to fulfil our roster needs for weekends. I appreciate that we all have plenty of pressure for our time but at the moment we are in danger of the roster collapsing. A problem arose recently where we had no cover on a Saturday and we were not open. A member arriving on the Sunday was given an ear bashing and the following Tuesday that was relayed to a club officer. It was not his fault but nonetheless, we as club officers (and this one in particular) often gets if both barrels!

No doubt the lack of opening was down to a very good reason. I had an occasion ten years ago to ring John Hatton to cover my Sunday duty as my mother had died during the night. John of course dropped his own plans for that day and stood in for me. I am in no doubt in those circumstances many would have done the same. Cars break down, we get ill, family emergencies do arise and need to be dealt with. Sometimes in the everyday rush of life, we can and do forget to do something, I know I do.

As I explained following the AGM, we are under the spotlight. Any failings on our behalf, we simply give others a stick to beat us

with. For the time being the roster is in my hands – and I hope that someone can be persuaded to take it on and manage it. My first task, however, will be to fill in some gaps and I am asking every member to assist me with doing that. Secondly we are going to have an emergency number that members can contact when those emergencies arise and we cannot cover our duty. For the moment that will have to be mine – **01908 376750.**

Please help us to fill the gaps. Some members do a lot of extra turns and we are grateful to everyone who turns up to assist even when not rostered. Some weeks we can have a good turn out and other weeks we are operating on an almost empty tank – indeed we are running on fumes at times.

I am sure that I can rely on the membership to help us through the transition.

Dennis Lovett
Chairman



Club Notice Board

2007 Woughton Swapmeets

The next Swapmeet will take place between 1100 – 1500 at Woughton Campus on:

**2nd September
16th December**

Admission is £1 Adults, 80p concessions, children under 18 free

RAILWAY CORRESPONDENCE & TRAVEL SOCIETY

The RCTS meets on the first Thursday of the month at the C.I.U. Working Mens Club, London Road, Stony Stratford at 1930 hours. Our long-standing friend

Border Union Railway (Hawick – Carlisle)

The North British Railway was not unsurprisingly content to terminate at Hawick and saw the ultimate prize as Carlisle with its various onward routes. As early as 1845 the company had surveyed a route south of Hawick to Carlisle via Langholm. Although the scheme was put before Parliament the following year, the Caledonian Railway objected strongly and won the day, keeping its rivals out of the Border city. This scheme was originally promoted as the Hawick & Carlisle Junction Railway.

Aware of the North British threat the Caledonian Railway submitted its own scheme in a bid to block the North British. The scheme was conceived as a single track line passing through Langholm the only major centre of population south of Hawick and terminating in Hawick, presumably on the south side of the River Teviot. It like the earlier North British proposals came to nothing.

The North British Railway again came back with its own scheme. Plans were already being pursued for a line from Hexham into the Scottish Borders which was promoted as the Border Counties Line and the North British took the opportunity to link it to the campaign for the Hawick – Carlisle line. In 1858, the campaign again reached Parliament with the North British Railway fully supported by the Border towns and a rival scheme put forward by the Caledonian Railway as a spoiling tactic to keep the North British out of the Border City. Although their were fears that Parliament would approve the Caledonian Railway proposals they eventually backed the North British scheme, which by now was known as the Border Union Railway. The Border Union received the Royal Assent in July 1859.

Extension of the line from Hawick to Carlisle began with the cutting of the first sod on 7th September 1859. The route south of Hawick had to traverse some of the most difficult terrain imaginable. It required great engineering skill to build the line which crossed the Cheviot Hills. In Hawick, a new station was necessary and the platforms extended on a viaduct across the River Teviot.



A train passes through Hawick. The original station can be seen to the right. Also seen is the loco depot

February 1849. The terminus at Hawick was reached later that year with the line opening throughout on 1 November of that year. The original terminus station was later replaced by a new through station whose platforms extended across the River Teviot at the south end. The original station later served as a goods facility and continued in use until the closure of the line in 1969.

Carlisle – The Border City

As early as 1835, the Carlisle Journal had provided editorial support for a line to serve Carlisle and into Scotland. There were doubts that Anglo-Scottish traffic could not support two routes and Carlisle would initially loose out to Berwick-upon-Tweed with the building of the East Coast line.

North of Carlisle the geographical constraints offered only three options and all three would eventually see railways built.

In 1836 Joseph Locke recommended that a line be built from Lancaster to Carlisle and from there to Glasgow following the route via Dumfries. George Stephenson was also approached in the same year to find a route also from Lancaster to Carlisle. However, before any scheme progressed, the Parliamentary Commissioners kicked it all into touch and ruled in favour of one route only between England and Scotland and the East Coast scheme through Berwick-upon-Tweed became the favoured option.

Despite this ruling, schemes to reach Carlisle and ultimately Scotland continued to be discussed and planned. George Larner proposed a route between Lancaster and Carlisle that differed from the other aborted schemes. This followed the route of today's West Coast Main Line. So confident were the proposers that they formed a company in 1843 to take it forward. An Act of Parliament was passed in June 1844. On the 17th December 1846, passenger services to Carlisle began and railway lines linked it directly to London for the first time.

In March 1844, support was growing for building a line north of Carlisle and on to Glasgow, with a connecting line from Carstairs to Edinburgh providing additional traffic. This was progressed as the Caledonian Railway. An Act of Parliament was duly granted in July 1845 with trains operating north of Carlisle to Beattock on 10th September 1848.

Carlisle by now was rapidly establishing itself as a major railway centre and other routes in and out of the city would soon follow. With the Borders now connected to the Scottish capital it was inevitable that attention would be given to establishing a route south of Hawick and to Carlisle.



Carlisle Citadel station today.

Bob Ballard is the Chairman.

Forthcoming events are;

6th September

"West Country in the 60`s" - slide show by the well known photographer and Society Member Peter Gray. This presentation should show the transition from steam to diesel power in this period plus the many closures which took place in this decade.

4th October

"Signalling UK & Beyond" - presentation by Society member John Foreman who is the Humberside Branch Chairman and has studied signalling for many years including working many of the Boxes he has known.

Note change of speaker; previously advertised for March

1st November

" My Life & Times on the Railway" - illustrated talk by former top BR Freight Manager Julian Worth who has a wealth of stories to share with us.

6th December

Christmas Evening - festive fare along with members presentations.

Further details from Bob Ballard on 01908 562195

Club Sweatshirts and Polo Shirts

Ken Ranns will be happy to take your orders for club sweatshirts and polo shirts.

HMRS

Meetings of the local HMRS group are held at Bletchley Park.

Further details can be obtained from Eric Bowman our Treasurer. MKMRS members can attend.

2007 MKMRS Exhibition

Congratulations to all those who took part in the successful exhibition held at Wolverton on Saturday 24th February.

The good news is that for 2008 we shall be moving back to Bletchley to the new College facilities in Sherwood Drive opposite the Police, Fire and railway stations.

Please start planning and building your layouts for 2009. Gareth Hommersley will be delighted to hear from you.

Meanwhile please put the dates in your diary.

BLETCHLEY PARK ROSTER

As already outlined in the editorial, a roster with far too many gaps to be filled is being distributed with this magazine.

Please contribute when and where you can.

An updated roster will be distributed with the Summer MKMRS news.



WAVERLEY ROUTE REVIVAL

PART 2—TOWARDS THE MILLS

Dennis Lovett takes a look at a piece of railway he has known since he was 6 weeks old!

Marquis of Lothian's Waggonway

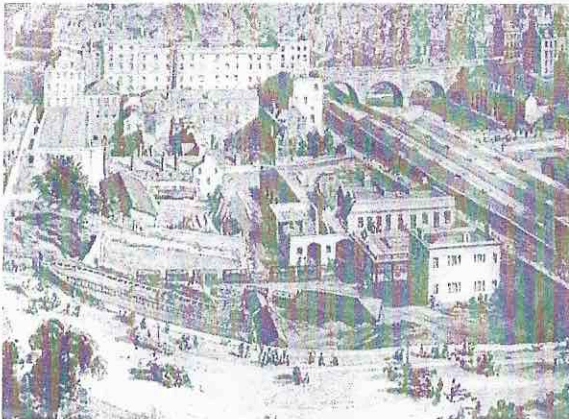
The Marquis of Lothian's mining interests lay to the south of the terminus at Dalhousie. He decided that in order to gain the full potential of the railway he needed to fund and build an extension from the terminus at Dalhousie on the north bank of the River South Esk to his own pits at Arniston, near Gorebridge (opened 1832). The crossing of the River South Esk required the building of a major timber bridge supported by stone piers. The Marquis in return for the high cost of building across the South Esk was granted free passage for his coal over the North Esk viaduct. The viaduct now known as Newtongrange was subsequently rebuilt.

The Duke of Buccleuch also built a viaduct across the South Esk with the construction of a wagonway to his own pits. This was an extension of the Dalkeith branch (opened 1838) which left the main line at Glenesk, just south of the North Esk viaduct.

The section of the Marquis of Lothian's line between Dalhousie and Gorebridge became part of the Waverley route with the building of the Edinburgh & Hawick Railway.

Edinburgh stations

During the early part of the 18th Century the area now occupied by the railway, to the north of the castle, and Princes Street gardens had prior to draining been occupied by the Nor Loch. A decision to drain the loch, which because of overcrowding in the old town had become little more than a stinking cess pool, was taken in 1759. This was gradually infilled and by 1820 created a link between the old town around the castle and the new town then being developed to the north of what is now Princes Street.



North Bridge (now Waverley) station can be seen dominating this old print of Edinburgh.

Running across the bottom of the print is the old Canal Street station, long since buried under Victorian Edinburgh.

The opening of the North British line from Berwick-upon-Tweed to Edinburgh on 18 June 1846 saw the line terminate at North Bridge. The extension of the Edinburgh & Glasgow Railway (which was absorbed by the North British in August 1845) eastwards from its original terminus at Haymarket (opened February 1842) was also completed in the same year to a station alongside the North British station. The original Haymarket terminus was during this time on the western edge of Edinburgh and was well away from the old town in the shadow of the castle. The Edinburgh, Leith & Newhaven Railway (later Edinburgh, Leith & Grantown) opened a station at Scotland Street in the new town during August 1842. This was extended to Canal Street alongside the existing stations and part of it still remains today, opposite platform 19 at what is now Edinburgh Waverley.

Although technically on the same site, there were three stations, not one. The North British later took on the task of improving the situation by extending the station between 1869 and 1873. Reconstruction of all the facilities on the site between 1892 and 1900 resulted in the creation of the Edinburgh Waverley that we know today, complete with the famous North British Hotel opened in 1902.

November 1847 saw the closure of St. Leonards and Dalkeith line services transferred to North Bridge. For a time North Bridge was known as General station but was renamed Waverley around 1854 standing in the shadow of Scott's 200ft high monument in Princes Street gardens (opened in August 1846).

St. Leonards became a goods station but was briefly reopened to passenger traffic for local services to Dalkeith and Leith between 1 June and 30 September 1860. It was considered to be too far away and the experiment ended, St. Leonards reverting to a goods station. This role continued until August 1968 when it was closed. The station located between Holyrood Park and Parkside Street, immediately to the west of Park Road has now disappeared under development but part of the trackbed and the tunnel survive as a footpath and cycle way.

Edinburgh & Hawick Railway

The Edinburgh & Hawick Railway was planned as a single track railway to the inherited 4' 6" Scottish gauge and gained Parliamentary approval in 1845. It utilised the earlier Marquis of Lothian's Waggonway and the Edinburgh & Dalkeith Railway. In the same year, the North British Railway purchased the company before work had begun on the extension south of Dalkeith. A year later the new owners found it necessary to convert the existing network to Standard gauge (4' 8.5") and to provide a second track.

The new standard gauge route opened in sections. The first to Dalhousie opened on 21 June 1847 and to Gorebridge on 14th July in the same year.

The route south of Gorebridge involved some heavy engineering work in bleak and often gruelling conditions. Even today, when winters are much kinder, it is not unknown for the road over Falahill to be closed due to snow blocking the route through.

Falahill was the highest point on the Edinburgh & Hawick line at 880 ft above sea level.

From Falahill to Galashiels the line followed Gala Water which it crossed some 15 times whilst descending the narrow valley. Today the trackbed, Gala Water and the A7 trunk road all follow the same valley contours in very close proximity to each other.

The line reached Bowland some 3 miles north of Galashiels on 4 May 1848. Galashiels an industrial town had been involved in the woollen industry since the first mills were recorded in 1593. The textile industry has played a dominant role in the history of many Border towns and still does today in some of them. Like most manufacturing industries, it has suffered from foreign competition in the last 40 years and is no longer dominated in the manner it once did.

The line continued from Galashiels through Melrose to reach Newtown (later St. Boswells) on 20