

THE GREAT CENTRAL RAILWAY

EARLY DEVELOPMENTS

- 1836 A) **The Sheffield, Ashton under Lyne and Manchester Railway** was launched at meetings held in Sheffield and Manchester on the 4th and 5th January.
- B) The prospectus for the Share issue was published in May.
- C) The reports of the surveying engineers were presented to a meeting of the provisional committee which was held at the Rose and Crown, Penistone on 14th October.
- 1837 A) The Bill incorporating the **S.A.M.R.** was passed through Parliament and received the Royal Assent on 5th May.
- B) The first general meeting of Shareholders was held at the Cutlers Hall, Sheffield on 23rd October.
- C) Lord Wharncliffe of Wortley was confirmed as Chairman of the Company at the first formal meeting of Directors held at Penistone on 3rd November.
- 1838 On 1st October, Lord Wharncliffe officially started the construction work by breaking the ground at a ceremony held at Woodhead.
- 1839 The construction of Woodhead Tunnel commenced.
- 1841 On 17th November the first section was opened, this being the 8.1/4 mile stretch from Manchester to Godley.
- 1842 The railway was extended to Dinting with a commencement of services on 24th December.
- 1844 The Dinting to Woodhead section opened on 8th August thus completing the western main line section from Manchester.
- 1845 A) On 9th June, the Dinting to Glossop branch was opened.
- B) On 14th July the Sheffield (Bridgehouses) to Dunford Bridge Section opened together with all the local stations including Thurgoland and Oxspring. Passengers were transferred between Dunford Bridge and Woodhead by coach and horses.
- C) With the completion of the Woodhead Tunnel, the first through train departed from Sheffield on 22nd December at 10.05 am and arrived at Manchester at 12.15 pm. This was an extended time due to the ceremonies involved en-route.

- 1847 A) On 1st July the **S.A.M.R.** merged with the **Sheffield and Lincolnshire Junction Railway**, the **Great Grimsby and Sheffield Railway** and the **Grimsby Docks Company** to form the **Manchester, Sheffield and Lincolnshire Railway**.
- B) Oxspring and Thurgoland Stations closed on 30th October due to lack of business.
- 1849 A) With the Woodhead Tunnel having been designed for single track working, the construction of a second bore commenced.
- B) A railway network linking Manchester with Grimsby and Hull was completed.
- 1850 On 1st July the Penistone to Huddersfield line was opened, this line was originally launched as the **Huddersfield and Sheffield Junction Railway**. Penistone now had two stations which were a few hundred yards apart.
- 1851 A) Through carriages were introduced between Sheffield Bridgehouses and London Euston Square in July. These carriages were routed via Beighton and Eckington to the Midland and London and North Western systems. (By 1856 the journey time had been reduced to five hours).
- B) Sheffield Victoria Station opened on 15th September thereby replacing Bridgehouses as the main terminal. Hammer dressed stone from Greenmoor was used in the construction.
- 1852 The second bore of the Woodhead Tunnel was opened on 2nd February.
- 1865 Deepcar Station was completely rebuilt.
- 1874 On 1st February the MSLR Station in Penistone closed and all business was transferred to the second station which had opened in 1850 at the Huddersfield Junction.
- 1888 Wortley Station was completely rebuilt and a footbridge was added.
- 1897 On 1st August, the M.S. & L. changed its name to the **Great Central Railway** in anticipation of the opening of its own line into London.
- 1899 Through services to London were started on 15th March by the GCR on its own lines, Marylebone being the terminal. The inner London section is routed via tunnels under the Lords cricket Ground which were constructed between cricket seasons when the ground was dug up. The contractors took possession of the ground on 31st August 1896 and handed it back on 8th May 1897.

- 1907 1st January: The Lancashire, Derbyshire and East Coast Railway was absorbed by the G.C.R.
- 1921 The GCR became a partner with other railway companies in operating the Aberdeen-Penzance Service which covered a distance of 793 miles in 22 hours with stops at Edinburgh Newcastle, York, Sheffield, Leicester, Banbury, Oxford, Swindon, Exeter and Plymouth.
- 1922 The GCR placed a stores contract order for 8000 tons of 95 lb/yard steel rails (equivalent to 100 miles) at £7.13.6d per ton.
This order was shared between three firms viz. Steel Peech and Tozer, Cammell Laird and Samuel Fox & Co Ltd.
Thirty years previously, the same three firms had sold to the M.S. & L. 86 lb/yard steel rails at £4.10.0d. per ton (Dow Vol. III P. 345) Dow Vol II P. 49.
- 1922 31st December.
The last day of operations under the guise of The Great Central Railway.
- 1923 1st January under the Railway Grouping Act, the private railways were merged into four groups.
- | | | |
|--------------------------------------|---|----------|
| London, Midland and Scottish Railway | - | L.M.S. |
| Great Western Railway | - | G.W.R. |
| Southern Railway | - | S.R. |
| London and North Eastern Railway | - | L.N.E.R. |

The GCR became a constituent of the L.N.E.R.