



NUMBER 2 WINTER 1995

50P [FREE TO MEMBERS]

A MOVABLE FEAST?

It's about this time of the year that I begin to feel that I have become a time-traveller, and that I now occupy a parallel



The Lord of Misrule

universe. I check, and keep checking the calendar - December 25th - Christmas Day. That's reassuring, Christmas was always at the end of December in the world that I came from. There are differences between here and there, though.

There the build-up to the Great Day seemed to start much later. We respectably got Bonfire Night out of the way before even thinking about Christmas shopping. In this universe Christmas seems to last from the end of September onwards, indeed I seem to have seen Christmas cards on display in August.

Then there was the great event of Father Christmas arriving at all the big stores and taking up residence in his grotto, each store trying to out-do its rivals in the attractions that preceded the ordeal of sitting on the knee of the 'Great Man' and trying to remember a single thing that you might possibly want for Christmas, the parents avidly listening for clues. I wonder, like me, how many kids said any old thing in the heat of the moment, just to get away from him, and lived to regret it on Christmas morning, when the parents admonished, *"But you told Father Christmas you wanted new blue socks!"*

This year, all 'planet Asda' can muster is a cardboard box the size of a very small garden shed, painted, not at all convincingly, to look like a log cabin, with a sign on the door that says 'Due to hygiene regulations the reindeer have had to be left at the North Pole', and containing a bored pensioner barely trying to live up to the reputation of a jolly St. Nicholas, dispensing plastic tat to ungrateful children.

The 'Temple of Mammon Inc. (Meadowhall)' goes overboard with its Grotto, there are animated Disney characters and elfettes with legs that seem to go on forever, but it's too slick and well presented. In the old days, the Grotto at the B&C was naff, but in the days of less sophistication all the kids were taken in by it and it still made

Christmas Day something special, but Meadowhall raises expectations to a level that Mum and Dad can't hope to match, and how can St. Nicholas survive in a world of virtual reality?

If Christmas is allegedly for children then what ever happened to the toy shop? Sheffield had a toy store of national repute in Redgates, with knowledgeable staff, a fantastic range of products, and a belief in what they were selling. These days Sheffield doesn't have a toy shop worthy of the name, Toys 'Я Us (another example of how American is replacing English)



is crammed from floor to ceiling with goodies, but it's like a supermarket, no one is there to demonstrate or sell you anything - it's hard enough finding someone to take your money at the checkout, and I've never seen a sign in there that says 'Goods Laid Away For Christmas'.

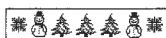
We all went to Redgates to 'see

what we might want Father Christmas to bring us' and at the crucial moment we would be whisked away to look at something else, while the other parent did the transaction and the parcel, wrapped in brown paper and secured with real, hairy, sisal string would be secreted away in the depths of the store to be collected when more convenient, i.e. when the kids weren't around!

Really though this kind of change and transition must have happened many times through the ages. Did people in the industrial revolution wish for times past when the Yule Log was still burned in the hearth and the Lord of Misrule still held sway over the celebrations? Can you imagine decrying this new-fangled German idea of decorating a fir tree with baubles and tinsel - what sort of way to celebrate Christmas is that?

If we unwrap the modern Christmas, the message that underlines the festival is still there at its heart, and families are still brought together at what is a very special time, and I still hang up my stocking, hoping to get an orange, an apple and a bright new penny.

Anon.



MANCHESTER SHEFFIELD & LINCOLNSHIRE

Part One

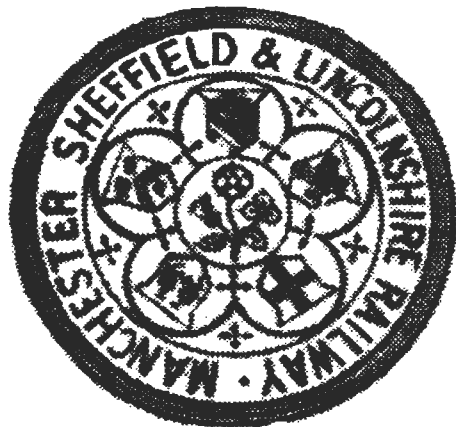
Written to commemorate that one hundred and fifty years ago on December 22nd 1845, the railway line between Sheffield and Manchester was finally completed and opened to through traffic. The line proved difficult to construct and had taken 8 years, with a great loss of life among the 'navvies', but it was the first main line into Sheffield.

The railway boom of the late 1830's had almost bypassed Sheffield whose position on the

railway map was unenviable. The geography of the area, combined with the then primitive state of locomotives, meant that the only railway route out of the town was a branch line along the relatively flat, Don valley to Rotherham.

The town needed rail links to the south via the Sheaf valley and at the time almost more importantly, links to Manchester and Liverpool in the west. The major barrier to the latter was the Pennine chain with its high watershed, some 1300 feet at its lowest point.

At this time there was increasing competition in the American market for edged tools and cutlery and Sheffield was keen to capitalise on this



trade, but was thwarted by the lack of transport links to the west coast ports. The 90 mile canal journey via Huddersfield frequently took 8 days.

Various schemes to link Sheffield and Manchester by rail, and in one case a combination of rail and water, came and went. One scheme, the Sheffield and Manchester, nearly succeeded, despite the overwhelming engineering obstacles that needed to be overcome in its choice of route via the Hope Valley and Rushup Edge. This particular scheme quietly faded away in 1833.

Remarkable industrial expansion was taking place in Lancashire and all the indications were that a ready market existed there for

Yorkshire coal.

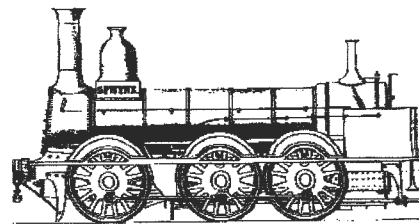
In 1836 surveys undertaken by Charles Vignoles resulted in the founding of the Sheffield Ashton under Lyne & Manchester Railway (SA&M). Leaving Sheffield, it was to follow a north westerly route, climbing the Don valley, piercing the Pennines at their shortest crossing point, between Dunford Bridge and Woodhead via a 3 mile long tunnel, and follow the Etherow valley down towards Manchester.

Vignoles resigned in 1839 and was replaced by Joseph Locke of Barnsley. By 1841 economic depression was creating financial difficulties and the project was nearly abandoned, the pretext being that an alternative route existed, which would have resulted in passengers from Sheffield travelling via Normanton and Huddersfield to Manchester.

When money was available, work was carried on day and night and by 1842 the labour force had grown to over 1000 men, large numbers of whom lived in very primitive conditions, some even sleeping in the open, the company having refused to provide them with tents.

By 1844, the line had reached Woodhead at the western end of the tunnel and in July 1845 the line was inspected by Major General C. W. Pashley on behalf of the Board of Trade.

I proceeded...to inspect the extension of their line...by a

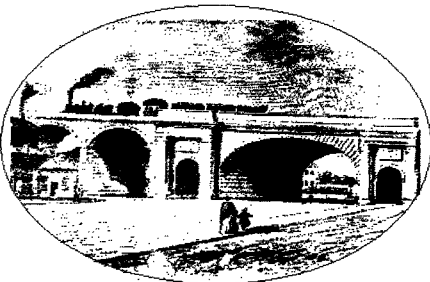


SA&M 0-6-0 Sphynx

special engine provided for the purpose with a train attached to it of empty carriages of all the classes proposed to be used, viz., First class, Second class, and

two sorts of Third class carriages, the

Parliamentary covered ones and open ones, both of which are good of their kind...the arrangements for enabling me to inspect this portion of the Sheffield and Manchester Railway were by no means satisfactory...the down line of rails from Sheffield was obstructed, first by a numerous train of wagons conveying rubbish or spoil from the entrance of the principal tunnel on this portion, and the tunnel itself was impassable...having been blocked up by a mass of rubbish covering the rails to a height of 5 or 6 feet...the wagons and rubbish were removed causing a delay of nearly two hours. Fortunately there just remained daylight enough to enable me to complete the inspection...we did not get back to Sheffield till ten o'clock at night...Part of the line is rather rough, but upon the whole I saw no reason why the Directors should not be permitted to open their line this day as proposed...Until the summit tunnel between Dunford Bridge and Woodhead shall be completed...it will be necessary to communicate between those two stations, which are about three miles apart by omnibuses meeting all the trains...
July 14th 1845.



Thus the line opened from Dunford at the eastern end of the tunnel, to a temporary terminus at Bridgehouses, Sheffield in July 1845. Coaches plied over moorland roads between Woodhead and Dunford until the tunnel was completed in December 1845. Described in the *Sheffield Iris* as "... a wondrous triumph of art over nature."

Having cost £200,000, over three times the original

estimate, it was a single line bore built on a gradient which climbed from Woodhead to the summit at the Dunford end. Indeed the whole of the line resembled a switchback, there being only two short sections of level track on the whole of the route between Sheffield and Manchester.

The tunnel had been in use for less than a year when it was realised that the single bore was fast becoming a major bottleneck to traffic. The contract for a new tunnel, to be built alongside the old was let in February 1847 and this time more attention was paid to the welfare of the navvies, even to the extent of providing a school for their children at Woodhead.

In May 1849, work came to a complete standstill, due to a serious outbreak of cholera. Four days after the onset of the disease, only 100 men out of 750 remained on the workings, many having fled in panic when a supply of extra coffins was brought in to cope with the dead, who eventually totalled 28. The victims were buried in unmarked graves at the little chapel in Crowden and in a communal plot in Tintwistle churchyard

The new Woodhead tunnel was completed for use in February 1852.

To the east of Sheffield there had been a number of unsuccessful schemes for links to the east coast. Things came to a head in 1845 when the Great Grimsby & Sheffield Junction Railway (GG&SJ) was founded. This ran from Gainsborough to the coast and was planned to connect to the Sheffield & Lincolnshire Junction Railway (S&LJ) founded in 1846, and whose line was to run from Sheffield to Gainsborough.

The SA&M, S&LJ and GG&SJ agreed to amalgamate to form the Manchester Sheffield & Lincolnshire Railway in January 1847, thus forming a continuous railway route from Manchester

to the east coast.

By 1849 all the major works had been completed and the main line of the MS&L was opened throughout.

In Sheffield, Bridgehouses passenger station was short lived being relegated to goods only when Victoria opened in 1851.

The *Sheffield & Rotherham Independent* noted that Victoria station was "...destitute of ornament." but other sources described it as "...this costly station covered with a light glass roof like that of the crystal palace."

In 1857 the Great Northern Railway (GN) introduced its 'Manchester Flyers', running from London Kings Cross to Manchester London Road in 5hrs 20mins, changing to MS&L locomotives at Sheffield. The GN had secured powers to run to Sheffield in 1850 but was never a welcome guest until the late 1850's. This gave Sheffield a more direct service to the capital than that provided by the rival Midland Railway.

To be continued
Mike Spick



THE VAUGHTONS OF VAUGHTON HILL

There's a famous village called Deepcar,
Abaht eight miles from Sheffield - or
more-

Where a well known family called
Vaughton lived
Rahnd abaht eighteen fifty four

James Vaughton were t' landlord o't
Low Drop -

T' Travellers Rest, by right
E worked as a file-cutter in t' day-time
And served in t' pub at night

E'd inherited t' pub from 'is father,
An all t' row o' houses an all:
A teetotalter - 'e then started boozin' -
And that brought abaht 'is downfall.

On one side o't' ouses were t' Smithy;
Wi' t' Saddlers at t' bottom o't' ill.

There were t' Toll bar for t' Langsett
Turnpike,
And, across t' rooad at t' bottom t' Flour
Mill.

There warn't much else i' Deepcar -
A station across t' River Don,
Two more pubs, t' Oak and t' Miller,
And farms - and Stocksbridge further on.

Education were at a small school
Up in t' hive yard run by a dame;
Or, they 'ad to walk to t' pay school
All t' way up More Hall Lane.

There were nowt in't way on amusement:
They 'ad to provide their own fun:
But t' travelling shows came every so
often
When a bear danced to t' barrel organ.

Then t' Penny Gaff and t' Travelling
Circus
used to play to packed houses in t' Grove.
Yer could see three murders a night for a
penny,
Wi' blood running - bright red and
mauve!

In between times there were concerts

When owd James Vaughton played t'
bass;
Saddler Dyson were a virtuoso on t'
fiddle,
While Jim Woodcock pulled a long face.

But James Vaughton 'ad taken to t'
bottle:
'E couldn't meet t' brewery bill:
So 'e 'ad to let 'em 'ave t' Travellers Rest
And Move out of Vaughton Hill.

'E ended 'is days up at t' Stubbin,
Wheer 'is sons lived up on t' farm
And 'e allus sampled t' whisky
That they kept for t' sick cows in t' barn

It is said that when on 'is death bed,
A widower three times o'er,
'E said e'd like to get married ageean
If 'e could find a good number four

'E's buried up at Bolsterstooan,
Just across from t' church door,
In t' family grave wi' wives one, two
and three:
Go and see t' poetic inscription set o'er

I'm one of his living descendants;
A few more are scattered about

My Grandmother (Sarah Vaughton)
married Jim Firth,
But her brothers remained bachelors - so
t' name died out.

But Vaughton is still part o' Deepcar
It's still in t' middle o' t' place,
Called after t' feller who built all t' row,
Not after t' one who were a disgrace.

We all have our black sheep in t' family;
James Vaughton followed this rule:
'E'd 'ad but in 'is 'and
And couldn't look after it - the fool.

If there's a moral to this story,
(As there must be, when all's done and
said),
It's simply - "Don't leave all yer money to
t' men.
Let t' women 'ave it instead!"

Otwen Firth



**STOCKSBRIDGE & DISTRICT
HISTORY SOCIETY**



- CHAIRMAN -

BASIL SPOONER. ☎ 288 4456

- DEPUTY CHAIRMAN -

PHILLIP SCOTT. ☎ 288 2370

- SECRETARY -

BRENDA DUFFIELD ☎ 288 2349

- TREASURER -

MARY HEPWORTH ☎ 288 5295

MEETINGS ARE NORMALLY
HELD ON THE SECOND
THURSDAY OF EACH MONTH.
AT THE LIBRARY MANCHESTER
ROAD, STOCKSBRIDGE AT
7.00PM

**NEXT EDITION
MARCH 1996**

**PUBLICATION DEADLINE
THURSDAY 8TH FEBRUARY
ALL ARTICLES FOR
PUBLICATION SHOULD BE
CLEARLY MARKED 'HISTORY
NEWSLETTER' AND SENT TO:-
MIKE SPICK, % THE LIBRARY,
MANCHESTER ROAD,
STOCKSBRIDGE.**

**★ PROGRAMME 1996 ★
MEETINGS ARRANGED SO FAR**

JANUARY 11TH
TOM COOKE

BOLSTERSTONE MALE VOICE
CHOIR

FEBRUARY 8TH
A.G.M.
PLUS

HANDBELL RECITAL

MARCH 14TH
JOAN & ERIC FIRTH
LOCAL AUTHORESS & LOCAL
WOODTURNER

APRIL 11TH
ESCAFELD MEDIEVAL SOCIETY
COSTUME DEMONSTRATION

A VISIT TO THE CUTLERS
HALL IS BEING ARRANGED

- NEXT EDITION -

☆ OLD FASHIONED ☆
☆ PASTIMES ☆

DO YOU REMEMBER THESE
GAMES?

☆ MS & L ☆
PART TWO

☆ AGM REPORT ☆
HOW THE AGM AFFECTS YOU

