

BRANCH LINE SOCIETY

THE YORKSHIREMAN

RAIL TOUR

SUNDAY, 2nd JUNE, 1957.

Notes and descriptive itinerary prepared by G.C. Lewthwaite.

In these notes Left and Right apply at all times to passengers seated facing the engine.

Thanks are due to Miss E.A. Richardson's Typewriting Agency of Bradford for duplicating services and to the Archivist of the British Transport Commission for his help in supplying information which was not otherwise readily available.

Note: The Committee reserves the right to add or omit stops if considered advisable. In view of the special connections at Church Fenton and Ulleskelf, punctual timekeeping is essential.

I. YORK - PILMOOR

<u>Time</u>	<u>Distance</u>	
12.30	0 m. 0 ch.	York station opened 25th June, 1877. From York to Pilmoor the line was formerly that of the York, Newcastle and Berwick Railway (originally the Great North of England Railway) opened for passengers on 30th March, 1841. The Scarborough line leaves on the R. straight off the platform end and our route curves L. passing the loco-sheds on the L. It will be seen that they are being rebuilt in accordance with the Modernisation Plan. When we have passed the carriage sidings on the R. the direct goods lines join us on the L.
	1 - 47	Poppleton Jc. The Harrogate branch goes off on the L. Opened 11th March 1848 to Haypark Lane (Knaresborough). About $1\frac{1}{2}$ miles further on we cross the viaduct over the Ouse, built in 1838-40 from the designs of Messrs. J. & B. Green of Newcastle. It is 30 ft. above the river and 300 ft. long.
	5 - 42	Beningbrough (called Shipton until 1st May 1899). Many of the wayside stations north of York were rebuilt by the L.N.E.R. in the 30's with platforms on the slow (outer) lines, but since the withdrawal of the Pickering trains they have very little traffic.
	9 - 55	Tollerton. The famous Kilburn White Horse is visible from here on the R. but alas, it is not very white today. Near here on the L. there is (or was) one of the few windmills still worked by wind-power. One mile beyond the station we pass the half-way signs between London and Edinburgh.
12.49	11 - 15	Alne. Junction for Easingwold (length of branch 2 miles 37 ch.) The Easingwold Railway was opened on 27th July, 1891 and closed to passengers on 29th November, 1948. The line was busy during the second World War and the track was relaid during 1944 with second-hand L.N.E.R. materials for £7000. The original engine was a Hudswell Clarke 0-4-OT called 'Easingwold'. This was replaced in 1903 by No. 2 of the same name which was an 0-6-OT. When it needed boiler repairs in 1947 it was sold for scrap as the Company could not afford the cost. Locally it was called 'The Coffeepot'. Since then, J72's hired from B.R. have worked the goods traffic. The line owned a succession of coaches, the last of which hailed from the Great Central and has only disappeared from a siding in Easingwold station within the last six months. Traffic was at one time quite extensive; before 1914 there were 9 trains each way, with a late night extra from Alne SO. There were no signals but two level crossings with gate houses. Through booking was in force to 12 principal stations and it is interesting to note that in 1947 exactly one first-class passenger was carried. Was he a rail-fan?
2.00	16 - 09	Leave <u>Alne.</u>
	18 - 23	<u>Raskelf.</u>
	19 - 60	Bishophouse Jc. South curve at Pilmoor (34 ch.) giving direct access to the Pickering branch from the York direction. The down points have now been taken out and trains from York have to reverse at Pilmoor South. Trains to York run direct as before. Opened 9th October 1871. In
2.09		between the two curves may be seen traces of the old railway which formerly ran direct from the Boroughbridge line to the Gilling line.

2. 9 20 - 23 Pilmoor South Jc. Just beyond here is Pilmoor station, the junction for the branch to Knarborough via Boroughbridge, which emerges from a wood and runs to the back of the down platform. It was opened to Boroughbridge in 1848 and to Knarborough on 1st April 1875. It was closed to passengers on 25th September 1950 and the track broken between Brafferton and Pilmoor, sight-testing signals being erected later. The track at the Pilmoor station end is used for wagon storage. Near the South junction some cottages may be seen with G.N.E. inscriptions on them.

II. PILMOOR - KIRBYMOORSIDE

The line from Pilmoor to Driffield was opened on 19th May 1853 and for public traffic on 1st June of the same year, by the York, Newcastle and Berwick Railway, which amalgamated with other lines to form the North Eastern Railway on 31st July 1854. Trains ran from Thirsk to Malton via the north curve at Pilmoor from 1853 to 1901. Pickering trains ran to York via the south curve but some connections for Pickering from York were given via Malton. It is interesting to note that in 1878, one train from Driffield to Malton was mixed, the passenger accommodation being included to give connections from Hull. In the summer, through trains run from Glasgow to Scarborough via Pilmoor and Malton, gaining the Scarborough line by a double reversal. Trains to Filey Holiday Camp which could continue to Driffield, do not do this but are routed via York instead. From Pilmoor to Malton there are three or four goods and mineral trains each way daily.

- 20 - 54 The double track of the junction curves becomes single at Sunbeck box. On the left may be seen the Hambleton Hills and a closer view of the White Horse. The line is single to Malton, with crossing places at Coxwold and Gilling.
- 24 - 06 Husthwaite Gate
- 25 - 45 Coxwold. The birthplace of Laurence Sterne the novelist is on the right of the main street looking up. Newburgh Priory is seen on the R. and the remains of Byland Abbey on the L.
- 28 - 04 Ampleforth. The Roman Catholic College of that name lies on the R. between here and Gilling.
- 2.42 30 - 45 Gilling. Another crossing-place, this is the point where the Pickering and Malton branches divide, though they continue as two single lines to the point of divergence, over a mile to the east. The line here is laid with steel sleepers put in in 1955.
- 2.47 33 - 45 Nunnington. This station is reached by a decided change of direction, the train eventually running north-west before resuming its easterly direction at Holmsley. The gradient at Stonegrave, where we leave the Malton line is 1 in 91 up.
- 2.58 37 - 17 Helmsley. The station is on a sharp curve and is a passing place. The old castle may be seen on the L. The line from Gilling had been opened on the same day as Raskelf south curve, 9th October, 1871, and was extended to Kirbymoorside on 1st January 1874.
3. 3 39 - 69 Nawton. After this station we cross a 3-arch viaduct 50 ft. above the Hodge Beck at Kirkdale.
- 3.14 42 - 39 Kirbymoorside. This is the present end of the line, as the track to Sinnington and Pickering, opened on 1st April 1875, has been lifted since the withdrawal of passenger services. This renders impossible the scenic tours of the Coast lines which used to come this way from Leeds and other centres. They now travel via Rillington.
- 3.24 We now retrace our steps (or rather wheels) to Gilling.

III. GILLING - MALTON

- 3.48 54 - 33 Gilling. We continue eastwards along the Thirsk and Malton Railway to the next station at Hovingham Spa. Unless otherwise stated, all platforms to Driffield are on the right hand side and no stations are passing places, except by shunting. All stations, too, have roughly the same ground plan, usually one or two sidings and a coal stage.
4. 0 58 - 00
- 59 - 65 Slingsby.
- 61 - 38 Barton-le-Street.
- 63 - 13 Amotherby.
- 4.28 The train crosses the York-Scarborough line and the river Derwent by a viaduct and reaches Malton (Scarborough Road Jc.). A connection from Malton station trails in on the R. and all trains to Gilling had to reverse. They were withdrawn on 1st January, 1931.
- 4.30 66 - 54

IV. MALTON - DRIFFIELD

<u>Time</u>	<u>Distance</u>	
		Passenger services were withdrawn on 3rd June 1950 and the line sees only a goods train three days a week. In 1953, however, the stations were opened for two passenger trains a day for a week or so owing to the roads being snow-blocked.
	69 - 31	<u>Settrington</u> Most stations to Driffield contain two connected platforms of differing heights, the lower being the originals erected by the Malton and Driffield Railway and the others built by the N.E.R. about sixty years ago.
	70 - 52	<u>North Grimston.</u> The two halves of the platform are here separated by a public road. On the older platform, the building is now the station-master's house. He is in charge of the stations Settrington to Burdale inclusive. The station approach on the L. is through a magnificent avenue of lime trees. On the wall of the booking office, which is now the stationmaster's office, are twelve first-class certificates in the best-kept stations competition, while numerous second-class certificates are also held.
	72 - 12	<u>Wharram.</u> This station has only the short platform on L. but boasts a water tower and column, as the gradient to Burdale tunnel is now becoming steep, rising at 1 in 71-92. The quarry on the L. beyond the station is still working, but that on the Burdale side of the tunnel ceased work in 1955 and its siding was lifted. The tunnel is 1734 yards long and is lined throughout with Malton and Driffield Railway bricks. Students of antiquarian matters will know that near here is the site of the "lost" village of Wharram Percy.
	74 - 67	<u>Burdale.</u> The remotely-situated station is unstaffed, the station buildings being unoccupied except at train times. Only two houses on the L. are visible from the station.
4.55 5. 2	77 - 30	<u>Sledmere & Fimber.</u> This station is picturesquely situated on a sharp curve. Just beyond is the only signal-box on the line, called Fimber Road. (All the stations have merely ground frames).
	79 - 22	<u>Wetwang.</u> We have now left the Wolds and run through a broad plain to Driffield.
	82 - 58	<u>Garton.</u>
	85 - 30	<u>Driffield West Jc.</u> We join the Selby line which we shall shortly traverse.
	85 - 58	<u>Driffield East Jc.</u> The Beverley and Hull line joins us on the R. It was opened from Hull to Bridlington on 6th October 1846.
5.27	85 - 63	<u>Driffield (reverse)</u>

V. DRIFFIELD - SELBY

5.40		Driffield - Market Weighton opened 1890 and worked by N.E.R. from the outset, though not formally amalgamated until 1913.
	88 - 58	<u>Southburn.</u>
	91 - 21	<u>Bainton.</u>
	92 - 68	<u>Middleton-on-the-Wolds.</u>
	95 - 75	<u>Enthorpe.</u> Now the line leaves the flat coastal plain and begins to climb. Near here on the R. is the interesting Kiplingcotes race course where a race is held every year which usually attracts no more than half-a-dozen entries.
	99 - 33	Market Weighton E. Jc. The line from Beverley comes in on the L.
6.05	99 - 49	Market Weighton station. The line to Selby was opened by the York and North Midland Railway on 1st August, 1848. The line was doubled in 1894. Stopping trains over this section were withdrawn in 1954, and the service now consists of two Leeds-Bridlington expresses (one SX) with one in the westbound direction, the corresponding evening train running to York instead.
	99 - 49	Market Weighton W. Jc. The line to Pocklington and York leaves on the R. It was opened on 3rd October, 1847.
	103 - 02	<u>Everingham (formerly Harswell Gate)</u>
	104 - 78	<u>Holme</u> serving the village of Holme-upon-Spalding-Moor.
	107 - 67	<u>Foggathorpe</u> (formerly Foggathorpe Gate).

Time	Distance	
	109 - 55	<u>High Field.</u>
	110 - 47	<u>Bubwith.</u> Beyond this station we cross the river Derwent.
	111 - 76	<u>Menthorpe Gate.</u>
	112 - 76	The site of <u>Duffield Gate</u> station (or halt). This was opened in 1853; the closing date is not known.
6.24	113 - 59	<u>Cliffe Common.</u> The junction for the independent Derwent Valley Light Railway to York (Layorthorpe). The line was opened from Cliffe Common to Wheldrake for goods and minerals on 29th October 1912 and fully opened for all traffic on 19th February, 1913. Traffic was light in such sparsely populated country and it is not surprising that passenger traffic was withdrawn in 1926. A rail-tour special worked over the line in 1954.
6.30		
	115 - 65	<u>Barlby Jc.</u> The Selby/Hull line joins us on the L. It was opened in 1840 and runs almost dead straight for twenty miles from the junction to Brough before making an appreciable curve.
	116 - 64	<u>Selby East Jc.</u> We now join the King's Cross-Edinburgh main line and cross the famous swing bridge over the Ouse. The actual junction points are at the west end of the bridge at the station platforms, the running lines being gauntleted over the bridge itself.
6.38	116 - 70	<u>Selby.</u> This consists of two long platforms, each with a short bay at the southern end.
6.43		
<u>VI. SELBY - YORK</u>		
Just past the road bridge, the Leeds goods lines diverge to the R., in which direction we also turn off, but on the other side of the loco. sheds. The line between Selby and Leeds was opened on 22nd September 1834 and for goods trains on 15th December of the same year.		
	117 - 32	<u>Wistow Junction.</u> The Cawood branch bears off on the R. A single line, it was opened in 1896 and taken over by the N.E.R. in 1900. It was closed to passenger traffic on 31st December 1929 and is not now considered strong enough to bear passenger coaches, hence our passing it by.
	119 - 26	<u>Thorpe Gates Jc.</u> Here is the direct connection from the Leeds direction to the Selby-Goole branch, opened in 1910 for goods and on 1st May 1912 for passengers. Originally double track it is now single and in a very grass-grown condition.
	121 - 04	<u>Hambleton.</u>
	123 - 17	<u>Gascoigne Wood Jc.</u> Marshalling yards on both sides of the line are found here and the Selby-Leeds line throws off spurs to both sides, connecting with the York-Castleford line at Milford Jc. and Sherburn-in-Elmet. We take the latter line, opened from Gascoigne Wood to York on 30th May 1839, originally to a temporary station and then to a permanent one (the old station) on 1st July 1840.
	124 - 33	<u>York Jc.</u>
	124 - 67	<u>Sherburn-in-Elmet.</u>
7.01	126 - 79	<u>Church Fenton.</u> The line from Leeds comes in on the L. There are four through platforms and a bay, originally for the Tadcaster and Harrogate trains, of which there is now only one, in the Northbound direction, although there are unadvertised workmen's trains for the Ordnance Factory at Thorp Arch. Until a few years ago there was a Leeds-Selby-Bridlington train which travelled to Selby via Wetherby and Tadcaster, thus almost doubling the normal distance of twenty miles. The Harrogate line goes away on the L. beyond the station. It was opened to Spofforth on 11th August, 1847 and Harrogate on 20th July, 1848.
7.02		
7.06	128 - 70	<u>Ulleskelf.</u> Stations from here to Copmanthorpe have platforms on the slow lines only.
	129 - 15	We cross over a 274 ft. long viaduct over the river Ouse, consisting of one 60 ft. central semi-elliptical arch and 8 semi-circular land arches of 15 ft.

Time Distance

130 - 05 Bolton Percy.
 133 - 73 Copmanthorpe. A line was projected in 1846 to Leeds via Tadcaster (17 miles), but was abandoned in 1849 after many earthworks had been completed; these remain to this day. Passing the junction with the London main line formerly known as Chalonsers Whin Jc. (the signal box was removed with the introduction of colour signalling), we traverse marshalling yards on both sides of the line at Dringhouses. The former excursion station is then passed and at Holgate Jc. the goods lines turn off to the left and we finally return to York station 137 miles 51 chains after leaving it.
 7.20

 A bibliography of books and articles found useful in compiling this itinerary is added for your convenience:

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