

PLATFORM 2



Issue 16

June 2019



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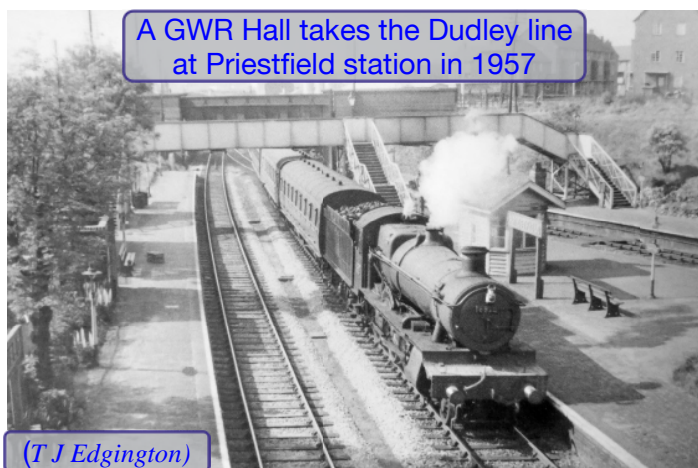
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The Stourbridge Line User Group, 46 Sandringham Road, Wordsley, Stourbridge, West Midlands, DY8 5HL

DUDLEY'S RAILWAYS

6. DUDLEY TO WOLVERHAMPTON LOW LEVEL by Roger Davis

The line from Oxford to Wolverhampton, constructed by the Oxford, Worcester & Wolverhampton Railway (OWW), was finally extended from Dudley to Wolverhampton on 1 April 1854 for goods and 1 July 1854 for passengers. This was nearly 9 years after the Act of Parliament authorised the building of the line on 7 August 1845. The estimated cost by Isambard Kingdom Brunel of £1.5 million for the 89 mile mixed gauge line (7' and 4' 8½") was finally exceeded by nearly £1 million, and at one stage the GWR refused to back the completion of the line on financial grounds ... until it found out that the London & North Western Railway (LNWR) and Midland Railway (MR) were both interested in taking over.



Intermediate stations were built at Tipton, Princes End, Daisy Bank, Bilston West and Priestfield, the last station at the junction with the line from Birmingham Snow Hill having four platforms – two on the Birmingham line and two on the Dudley line.

The 1895 Bradshaw's Timetable Guide showed about 18 trains in each direction on Mondays to Saturdays and 6 on Sundays, with most trains continuing south from Dudley to Stourbridge Junction.

Sundays, with most trains continuing south from Dudley to Stourbridge Junction.

In 1916, Daisy Bank station was closed as a wartime economy measure but this reopened in 1919, renamed as Daisy Bank & Bradley. By 1922, the following timetable was in operation along the line.

MONDAY TO SATURDAY								SX	SO						
<i>Starts from</i>	<i>SBJ</i>	<i>SBJ</i>	<i>SBJ</i>	<i>SBJ</i>	<i>SBJ</i>	<i>WOS</i>	<i>SBJ</i>			<i>WOS</i>	<i>SBJ</i>	<i>PAD</i>	<i>WOS</i>	<i>SBJ</i>	
Dudley	0642	0743	0831	0922	1009	1051	1147	1215	1224	1249	1255	1350	1438	1532	1630
Tipton	0646	0747	0835	0926	1013	✓	✓	1219	1228	✓	1259	1354	1442	1536	1634
Princes End	0650	0750	0838	0929	1016	✓	✓	1222	1231	✓	1302	1357	1445	1539	1637
Daisy Bank & Bradley	0653	0753	0841	0932	1019	✓	✓	1225	1234	✓	1306	1400	1448	1542	1640
Bilston West	0656	0756	0844	0935	1022	✓	1154	1229	1238	✓	1309	1403	1451	1545	1643
Priestfield	0700	0800	0848	0939	1026	✓	✓	1232	1241	✓	1313	1407	1455	1549	1647
Wolverhampton Low Level	0705	0805	0852	0943	1030	1102	1200	1236	1245	1300	1318	1412	1500	1553	1652

MONDAY TO SATURDAY								
<i>Starts from</i>	<i>PAD</i>	<i>SBJ</i>	<i>....</i>	<i>SBJ</i>	<i>SBJ</i>	<i>WOS</i>	<i>SBJ</i>	<i>WOS</i>
Dudley	1715	1734	1810	1840	1914	1947	2043	2155
Tipton	1720	1738	1814	1844	1918	✓	✓	2200
Princes End	1724	✓	1817	1847	1921	✓	✓	2203
Daisy Bank & Bradley	1728	✓	1820	1850	1924	✓	✓	✓
Bilston West	1732	1744	1823	1853	1927	1955	✓	2208
Priestfield	1736	✓	1827	1857	1931	✓	✓	✓
Wolverhampton Low Level	1741	1750	1832	1901	1935	2000	2055	2215

SUNDAY			
<i>WOS</i>	<i>WOS</i>	<i>SBJ</i>	<i>WOS</i>
1220	1546	2006	2146
✓	✓	✓	✓
✓	✓	✓	✓
✓	✓	✓	✓
1229	1555	2015	2155
1233	1559	2019	✓
1237	1603	2023	2202

MONDAY TO SATURDAY

Wolverhampton Low Level	0600	0700	0750	0803	0820	0855	1040	1120	1203	1300	1315	1440	1505	1615	1620
Priestfield	0604	0704	▼	0808	0824	0859	1044	▼	1208	1304	1319	1444	1509	▼	1624
Bilston West	0608	0707	0756	0811	0828	0902	1047	1127	1212	1307	1323	1448	1513	1622	1628
Daisy Bank & Bradley	0611	0710	▼	0814	0831	0905	1050	▼	1215	1310	1326	1451	1516	▼	1631
Princes End	0614	0713	▼	0817	0834	0908	1053	▼	1218	1313	1329	1454	1519	▼	1634
Tipton	0617	0716	▼	0820	0837	0911	1056	▼	1222	1316	1332	1457	1523	▼	1637
Dudley	0620	0719	0802	0824	0840	0915	1100	1135	1226	1319	1335	1500	1526	1628	1641

Continues to *KID PAD SBJ PAD SBJ HBY SBJ SBJ BSW WOS SBJ SBJ PAD KID*

MONDAY TO SATURDAY

Wolverhampton Low Level	1650	1733	1800	1840	1930	2025	2115	2215
Priestfield	1654	▼	1804	1844	1934	2029	2119	2220
Bilston West	1658	1739	1807	1848	1938	2033	2123	2224
Daisy Bank & Bradley	1701	▼	1810	1851	1941	2036	2126	▼
Princes End	1704	▼	1813	1854	1944	2039	2129	2229
Tipton	1708	1745	1817	1857	1947	2042	2132	2233
Dudley	1712	1748	1821	1900	1951	2047	2136	2237

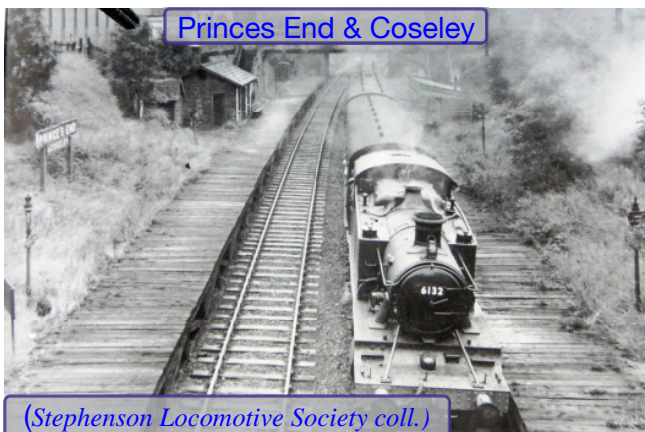
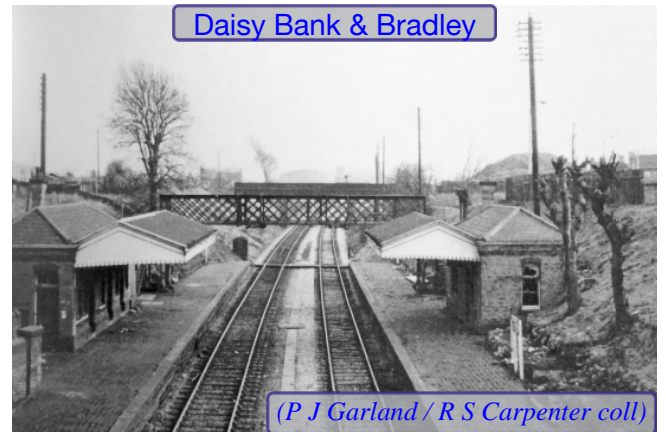
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SUNDAY

0820	1435	1558	2005
0825	1440	1603	2010
0829	1444	1607	2014
▼	▼	▼	▼
▼	▼	▼	▼
▼	▼	▼	▼
0837	1452	1615	2022

SBJ SBJ WOS SBJ

Codes : SO - Saturdays only, SX - Saturdays excepted, BSW - Birmingham Snow Hill, HBY - Hartlebury, KID - Kidderminster, PAD - London Paddington, SBJ - Stourbridge Junction, WOF - Worcester Foregate Street, WOS - Worcester Shrub Hill



By 1932, although Monday to Saturday service remained about the same, the Sunday service doubled to 8 trains in each direction. Two of the stations along the line were renamed either side of World War II - Princes End became Princes End & Coseley in 1936, while Tipton was renamed Tipton Five Ways after nationalisation in 1950 to distinguish it from the ex-LMS station which became Tipton Owen Street.

However, the 1950s saw a decline in the service on Mondays to Saturdays. By 1950, only 14 services operated in each direction and this had reduced to 11 in each direction by 1955. The service level then stabilised, and the Summer 1961 timetable shows the following service pattern.

MONDAY TO SATURDAY	SX					SO			SX		SO
<i>Starts from</i>	<i>SBJ</i>	<i>SBJ</i>	<i>SBJ</i>	<i>SBJ</i>	<i>SBJ</i>	<i>SBJ</i>	<i>WOS</i>	<i>SBJ</i>	<i>WOS</i>	<i>SBJ</i>	<i>SBJ</i>
Dudley	0732	0819	0904	1057	1213	1400	1552	1749	1928	2120	2125
Tipton Five Ways	0734	0821	0906	✓	✓	1402	1554	1752	✓	✓	✓
Princes End & Coseley	0737	0824	0909	✓	✓	1405	1556	1755	✓	✓	✓
Daisy Bank & Bradley	0740	0826	0911	✓	✓	1407	1559	1758	✓	✓	✓
Bilston West	0743	0829	0914	✓	✓	1410	1602	1801	✓	✓	✓
Priestfield	0746	0832	0917	✓	✓	1413	1605	1804	✓	✓	✓
Wolverhampton Low Level	0750	0836	0922	1112	1227	1417	1610	1808	1942	2135	2140

SUNDAY	SBJ					
<i>Starts from</i>	<i>SBJ</i>	<i>SBJ</i>	<i>SBJ</i>	<i>SBJ</i>	<i>SBJ</i>	<i>SBJ</i>
Dudley	0948	1125	1503	2013	2103	2213
Tipton Five Ways	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Princes End & Coseley	0953	1130	1508	2018	2108	2218
Daisy Bank & Bradley	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Bilston West	0957	1134	1512	2022	2112	2222
Priestfield	1000	1137	1515	2025	2115	2225
Wolverhampton Low Level	1004	1141	1519	2029	2119	2229



MONDAY TO SATURDAY	SX			SO			SO					
Wolverhampton Low Level	0632	0650	0814	1015	1203	1225	1300	1415	1557	1655	1729	1805
Priestfield	0636	0654	0818	✓	1207	✓	1304	✓	✓	1659	1733	1809
Bilston West	0639	0657	0822	✓	1210	✓	1307	✓	✓	1702	1738	1812
Daisy Bank & Bradley	0641	0700	0825	✓	1212	✓	1309	✓	✓	1704	1740	1814
Princes End & Coseley	0644	0703	0828	✓	1215	✓	1312	✓	✓	1707	1743	1817
Tipton Five Ways	0647	0707	0832	✓	1217	✓	1314	✓	✓	1709	1745	1819
Dudley	0650	0711	0835	1026	1220	1236	1317	1426	1608	1712	1748	1822
<i>Continues to</i>	<i>BSW</i>	<i>WOF</i>	<i>SBJ</i>	<i>WOS</i>	<i>BSW</i>	<i>WOS</i>	<i>SBJ</i>	<i>SBJ</i>	<i>WOS</i>	<i>SBJ</i>	<i>WOS</i>	<i>SBJ</i>

SUNDAY	SBJ					
Wolverhampton Low Level	0730	0915	1350	1915	2105	2205
Priestfield	0734	0919	1354	1919	2109	2209
Bilston West	0737	0923	1357	1922	2112	2212
Daisy Bank & Bradley	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Princes End & Coseley	0742	0927	1402	1927	2117	2217
Tipton Five Ways	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Dudley	0747	0932	1407	1932	2122	2222
<i>Continues to</i>	<i>SBJ</i>	<i>SBJ</i>	<i>SBJ</i>	<i>SBJ</i>	<i>SBJ</i>	<i>SBJ</i>



However, the end was nigh. The line did not even survive until the Beeching Report, closing to passengers on 30 July 1962, although goods services survived until 22 September 1968. The line from the Dudley Freightliner terminal to Priestfield Junction was quickly ripped up, and much of the route of the line is now buried under new development. Bridges over the Birmingham New Road, Sedgley Road and the West Coast main line have all disappeared. One short section alongside the Black Country Living Museum still exists. Wouldn't it be nice if they could lay a short section of track and a station as their counterparts at Beamish have done?

NO LONGER STOPPING AT ... SMETHWICK WEST

by John Warren

This is the fifth in a series of articles that looks at the stations between Birmingham Snow Hill and Worcester that have closed since 1960, working down the line from north to south.

SMETHWICK WEST

Smethwick West looking towards Oldbury Road. The car park by the booking office is still in use as Smethwick Galton Bridge car park!



(National Railway Museum and SSPL)

Smethwick West looking towards Oldbury Road



(T J Edgington)



<i>Date Opened</i>
1 April 1867
<i>Final Passenger Services on</i>
28 September 1996
<i>Number of Platforms</i>
2
<i>Number of Trains (1959)</i>
69 (M-F), 70 (Sa), 43 (Su)
<i>Number of Trains (1996)</i>
0 (M-F), 2 (Sa), 0 (Su)

Station Name : Smethwick Junction (April 1867 - September 1956), Smethwick West (September 1956 - September 1996).

Smethwick West station was situated to the south of Oldbury Road in Smethwick and just to the west of Smethwick Junction where the lines from Snow Hill and New Street converge. Up to September 1956, the station shared its name with the junction. The station was the most important intermediate station between Birmingham and Stourbridge Junction, with the majority of cross-country services from Snow Hill to Hereford and Cardiff stopping there - the only intermediate stop between Snow Hill and Stourbridge. The station's downfall came when the Jewellery Line was opened on 24 September 1995. The new interchange station at Smethwick Galton Bridge, with platforms on the Snow Hill to Stourbridge and New Street to Wolverhampton lines, opened on the north side of Oldbury Road, with a distance between the two platforms of only 170 yards. A parliamentary service of a train in each direction every Saturday served the station until it closed the following year.

ALL CHANGE AT ... BIRMINGHAM MOOR STREET
 The changing scene at one of the Stourbridge line stations



2001

(Luke Unsworth)



2003



1981

(Malcolm Keeley)



2003



1961

(J C Flemons)

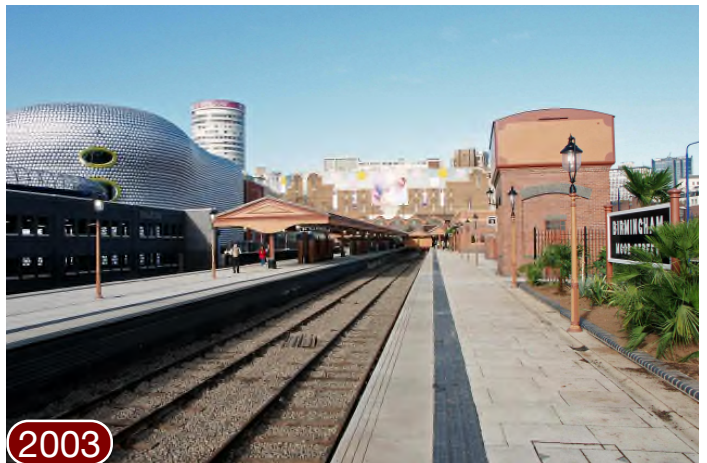


2017



1992

(M Bearton)



2003

THE HARBORNE CONNECTION

by Rob Hebron

Historically, there has never been a direct rail route between Stourbridge and Harborne. At the time when Stourbridge Line trains were running to Birmingham New Street and passing the junction for the Harborne Railway, passenger trains had long ceased operating. If railway history had turned out differently, Stourbridge Line passengers could have changed trains at Monument Lane station to reach the suburbs of Birmingham. Now, trains originating in Stourbridge take the old GWR route from Smethwick Junction to Birmingham Snow Hill. By avoiding the Stour Valley Line, Stourbridge Line commuters will not get a glimpse of the bricked up archway on the right hand side of a cutting near Dudley Road overbridge. This archway was the aperture for Harborne-bound trains.

This railway bridge took the line over Park Hill Road in Harborne



Hagley Road, the location of one of the stations



The Harborne Railway Company had ambitions in the nineteenth century to construct a branch line from Soho, across the LNWR line at Monument Lane and through Harborne to join the Halesowen - Longbridge branch at Lapal. The scheme was thwarted by landowners along the intended route and so only the section from Monument Lane to Harborne was authorised in 1866. It was not until 1874 that the branch opened for passenger traffic

and it was operated by the LNWR under an agreement which gave it 50% of gross receipts. The Harborne Railway Company was initially so successful that the LNWR offered three times to buy the HR Co. outright.

The line from Monument Lane was provided with four stations, namely: Icknield Port Road, Rotton Park Road, Hagley Road and Harborne, itself. By 1914, the timetable consisted of twenty seven trains each way per day, illustrating the value of the passenger traffic.

Railway author Keith Turner maintains that the HR Co. remained independent until 1923 until it was amalgamated with the LMS under the Grouping arrangement. However, a pictorial postcard from around 1913/1914 suggests otherwise. The photograph appears in 'British Railways Past and Present 5' [Whitehouse and Dowling] and is reproduced in Andy Doherty's 'Central Birmingham'. The evidence of a transitional takeover is a notice board proclaiming London and North Western Railway.



This long bridge took the line under Hagley Road

Having survived the First World War, the line was threatened with a worse threat from trams and motor buses which could make the journey much quicker. In 1931, Icknield Port Road was closed and on 24 November 1934, all scheduled passenger services ceased. However, freight trains continued to use the route, particularly the Webb tanks hauling wagons to the Mitchells and Butler brewery at Camp Hill. The Chad Valley company also had a factory in the area and components for toys continued to be delivered by Harborne Line trains. This ensured that the whole 3½ miles survived in the next decades.

Eventually, this traffic ceased and the Harborne Line became redundant on 3 November 1963. An enthusiasts' special (reporting number 1Z10) on 2 November 1963 was the last recorded passenger service on the line. The special was topped and tailed by locomotives 46429 and 46522 with the latter hauling the final service back along the branch from Harborne. The end of the Harborne branch was in sight.



Soon after closure, the track was lifted by British Railways and alternative uses for the track bed were proposed, including a relief road. However, Birmingham City Council purchased the land along the course of the railway and it was converted to a landscaped public walkway. Very little railway infrastructure is discernible on the walk, apart from overbridges.

Although there has never been a direct rail route between Stourbridge and Harborne, there *has been* a direct bus route. Diamond Bus experimented with an extension of service 142 early in 2017. Alas, the 142 which was designed to terminate at Queen Elizabeth Hospital was not a commercial success and the daytime service was withdrawn altogether by Diamond. At the end of May, the core route of Stourbridge to Halesowen was rescued by Central Buses. Nowadays, the best way of getting from Stourbridge to Harborne is by bus 9/142 to Halesowen, changing to bus 19.

For the benefit of ramblers and explorers reading this article, the 1½ mile railway walk from Summerfield Park to Harborne can be reached via a single bus ride from Stourbridge line stations - the 9 from Stourbridge or Lye, X10 from Cradley Heath or 12/12A from Langley Green to Hagley Road. In addition there is the option of the 13A/13B from Rowley Regis and then alighting at Portland Road. What a pity that the Harborne Railway cannot be re-laid!

(Source: - THE LOST RAILWAYS OF BIRMINGHAM by KEITH TURNER)

TRACK RATIONALISATION ALONG THE STOURBRIDGE LINE

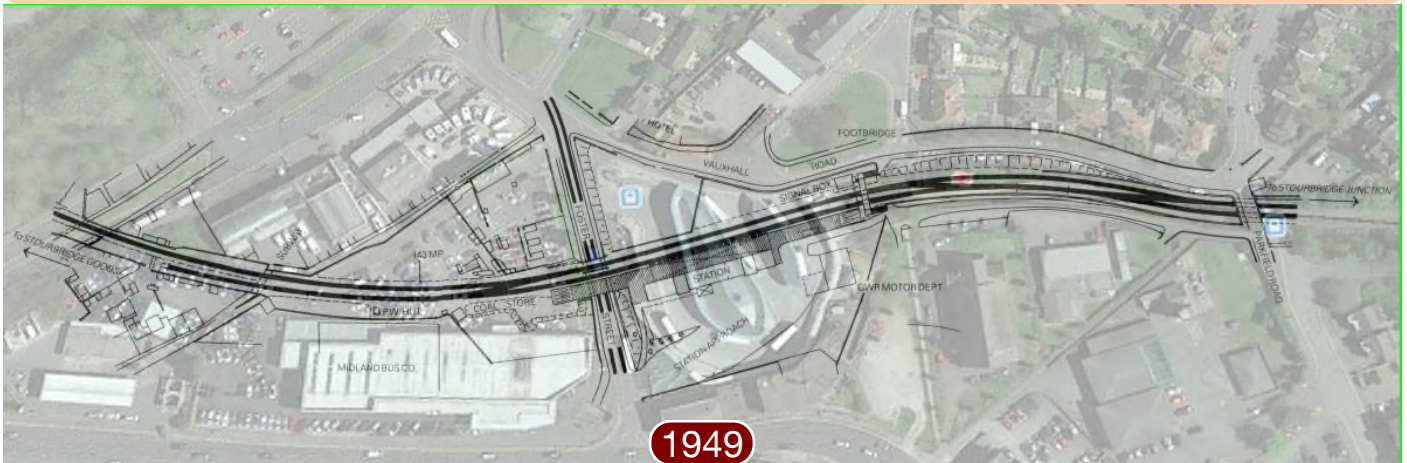
Part 2 : Stourbridge Town to Birmingham Moor Street by Roger Davis

In the previous edition of Platform 2, we looked at track layout changes at stations between Worcester and Stourbridge. In this issue, we continue the journey towards Birmingham. The first map shows the current layout, with the old layout shown very faintly, while the second map shows how the track network looked in the past.

STOURBRIDGE TOWN



The old station covered the site of the modern bus station and the platform crossed Foster Street. The double track formation with crossovers at both ends of the station can be seen.



HANDSWORTH & SMETHWICK



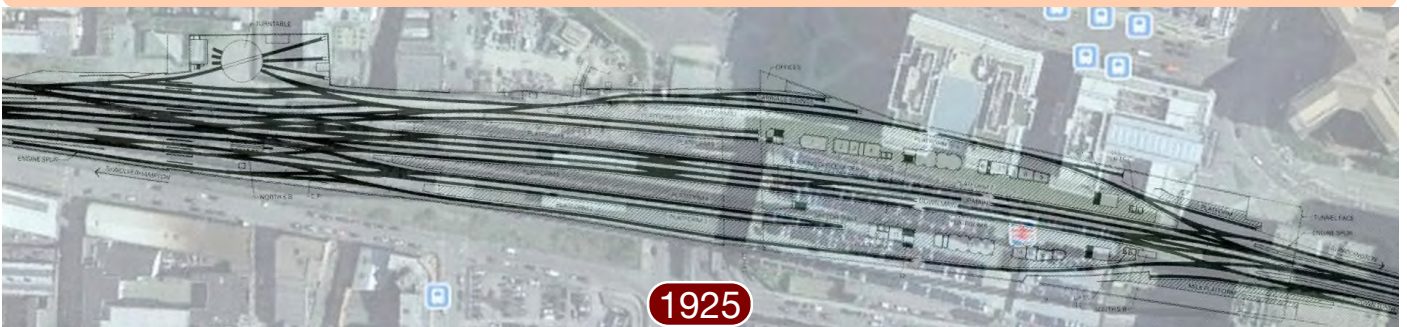
Both sides of the existing main line had extensive sidings while the station had five through platform faces.



BIRMINGHAM SNOW HILL



The old station occupied land to the east now covered by office blocks. Bay platforms at the north end of the station can be seen along with the extensive trackwork at both ends of the station.

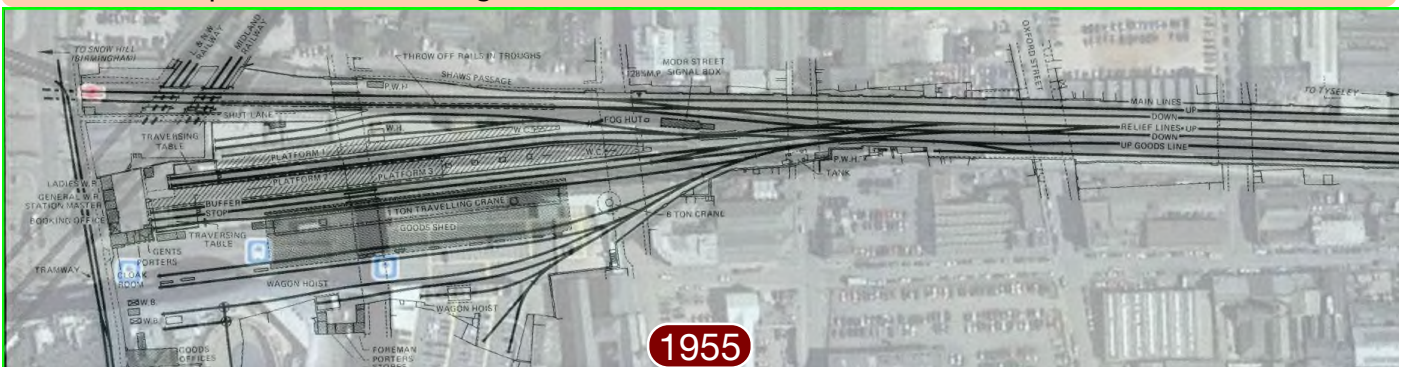


1925

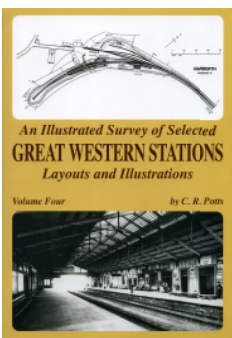
BIRMINGHAM MOOR STREET



There were no through platforms on the route to Snow Hill while goods sidings occupied land which is now part of the Bull Ring Centre.

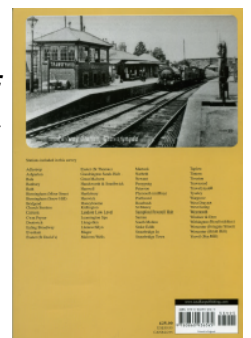


1955



The station plans used in the two articles were obtained from a book titled "An Illustrated Survey of Selected Great Western Stations, Volume 4), written by C R Potts and originally published by OPC/Railplan.

The current day aerial maps were obtained from Google Earth.



THE BEST SLUG RECORD ALBUM IN THE WORLD

by John Warren



The Stourbridge Line User Group is pleased to present a hypothetical compilation album consisting of tracks which features artists with connections to locations along the Stourbridge line.

I'm sure that there are a lot of artists that we forgot, so we challenge our members to help us to create a second hypothetical album for a future edition. Any ideas that you have may be sent to platform@stourbridgelineusergroup.info.

	TITLE	ARTIST	YEAR	POS
1	Get The Girl! Kill The Baddies!	Pop Will Eat Itself	1993	9
2	Love Hurts	Jim Capaldi	1975	4
3	Happy	Ned's Atomic Dustbin	1991	16
4	Stairway To Heaven	Led Zeppelin	1971	-
5	Flowers In The Rain	The Move	1967	2
6	Emergency 999	The Alan Bown Set	1966	-
7	The Bucket of Water Song	Four Bucketeers	1980	26
8	Paranoid	Black Sabbath	1970	4
9	Keep On Running	Spencer Davis Group	1965	1
10	The Size of a Cow	The Wonder Stuff	1991	5
11	Living After Midnight	Judas Priest	1980	12
12	Swagger Jagger	Cher Lloyd	2011	1
13	Superstar	Jamelia	2003	3
14	Spaceman	Babylon Zoo	1996	1
15	Funky Gibbon	The Goodies	1974	4
16	Three Lions	Baddiel & Skinner	1996	1
17	Hole In My Shoe	Traffic	1967	2
18	The Chain	Fleetwood Mac	1977	-
19	Gaye	Clifford T Ward	1973	8
20	I'd Rather Go Blind	Ruby Turner	1987	24



(1) Pop Will Eat Itself was formed in Stourbridge in 1986 (2) Jim Capaldi was born in Evesham and later lived and worked in Worcester (3) Ned's Atomic Dustbin was formed in Stourbridge in November 1987 (4) Robert Plant was born in Handsworth, raised in Kidderminster and later lived in Stourton (5) Carl Wayne was born in Winson Green (6) Lead singer Jess Roden was born in Kidderminster (7) Chris Tarrant was educated at King's School, Worcester (8) Lead guitarist Tony Iommi was born in Handsworth (9) Dave Mason was born in Worcester (10) The Wonder Stuff was formed in Stourbridge in 1986 (11) Songwriter and guitarist Glenn Tipton was born in Blackheath (12) Cher Lloyd grew up in Malvern (13) Jamelia was born in Smethwick (14) Lead singer Jas Mann was born in Dudley (15) Bill Oddie attended Halesowen Grammar School (16) Frank Skinner was born in West Bromwich and raised in Oldbury (17) Steve Winwood was born in Handsworth (18) Christine McVie (Perfect) was brought up in Smethwick (19) Clifford T Ward was born in Stourport and educated at King Charles Grammar School in Kidderminster (20) Ruby Turner grew up in Handsworth

IS THIS A POINTLESS LINE ?

by Roger Davis

An edition of the BBC1 quiz programme Pointless on 23rd April concluded with a jackpot round with the title “British Train Stations with Natural Names”.

The three subcategories asked the contestants to name any station with a name that contained the word “Green”, “Park” or “Wood”. Despite coming from Bradford, they opted for three London stations – Belsize Park (incorrect), Finsbury Park (4) and Palmers Green (1). Had they been regular travellers on services from the Stourbridge line, they would have found five pointless answers and walked away with the £1,000.



(Five Pointless answers at the bottom of the page)

NAME THE STATION - No 5 : PORT

The following 12 stations, past, present and future, have the word Port somewhere in their name. Can you name them?

1. This station is overlooked by the second tallest observation tower on the south coast.
2. A West Midlands county station which had platforms at two levels until 1964.
3. This Bristol Channel station closed in 1964 but is scheduled to reopen in 2021.
4. This station, just south of Eastleigh, is used by CrossCountry trains.
5. This station once had the suffix “& West Hove”.
6. The northernmost station on the Merseyrail network.
7. This station on the Tarka Line in Devon is named after an adjacent pub.
8. This station on the Merseyrail network serves a model village created by William Hesketh Lever.
9. This junction station closed in 1966 when the lines to two island ferry ports closed.
10. A station on the Great Western Main Line in South Wales.
11. This station west of Plymouth had the suffix Albert Road from 1948 to 1968 to distinguish it from the Southern Region station suffixed King’s Road.
12. The southern terminus of the Ffestiniog Railway and the Welsh Highland Railway.

WHERE ARE WE ? - No 3 ANSWERS

Here are the answers to Where Are We? No 3 which featured in the previous issue.

1 - Approaching Droitwich Spa, 2 - Approaching Blakedown, 3 - Approaching Cradley Heath, 4 - Langley Green, 5 - North of Hagley, 6 - Between Cradley Heath and Old Hill

Five Pointless answers - Langley Green, Acocks Green, Hall Green, Yardley Wood, Wood End