

DORE AND TOTLEY STATION, opened 150 years ago in 1872

Dore Road opened 1871/2

At the start of the 18th Century transport around Britain relied on old tracks and remains of roads dating back to Roman times. Bulk loads went by sea and small ships were brought up rivers as far as they could get. All the biggest British cities were ports. By the middle of the century the Industrial Revolution was transforming Britain. Small canals had existed long before then but a massive surge of major canal building got under way and by 1800 tunnels of 2 miles under the Pennines were becoming routine.

The old roads were being improved and new turnpike toll roads constructed, many still forming the foundations of today's A and B roads. By 1820 there was a good national network of roads and canals, but Sheffield was rather left out. Our canal was a dead end. The Great North Road ran through Doncaster.

Coal was being mined in ever increasing quantities and by 1800 horse drawn tramways were being built to move it from collieries to the coast. Step forward George Stephenson who did so much to survey new railways and design steam engines, most famous for the Stockton & Darlington and the Liverpool and Manchester Railway opened for passengers in 1830.

In 1835 George surveyed a line between Derby and Leeds for the North Midland Railway following river valleys avoiding tight curves and steep gradients. It was to meet the Sheffield and Rotherham Railway at Masbrough. That spur opened in 1838, the North Midland north to Rotherham in 1840. (History repeats itself for HS2 was also planned to bypass Sheffield for similar reasons - plus a lot of housing and industry now in the way.)

Then as now the people of Sheffield weren't happy to be left on a branch line backwater. In 1821 the population was 84,540 growing to 134,599 in 1841 and 219,634 by 1861. Public meetings were held and in 1864 an Act of Parliament authorised a new direct line via Dronfield, the 'new road'. Things happened quite fast in those days and work started in 1865. It was completed by late 1869, including Bradway Tunnel. At that time Dore, Topley and Bradway were not considered significant enough to need a station. Beauchief was to be the nearest at a cross roads and Beauchief Hall, opened in 1870. Dore Road didn't exist.

Once construction got underway the local disruption was considerable. Many more people came to the area pouring money into the local economy. Quarries, brick works, beer houses, butchers, grocers and other traders all benefitted. New brick buildings sprang up. However spoil from both the deep cutting and Bradway Tunnel were dumped on the old Walk Mill site at the bottom of today's Twentywell Lane. That became known as the railway triangle after 1894, but that's skipping ahead a little.

Why no station at Dore?

By the 1860s almost everyone wanted a local railway station but at that time the route of Dore Road was just open green fields. Local landowners like the Duke of Devonshire and Earl Fitzwilliam clearly saw opportunities to make the railway work for them.

As the line was about to open the Sheffield Daily Telegraph reported on Saturday 29th January 1870;

OPENING OF THE NEW RAILWAY TO CHESTERFIELD On Thursday, a special train from Derby passed over the new line, stopping at the several intermediate stations of Chesterfield and Sheffield, including Unstone, Dronfield, Abbey-houses, Ecclesall, and Heeley. The train contained

the station masters and porters, with the furniture for the stations and matters necessary for the working of the line. The whole of the stations have a neat appearance, the platforms being very commodious. It is understood that in addition to a new station now in progress at Whittington Moor, it is also intended to construct a station in Abbeydale, near to the bottom of "Twenty-well-sic-lane," for the accommodation of Topley and Dore.

Local pressure was clearly building because by Friday 6th May 1870 the Sheffield Daily Telegraph report goes;

ABBEYDALE AND THE NEW RAILWAY.—As was expected the new railway will effect great changes this picturesque valley, both as regards the number of inhabitants and also the making of new roads. The well-to-do tradesmen of Sheffield are said to be anxious to take their residence in the 'dale', and with the view of meeting this requirement Earl Fitzwilliam and the Duke of Devonshire are leasing eligible sites for the building of villa residences. It is also understood to be the intention of Earl Fitzwilliam to widen the current road leading from Abbeydale-road, Beauchieff Bar, to Dore Moor. It is also intended to make a new road from the Abbeydale opposite the Twenty-well-sic-road to Dore. This part of the dale, beside the attractions of great natural beauty, possesses another commendable feature—being out of the borough the rates will be but nominal in amount in comparison with borough rates. The new railway station too, promised to be erected by the Midland Railway Company will be within a stone's throw of the land on the side of the proposed new road. It is also understood that the property owners, who are but few, will not sell on lease any property for manufacturing purposes.

In those days Dore, Topley and Bradway were still in Derbyshire where lower rates applied! That report was followed by the Sheffield Daily Telegraph on Saturday 4th June;

IMPORTANT MEETING AT DORE. A numerous-attended meeting of the ratepayers this township was held in the school-room on Thursday evening last, the Vicar in the chair. The Chairman, in opening the meeting, said they had met together pursuant to notice, in order to discuss the best method of widening and improving the upper part of what is called Dore-lane. Some time ago memorial, signed by the inhabitants of Dore, was forwarded to the directors of the Midland Railway Company, petitioning for a station further up the valley than Beauchief, and at a point nearer to Dore. This request had been granted, subject to a proviso that a road from Dore to the proposed Station should be constructed, the lower part of which had been surveyed and staked out by J. M. Withers, Esq., at the request of the agents of the Duke of Devonshire, and it only remained for the parish to continue that road in a westerly direction from the point where it leaves his Grace's property up to Dore itself. After remarks from Mr. Hancock, Mr. Withers explained the plan of the road, the gradient of which, at the lower end is 1:13.5, and grows much easier as it advances. Resolutions were proposed by Messrs. Hancock, Unwin, and Roe empowering the Surveyor to improve the road as proposed, and deputing a committee apply for an order of magistrates to do away with certain footpaths shown on the large ground plan exhibited by Mr. Withers to the meeting. The feeling of the meeting was unanimous on all the resolutions, and considerable satisfaction was expressed that this scheme, which Mr. Hancock stated, had been contemplated nearly thirty years, was at length definitely settled. The new road will not only place this village in direct communication with the fast-increasing suburbs of Sheffield, but also supply the town with a site for villa residences unequalled both in the beauty of its situation and in the abundance of its water any place in the neighbourhood round.

So the roots of our belated little station had started to appear, as had Dore New Road.

Pressure continued and on 6th May 1871 the Derbyshire Times and Chesterfield Herald reported;

DORE. A meeting of the inhabitants of Dore (and very fully attended one) was held on Friday evening last, with reference to that portion of the new road to the Midland Station to be made by the parish. The question at issue was—by rate, or by applying to the landowners for subscriptions. It was argued by Messrs. Taylor and B. Unwin that the larger sums collected from a few would save the pockets of the many; the other side Mr. Hancock and the Chairman (the Rev. T. Aldred), that as the road is an advantage for all, small and great, the cost should be distributed upon all, especially as the Duke of Devonshire, the largest landowner in the parish, had already undertaken the greater part of the road. The meeting taking this view, carried the resolution to proceed by rate, by a majority of 33 to 2. Mr. Wethers, surveyor of the Duke of Devonshire's part of the road, kindly offered his advice in the formations of the parochial portion. The station, we understand, is already marked out. Census. -The following is the Census return for the township of Totley and Dore. Township of Dore in 1861, 610; Township of Totley, in 1861, 396.

And so it came to pass that Dore New Road was constructed and our little station was built at a building cost of £1,517 and £450 for two acres of land.

It was opened, apparently without ceremony, on 1st February 1872, 150 years ago, two years to the day after the line was opened in 1870.

At that time there were two platforms and the footbridge was at the south end of the platform. It was removed and reassembled elsewhere when a further two platforms were built about 1900. Older readers may remember 4 platforms with a footbridge to the north of the station buildings. That forms the next part of the story of our little station. Suffice to say that in 1872 it was a huge success and the popularity of Dore, Totley and Bradway for well to do commuters grew, safely away from the smoke and high rates in the city of Sheffield.

Midland Railway.											
OPENING											
OF THE											
DORE & TOTLEY											
STATION.											
The DORE and TOTLEY STATION, between Dronfield and Beauchief, on the SHEFFIELD and CHESTERFIELD LINE, will be opened for Passenger Traffic on THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 1st, and on and from that date Trains will call there until further notice as under :---											
STATIONS.	WEEK-DAYS.							SUNDAYS.			
	a.m.	a.m.	p.m.	p.m.	p.m.	p.m.	p.m.	a.m.	p.m.	p.m.	
Leeds..... dep.	5.40	9.47	..	1.20	2.45	5.20	..	7. 0	..	2.15	
Sheffield .. "	8. 5	11.10	1.10	2.42	4.30	7.36	8.20	9. 3	2.15	4.17	
Dore and Totley .	8.23	11.28	1.28	2.59	4.48	7.54	8.38	9.22	2.33	4.35	
Dronfield... arr.	8.28	11.33	1.33	3. 4	4.53	8. 0	8.43	9.27	2.40	4.40	
Chesterfield.. "	8.44	11.50	..	3.20	5.10	8.17	A	9.44	..	4.58	
Nottingham "	10.55	1.15	..	5.20	7. 0	10.30	..	11.45	..	7.15	
Derby..... "	9.55	12.50	..	4.25	7.35	9.25	..	10.55	..	6. 5	
Derby..... dep.	6. 0	7.30	10.20	..	1.30	3. 0	5.40	7. 0	..	6.35	
Nottingham "	..	7. 5	9.25	..	12.40	3.20	4.55	6.25	..	5.40	
Chesterfield.. "	7. 3	8.43	11. 7	..	2.35	5. 5	6.51	8. 3	..	7.35	
Dronfield... "	7.19	9. 0	11.24	2.30	2.51	5.22	7. 9	8.20	6.25	7.52	
Dore and Totley .	7.24	9. 5	11.29	2.35	2.56	5.27	7.14	8.25	6.30	7.57	
Sheffield..... arr.	7.42	9.25	11.46	2.55	3.15	5.45	7.33	8.43	6.50	8.18	
Leeds..... "	9.45	11.55	1.38	..	5.15	..	8.50	10.45	..	10.20	

A Runs through to Chesterfield on Saturdays.

JAMES ALLPORT,
General-Manager.

Derby, January 29th, 1872.

Bemrose and Sons, Printers, London and Derby.

1872 Timetable



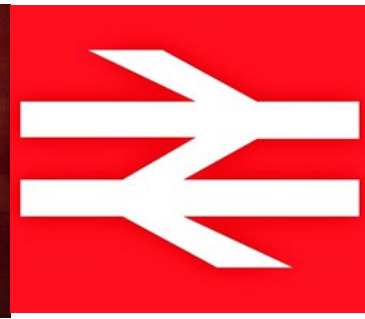
Station in 1872



Midland Railway



LMS



Great British Railways

Friends of Dore and Totley Station, 1st February 2022