

Irlam Chronicle



An Historic Day for Irlam Station



Today marks the re-launch of Irlam Station House, 122 years to the day since it first opened its doors to the public. After standing derelict for almost a quarter of a century, the Victorian building which now sits proudly on the platform, has undergone extensive restoration work to return it to its former glory!

Over the years, Irlam and its railways have been on a journey of their own. This journey began with the introduction of the Manchester to Liverpool Railway, the world's first inter-city line; although just over a mile outside of Irlam, it would become the foundations of the future of transport and industry for the area.

Coming online in 1873, Irlam's first railway station was pivotal in providing essential transport links for goods and passengers between Liverpool and Manchester and beyond.

district into a prosperous industrial area; the station was a bustling hub up until the 1960s. Passenger trains were frequent and on time, and a large volume of goods and raw materials were transported to and from the numerous factories in the area, many of which operated their own internal railway systems linked to the main line at the station.

Unfortunately these boom times didn't last. Transportation of goods through Irlam Station ended in 1966 followed by the closure of many heavy industries including the Steelworks. These factors, coupled

station and bringing the buildings back into use, an agreement was made with the owner to lease the station house which enabled development to commence.

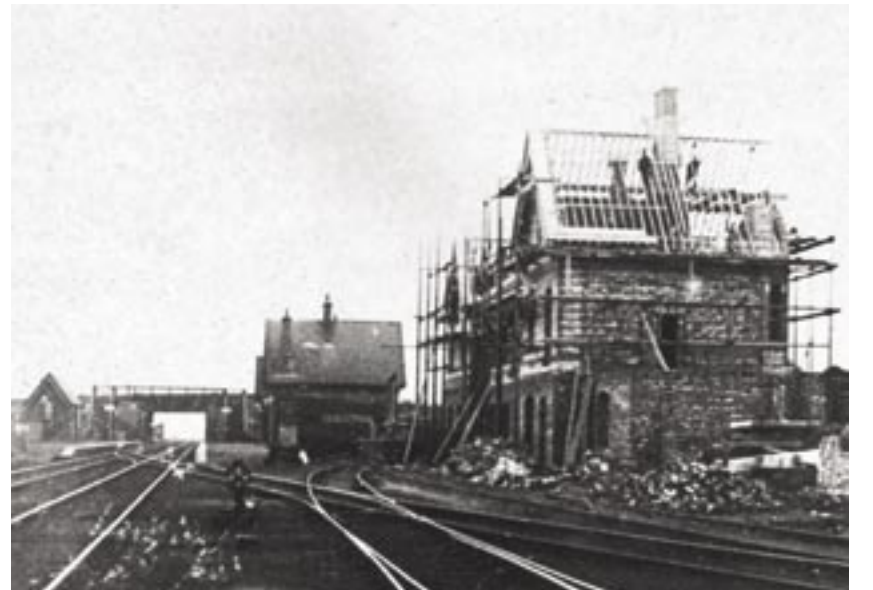
Following years of planning, consultation and extensive (and expensive) work, the revitalised station will provide lots of new facilities alongside original architectural features, offering visitors a taste of the present and a flavour of the past.

The exterior of the building has undergone extensive renovation to recreate how it looked when it was first built. Original slates adorn the roof, the bright new paintwork is in the original London, Midland and Scottish Railways (LMS) colour scheme, and a magnificent canopy will provide visitors with shelter on rainy days and welcome shade from the hot sun.

Inside the building the pristine décor provides a relaxing atmosphere. Should you want to eat there is a café bistro serving delicious food and beverages and comfortable seating is provided while waiting for your train.



There is plenty to see too, with fascinating heritage material, photographs and artifacts from by-gone days. The magnificent clock has a story to tell; it began life in 1907 on the old Irlam Council Offices building. From there it moved high up on a barn at Chat Moss, before finally being restored to its former glory, and coming to rest in a fitting new home where it will hopefully continue to serve the district for another 100 years.



The station now has free parking for over 60 cars (including disabled bays), motorcycles, and a new cycle hub. Enhanced lighting, security and pedestrian footpaths ensure a safe environment. The general surroundings are planted with shrubs and trees, providing a peaceful area for both people and wildlife and the planned

station garden will add splashes of colour throughout the year.

Whatever the reason for visiting, it is now so much more than a station and will provide a safe and enjoyable experience for the local community and the 240,000 rail users who use the station each year. Thanks to very successful partnership working, today is an historic day for Irlam Station!



The construction of the Manchester Ship Canal in 1887 resulted in the railway line being raised and moved, with a new station house having to be built on the Manchester-bound platform. Opened in 1893, the building had large canopies on both platforms, which sheltered hundreds of passengers as they made their way to and from work, school or neighbouring districts.

Irlam Station played an important role in both the First and Second World War helping to move troops, goods and munitions, whilst continuing to serve the local community.

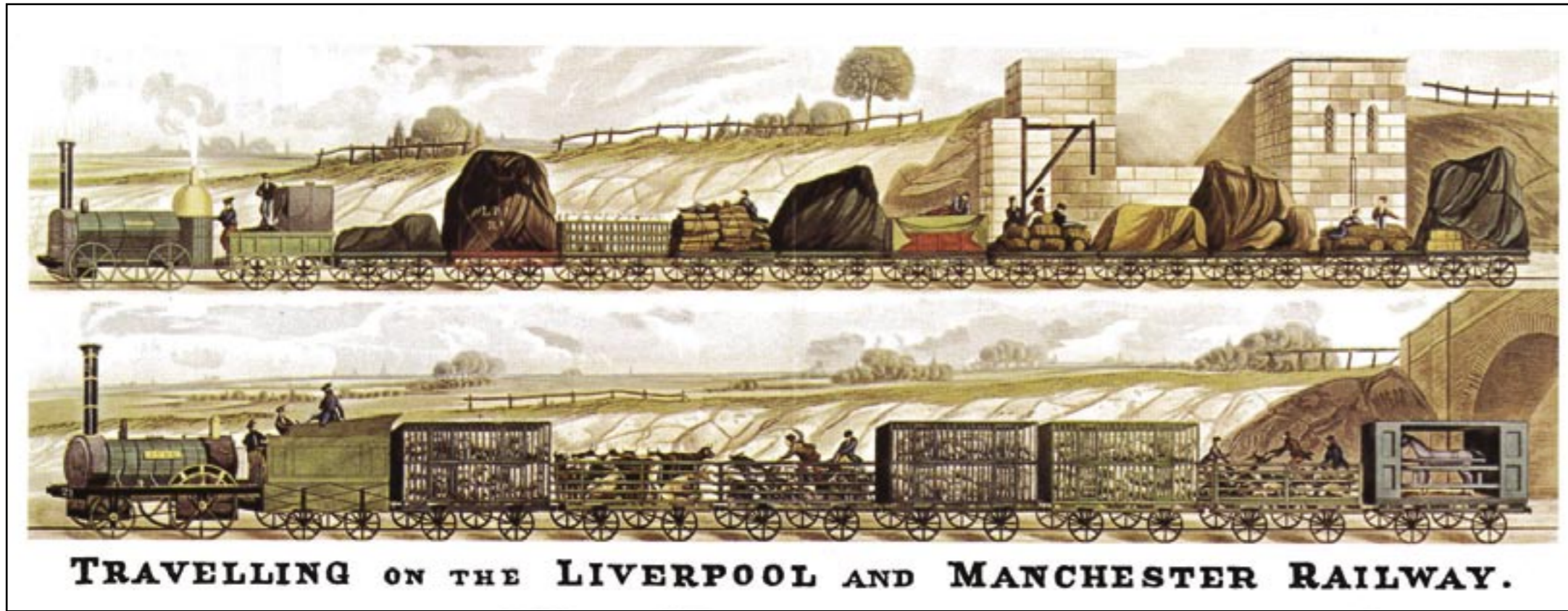
Both the railway and ship canal were instrumental in turning the

with the growth in road transport, had a huge impact on the area and the station, resulting in a reduction in the frequency of trains. The station gradually lapsed into disrepair until finally, in the 1980s, British Rail closed the station house and sold it off privately - it continued to deteriorate.

After being derelict for over 25 years, the Irlam Station Strategy and stakeholder partnership was born, combining the knowledge and resources of Salford City Council, NC Developments, Transport for Greater Manchester, Network Rail, Northern Rail and Hamilton Davies Trust. Tasked with redeveloping the



Chat Moss Makes the History Books!



TRAVELLING ON THE LIVERPOOL AND MANCHESTER RAILWAY.

The peat bog that has supported a flourishing farming community for many years is now home to the first ever intercity passenger railway in the world!

Building on the success of the Stockton and Darlington Railway which opened five years ago, the

new Manchester to Liverpool line is the world's first railway to be built on a double track throughout its length and to rely exclusively on steam power with no horse-drawn traffic permitted at any time.

Designed by Robert Stephenson, the railway track has been built on

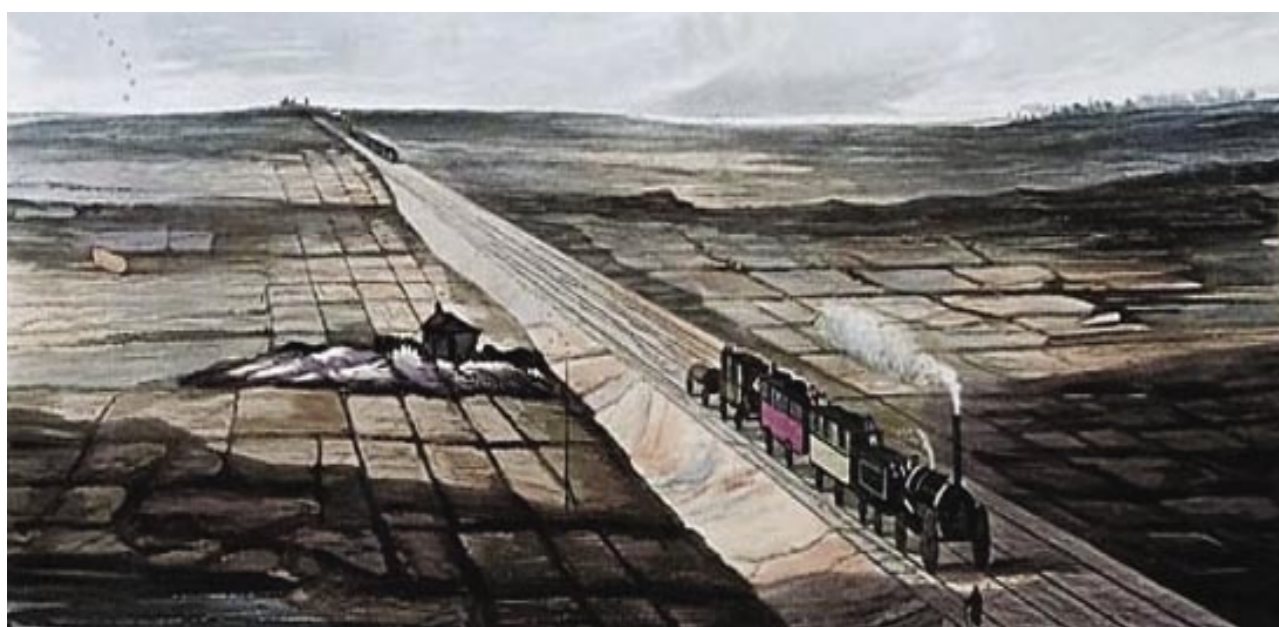
a floating raft set upon a stone and wooden foundation across the peat bog. Running 36 miles between the two cities, the railway needed a host of bridges and viaducts to be constructed to support its track. The project, which cost a total of £820,000, has been hailed a triumph

of engineering, given the challenging nature of the peat bog on which it sits.

Located just a mile outside of Irlam, the railway has primarily been built to provide faster transportation of passengers, raw materials and finished goods

between Liverpool and Manchester with an estimated journey time of only two hours. Prior to its construction the journey between the two cities could take over half a day by horse and cart and more than two days via the Mersey and Irwell Navigation.

Fatal Start for the Manchester to Liverpool Railway



The launch of the railway should have been a memorable event; it was, but for all the wrong reasons. Thousands cheered as the procession of eight carriages left Liverpool. A special carriage carrying the Duke of Wellington, drawn by the engine "Northumbrian", led the way, followed by other trains carrying over 600 passengers including dignitaries.

Onlookers lined the route and gazed with amazement as the trains sped by at over twenty miles an hour! The police were brought in to control the crowds and keep the railway clear and incident free; however the crowd wasn't the problem! Mr William Huskisson MP, alighting for some fresh air when the engines stopped at

Parkside to take on water, was struck by Stephenson's world famous "Rocket". His leg instantly crushed, he was rushed to Eccles Hospital where he sadly died. The party agreed to proceed to Manchester where thousands awaited their arrival, but the visit was curtailed and planned festivities abandoned.

Railway Boom!

Since the opening of the Manchester to Liverpool line, the country has gone rail mad!

With the railway proving to be a huge success, carrying an astonishing 445,000 people in its first year, it led to a surge in rail transport connecting cities and villages up and down the country.

The line was subsequently connected to Warrington, and then to Birmingham via the Grand Junction Railway; the 99 mile journey from Manchester to Birmingham taking 4½ hours. Birmingham was then connected to London, with trains

from Manchester being able to reach the capital in just ten hours!

Travel has been completely transformed in England through the introduction of the rail network and this is expected to continue. The newly formed LNWR (London and North Western Railway), a merger of three key railway companies (Liverpool and Manchester, Grand Junction and London and Birmingham Railway) will have a major impact on the speed and cost of transport for travel and trade.

The railway boom has begun!

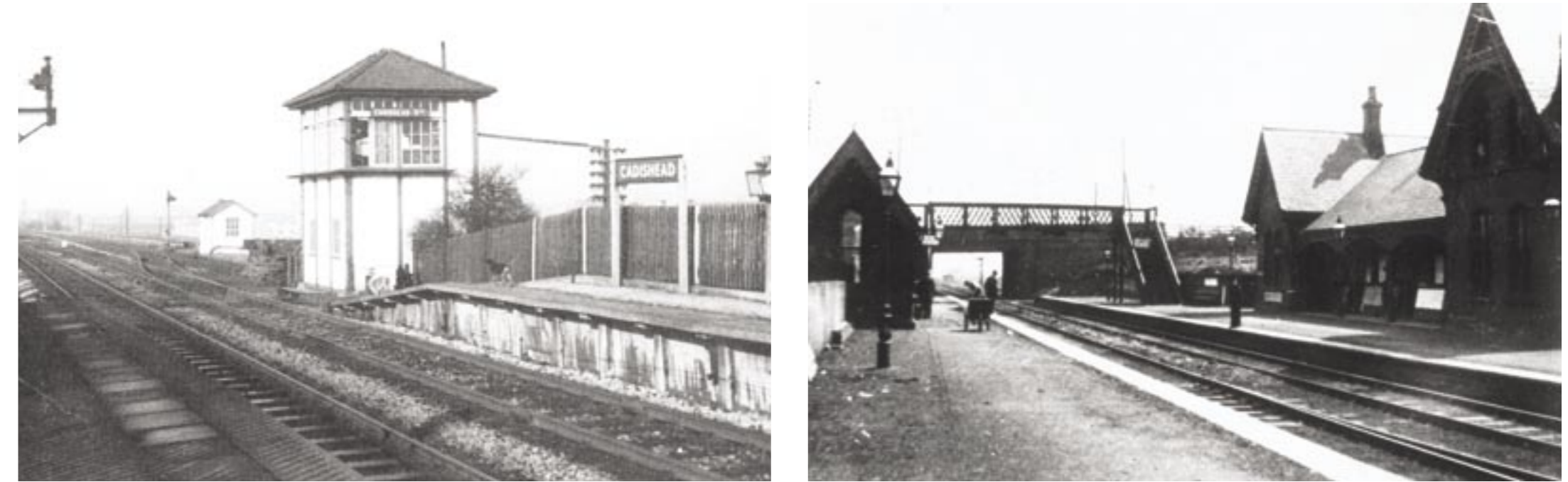
First Locomotive Factory in the World!

The first ever locomotive works in the world opened recently in Newcastle.

Robert Stephenson & Co was established by George Stephenson with his son Robert at the helm as the firm's managing partner.

With a wealth of expertise in both civil and mechanical engineering and forward thinking designs, the firm and its directors intend to be a driving force in the rail industry for some time.

Irlam and Cadishead get on track!



The first ever railway stations for Irlam and Cadishead have now arrived.

Thanks to the approval of the Cheshire Lines Committee Act, powers were granted to build 143 miles of railway, 34 of which now connect Manchester with Liverpool at Garston (Cressington Junction) via Irlam, and Skelton Junction (Altrincham) to Glazebrook East Junction via Cadishead.

Formed in 1863, the Cheshire Lines Committee (CLC), a joint venture combining the Great Northern Railway, the Manchester, Sheffield and Lincolnshire Railway and the Midland Railway became the second-largest railway in Great Britain. Their aim was to access the rich trade of Liverpool and West Lancashire with extra tracks connecting Liverpool and Manchester to surrounding towns and villages as

well as the lucrative trans-pennine route: Sheffield to Stockport.

Irlam and Cadishead stations have now opened their doors to both passengers and goods, offering a new form of transport to the area between the two major cities of Manchester and Liverpool.

The station at Irlam offers a goods and passenger service, an internal waiting room for ladies with a roaring fire for those cold winter

days, rest rooms, a ticket office and a distinguished drinking fountain similar to those featured at other CLC owned stations.

Cadishead, a much smaller station, will be used in the main for transporting goods, linking Yorkshire with Lancashire and delivering coal to the Liverpool Docks. For local residents, a passenger service is also available.

For the seasoned traveler who up

until now has only had access to much slower forms of transport, whether on foot, by horse and cart or stage coach from Irlam's Ship Hotel or the Coach and Horses in Cadishead, travel is now possible at speed and in the comfort of a railway carriage from one of the new stations, which is a great improvement.

Both stations are great arrivals, firmly putting Irlam and Cadishead on the map.

Manchester Ship Canal Plans Announced!



Plans have now been unveiled for the construction of the Manchester Ship Canal (MSC) following the approval of the parliamentary act.

The ship canal proposals were developed to give ocean-going vessels direct access to Manchester and bypassing the Liverpool Docks which currently represent the only gateway for transporting merchandise from the Northwest to the rest of the world.

To reach the docks of Liverpool, for many years goods have been transported along the rivers Irwell and

Mersey, the Bridgewater Canal and by the Manchester to Liverpool Railway. Unfortunately over recent times the Irwell and Mersey Navigation has fallen into disrepair becoming unusable, forcing businesses to use the railway companies whose prices have become excessive, when combined with those charged at the Liverpool Docks.

The Manchester business community wanted change, with some merchants simply uprooting and moving their business out of the City.

Faced with stiff opposition from Liverpool and the rail companies, the canal's advocates initiated a public campaign to enlist support for the scheme and continued to push the genuine benefits of the project, which after two years resulted in success!

With the region still suffering from the effects of the Long Depression, the estimated cost of £5 million for construction seems like a huge sum of money but the project's proponents believe that the introduction of a ship canal will boost competition and create jobs.

Service comes to a halt!

After only six years in operation, Cadishead Railway Station has sadly closed its doors to the public.

With Irlam Station located just half a mile away and being on the main Manchester to Liverpool line, the majority of local people have opted

to hop on the train there, meaning that Cadishead Station has struggled with low passenger numbers for some time.

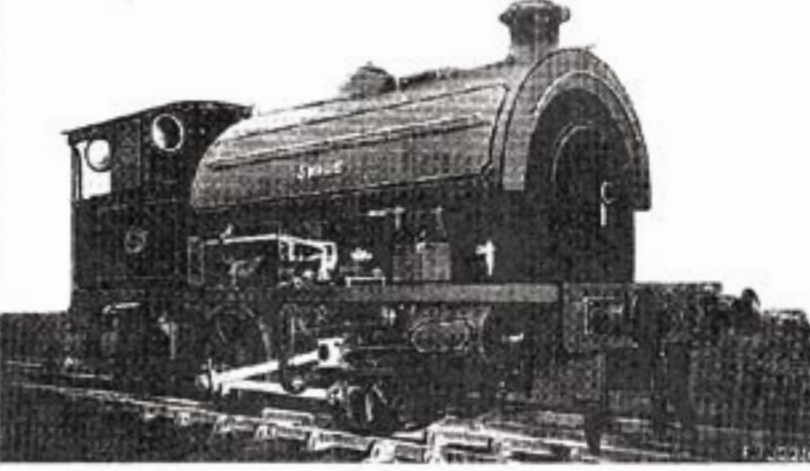
Residents of Cadishead who did use the station will need to walk a little further to catch a train to Liverpool or Manchester from

Irlam. Anyone wanting to journey to Altrincham, and other destinations in Cheshire, will now face a much lengthier journey and a change of trains along the way.

The station at Irlam will reflect this change in its new name of Irlam and Cadishead Station.

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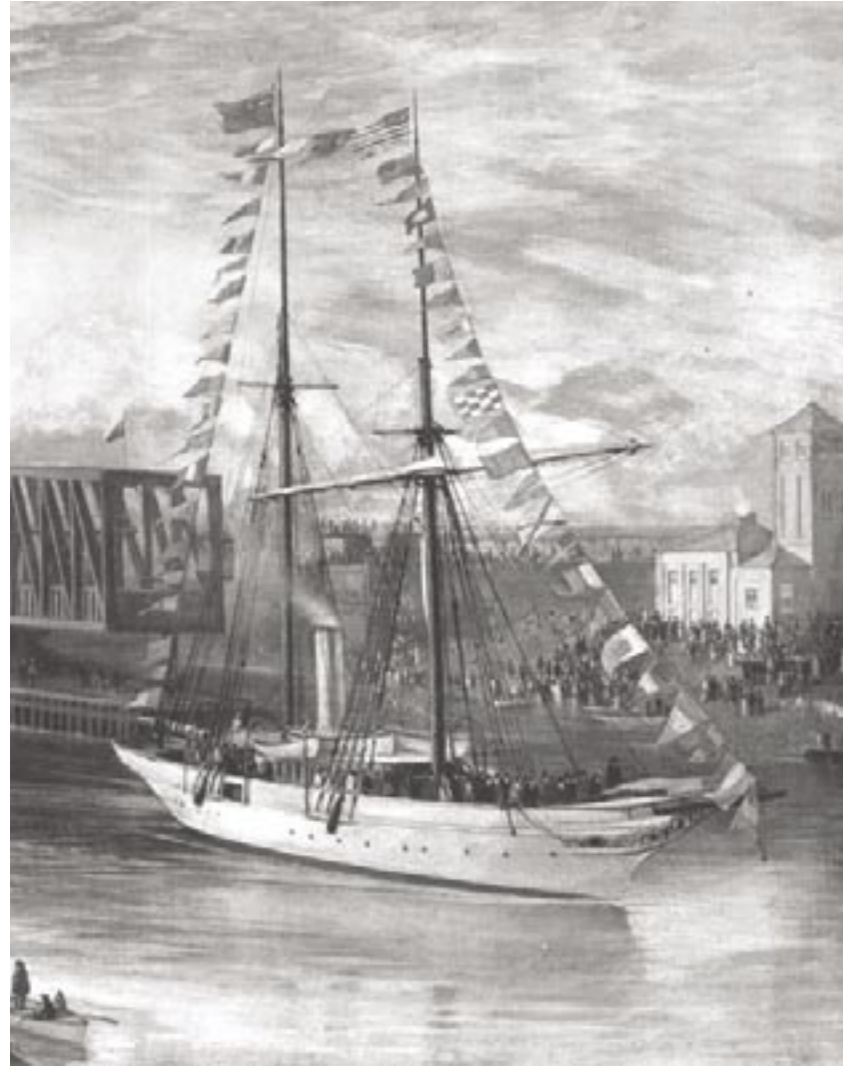
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Manchester Has the Wind in its Sails!



New Year's Day saw the opening of the Manchester Ship Canal, after six years construction.

What a great start, with over 50,000 people showing their support at the opening day celebrations. A steam whistle followed by an almighty cheer and scores of sirens started proceedings. The grand steam yacht 'Norseman' carrying the company directors led the procession of 71 ships from Latchford to Manchester; seagulls following the ships were said by many to be a good omen.

The Co-operative Wholesale Society steamer, the 'Pioneer', unloaded its cargo of sugar from Rouen, claiming the honour of being the first merchant vessel to be registered in the Port of Manchester.

The ship canal which will now connect Manchester to the rest of

the world, also has its own railway system. Initially used to build the canal the track carries freight between the docks and the many factories situated along the banks of the waterway, providing another valuable asset to local businesses.

At £15 million, the project, a massive undertaking using over 200 miles of railway track and at its peak employing 17,000 workers, was beset by problems. Numerous hurdles including engineering problems, bad weather, opposition from Liverpool and compensation claims from railway companies all caused a big delay in delivery and an escalation in cost from the £5 million estimate.

All of the hurdles were eventually overcome and now the largest river navigation canal in the world is open at last!

Going Up in the World!



The area welcomes two new railway stations 20 feet higher than the originals.

Construction of the Manchester Ship Canal which started some six years ago brought enforced changes to the railway lines in the area, which had to be carried across the new canal via steel viaducts 75 feet above the water.

Due to the deviated line, a new

station house has had to be built at Irlam on the Manchester bound platform, the opposite side to all other stations on the line. It has been built on brick piles making it higher than the original which will soon be demolished. Large canopies have been constructed on both platforms providing shelter for those rainy days.

Cadishead station, also built at a

higher level, runs across the newly erected bridge and embankment.

The Manchester Ship Canal Company has taken ownership of the previous stations' tracks for transporting workers, raw materials and finished goods to and from the main line.

Initially opened for goods traffic only, both stations now offer a passenger service.

New Stream of Industry for Irlam

The first major factory built on the banks of the Manchester Ship Canal opens for business.

The Co-operative Wholesale Society has opened its Soap Works alongside the new canal. Complete with a wharf, the factory has direct access to the waterfront for the transportation of raw materials and finished products.

But that's not all. The Soap Works also connects to the main train line, just west of Irlam Station using the original Cheshire Lines Committee track now owned by the Manchester Ship Canal Company. To assist operations on its 15 acre site, the works also has its own internal rail system and owns both rolling stock and locomotives.

Originally based in Durham, the company relocated the factory to Irlam not just to take advantage of the larger site and the space to expand, but also for its great links to both the rail network and ship canal.



Good Old Send Off!

Local man has a rousing send off as he heads for the South African War!

Escorted by a procession, complete with local band, Arthur Cousins made his way to Irlam station to begin his journey to the Front. Whilst waiting for Arthur's train to arrive, the band played South African War tunes and sentimental ballads such as 'Good-bye Dolly Gray.'

The platform and station approach were packed with hundreds of well-wishers showing their support and waiting to wave him goodbye as the train steamed out of the station.

Arthur, from Liverpool Road, Lower Irlam, is the first man from the district to leave for the Front. He waved to the crowd as his train pulled away, taking him to do his duty for Queen and country in South Africa.

Blast Off!



Following two years construction, the Partington Steel and Iron Company has finally commenced full production with blast furnaces and rolling mills becoming operational.

Built on a former confluence and flood plain of the rivers Irwell and Mersey, the Steelworks factory was created following construction of the Manchester Ship Canal. The infrastructure of the canal played an important role in the development of the new works, using its own railway

and building sidings to service the site, which now has its own internal rail network to connect to the main line.

The new factory is a welcome addition to the district providing work for many local men as well as a large influx of experienced steelworkers from Lanarkshire in Scotland, joining the workforce to help show them the ropes.

With the threat of war in the air the Partington Steel and Iron Company has perhaps opened just in time.

Soldiers' Jobs and Wages Safe

Jobs have been secured for local men supporting the war effort.

With reservists and territorials having already reported for duty and more men leaving daily, the Soap Works and Steelworks have promised to save jobs for workers when they return from the war. Both companies have also offered a separation allowance for families to cover earnings while the men are

away. This means one less worry on the minds of our brave soldiers!

There is, however, concern over other jobs in the district. Royles Engineers have cut workers' hours, and jobs have been suspended at the wallpaper factory and the Magadi Soda Co, creating worrying times.

There are real fears that people will begin to suffer hardship the longer the war goes on.

Local Industries Enlist Help From the Germans



German prisoners of war (POWs) are providing a helping hand with production at local factories.

Around two hundred travel from Leigh POW Camp to the Steelworks each day on a special corridor train. Accompanied by an armed escort and commanded by an officer,

the POWs arrive at 7:30am in the morning and return at 5:30pm in the evening.

The Army Boot Depot on Fairhills Road, known locally as the Jerry Works and once the site of the Magadi Soda Company, also has the help of a number of POWs.

Brass Band Send Off for the Brave

Twenty-eight brave recruits have been given a supportive farewell as they left for the Front.

As the men marched along Liverpool Road the Brass Band played 'Rule Britannia', 'The Marseillaise' and 'The Hero of Trafalgar'.

They were cheered heartily by the crowd as they reached Irlam

Station to catch the 11:31am train to Manchester and the band played 'It's a long way to Tipperary'.

The bystanders raised their hats and gave a massive cheer as the train departed and the National Anthem was played.

A 'Feu de joie' consisting of fog signals was fired from a train on the CWS railway line.

Soap Works Special!



Staff feel really looked after since the Soap Works introduced a free train service for them.

Known as the Soap Works Special, the service runs morning and evening to and from Irlam Station to coincide with main line train arrivals and departures.

Pulled by a steam locomotive, the brown and cream carriage has four separate compartments split for Ladies and Gentlemen. Providing

comfort and convenience, the service makes workers feel 'special'.

The service runs alongside the main line to Manchester on the original Cheshire Lines Committee track. A busy line; constantly in use for transporting inbound raw materials and outbound finished goods in between passenger services.

After a busy day at the office, the Soap Works Special is a welcome sight to its passengers.

Return of a Hero!

After a 3 year stint, a local man returns from the South African War!

Met at Irlam Station by the same crowd of well-wishers who waved him off some three years earlier, Arthur Cousins was carried home shoulder high, whilst the band played. It was the perfect homecoming, for a local hero.



New Landmark for Irlam!



A wonderful clock has been installed at the Council Offices on Liverpool Road.

Featured high up on the front of the building, there's much more to the new iconic landmark than meets the eye! With the face having a 30" diameter, the clock requires a 12 foot high space to accommodate the winding mechanism and four foot pendulum, as well as the commitment to turn the crank 44 times each week to wind it up.

This impressive timepiece really is a magnificent feature which will become a well-known landmark to people who live in and visit Irlam and Cadishead for many generations to come.

Another Spread of Industry in the Area!



The Co-operative Wholesale Society chooses Irlam again for its latest factory.

Their new business venture, the Margarine Works, has opened to satisfy an increased demand for fats of all descriptions.

Located on Liverpool Road, Higher Irlam, the works has its own private railway that connects to the Manchester Ship Canal line for

inbound raw materials and outbound finished products.

With high standards employed throughout, the workers in the new factory enjoy spotlessly clean conditions and the latest production methods, which include completely enclosed packing machines capable of wrapping ninety half-pound packs per minute, meaning the margarine is untouched by hand.



Local Industry Receives Royal Approval



HRH the Duke of York was welcomed by workers when he visited two of the district's largest works, as part of his tour around Lancashire as patron of the Industrial Welfare Society.

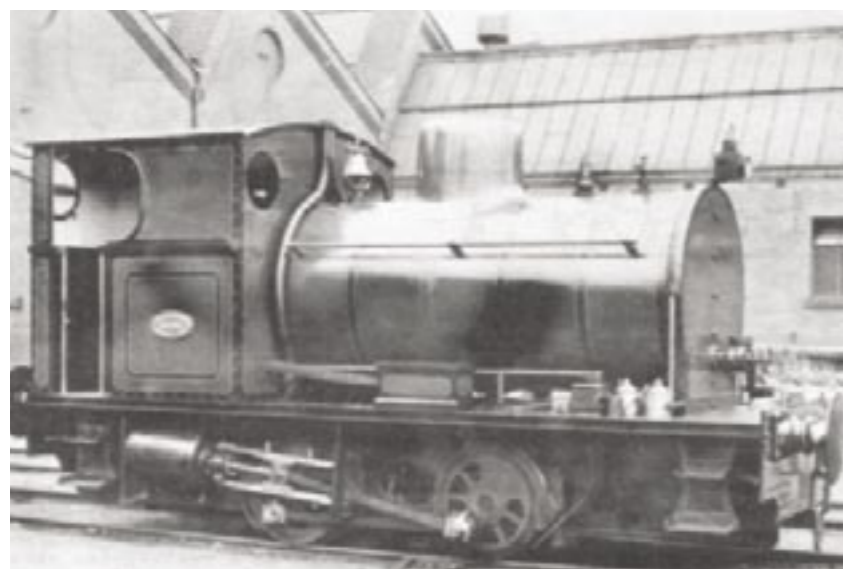
First stop was the Lancashire Steel Corporation (formerly Partington Steel and Iron Company). The Duke was met by workmen who stopped production and stood to attention as he checked out the blast furnace, rolling mills and other important facilities on site.

The Duke then moved on to the Co-operative Wholesale Society Margarine Works, one of the most

modern factories in the country where he was impressed with the cleanliness of the operation.

It is a great testament to the district that the Duke selected both plants as part of his tour of Industrial Lancashire. What a contrast he must have found from the dark and dusty testosterone-filled Steelworks to the cleanliness and femininity of the Margarine Works.

Special Delivery for Irlam Soap Works



Unique fireless locomotive photographed by L. W. Perkins, 1955

A new and completely unique Peckett Loco has arrived in Irlam to become the eighth member of the Soap Works locomotive team.

With the business flourishing there was a need to bring in another locomotive. Unable to purchase their first choice, a diesel engine, due to timeframes, alternatives were

sought. Given that there are several stationary boilers on the Soap Works site, the fireless loco was suggested as a feasible and more economical option.

Purchased from Peckett and Sons for £4,760, loco number 2155, a fireless type, was the only one of its kind produced at the Atlas Works, Bristol.

The Show Must Go On!

In the midst of a World War, Irlam tries to continue as best it can!

Production at the Steelworks continues despite being hit by enemy bombs! Thankfully there were no casualties or serious damage sustained by the plant and machinery. The workforce continues to operate day and night, sometimes in blackout conditions, producing steel for shells, bombs, aircraft, tanks, Bailey bridges, Anderson shelters and much more.

The Soap Works has deployed workers from Manchester

to get them away from the worst of the blitz, and even the lock keepers on the canal are working flat out keeping ships delivering much needed supplies of food and munitions moving along the water.

As men are being called up to war, women are taking their places as labourers, crane drivers and office workers, no longer feeling that "their place is in the home".

The district's workforce are doing their bit - together we are stronger!

Steelworks Expansion



The Steelworks, one of the largest employers in the area, continues to expand.

Already having an extensive rail network across the site, the works has just opened a new line connecting the factory to the Cheshire Lines Committee main line. This new

section of track, costing over £1 million, enters the works via a branch siding off the main line just west of Irlam Station. A new bridge has been built to carry it over Liverpool Road.

The Steelworks employ many local men and others who arrive by ferry

from Flixton and Urnston, those who cycle across the moss from Astley, and many who arrive by train from places such as Leigh and Wigan.

With a very busy roster, thousands of men work around the clock in shifts to keep pace with the demand for steel.

In the Nick of Time!



The clock which once sat proudly at the top of the Council Offices on Liverpool Road has found a new home!

This historic treasure was put up for sale to the highest bidder following the announcement of the impending demolition of the Council Offices. The successful bidder, Mr Gilbert Blundell from Nook Farm, Cadishead Moss, said

"This clock has served the district well over the years and I didn't want it going on the scrap-heap. I am so delighted it is coming to the farm, it will be my new show piece".

Due to its size, this iconic local landmark will be re-sited on the front of a barn at Nook Farm and will hopefully continue ticking for some time to come.

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Irlam in Freefall!



The district is in shock at the news that another important factory is set to close.

With over 4,000 people employed at the Irlam Steelworks site, the news that it is likely to close is a major disappointment to the district. For those with family members who previously worked at the Soap Works, it will be a double blow.

Not so long ago the Soap Works employed over 1,000 people and its private railway was always busy,

transporting goods between the works and Irlam sidings. The Soap Works Special train stopped running in 1959, followed by the line itself. Finally, as production declined, the factory shut its doors for good.

The original Steelworks started life almost 60 years ago and played a vital role in both world wars.

Now the Chairman of British Steel Corporation, Lord Melchett, has announced wholesale redundancies in the steel industry.

A protest march has taken place along Liverpool Road to try to save the works; trades unions' banners were flying as the workers marched proudly by.

It will be a sad day and another tremendous loss to the district if the Steelworks close.

Many residents of Irlam are concerned about the future of industry and employment in the district and how the closing of local factories will affect them.

Going Down the Swanee!



Classed as the largest river navigation in the world, the Manchester Ship Canal has seen better days!

Once a busy waterway, driving industry and connectivity into Irlam, the canal enabled the Port of Manchester to become Britain's third-busiest, despite the city being nearly 40 miles inland.

In its heyday, twenty million

tons of freight a year passed along the canal, with ocean-going liners a familiar sight.

With industry evolving, the recent introduction of container ships and the increasing size of modern ocean-going liners, the ship canal can no longer accommodate these much larger vessels and trade is drying up.

The quality of the canal itself has also faced a downturn following

years of neglect, with widespread pollution from the numerous factories along its banks.

But it's not just the waterway that's facing decline. The canal's once busy private railway, with more than 200 miles of track that previously carried freight between the docks and various industrial estates, is also suffering.

Irlam's prosperity began with the canal. Will it end with it?

Right on Time!

The iconic clock, which has adorned a barn at Nook Farm, Cadishead, for several years, has been taken down prior to the barn's demolition.

The clock, which started life at the old Council Offices in 1907, has kept the farm workers on Gilbert

Blundell's farm on time since 1963 as it could be seen from the fields almost half a mile away.

This important landmark from Irlam's past has been donated to the Irlam and Cadishead History Society, and will be held in storage until a new worthy home can be found.

IRLAM STATION

Formerly Irlam for Cadishead New name, same great passenger service connecting you with the places you want to go!

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Equality on the Line!



Few women were employed on the railways in the 1830s; it was believed that the work was too difficult, both physically and mentally, for the fairer sex.

As men went off to fight in the First World War an increasing number of women took on roles that had previously been thought beyond their capabilities.

By 1918 there were almost 60,000 female employees working in various roles across the industry including handling heavy goods. The women got on with the job and helped keep the country moving. Unions begrudgingly accepted the need for them but insisted they should be ousted once the war was over.

Male attitudes towards railway women changed little between the wars. The Second World War saw women once again playing a vital role in keeping the country's railways

running efficiently, transporting troops and equipment. It was a dangerous occupation; the railways were an obvious target for enemy bombing.

Following the war, opinions reverted back to what they had previously been. Attempts by British Rail to employ women as guards and signallers were met with such fierce opposition from railwaymen that the idea was dropped.

The search for equality continues. With the Equal Pay Act (1970) women finally received equal pay with their male colleagues. Now the Sex Discrimination Act (1975) means that women can enter any railway occupation on the same terms as men.

Women still face ridicule, opposition and harassment from their male colleagues, but they now receive equal pay and opportunities and can at last become train drivers should they so wish!

Steam Engine Gets a Shunt in the Right Direction!



A unique Peckett Loco has been given a new home in a much greener setting!

Following the closure of the Soap Works where Loco 2155 spent its whole life, it has been gifted to the communities of Irlam and Cadishead. With all of its moving parts removed, the 1955 loco has taken centre stage at the George Thomas Recreation Ground in Irlam.

Placed on a concrete plinth in the

play area, the steam engine not only sits proudly as a statement of the area's industrial heritage, but provides a great apparatus for children to play on and enjoy.

In its heyday the train was one of eight steam locomotives operating on the internal tracks at the Soap Works. An unusual 'fireless' type, worked by high-pressure steam from the factory, it was the only one of its kind built by Peckett & Sons.

Full Steam Ahead! Marge and Steel



Plans have been approved to completely transform Irlam Station.

Once a bustling hub with passengers, raw materials and finished goods being transported to and from local factories and further afield, the station was hit hard when local industry started to collapse around it. The result was a spiral of decline; reduction in the frequency of services, alongside deterioration of the buildings and surrounding environment.

The station gradually lapsed into disrepair until finally the building was sold off privately by British Rail (predecessor to Network Rail).

The large canopy was scrapped and finally the building was fenced off from the platform and boarded up.

Over the years despite the station house being transferred through different owners, unfortunately it remained derelict, becoming an eyesore in the area. Something needed to be done!

We now see the birth of the Irlam Station Strategy, adopted by Salford City Council in response to a number of issues and opportunities identified following a public consultation process. With the aim of 'making Irlam Station safer, more accessible and a better used station, attractive to both rail passengers and residents



along the Liverpool Road corridor; the strategy has a number of objectives to improve:

- Security and safety
- Environment
- Parking facilities
- Management of Irlam Station
- Accessibility

Determined to make a difference in the area, Salford City Council and Hamilton Davies Trust have decided to take action and will be enlisting the support of a number of partner organisations including Transport for Greater Manchester, Network Rail, Northern Rail and NC Developments to collectively bring the station into the 21st century, giving it the makeover it deserves.

Residents, commuters and rail enthusiasts are delighted with the news of the redevelopment of the station after 25 years of dereliction.

Located just off Liverpool Road, one of Salford City Council's key regeneration priorities in Salford West, the station is well placed, within walking distance of just over 1,000 homes and close to Irlam and Cadishead College, Lower Irlam Neighbourhood Centre and Northbank Industrial Estate.

Irlam and Cadishead have a growing population which is likely to result in more people using Irlam Station.



The Marge and Steel artwork, erected in 2007, stands on the roundabout at the start of the bypass in Cadishead

Funded by a £75,000 government regeneration fund, partnership working between various bodies ensured the project's success.

The 12ft steel monument commemorates two of the

district's former major employers, the Margarine Works and the Steelworks.

Designed by artists Marcela Livingston and Liam Curtin following interviews with local people who told of the tea dances they had enjoyed, an idea was developed to portray the dance of these two industries to celebrate the district's industrial heritage.

Special Piece of Local History Saved!



After being threatened with the scrapheap, the last standing Peckett Locomotive from the Soap Works has been saved!

The play area where the engine previously resided was due to have a makeover, with the tired looking engine becoming surplus to requirements.

The Rotary Club of Irlam, determined to do something to save the engine, rallied around to gain support. Subsequently named 'Thomas', the salvation project has involved a collaboration of efforts from local stakeholders to find the now famous loco a new home.

Salford City Council donated land, and Birse Construction, who are building the Cadishead by-pass,

stepped in to help. Placed on rails, and painted in its original colours of green with black and yellow lining, the engine stands proudly alongside the new road near to the old railway viaduct over the Ship Canal, surrounded by grass and shrubs and with a plaque detailing its checkered history.

To avoid the steam engine falling into disrepair as it had previously, the Rotary Club have agreed to maintain the loco and the area on which it sits. "Today there are few reminders of the district's industrial past, but thanks to the Rotary Club, Birse and Salford City Council, this important piece of our history has and will be preserved for future generations". David Taylor, Rotary Club of Irlam

New Lease of Life!



Planning permission to redevelop Irlam Station has been given the green light by Salford City Council.

Residents, commuters and rail enthusiasts are pleased to hear that work is well underway on restoring Irlam Station to its former glory. The station, used by over 240,000 people each year, is located on Liverpool Road, which is one of Salford City Council's regeneration priorities in Salford West and is a key gateway through the area.

Key to the success of this project is the partnership group that has been formed to manage it, which includes Salford City Council, NC Developments, Transport for Greater Manchester, Northern

Rail, Network Rail and Hamilton Davies Trust.

A number of improvements had previously been made to the station including the installation of CCTV to improve security, new passenger waiting shelters, a tannoy system, help points, information screens and a ticket machine.

Station Road has also seen improvements with re-surfacing and the creation of a pedestrian crossing. The railway embankments have been cleared, tidied and re-planted.

The current provision of only five official parking bays, will be



increased substantially thanks to Transport for Greater Manchester. The disused and somewhat derelict land adjacent to the station house is to be levelled and tarmacked to provide a large free car park for rail users enabling them to park and ride, additional disabled parking bays, motorcycle spaces, a cycle hub and dedicated pedestrian walking routes.

The station house has been vacant and dilapidated for some time, but now the original features of this once attractive Victorian building will be restored. On completion, the building will

offer a fantastic first impression of the area to travellers passing through, providing great facilities with the café bistro, waiting area, toilets, meeting space and wifi; all of which can only enhance users' experience of the station.

Work has already commenced on the building with the roof and chimneys being the first parts to be restored.

Moving forward, the redevelopment also hopes to introduce further landscaping including a community garden and a new accessible ramp to the Liverpool bound platform.

Ancient Bridge Restored Blast from the Past!



The old railway bridge in Cadishead has been given a new lease of life.

Used for transporting goods from different factories in the area, Cadishead Bridge was operational as late as the 1990s. Since then the bridge, which was originally built in

the 1870s to carry the Cheshire Lines Committee (CLC) Manchester to Liverpool railway across Liverpool Road to transport coal to the Liverpool Docks, has been redundant and fallen into a state of disrepair.

Thanks to Hamilton Davies Trust, the bridge has now been restored and

repainted in the famous CLC green. The surrounding embankments have been landscaped and the adjacent sites cleared and re-planted.

HDT continue to support the maintenance of this iconic structure to preserve it for future generations.



A well-known landmark of Irlam and Cadishead is to be brought back to life!

Over a hundred years since it once sat proudly atop the old Council Offices on Liverpool Road, the iconic clock is to be restored.

Thanks to the generosity of

Hamilton Davies Trust and the Irlam and Cadishead History Society, the well-travelled timepiece will once again serve local residents, workers and visitors to the district. The clock, which requires extensive restoration, will take pride of place at the new station house in Irlam.

Building the Future, Restoring the Past!



Work progresses on Irlam Station to give it the makeover it has long needed and deserved, after sitting derelict for almost quarter of a century. The building and grounds, part of an extensive redevelopment project estimated to cost over £1.6 million, will bring new facilities and enhanced public realm to benefit both local residents and visitors.



Expected to open in Spring 2015, the redevelopment is thanks to great partnership working between Salford City Council, NC Developments, Transport for Greater Manchester, Hamilton Davies Trust, Network Rail, Northern Rail, Friends of Irlam Station and the Irlam and Cadishead History Society who have combined ideas and resources to improve the environment and experience of using Irlam Station.

Managed by NC Developments the station house is being transformed into the modern café bistro 1923, with a combination of restoration work to reinstall some original architectural features, alongside the use of modern building materials and techniques to ensure its longevity. The café bistro will offer freshly prepared food and drink, a place to wait for the trains in comfort, toilet facilities, wifi and meeting space.

The team has researched lost detail from the past using archive material, and from studying similar stations along the Cheshire Lines Committee track.

One distinguished feature at most Cheshire Lines Committee stations, the drinking fountain, is being replicated, with time taken to source the correct stone to match the original from 1872, and incorporating the Irlam coat of arms as a central feature.

The canopy on the Manchester bound platform replicates the design detail from the period in which the station was originally constructed, while the barge boards are based on those at other stations along the line.

The colours selected for the building, both internally and externally, are based on the original London, Midland and Scottish Railway (LMS) colour scheme.

Modern construction techniques and materials mean the building will



be sustainable for many years to come. The brickwork on the extension was matched to the original building, but using an insulated cavity design to improve its thermal efficiency, while the installation of modern heating systems, electrics, LED lighting and data ensures the building is very energy efficient.

Extensive work has been undertaken on the roof. The slates were stripped off, checked and where possible reused. Where additional slate was required, reclaim yards provided salvaged slate from buildings of a similar age. The chimneys, a noticeable feature of the roof, were rebuilt using historical photographs.

Internally, the building required extensive repairs to the timber and masonry. Proposed alterations to the layout combined with the condition of the building meant that much structural bracing was needed.

One important piece of history inside the building is the clock. Originally an iconic landmark featured on the front of the Irlam Council Offices in 1907, it has been restored through the generosity of Hamilton Davies Trust and Irlam and Cadishead History Society. Through extensive work by Horologist Phil Irvine, the clock will become an important feature in the new station house.

"The Carriage" will provide a booted area within the café bistro where people can meet up, relax and

enjoy a spot of lunch. The design, based on the Soap Works Special, will transport guests back to the great age of steam. Railway memorabilia such as fire buckets, Companies' brass plates, scales, and a porter's trolley will be on view, alongside other historic artefacts including Co-operative Wholesale Society Soap Works' packaged soaps and 'dolly blue', holiday posters, a red telephone kiosk and a vintage 'press button B' telephone.

The building's surroundings are also undergoing extensive works. These include free parking for 60 cars and four disabled bays at the side of the station house. Provided by Transport for Greater Manchester as part of their park and ride programme, the new parking facilities will also include ten spaces designated to the café bistro, three motorcycle parking bays, a large turning facility and drop off point, dedicated pedestrian walking routes, new CCTV and enhanced lighting.

Further changes to the surroundings include a new cycle hub with space for up to 20 bicycles and a new accessible ramp to the Liverpool bound platform.

Lighting with special optics will be installed to brighten the car park and minimise antisocial behaviour, while new fencing at the rear of residential properties will create a more secure environment and improved public realm with landscaping, including a station garden.





Return to the great age of steam

New café bistro now open!

IRLAM STATION

WE'RE GOING PLACES

Working in partnership



Disclaimer:

This newspaper contains information regarding the history of Irlam Station and the surrounding area. Whilst this information has been widely researched, the creators accept no liability for any errors or omissions. Hamilton Davies Trust would like to thank the following for their invaluable contributions to the production of this newspaper: Irlam & Cadishead History Society, Co-Operative Society, Beamish Museum, Joan Hill, Pete Thomas, Neil Drum, and Margaret Vaudrey. For a complete list of information sources used in this publication, please visit our website www.hamiltondavies.org.uk



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