



Railway History Research Group

A special interest group of the Railway & Canal Historical Society – a registered Charity No. 256047
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NEWSLETTER No. 6

NOTES & QUERIES

N&Q 20 – M Greville Collection

I have received the following query(s) by direct email. Are any members of the Group able to shed confirmatory light on the matter

Andrew Jones

13th May 2014

I am an archivist of old Essex photographs and documents. Part of my archive contains a collection of c 3,000 photographs taken by Maurice Drummond Greville plus some postcards and prints he collected. Maurice Drummond Greville was a railway historian who wrote a number of books about the history of some of our railways. I am researching Maurice Drummond Greville. Some of the railway history books that Maurice Greville wrote include: Closed Passenger Lines of Great Britain, 1827-1947; Chronology of the Railways of Cheshire; Chronology of the Railways of Lancashire.

It was therefore of great interest to me to find the following note on your website:

"Greville collection: around 1000 prints collected in the 1950-70s of closed stations. Some are from commercially available sources and other photographers, but many were taken by M Greville himself. Print size is small (in some cases) and quality is variable. The Greville Collection specialises in studies of closed passenger stations and includes views of structures from the earliest time of public railways."

Given that the books Maurice Drummond Greville wrote were for the Railway and Canal History Society, given also the Railway history and photography connections between your M Greville and my Maurice Greville, also that your collection ends in the 1970s and my Maurice Greville died in 1977, your M Greville appears to me to be the Maurice Drummond Greville who photographed my collection.

I wonder if you might have any more information about your M Greville which might help to establish whether or not he is the Maurice Drummond Greville that I am researching? I believe I have a photograph of Maurice Drummond Greville, but I cannot be sure because I have not yet found any photographs of him to compare mine with. I wonder if your society might have a photograph of your M Greville?

Colleen Morrison

A follow up email followed hard on the heels of that first one:

15th May 2014

I've gleaned a little more information from your website which further confirms my belief that Maurice Drummond Greville and your M Greville are the same man.

An article on your website by Gordon Biddle, on the early history of your society, states:

"The inaugural meeting of the founder members in September 1954 was recorded in the Journal of July 1994: Bertram Baxter, C R Clinker, R A Cook, M D Greville, K P Seaward and myself, with Charles Hadfield and G O Holt *in absentia*. All the founders agreed to serve as a Council..."

"Greville was a short, stocky man, always wore a cap, smoked a pipe, and had a great sense of humour. He was very knowledgeable about all kinds of topics, and was very fond of animals. But underneath he was also very shrewd, and obviously had a quiet word with Clinker at times of tension. He was the oldest Council member, a former marine underwriter who devoted his retirement to researching closed lines and stations, through which he became close friends with Spence. A lot their work went into Clinker's Register of Closed Passenger Stations and Goods Depots..."

"...Early in 1956 Greville quietly proposed separating the positions of President and Chairman, to which the Council agreed, and after the AGM Greville took the chair with Hadfield as vice-chairman. Thereafter there was much less presidential interference and harmony reigned."

1. Biddle's description of M Greville perfectly fits the man in the photograph I have, which I believe to be of Maurice Drummond Greville.
2. Biddle refers to your man as MD Greville.
3. Biddle states that your M Greville was a batchelor - as was Maurice Drummond Greville.
4. I've been told that Maurice Drummond Greville was a friend of the family of John Horsley Denton, who it appears from your website, also wrote books on the railways for your society.
5. As you can see from Biddle's article MD Greville was a founder member of your society in 1954 and the second person to become Chairman of the society.

There are many puzzles in respect of Maurice Drummond Greville. The photograph collection of his that I have dates from 1922 to 1936 and some of these pictures appear to show members of some sort of history society on a tour of Essex villages. Maurice Drummond Greville may possibly have acted as the guide for these tours and was certainly the tour photographer. I wonder if this society might have been a precursor of your society?

There are - oddly - no photographs of Essex railways among the collection of Maurice Drummond Greville's photographs that I have. Yet many of the Essex villages MDG was touring were hot spots of interest for railway enthusiasts - the villages where the Crab & Winkle Railway had stations and halts, for example - most of which became victims of Beeching's axe in the 50s. I would think that Maurice Drummond Greville did take photographs of these railways but that these photographs are in another collection. As far as I can see, your society does not have copies of these Essex railway photographs, or does it?

Thank you for any advice that you might be able to provide in respect of my query.

Colleen Morrison

Re: N&Q 20 – M Greville Collection (1)

Greville was indeed a friend of John Horsley Denton and for a short time (late 1960s-early 1970s?) lodged with John's family at their Codsall (near Wolverhampton) home.

Neil Clarke

Re: N&Q 20 – M Greville Collection (2)

Re the enquiry about Greville. (In those days it was normal to refer to other members by their surnames only – a sign of friendliness). I didn't know him personally. He died about the time I joined the Society.

From 1956 until 1964 the R&CHS Journal carried Greville's annual listing of railway openings whose centenaries fell in that year. The early Journals in 1955-62 also carried a number of his articles and letters.

His obituary by his friend Jeffery Spence appears in vol. 23 (1977). He left a bequest to the Society which was used to publish a special 'Greville Memorial Issue' of the Journal in September 1979, containing articles specially written by a number of senior members and reprints of two of his own earlier articles. It includes a photograph taken some years previously of Greville with flat cap, pipe and zebra!

Grahame Boyes

N&Q 21 – Rhos to Birkenhead: 1914 Fare

I am seeking assistance concerning some research I am carrying out at Birmingham University for the Denbighshire History Society.

I am researching the life and times of George Jarvis, Miner and WW1 Bantam soldier (1891-1967) who lived at Rhosllanerchrugog near Wrexham. The specific query that I have relates to the attached cutting from the *Llangollen Advertiser* for the 8th January 1915. You will note that he could not afford the train from Rhos to Birkenhead and people have asked me the cost of the 3rd class single in 1914. The route would be presumably Rhos to Wrexham (GWR), Wrexham to Chester (GWR), and Chester Northgate to Birkenhead Central (Birkenhead Joint; GWR & LNWR). I have been unable to find the cost of the fare in spite of researches in TNA, queries to the NRM at York, and correspondence with members of the Wrexham Railway Society. The best estimate that we have been able to come up with was the 1d per mile listed in the Oxford Companion to British Railway History. For the 30 miles this would have been 2s. 6d., approximately the daily wage for a young North Wales miner in 1914?

Any further suggestions would be most gratefully received.

Professor Timothy J Peters

WAR BREVITIES.

George Jarvis, of Rhos, recently presented himself at the Rhos and district recruiting offices, but in each case was refused, owing to his failing to register the requisite number of inches. However, he determined to try and join the Bantam Battalion then in process of formation at Birkenhead. Not having the train fare, young Jarvis started on foot, setting out from Rhos about midnight, and arriving at Birkenhead at 11 o'clock next morning, having walked all the way. At the recruiting office at Birkenhead, Jarvis was examined, pronounced fit and enrolled on the spot. He is the only representative of Rhos in the Bantam Battalion.

Re: N&Q 21 – Rhos to Birkenhead: 1914 Fare (1)

“The route would be presumably Rhos to Wrexham (GWR), Wrexham to Chester (GWR), and Chester Northgate to Birkenhead Central (Birkenhead Joint; GWR & LNWR).”

I can't help about the fare, but the Chester - Birkenhead section of the rail journey would not have been from Northgate but from Chester General station (to Birkenhead Woodside), on the Birkenhead Joint.

Richard Maund

Re: N&Q 21 – Rhos to Birkenhead: 1914 Fare (2)

Evidence from TNA file RAIL 1057/3258 (GWR committee of enquiry into rates and fares, 1922) indicates that the standard 3rd class single fare pre-1917 was 1d per mile, increased on 1 Jan 1917 to 1½d and on 6 Aug 1920 to 1¾d. In May 1922 the GWR was proposing to the Railway Clearing House that the standard fare should be reduced 1½d per mile, but without looking at other files I cannot say what was actually agreed. However the GWR Ticket Examiners' Fare Book issued in 1923 (RAIL 253/424) gives the following 3rd class single fares from Chester: to Birkenhead Woodside 1s.11d.; to Wrexham 1s.6d. The add-on to Rhos is not given.

Grahame Boyes

WORK IN PROGRESS

WIP 3 – John Cooke Bourne (1814-1896), lithographer: ‘The Great Excavations’

The article by John van Laun in the RCHS Journal for March created quite a bit of interest. One of the strings centred on which railway was Dickens describing in *Dombey & Son* – was it the London & Birmingham as is generally supposed or the East & West India Docks & Birmingham Junction Railway? I was at the receiving end of a number of emails and eventually it was agreed that it really was the L&BR after all. I didn't think the exchange appropriate for the Journal, partly because it had more the character of work in progress, partly because, at the end of the day, the discussion went full circle. However, it was quite an interesting exchange and I thought it something that might be of interest to RHRG members.

Paul Reynolds

John Cooke Bourne (1814–1896), lithographer: ‘The Great Excavations’

(*RCHS Journal* March 2014, 2-17)

I believe there is an important erratum on p. 2 of the article, which I must confess is one that I have also been making. The Dickens passage from *Dombey & Son* was, I now believe, not ‘coloured by nostalgia’ for the works he witnessed ten years earlier in 1835-6 but describes the start of excavations for the East & West India Docks & Birmingham Junction Railway, later called the North London Railway, in 1846, the year he published the first section of the book. The descriptions relate very clearly to a much more built up area than that through which the L&BR was driven, and to poorer housing (‘tenements’) than would be found along the cutting to Euston. Other elements of the description also make more sense in the context of the NLR.

I do not take credit for this discovery myself; it is down to no less a researcher than David Hayes, editor of the *Camden History Review*.

Peter Darley

What follows (hopefully) substantiates my view that in chapter 6 of *Dombey and Son* Charles Dickens is referring to the works undertaken between the Regent's Canal and Euston rather than to works undertaken on the East & West India Docks & Birmingham Junction Railway (EWID&BJR) which was incorporated in 1846.

The dating of Chapter 6 Dombey & Son

From John Forster's *The Life of Charles Dickens* (London : Palmer, 1872-4) we can follow Dickens's movements at the time he wrote the piece relating to the ‘Excavations’. Chapter 6 was written in August 1846 and published in Part II of *Dombey and Son* in November. At the time he was in Lausanne, returning to England from Paris in February 1847 well before any works had begun on the EWID&BJR.¹ In itself this is sufficient evidence to discount this as the railway witnessed and described by Dickens as being under construction.

Which railway is described by Dickens?

There are two points which support the excavations as being those undertaken between Euston and the Regent's Canal rather than elsewhere.

Firstly the evidence contained in *Dombey and Son* clearly refers to Camden Town.

This euphonious locality was situated in a suburb, known by the inhabitants of Staggs's Gardens by the name of Camberling Town; a designation which

the Strangers' Map of London,² as printed (with a view to pleasant and commodious reference) on pocket handkerchiefs, condenses, with some show of reason, into Camden Town. Hither the two nurses bent their steps, accompanied by their charges; Richards carrying Paul, of course, and Susan leading little Florence by the hand, and giving her such jerks and pokes from time to time, as she considered it wholesome to administer.

It continues with 'The first shock of a great earthquake had, just at that period, rent the whole neighbourhood to its centre'. It might be argued that the 'Camden' described relates to the building of the EWID&BJR, but I have shown did not take place until well after the relevant chapter had been written and published.

My second point relates to the impact that the building of the Euston extension of 1836 had on Dickens, and that is therefore likely to have remained dormant in his literary mind until reawakened in 1846. This is supported by a mixture of Dickens's schoolboy anecdotes from his days at Wellington House Academy and more recent visits made by him to the site of the school. These are gleaned from Forster (a close friend of Dickens with a valuable collection of Dickens manuscripts to draw on):

There was a school in the Hampstead-road kept by Mr. Jones, a Welshman, to which my father dispatched me to ask for a card of terms. ... He came out, and gave me [Dickens] what I wanted; and hoped I should become a pupil. I did. ... I went as day scholar to Mr. Jones's establishment, which was in Mornington-place, and had its school-room sliced away by the Birmingham-railway, when that change came about. The school-room however was not threatened by directors or civil engineers then, and there was a board over the door graced with the words WELLINGTON HOUSE ACADEMY. [p. 45]

.We [Dickens recounting to Forster] went to look at the place only this last midsummer, and found that the railway had cut it up, root and branch. A great trunk line had swallowed the playground, sliced away the school-room, and pared off the corner of the house. Which, thus curtailed of its proportions, presented itself in a green stage of stucco, profile-wise towards the road, like a forlorn flat-iron without a handle, standing on end. [p.46]

One who knew him in those early days, Mr. Owen P. Thomas, thus writes to me [Forster] (February, 1871): "I had the honour of being Mr. Dickens's schoolfellow for about two years (1824-1826), both being day-scholars, at Mr. Jones's 'Classical and Commercial Academy', as then inscribed in front of the house, and which was situated at the corner of Granby Street and the Hampstead Road. The house stands now in its original state, but the school and large playground behind disappeared on the formation of the London and Northwestern Railway, which at this point runs in a slanting direction from Euston Square underneath the Hampstead Road. We were all companions and playmates when out of school, as well as fellow-students therein. [p.77] [Compare also with Fig. 3 in van Laun 2014.]

1. *Survey of London* (Hermione Hobhouse (ed.), *Survey of London. Vols. 43-44, Poplar, Blackwell and Isle of Dogs* (Athlone Press, 1994), pp. 336-44 states: "The East and West India Docks and Birmingham Junction Railway Company began building its line from Chalk Farm in 1847 [incorporated August 1846] , proceeding cautiously in the prevailing economic slump. Indeed, the controlling London and North Western Railway Company nearly aborted the project, but dock company resistance to abandonment, and confidence that the dock terminus would eventually pay, helped to ensure that the work continued. [In

was in fact completed in 1849.] Sources cited are PRO RAIL 410/20, nos 397, 483; 529/9, nos 152, 179: MiDS 3153/27–8.

2. Edward Mogg, *The Strangers Guide to London and Westminster exhibiting all the various alterations & improvements complete to the present time* (Mogg, 1834)

John van Laun

I am doubtful that Dickens was describing the E&W India Docks and Birmingham Junction Railway's works rather than those of the London & Birmingham, because the works cannot have been so dramatic or novel. The EWID&BJR largely skirted the built-up area, although impinging on existing development at specific points (Poplar, central Hackney, Dalston, Highbury Corner/Barnsbury and Camden Town). The Dickens descriptions seem to refer to the necessarily more disruptive effects of excavations, and I don't think we can include bridge foundations amongst those because the London Clay and locally overlying brickearth and gravels of north London do not require foundation pits of great size or depth. So that will rule out for instance Camden Town. The areas of cutting are through Barnsbury and Dalston and at Poplar, and they are not particularly deep. There were two tracks to be built, not four. Also, these works would have started only recently when Dickens was writing, the Act having been passed in August 1846 and land then needing to be acquired, although the pace may have been quick until the national shortage of capital slowed things down. (The first section from Highbury to Bow was not opened until Sept 1850). I suggest therefore that Dickens' memory of earlier events may have been refreshed by the new works but he had the more dramatic earlier events primarily in mind.

Malcolm Tucker

After an interchange with Malcolm Tucker, I now take a more considered view of the Dickens passage.

The timing in 1846, when the East & West India Docks & Birmingham Junction Railway was demolishing parts of Camden Town, must surely have been the trigger for the passage in *Dombey & Sons*. But the description of the chaos that ensued appears to be a fusion of these works and of his recollections of the L&BR excavations a decade earlier. It is true that much of his description relates to a cutting ("steep unnatural hill") and to streets dissected by the cutting. But there were very few houses pulled down by the L&BR, and the "unfinished walls and arches" and "ragged tenements" appear to describe the viaduct that was driven through the much more built-up area that was Camden Town in 1846.

So I am retracting my neck somewhat, and accept that the passage was "coloured by nostalgia"!

Peter Darley

I've never actually stated that Dickens was describing the building of the East & West India Line. Most of his account was clearly describing the L&BR excavation. I was merely concerned about the mismatch between his comments in relation to Camden Town, suggesting as they do a rather heavier impact on that area than was the reality. And, not knowing precisely when work began on the Camden Town end of the E&WID&BJR, I wondered whether Dickens' description might have been influenced by that, in view of that

line's greater effect (at least visually) on the then built-up area of Camden Town. If the work didn't start until 1847, that notion is clearly incorrect. I'm grateful to your correspondents for pointing that out.

I'm still concerned that Dickens' words overstate the effect of the L&BR works on Camden Town, which at that time extended only as far west as the east side of what is now Arlington Road. Except, that is, for Park Street, the only Camden Town street to be crossed by the railway, which otherwise ran through still undeveloped land on Lord Southampton's estate (strictly and maybe pedantically not part of Lord Camden's estate). And Granby Street and Hampstead Road, where the impact was greater, and the final approach to Euston, were both south of Camden Town.

Park Street must have been temporarily "stopped" for the excavation of the Parkway Tunnel, and a few houses were evidently demolished, witness a comparison of the St Pancras Poor Rate books of January 1834 and July 1837. In 1834 Park Street comprises houses numbered 1 to 121 - consecutively east along the north side and the back again along the south side, so that the lowest and highest numbers were at the railway end. In 1837 only numbers 1 and 5 to 121 are listed, suggesting that three houses on the north side have gone. This hardly constitutes the wholesale destruction that Dickens suggests.

Dickens, I think, must have either been using the terms Camberling and Camden Town very loosely, or projecting the greater mayhem further south northwards into Camden Town for literary effect. As for Stagg's Gardens, I can find no properties on or near the line of the L&BR that might match their description in either rate books or the 1834 Davies map, suggesting to me that they were a pure fabrication.

David Hayes