## 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*



# PLATFORM 2

STOURBRIDGE LINE USER GROUP

Issue 16 June 2019

Priestfield Tram Stop looking towards Bilston. The line from Dudley was joined by the line from Birmingham at Priestfield station just beyond the bridge in the background.

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## 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.

A GWR Hall takes the Dudley line at Priestfield station in 1957

(T J Edgington)

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.

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 | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| *Starts from* | *SBJ* | *SBJ* | *SBJ* | *SBJ* | *SBJ* | *WOS* | *SBJ* | | | *WOS* | | *SBJ* | *PAD* | *WOS* | *SBJ* |
| 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 | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| *Starts from* | *PAD* | *SBJ* | *....* | *SBJ* | *SBJ* | *WOS* | *SBJ* | *WOS* |
| 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 | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| *WOS* | *WOS* | *SBJ* | *WOS* |
| 1220 | 1546 | 2006 | 2146 |
| ↓ | ↓ | ↓ | ↓ |
| ↓ | ↓ | ↓ | ↓ |
| ↓ | ↓ | ↓ | ↓ |
| 1229 | 1555 | 2015 | 2155 |
| 1233 | 1559 | 2019 | ↓ |
| 1237 | 1603 | 2023 | 2202 |



## 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 |

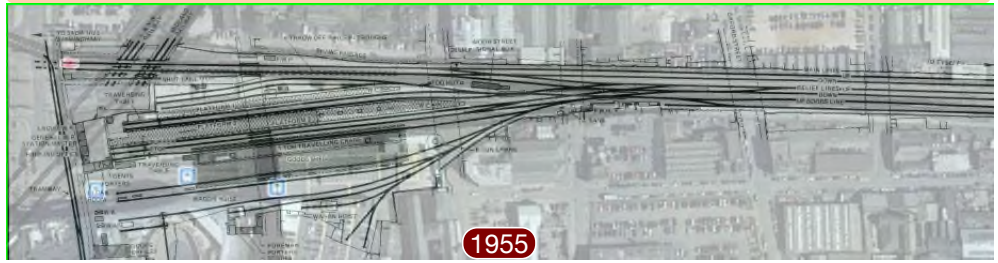
(1) Pop Will Eat Itself was formed in Stourbridge in 1986 (2) Jim Capaldi was born in Evesham and later lived and worked in Worcester (3) Ned's Atomic Dustbin was formed in Stourbridge in November 1987 (4) Robert Plant was born in Handsworth, raised in Kidderminster and later lived in Stourton (5) Carl 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

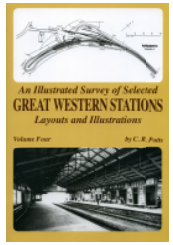
BIRMINGHAM SNOW HILL

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.

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.




*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.*

| 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 |
| *Continues to* | *KID* | *SBJ* | *SBJ* | *SBJ* | *SBJ* | *SBJ* | *SBJ* | *SBJ* |

| 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

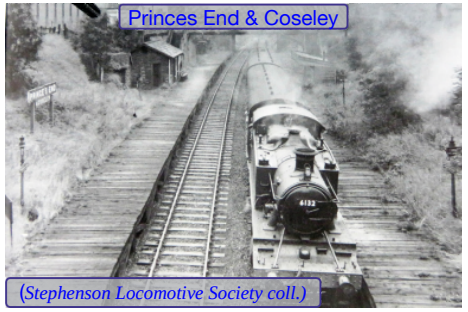
Bilston West

*(R G Nelson / T Walsh)*

Daisy Bank & Bradley

*(P J Garland / R S Carpenter coll)*

Princes End & Coseley



*(Stephenson Locomotive Society coll.)*

Tipton Five Ways

*(P J Garland / R S Carpenter coll)*

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 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| *Starts from* | *SBJ* | *SBJ* | *SBJ* | *SBJ* | *SBJ* | *SBJ* | *WOS* | *SBJ* | *WOS* | *SBJ* | *SBJ* |
| 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 | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| *Starts from* | *SBJ* | *SBJ* | *SBJ* | *SBJ* | *SBJ* | *SBJ* |
| 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 | 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 |
| *Continues to* | *BSW* | *WOF* | *SBJ* | *WOS* | *BSW* | *WOS* | *SBJ* | *SBJ* | *WOS* | *SBJ* | *WOS* | *SBJ* |

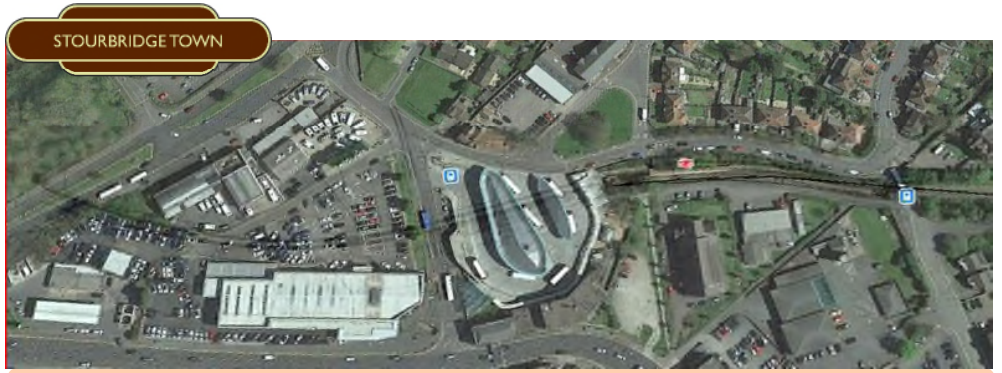
| SUNDAY | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Wolverhampton Low Level | 0730 | 0915 | 1350 | 1915 | 2105 | 2205 |
| Priestfield | 0734 | 0919 | 1354 | 1919 | 2109 | 2209 |
| Bilston West | 0737 | 0923 | 1357 | 1922 | 2112 | 2212 |
| Daisy Bank & Bradley | ↓ | ↓ | ↓ | ↓ | ↓ | ↓ |
| Princes End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

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?

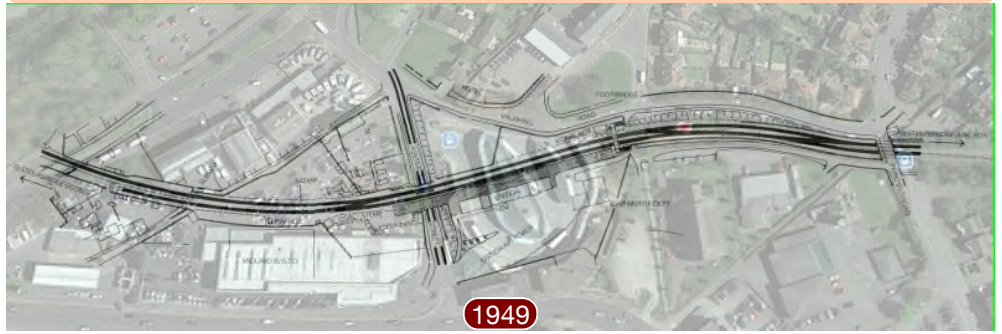


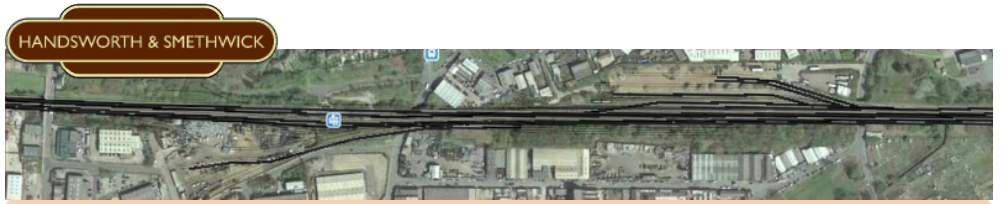
## TRACK RATIONALISATION ALONG THE STOURBRIDGE LINE
## Part 2 : Stourbridge Town to Birmingham Moor Street by Roger Davis

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.




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.




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

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.

The final passenger special arrives at Harborne hauled by no. 46429

(Geoffrey Head)

The final passenger special to depart from Harborne hauled by no. 46522

(Geoffrey Head)

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)*



## 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 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)

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

Smethwick West looking towards Oldbury Road

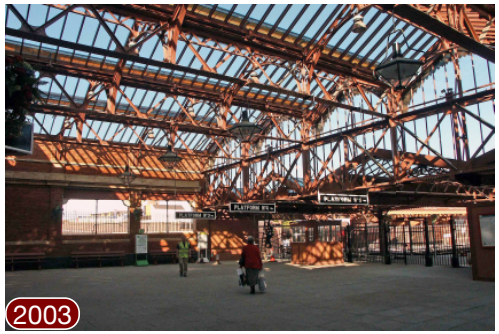
(T J Edgington)

**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

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

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.

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