

NORTH LANCASHIRE'S HISTORICAL COMMUNITY STATIONS

BARE LANE



An early photograph of Bare Lane station looking towards Morecambe. Photographer not known.



A steam-hauled freight stands at the signal as the level crossing gates are closed to road traffic, in the 1960's. Photograph courtesy of Noel Machell



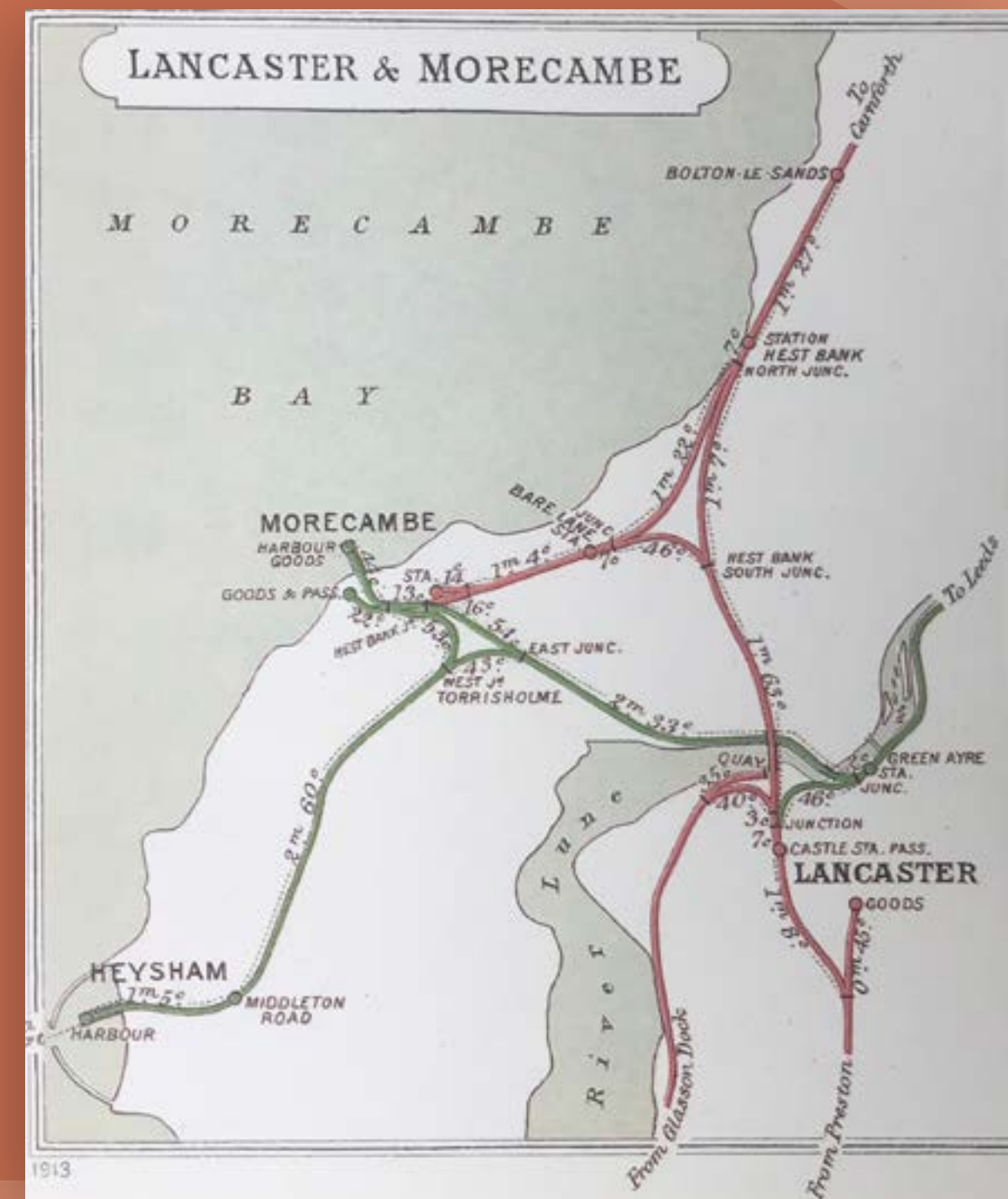
View of station and signal box in 1980. The former hand-operated crossing gates have been replaced by electric barriers and colour-light signals have superseded the earlier semaphores. Photograph courtesy of Brian Haworth



A Class 156 rolls into Bare Lane station in April 2019, with a local service from Morecambe to Lancaster. Photograph courtesy of Brian Haworth



156452 arrives at Bare Lane station on its short journey to Lancaster, in 2020. Photograph courtesy of Charlie Rouse



A BRIEF HISTORY OF BARE LANE STATION

Bare Lane Railway Station was opened by the London North Western Railway (LNWR) in August 1864 as Poulton-le-Sands, however, on 31st October that year the station was renamed Bare Lane. The station serves the village of Bare which is a northern suburb of Morecambe. The original stone-built station building still stands and is in private ownership.

The 1904 Railway Clearing House Handbook of Railway Stations shows the station having facilities for goods and passenger traffic. At this time there was no goods crane available in the small goods yard. The old goods office still stands at the entrance to the goods yard.

The LNWR ran most of its services to Morecambe Euston Road station through Bare Lane. Following the 'big-four' grouping in 1923 this usage changed, and eventually ceased, with the closure of Morecambe Euston Road in 1962.

Major diversions on the West Coast main line took place and several services were routed via Bare Lane, when Carlisle Bridge over the River Lune was rebuilt between 1962 and 1963. Later summer services from Morecambe to Barrow-in-Furness and Lakeside ran through Bare Lane and on through Hest Bank. The Heysham Port boat-train services also passed through. From 1966 onwards, Morecambe services from Leeds were routed via Carnforth and called at Bare Lane, following the closure of the more direct route from Wennington, via Lancaster Green Ayre, to Morecambe Promenade, under the 'Beeching axe'.

Currently, the station appears to have double tracks but these are actually operated as two separate bi-directional single lines. Platform 1 serves the up and down Morecambe line whilst platform 2 handles trains on the up and down Heysham branch. The line through platform 1 is basically a long siding into Morecambe station and the line through platform 2 connects to the single line branch to Heysham Port station at Holt Back junction. This junction is manually operated by train staff.

Leaving Bare Station travelling eastwards the double tracks split, one line curving north towards the West Coast Main Line at Hest Bank and the other curving south towards the main line and Lancaster Castle station. In recent times, Bare station has been promoted as a commuter station and a park-and-ride facility was introduced utilising the old goods yard.

There is a gated level crossing at the Morecambe end of the platforms, which until 2012 was controlled by the adjacent Bare Lane signal box, acting as a fringe box for the Preston Power Signal Box. The original wheel for operating the old crossing gates was known by the signalmen for being very 'heavy'. Following a signalling upgrade and the conversion of the level crossing to barrier operation, the box closed on 8th December 2012, when control of the crossing and associated signalling passed to Preston Power Signal Box.

Once the automatic barriers at the station have closed there is no way of crossing to the other platform. This initially caused difficulties for passengers and, as a temporary measure, staff were housed in the unused signal box to advise passengers as to which platform the train was going to arrive on. The signal box was finally removed in January 2014, following the introduction of remote station announcements and the installation of passenger information screens on both platforms.

There is an active station friends group at Bare Lane station, the Lancaster and District Conservation Volunteers, who have improved the station environment for local community, visitors and passengers, through their voluntary work.

