

NORTH LANCASHIRE'S HISTORICAL COMMUNITY STATIONS

MORECAMBE

A BRIEF HISTORY OF MORECAMBE'S STATIONS



An early picture of Morecambe Northumberland Street station shows a busy platform as a train approaches.



An early view of Morecambe Euston Road station, built by the London North Western Railway in 1886.



One of the three early Midland Railway electric units built at Derby, seen here at Morecambe Promenade.



One of the green liveried British Railways' EMUs, at Morecambe Promenade, which ran on the route from 1953 until closure in 1966.



Introduced in 1928, 2-6-2T number 42322 rests after arrival at Morecambe Promenade in 1963.



A shadow of its former self, Morecambe Promenade station 1980. Photo courtesy of Brian Haworth.



The original Morecambe Promenade station now an entertainment venue, public house and tourist information centre. Photo courtesy of Brian Haworth.



Class 158 No.755 awaits departure from the present Morecambe station in the summer of 2020. Photo courtesy of Charlie Rouse.

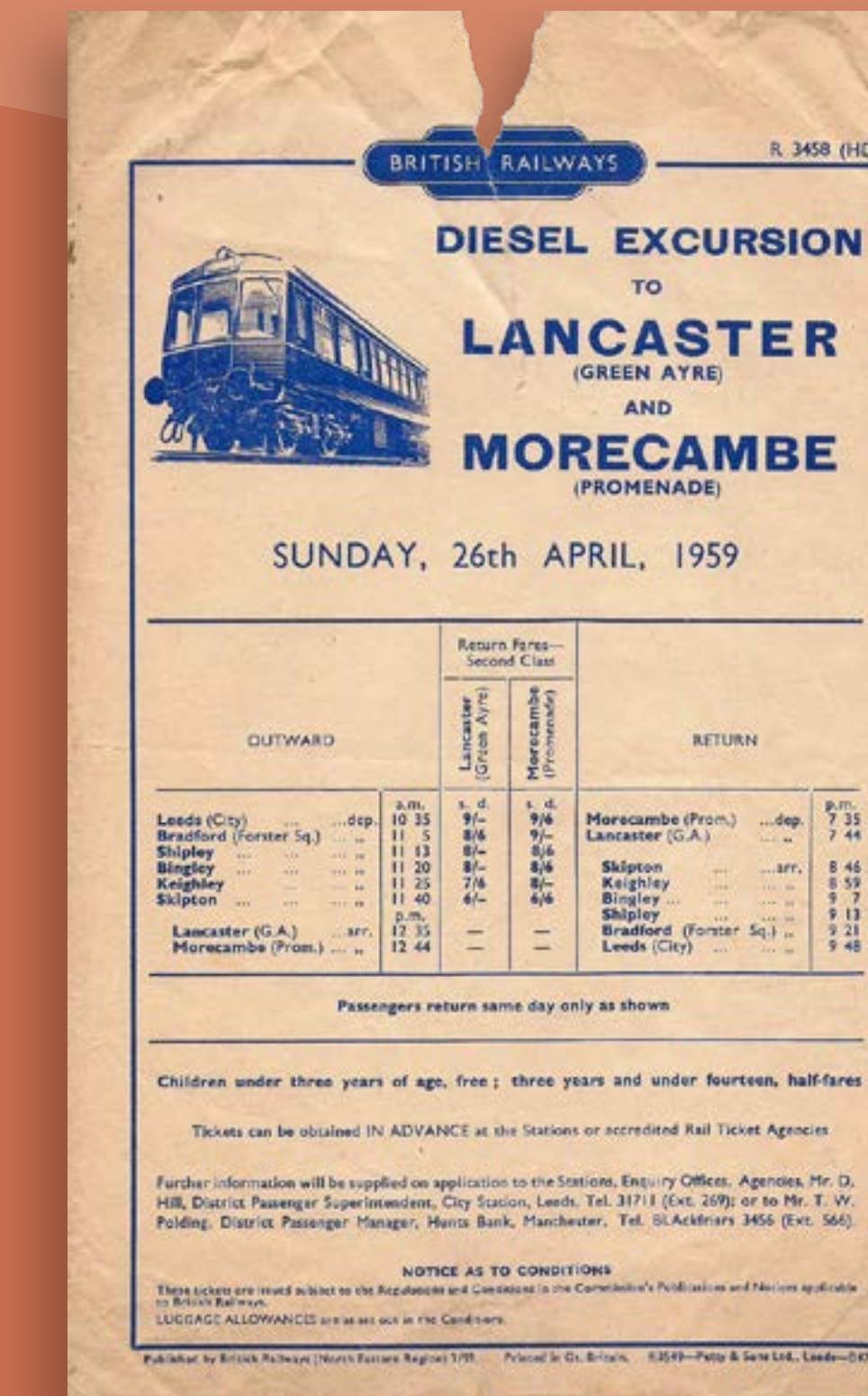
The history of Morecambe's many railway stations is quite complicated. The first railway to Morecambe was constructed by the Morecambe Harbour and Dock Company. Its two-platform terminus station, called Morecambe Northumberland Street, opened in 1848. In 1848 the Morecambe Harbour and Dock Company was amalgamated with the 'Little' North Western Railway, which in turn became fully incorporated into the Midland Railway in 1871.

This two-platform station eventually struggled to cope with high passenger levels and, consequently, the Midland Railway built a grand replacement station, named Morecambe Promenade, which opened on 24th March 1907. The new station with its large concourse and extensive facilities was designed to cope with the rising holiday traffic to Morecambe. The station had four long platforms for passenger traffic and goods yards. It is said that quality stone used in the building of Northumberland Street station was reused in the building of Morecambe Promenade station. Carefully chosen, the station site was across from the Midland Railway's hotel giving rail passengers bound for the Isle of Man or Barrow-in-Furness an opportunity to stay the night and continue their journey the following day, boarding their boat from the nearby Stone Jetty. The Stone Jetty, part of which still stands today, was constructed under the watchful eye of railway engineer Richard Smallman and was built as a wharf and railway terminal for passengers and cargo, part of which still stands today.

The branch from Morecambe Promenade station to Heysham Harbour was electrified by the Midland Railway on 13th April 1908 and electrification of the line to Lancaster soon followed. The company produced its own electricity at a power generating station in Heysham and three new 3-car electric multiple units were built at Derby to operate the service.

The London North Western Railway built its own branch line to Morecambe in 1864 from a junction at Hest Bank. Initially, the branch ran into Morecambe Northumberland Street station but traffic levels became a problem so the LNWR built its own single platformed station at Euston Road. By 1895 the single-platform was proving to be inadequate for the traffic and two new island platforms at Euston Road were constructed by the LNWR.

On 1st January 1923, the grouping of the many smaller rail companies into four much larger ones put both Morecambe railway stations under the control of the London Midland and Scottish Railway and their full titles at this time became Morecambe Euston Road and Morecambe Promenade. The Promenade station soon became the busiest but Euston Road was invaluable during the summer months in coping with holiday traffic.



The LMS built the iconic Art Deco Midland Hotel in 1933, on the Promenade adjacent to the station. This new hotel replaced the original North Western Hotel built by the 'Little' North Western Railway after purchasing the site in 1846. It was renamed the Midland Hotel when the Midland Railway took over in 1871. The Art Deco Midland Hotel passed out of railway hands in 1952, 19 years later, when it was sold by the British Transport Commission.

On 1st January 1948, following the nationalisation of the railways, both stations came under the British Railways' London Midland Region and as traffic levels declined all passenger services except for holiday traffic were diverted to Promenade Station. The 1962 summer timetable was the last to feature Euston Road station and the 4:25 pm service to Lancaster on 8th September was the last scheduled passenger departure from the station.

For a short time many of the station buildings were used for parcels traffic. The station tracks and associated sidings were then used for empty-stock storage and the goods facilities remained open until 9th October 1970. The old goods shed which served Euston Road station buildings still stands in use as a builders merchants. British Railways wanted to build a new station at Morecambe in connection with the aborted Heysham Curve proposal which would have seen a new station built close to the site of Euston Road station.

By the late 1980s, passenger numbers had fallen dramatically at Morecambe Promenade station and, after much discussion, in 1993 the decision was taken to close the Promenade station and replace it with a smaller station, to be sited further inland closer to the town centre, near to the site of the old Northumberland Street station. The Promenade station closed on the 7th February 1994. However, the impressive station building has survived and is now used as an entertainment venue. It is also home to the tourism office and a public house. The Festival Market, car parks and a cinema now stand on the area formerly occupied by the platforms and sidings.

The new station named, simply, Morecambe opened in 1994 with two platforms and additional track work to cater for the occasional excursion train. The much smaller new station building has a waiting room and ticket office. Terminating services usually run into platform 1. Through services to Heysham Port have to use platform 2, to enable them to gain access to the Heysham branch. The lines to platforms 1 and 2 connect at a junction just east of a Bare Lane station, whilst the Heysham branch is controlled by a ground frame near Morecambe station.

