

ECCLES STATION

NEWS

FEBRUARY 2012

The contents of this month's e issue are as follows:

News section, Articles, Trip of the Month.

NEWS

*See the articles section **about the great big event that people have been waiting years for.** We felt that ESN couldn't ignore it!*

The **FRECCLES 'Trip of the Month'** is to **Stafford** which is a very pleasant county town with good shops and old buildings:



The journey is a quick one using Cross Country expresses from making use of the **connections** mentioned in our **CHANGING TRAINS** article.

*The next gardening day at the station is at **11.00 on Sunday February 5th.**
Bring your gloves and wellies or boots. Give us a hand please!*

Electrification work is continuing on the line from Manchester to Liverpool. The vast majority of our trains will operate as normal but at quieter times there will be some changes in February and beyond:

On Mondays to Thursdays: The 22.39 and 23.09 departures from Manchester to Eccles and stations to Liverpool **will be replaced by a bus**. The last two trains from Liverpool will run to Earlestown, and from there to Eccles and Manchester will be **replaced by a bus**, calling at Eccles at 23.48 and 00.53 respectively. **Notice that the Friday and Saturday night trains run as normal.**

On Saturdays from 18th Feb the stretch between Earlestown and Lime Street will be covered by bus but Newton/Eccles/ Manchester/ Stalybridge trains still run.

On Sundays from 19th February all trains will be replaced by buses.

*There is progress on the **new building for the front of Eccles Station.** Network rail are in discussion with the Local Authority to take over ownership of part of the bridge so they can put the building on it. Northern Rail has put out to tender the drawing up of plans for the new ticket office. There is to be a progress meeting on Tuesday 7th February at Network Rail's offices in Manchester. Freccles attendees hope to use their influence to make sure that the building is **attractive** as well as **functional.***

Great news for 'RALE' drinkers! The art nouveau pavilion at York Station, left empty by the closure of the model railway exhibition, has now been converted into the York Tap. A great range of well kept micro brewery beers (at reasonable prices for York!) is served from hand pumps on an old style small circular bar. This has been placed centrally giving a spacious feel to the seating and bar serving area.



The building has been cleaned and tastefully decorated within and without, producing an elegant place to try the products of England's brewers and brewsters.

Photo courtesy of J E Rayner

At long last the painting of the Forth Bridge IS finished!

This is because of a new paint system that is expected to last for twenty years even with the weather on the River Forth. The paint, of a type used on North Sea oil rigs, was formulated and supplied by Leigh's Paints (of Mule Street, Bolton) who also formulated specialist paint for the Barlow train shed at St. Pancras.



Photo by Network Rail (see websites below)

The system consists of a base layer of zinc phosphate primer on the bare steel, to act electrochemically against potential corrosion. Then there is a thick

second coat consisting of glass flakes in epoxy resin – the glass flakes arrange like minute tiles to protect all that is under them. The top coat is then an acrylic urethane which gives a polish like finish, and this is the ‘Forth Bridge Red’ – a colour used only on this bridge.

See: <http://www.leighspaints.com/en/CompletedProjects.aspx>

<http://www.networkrail.co.uk/Custom/Templates/NetworkRailNewsArchiveSummary.aspx?id=30064778430>

<http://www.networkrail.co.uk/Forth-Bridge-repainting-finally-complete.aspx>

On Monday 11th January Justine Greening announced in parliament that the **HS2 project** will go ahead. This will provide a **new very high speed line from London (Euston) to Birmingham**, cutting the journey time and taking trains off the very busy line through Rugby. The project will cost some £17,000,000,000 and take many years to complete. Planning will also start for extending the route in a ‘Y’ shape to Manchester and Leeds.

During January the coping stones on the parapet of the bridge at the top of Church Street were replaced with hard to climb ones in readiness for electrification. Work was also carried out on the old sandstone parapet wall at the opposite side.

ARTICLES

THE EVENT OF THE YEAR.

As you have probably guessed by now, we are talking of **The Preston Guild Fair** taking place in 2012. The main event will take place in September but there will be plenty other events and items of interest in the run up to that. Therefore during this year we shall be including a series of articles about Preston, and what you can do and see there. Here is the first:

HISTORIC TOWN It is situated on the River Ribble, and because it is the lowest bridging point of that river it has been of significance since at least

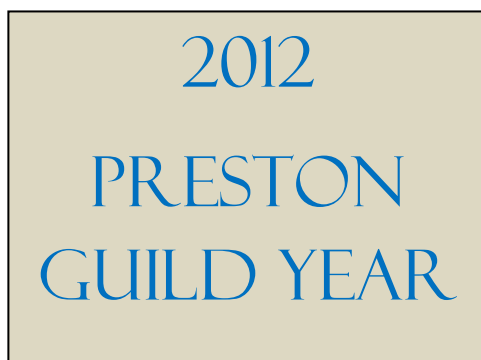
Roman Times if not earlier. Many Roman artefacts have been found in the area, and some of these are in the Harris Museum.

COUNTY TOWN It is the administrative centre of Lancashire (Lancaster is the 'county town' or city) as that county is currently constituted, but it was also the county town for old Lancashire from 1835 to 1974.

This proper Lancashire was bigger and certainly more industrious than many countries in the world. It included Liverpool, Warrington, Manchester and Ashton-under-Lyne in the south; Oldham, Rochdale, Littleborough, Bacup, Burnley, and Colne in the east; Lancaster, Morecambe and Carnforth in the north; then a detached portion comprising Ulverston, and Barrow in Furness! As a result Preston was a large town and has a large number of civic buildings, some of which are very impressive.

COKETOWN There is also much evidence of its industrial past in cotton and engineering, not all of which is attractive. In Dickens's novel 'Hard Times' there is a generic Northern Mill-Town called 'Coketown'. The novel is critical of the ideas and living standards in the industrial towns, and many believe that Preston was the model he had in mind for this fictional town.

CITY Preston was given its Royal Charter as a City in 2002 to mark the 50th year of Queen Elizabeth II's reign.



For up to date details of the Guild see: <http://www.prestonguild2012.com/>

NORTHERN RAIL CUP 2012

Once again Northern Rail is sponsoring a **rugby league competition**. Matches begin on the 12th February and lead to a final play off on 29th July 2012.

Here are the fixtures:

Round 1 - 12 February 2012

Home team			Away team	Kick off
London Skolars	-	v	Toulouse Olympique	13:00
Keighley Cougars	-	v	Batley Bulldogs	14:00
Dewsbury Rams	-	v	Halifax	15:00
Gateshead Thunder	-	v	Doncaster	15:00
Hunslet Hawks	-	v	Whitehaven	15:00
Leigh Centurions	-	v	Barrow Raiders	15:00
Oldham Roughyeds	-	v	Featherstone Rovers	15:00
Rochdale Hornets	-	v	South Wales Scorpions	15:00
Workington Town	-	v	Sheffield Eagles	15:00
York City Knights	-	v	Swinton Lions	15:00

Round 2 - 18 February 2012

Home team			Away team	Kick off
Toulouse Olympique	-	v	Keighley Cougars	19:00

Round 2 - 19 February 2012

Home team			Away team	Kick off
Barrow Raiders	-	v	Workington Town	14:00
Swinton Lions	-	v	Hunslet Hawks	14:00
Batley Bulldogs	-	v	London Skolars	15:00
Doncaster	-	v	York City Knights	15:00
Featherstone Rovers	-	v	Dewsbury Rams	15:00
Halifax	-	v	Rochdale Hornets	15:00
Sheffield Eagles	-	v	Leigh Centurions	15:00
South Wales Scorpions	-	v	Oldham Roughyeds	15:00
Whitehaven	-	v	Gateshead Thunder	15:00

Round 3 - 25 February 2012

Home team			Away team	Kick off
Batley Bulldogs	-	v	Toulouse Olympique	18:00

Round 3 - 26 February 2012

Home team			Away team	Kick off
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Barrow Raiders	-	v	-	Swinton Lions	14:00
Doncaster	-	v	-	Sheffield Eagles	15:00
Halifax	-	v	-	Featherstone Rovers	15:00
Leigh Centurions	-	v	-	Hunslet Hawks	15:00
Oldham Roughyeds	-	v	-	Dewsbury Rams	15:00
Rochdale Hornets	-	v	-	Keighley Cougars	15:00
South Wales Scorpions	-	v	-	London Skolars	15:00
Workington Town	-	v	-	Whitehaven	15:00
York City Knights	-	v	-	Gateshead Thunder	15:00

Round 4 - 2 March 2012

Home team				Away team	Kick off
Sheffield Eagles	-	v	-	York City Knights	19:30

Round 4 - 3 March 2012

Home team				Away team	Kick off
Toulouse Olympique	-	v	-	South Wales Scorpions	19:00

Round 4 - 4 March 2012

Home team				Away team	Kick off
Keighley Cougars	-	v	-	Oldham Roughyeds	14:00
Swinton Lions	-	v	-	Workington Town	14:00
Dewsbury Rams	-	v	-	Rochdale Hornets	15:00
Featherstone Rovers	-	v	-	Batley Bulldogs	15:00
Gateshead Thunder	-	v	-	Leigh Centurions	15:00
Hunslet Hawks	-	v	-	Doncaster	15:00
London Skolars	-	v	-	Halifax	15:00
Whitehaven	-	v	-	Barrow Raiders	15:00

Quarter Finals - weekend of June 16/17

Semi Finals - weekend of July 7/8

Final - July 29

For up to date details as the competition progresses see:

<http://www.northernrail.org/northernrailcup/fixtures>

Tuesday, 30th December 1941

This month we continue our narration of the dreadful railway accident at Eccles with the story of events immediately following the collision that occurred at 08.18. Signalman Lowe was shocked but stayed at his post, and then received a further shock when fog man Patten (whom he thought was on duty) reported to the box for duty at 08.30.

Between Eccles and Ladywell.

The track around where Gilda Brook road crosses the railway was strewn with wreckage, casualties, and personal belongings. It was still dark and densely foggy. Almost immediately, uninjured passengers began rescue and assistance to those injured. Small fires were lit from wooden wreckage to illuminate the scene. Pieces were used as splints, and panels used as ad hoc stretchers*. Despite his injuries and being considerably shaken by his experience Driver Mountford helped with the rescue work until he was taken to hospital an hour later.

Emergency teams began to arrive from about 15 minutes after the impact. They then took control and ferried the injured along the platforms and up the station stairs to ambulances waiting outside the station on Church Street. These then ferried casualties to one of Hope Hospital or Eccles & Patricroft Hospital. Many people were trapped underneath the wreckage and some of these were dead. They could only be released once lifting gear had arrived with the breakdown crew from Patricroft engine sheds. Bright portable lights were set up to improve visibility. Doctors in white coats administered morphine to the seriously injured. One of the last to be released, and who did survive, was a red haired workman who had been one of the first to be located four and a half hours before. A nearby house had become a reception centre for those with minor injuries or in shock. All the male casualties were identified by the afternoon but identification of the female victims proved to be a problem because they carried their ID cards in purses and handbags that were scattered amongst the wreckage and along the tracks.

While this took place skilled railway investigators had to begin their examination of the locomotives, carriages, wreckage, signalling equipment and the signal log to identify the causes of the crash. This data would be needed for an inquiry held routinely by The Railway Inspectorate following any railway accident.

*The carriages were wooden bodied or wooden frames with outer metal panelling.

Casualty Reports

The accident was reported in the late night final edition of the MANCHESTER EVENING NEWS of Tuesday December 30th 1941, under the heading of “**16 Killed and 100 Injured in Eccles Rail Crash**”. The names of 10 dead are given and it states that 6 of the dead (women) had yet to be identified. There is also a list of 46 injured taken to Hope Hospital and of 30 injured taken to Eccles and Patricroft Hospital and a statement that a driver and fireman were taken to hospital - presumably Driver Mountfield and fireman Ashcroft of the train to Pennington.

The Wednesday December 31st issue of the MEN reports that “**Eccles Railway Crash Death Roll Reaches 19**” gives a list of the dead, and states that 5 of the injured are still very ill.

From these lists we find:

Eccles area residents killed

Jack Creswell (sic)	Highfield Drive	Monton
James Hope	Park Drive	Monton
Oswald Charles Johnson	Nelson Avenue	Monton
Vera Davies (21)	Pine Grove	Monton
Jessie Dawson (28)	Cambrai Crescent	Winton
Joan Veronica Beeson (16)	Anson Street	Monton

The edition on the day the inquiry opened (Wednesday Jan 7th) reports a 21st death and the 27th January edition reports the 23rd (and final) death from the accident. These were not Eccles residents. I could find no reports of the 20th and 22nd deaths.

Eccles area residents injured (Hope Hospital)

Mr L T Basketter	Greencroft Road	Monton
Olive M Langan	Cambrai Crescent	Monton
I Proctor (woman)	Westwood Crescent	Monton
L Fryer (woman)	Nansen Avenue	Monton
Mrs Robins	Parrin Lane	Monton
Ermine Tonge	Park Drive	Monton
Frederick Coates	Maulden Drive	Monton
William Needham	Algernon Street	Monton
Clifford Bell	Pine Grove	Monton
R M Greenlees (male)	Grange Drive	Monton
James Bradshaw	Pine Grove	Monton

Eccles area residents injured (Eccles and Patricroft Hospital)

Kathleen Barlow	Verdun Road	Monton
Irene Davies	Pine Grove	Monton
Marjorie (Bate?)	Egerton Terrace	Monton

One family's tragedy

Freccles researcher Mary Eminson has examined reports in the Eccles and Patricroft Journal of the time and has also contacted the Cresswell family. The results are displayed in a poster case at the station and here is the story relating to Jack Cresswell.

One of those killed was Jack Cresswell, of Highfield Drive, Monton. Jack was a senior employee of the London, Midland & Scottish Railway, an Assistant District Locomotive Superintendent, travelling to Manchester to work at Longsight depot. His death had an impact on many people: two of his sons, Bert (87) and Peter (79) have vivid memories of that time and what followed.

Bert, 17 in 1941, was working in Salford when a driver told him there had been a serious train crash at 8.15am. Bert immediately knew his father would be on that train. He ran all the way back to Eccles, first to the station where he looked over the wall and down the steps at the station, but could see nothing, so thick was the fog. He ran back home, his Mother did not even know of the accident. 'We started ringing the hospitals, but no joy. Eventually we phoned the police; they said "He's marked dead." The phrase sticks in my mind still. I had to break the news to Mother, widowed at 44 with four children.'

Peter, only 8, was not told directly of what had happened but realised his father had died. When the funeral took place, he was sent to the back room of a neighbour – funerals were no place for children in the 1940s – 'I had to piece it together for myself'. But Peter also remembers the sadness and worries afterwards – his mother's grief; her anxieties for the eldest son, also called Jack, in the RAF as aircrew; for Bert who went in to the Navy and was escorting transatlantic shipping (both incredibly risky jobs), as she struggled to look after Peter (in poor health, then) and the fourth brother Dennis (12). There were many tears.

Managing was made harder by shortness of money. Mrs Cresswell went to court, with the widow of another LMS employee killed in the crash, Mrs

Johnson, for the compensation which the family were to live on – it was ‘peanuts’, Bert remembers. The judge’s words were harsh ‘You’re a very attractive lady – I’ll pay it in instalments.’ (In other words, - he expected to her remarry and the payments could then be stopped.) Such attitudes made the difficulties harder to bear.

An extra twist in this sad story is that Jack Cresswell’s job had previously been based at Patricroft engine depot – and it was the workmen from Patricroft who found his body on the track.

Changing trains 12

This article covers **Cross Country** train connections available from Manchester Piccadilly Station to Birmingham then the South and South West of the country. Once again this is a fast and frequent service. Even on Sundays the trains are hourly till the afternoon, and then follow the half hourly weekday pattern given below.

Trains run from 05.11 in the morning until mid to late evening on Monday to Saturday. Departures to **Birmingham** are twice hourly for most of the day with a journey time of about 90 minutes. Stations served on the way are Stockport, Macclesfield, Stoke on Trent, Stafford and Wolverhampton.

The xx.07 trains continue to Cheltenham, Bristol Parkway and Bristol Temple Meads. A handful of these trains go further to serve Weston-super- Mare, Taunton, Tiverton Parkway, Exeter, Dawlish, Teignmouth and Newton Abbot; then Torquay, and **Paignton**, or else Totnes, and **Plymouth**.

The xx.37 trains continue from Birmingham to serve Birmingham International, Coventry, Leamington Spa, Banbury, Oxford, Reading, Basingstoke, Winchester, Southampton Airport, Southampton Central, Brockenhurst, and **Bournemouth**.

As with the Virgin trains to London very cheap fares are available if you book a specific seat on a specific train in advance. The summer timetable will probably bring more trains running through into Devon and Cornwall.

On Sundays the trains from Eccles usually run direct to Piccadilly and on to the airport (but check – electrification will alter this on some Sundays). On weekdays take the train from Eccles to Victoria and transfer by tram to Manchester Piccadilly. From the tram platforms you can ascend to the main concourse for your train.

Next month we shall cover more of the express services available from Piccadilly.

TRIP OF THE MONTH

This month we recommend **trip No 98** which is:

STAFFORD – a very pleasant change.

Take a trip on an express train to Stafford, an attractive county town. It packs many shops, pubs, cafes, and lovely buildings into a very small centre that is easy to stroll around.



The city museum
and the ancient St
Chad's church in
Stafford centre.

Photos by J E Rayner



The total journey takes one and three quarter hours – much of it through attractive countryside. The off peak fare is £20 return. Ask if it covers metrolink between Victoria and Piccadilly.

If you have a Greater Manchester pass or travel card, ask for a ticket from Stockport – this should be a little cheaper.

Just buy your ticket at Eccles station and off you go whenever you fancy!

For the itinerary see:

<http://www.freccles.org.uk/pdf/Railway%20trips%2098.pdf>

Why not join freccles? It is only £5 a year and this contribution helps us to improve the gardens and tubs at the station as well as to campaign for a better station and services.

To find out more about **FRECCLES** or to make contact see our **website:** www.freccles.org or e-mail us at info@freccles.org.uk

