

## The First Journeys, 1840

### Sheffield to Derby, 11<sup>th</sup> May 1840

Yesterday the first train of carriages left the Sheffield station for London. Half-past five a.m. was the time appointed but owing to delays the train did not move until seven minutes to six. The first impression produced on the minds of the passengers was that they were moving at a slow pace, by timing the distances, however, this was found not to be the case, but that it arose from the easy motion of the carriages. The comparative stillness was no less remarkable. Now appearing in the distance across the valley, the curious corkscrew steeple of Chesterfield Church. Chesterfield Station was reached at half-past seven. The distance to Derby was still 24 miles, all hopes of getting there by the specified time of arrival, had now vanished.

An additional engine was now put to the rear to expedite the speed on the ascent to Clay Cross, which after passing North Wingfield, was approached and our intended entrance to the tunnel was announced by the frequent shrill and terrific whistle from the engine. Immediately we were in complete darkness, proceeding at the time at a slow pace, which passengers imaging arose from proper and necessary caution, however a complete standstill was reached about two-thirds of the way through. It was soon ascertained an insufficiency of steam was the cause of this. Mr

Stephenson, who could be identified by his Northumbrian dialect (for he could not be seen), complained on the mismanagement of ordering the extra engine away when it was most needed. 15 minutes later we got into open day. We got to South Wingfield Station at about 8 o'clock. We arrived Derby about half-past 9.

## The First Journeys, 1840

### Leeds to Derby, 1<sup>st</sup> July 1840

The directors, accompanied by their friends, to the number of several hundreds, in thirty-four carriages, drawn by two powerful engines, proceeded from Leeds at eight o'clock in the morning, to Derby where they met the directors of that end of the line. At twenty-four minutes past ten the train arrived at Masbro' Station, where a number of passengers had arrived from Sheffield. After a few minutes rest, to allow the engines to receive water, the train moved on and arrived at Belper, at 14 minutes before one, stayed four minutes, and at 10 minutes past one, stopped within the truly splendid and extensive station at

Derby where was provided a cold collation, nowise unacceptable to the travellers.

The stay at Derby occupied about an hour, or rather more, it being judged necessary to return as soon as possible, on account of the time occupied in the trip. Consequently, at half-past two, the shrill whistle of the engine gave the note of departure. The time occupied in the return, however, was not so long as in going. The train left Derby at half-past two and arrived in Leeds at five minutes before seven o'clock – four hours and twenty five minutes, the distance being  $73\frac{1}{2}$  miles [118 km], and the train a quarter of a mile [400 m] long.

As reported in the *Sheffield Iris*

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