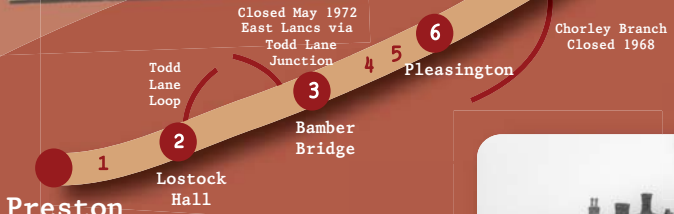
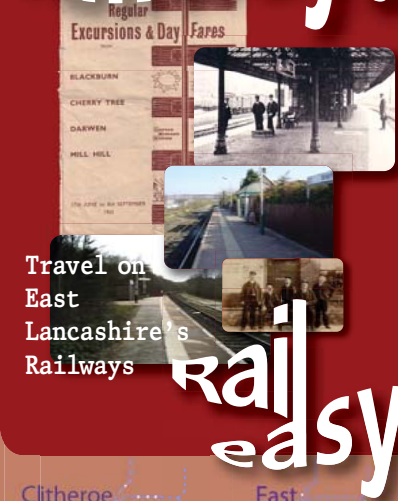


East Lancashire Historical Community railways



Preston to Colne Line Features

1. Farington Curve Junction

Soon after departing Preston and shortly after crossing the River Ribble on the West Coast main line we branch away from the main line at Farington Curve Junction accompanied by the Ormskirk line. The Ormskirk line diverges away to our right. As we lean into a tight curve the flange wheels of our train squealing in protest traces of the line to Liverpool can be seen on our right heading towards Moss Lane Junction.

2. Lostock Hall

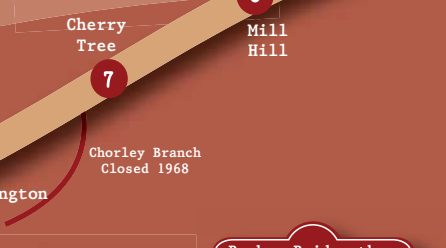
The site of the old engine sheds can be seen on our right as we approach Lostock Hall station. The original station built in 1881 was closed in 1969 and was located adjacent to the engine sheds. The station was rebuilt and reopened in its present location (on the other side of the road bridge) in 1984. Immediately on departure from the station the old track bed of the Todd Lane curve can be seen on the left now heavily overgrown.

3. Bamber Bridge

As we approach Bamber Bridge station the remains of what was once a large bustling goods yard can be noted on the left and here also the East Lancashire Railway Companies line to Preston via Todd Lane Junction trailed off through the yard. This line closed in 1972. At Bamber Bridge some of the East Lancashire Railway buildings still survive on our right as we run into the station. Also worthy of note on our right as we leave the station is a fine Lancashire and Yorkshire signal Box built in 1906.

4. Hoghton

A housing estate now marks the site of Hoghton station adjacent to the level crossing. At the summit of the gradient and nesting beneath Hoghton Towers the site of the old stone sidings can just be made out on our right. (A small private halt existed here from 1847 to 1848)



5. Hoghton Viaduct

The line now plunges down the bank towards Hoghton Bottoms and it is here at the foot of the bank where the engineer Joseph Locke encountered his first major problem during the line's construction. Standing 116 feet above the riverbed the splendid, graceful three-arched Hoghton Viaduct. The first stone of this structure was laid on the 18 December 1844 and took eighteen months to complete.

6. Pleasington

Pleasington is the next station and although its pretty original station buildings are long since demolished it still exudes the feeling of the archetype English country station. Soon after leaving the station a tree lined embankment can be seen curving towards us on our right. This was the line to Chorley, which opened on 1 November 1869, and closed fully in 1968. As we approach Cherry Tree the track bed trails in to meet us at what was once Cherry Tree Junction.

7. Cherry Tree

At Cherry Tree station an original goods warehouse, recently restored, can be seen on our left as we enter the station.

8. Mill Hill

Mill Hill was the last of the stations to be built on the line in December 1887. It is an island platform and once hosted a busy goods yard serving the local mills. As at Cherry Tree another large stone goods shed in private ownership survives on our left as we leave the station.

9. Bolton Junction

On the approach to Blackburn the line from Bolton drops in to join us on the right at Bolton Junction. Another large stone goods shed still served by rail stands proudly on our right with some colourful murals highlighting its history set into the window arches, and on our left the King Street coal branch trails in. As we run into Blackburn the old turntable pit can be made out on our left.

10. Blackburn

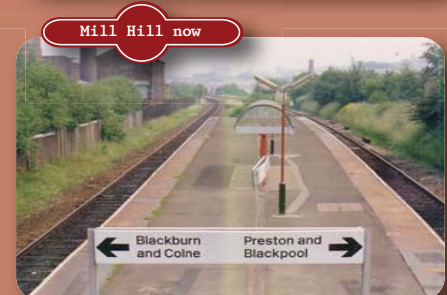
Blackburn is the major junction station for East Lancashire's community railways. Recently rebuilt only the station frontage remains of the original build. What is left however is worth looking at in particular the lovely station clock surrounded by some beautiful carved stonework depicting the Lancashire and Yorkshire Railway Companies coat of arms. On departure from Blackburn we immediately run into the curved 435 yard Blackburn Tunnel and soon we reach Daisyfield Junction where the Ribble Valley line trails off to our left. A large goods yard once occupied the neck of this junction serving the mills and heavy engineering works that filled the area.

11. Whitebirk

At Whitebirk the North Lancashire loop to Great Harwood trailed in on the left but the site of the junction is now difficult to spot.

12. Rishton

Approaching Rishton we are carried past two reservoirs on an embankment before running through the short 68 yard Rishton Tunnel and on into the pleasant station complete with a graceful lattice footbridge. Soon after departure from Rishton we run onto a high embankment carrying us over the Aspen valley. When the line was first constructed the valley was spanned on a massive wooden trestle viaduct of 33 single 25 feet spans reaching a maximum height of 70 feet above the valley floor. Built in 1848 a railway servant was employed permanently on site as fire warden. The Viaduct was slowly filled in and by 1925 the old wooden structure had disappeared beneath the embankment.



13. Church & Oswaldtwistle

On the approach to Church and Oswaldtwistle Station we pass over the ornate coach road bridge before running on to the seven 40 foot spans of Church Viaduct. Parts of the original tiled subway are still in use here and take us to Oswaldtwistle Mills.



14. Accrington

Accrington is our next station but on the approach the site of the old engine sheds can be noted on the right its large flat area hemmed in with embankments slowly returning to nature. Accrington station is a pale shadow of its former self. At the end of the platform on our right as we leave the station the steeply inclined line to Manchester via Clifton Junction (opened 1848), headed off up the notorious Baxenden Bank, which regularly tested the skills of the engine men. Immediately on leaving the station and on a tight curve we run onto the massive Accrington Viaduct, which affords us magnificent views of Accrington nestling below. Built on a curve of 40 chains radius the 21 arches were originally built in brick but this structure was demolished and rebuilt in stone in 1867 at a cost of £11,215.

15. Huncoat

Running into Huncoat it is hard to visualise the scale of industry, which once surrounded the station. A colliery, brickworks and a power station were all served by the railway connected via a series of branch lines that fanned out from the station. The sharp-eyed will spot the embankment of the old line into the brickworks, which was carried, across the valley on a brick viaduct (the remains of which can still be found). The signal box on our right as we run into the station (the last to be built by the Lancashire and Yorkshire Railway) is worthy of note.

16. Hapton

Hapton station shorn of its buildings is now a basic halt its goods yard and sidings long gone.

17. Rose Grove

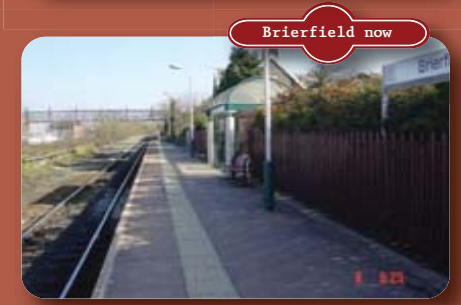
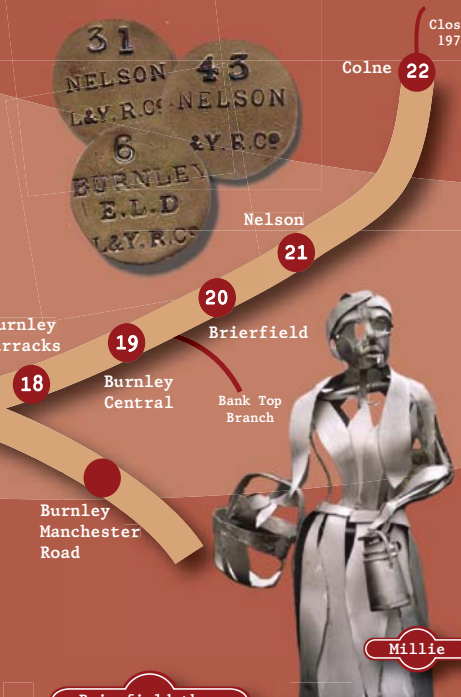
On the approach to Rose Grove the truncated remains of the North Lancashire loop line trails in on our left and again on our left the site of Rose Grove engine sheds have disappeared under the motorway tarmac. Running into the island platform Rose Grove station the site of what was once a massive goods yard has been covered with bland industrial units. Signs of railway activity goods loops and abandoned track formations and bridges abound as we leave the station towards Gannow Junction. Here the Copy Pit line diverges away to our right and we head off towards Burnley on the single-track line.

18. Burnley Barracks

Set in a deep cutting and hemmed in with over bridges this is the smallest station on the line. Traces of its compact goods yard can be made out on the left as we run into the station. Departing the station we soon roll onto Burnley Viaduct its 15 stone spans carrying us high over Burnley's rooftops. Built in 1848 the viaduct did give the engineers problems during construction with at least one partial collapse occurring.

19. Burnley Central

As soon as we run off the viaduct we run into Burnley Central station built on a curve. To the left once stood a large goods yard and as we leave the station traces of the Bank Top branch which served the local colliery can be seen on our right. The sharp-eyed will spot an old semaphore signal on the right as we proceed out of Burnley.



20. Brierfield

Approaching Brierfield the site of its large goods yard can be seen and a fine Lancashire and Yorkshire signal box survives on our right as we run into the platform. The original stationmasters house survives in private ownership on our right its front gate still opening on to the platform. A large lattice footbridge complements the station its span betraying the size of one of its former goods yards. Brierfield was noted for the copious amounts of watercress, which passed through the station and was delivered all over the country by the railway. On departure from the station we quickly pass through the short Brierfield tunnel and head towards Nelson.

21. Nelson

Traces of goods yards on both sides of the line can be spotted on the approach to the station. Nelson station, an island platform, still retains its original ornate and attractive canopy.

22. Colne

Colne is the terminus station on the line, the through line to Skipton being closed on 1 February 1970. Prior to arrival and on a high embankment the site of the old engine shed and large carriage sidings can be noted on our right prior to us rolling onto Primet viaduct of six stone spans and into Colne station. Again it is hard to imagine the amount of railway infrastructure that once existed here. A few years ago this station was in very poor condition but recently has seen investment and a significant work of art erected within the station gardens.

Further Information

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Train service information can be obtained by calling 08457 484950 or by picking up Northern train times guides 9 and 12 from staffed stations or visit:
www.elcrp.org
www.ribblevalleyrail.co.uk

Acknowledgement:

The Clitheroe Line and East Lancashire Line Community Rail Partnerships wish to thank the Lancashire & Yorkshire Railway Society and Ribble Valley Rail for permission to use their photographs in this leaflet.

East Lancashire's Historical Community Railways

Both East Lancashire's historical community railway lines when built served mills, markets and villages. The arrival of the railway resulted in a social and economic revolution which significantly changed forever the way of life in the communities that the lines passed through. Both lines cross through contrasting urban and rural landscapes. From bleak moorland to lush fertile meadows, from terrace towns with blue slate roofs to pretty rural villages. The traveller is carried over magnificent graceful and imposing viaducts, through dark mysterious tunnels, along raised embankments affording splendid views and through deep cuttings the banks of which are festooned with wild flowers.

These are East Lancashire's Historical Community Railways.

Sit back and enjoy!

Bolton to Clitheroe Line Features

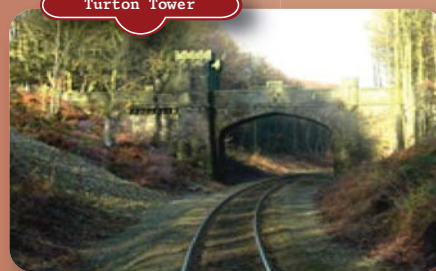
The Line between Bolton and Clitheroe opened in stages between 1847 and 1850.

1. The Croal and Tonge Viaducts

Departing Bolton the Croal viaduct carries the line over what was once the terminal basin of the Manchester, Bolton and Bury canal (long filled in). The Viaduct is constructed of six masonry arches of 36 feet span and four cast iron spans of 78 feet. The Tonge viaduct is crossed shortly after the Croal viaduct and is almost half a mile in length, its arches towering 73 feet above the River Tonge. This Viaduct is unusual in that it contained a junction part way across that led to Astley Bridge. The remains of this long closed branch can be noted trailing in from the left as we cross the viaduct, its stone arches 345 yards long curving away carrying nothing more than Silver Birch saplings which create a green roof garden across the industrial landscape below.

2. Bromley Cross Station

As we run into this station several original buildings can be seen surviving on our right. Worthy of note is the station clock set into the wall of the building and still keeping good time. The well maintained signal box at the end of the platform on the same side as the station buildings is also worth a second glance.



3. Castellated Over Bridges at Turton Tower

Two ornate over bridges are passed under after leaving Bromley Cross. The local landowner insisted on the unique design before he would allow the Railway Company to build across his land. The landowner may have been a train spotter, as within the design of one of the bridges there was a staircase leading to the top of the turret with a stone bench in place to allow him to sit and observe the passage of trains!

4. Bradshaw Brook Viaduct

This 120 foot high viaduct of nine semi circular spans carries us high over Bradshaw Brook. The viaduct used seven million bricks during its construction and the scaffolding costs alone ran to £9000 in 1847/48.

5. Entwistle Station

Running into this small isolated station it is almost impossible to believe what railway infrastructure existed here. An island platform with station buildings, gas lights and a goods yard with a large wooden shed. Four through tracks spanned with a lattice footbridge, all watched over by a signal box mounted rather precariously on a girder support system spanning two of the tracks.

6. Sough Tunnel

Not long after leaving Entwistle on a falling gradient of 1 in 74 we plunge into the 2015 yards long Sough Tunnel. During construction this tunnel was worked from 15 shafts. The tunnel is 17 ft 6 ins high and 24 foot wide and the north portal is decorated with two round turrets. During construction several large streams were hit and complicated drainage systems were developed, some of which can be seen from the train on our right as we approach the tunnel mouth from the Bolton direction.



10. Blackburn Station

Crossing Darwen Street bridge which cost £16,981 13s 7d to build between 1883 & 1885 we come into Blackburn Station. The old turntable pit can be made out on the left as we run in. The relatively new station is the major station on East Lancashire's Community Railways.

11. Blackburn Tunnel

Departing Blackburn we immediately enter Blackburn tunnel 435 yards in length. Emerging in a cutting within a few yards we reach Daisyfield Junction, where we trail off to the left leaving the East Lancs line and head towards Clitheroe on the Ribble Valley line. Daisyfield Signal Box is worthy of note on our right as we pass the site of the former Daisyfield Station.

12. Cob Wall Viaduct

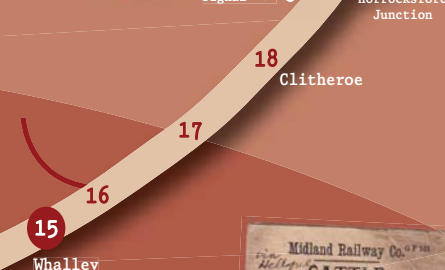
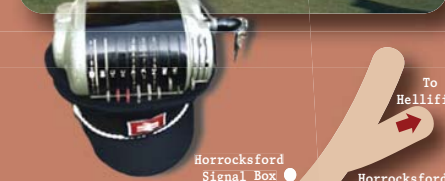
This viaduct built on slight curve consists of eight stone spans carrying us high over Little Harwood Brook and a couple of roads.

13. Ramsgreave & Wilpshire Station

This station was rebuilt on a new site when the line reopened in 1994. The old station building can be noted on our right shortly after leaving the station. The old concrete platform still stands on our left. Running on into a deep cutting we pass into the 325 yard long Wilpshire Tunnel.

14. Langho Station

Langho is the next station stop. A typical country station that once employed five staff is now an unmanned halt.



Bolton



7. Darwen Station

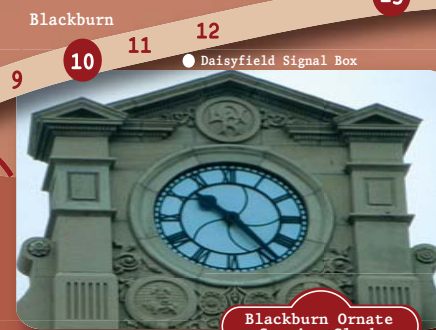
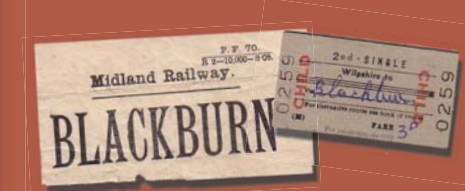
As we arrive at this station the one remaining original building, the Station Masters House, can be seen on our left standing high above the town nestling in the valley below.

8. Hoddlesden Branch

Shortly after departure from Darwen a massive stone retaining wall on our right marks the site of the junction for the Hoddlesden branch, which, trailed in from the right. Closed in 1962, sections of the embankments of this branch can be seen across the fields marking the original track alignment as we descend towards Blackburn.

9. Bolton Junction

As we approach Blackburn a large original stone goods warehouse still stands in use on our right as we trail into the East Lancs, Preston to Colne line, which is on our left. The out of use King Street coal sidings can be noted on our left.



15. Whalley Viaduct and Station

Leaving Langho on a falling gradient and passing through a long deep cutting we suddenly find ourselves on Whalley Viaduct. This magnificent structure dominates the valley and affords us spectacular views of Whalley and the Abbey. The viaduct is constructed of 48 brick arches, is 679 yards long and carries us 70 feet above the River Calder. Seven million bricks and 436,000 cubic feet of stone were used in its construction at a cost of £35,000. Arches 12 & 13 collapsed during construction killing three men. Immediately we run off the viaduct we enter Whalley station with original buildings surviving on our left.

16. Calderstones Branch

Shortly after departure from Whalley and in open countryside the trained eye can note the long abandoned track bed of the Calderstones branch trailing in our left. The railway fence set back from the line gives away the location. This branch served Queen Mary's Military Hospital during the war.

17. Primrose Viaduct

Approaching Clitheroe we pass across Primrose Viaduct. This 120 yard long viaduct was originally seven stone spans with one wooden centre span, but in 1870 the centre span was replaced with stone.

18. Clitheroe Station

Clitheroe Castle hoves in to view on our right and we roll into Clitheroe station. As we approach the platforms the observant will notice the huge stone base, which originally held the water tower for steam engine use. The old station building still stands in use as an art gallery and the sympathetically built Interchange building sits well along side it.