

As is well known, Buxton is the highest market town of any considerable size in England, at 1,000 ft above sea level. There is a steep climb from Whaley Bridge to Bibbingtons Sidings, beyond Dove Holes, and a similarly steep climb out of Buxton northwards to the Sidings. Photos taken at the Sidings bear a strong resemblance to Dalwhinnie, on the Perth - Inverness main line, with weather to match at times during our colder winters!

The Midland Railway opened a station in Buxton on 1<sup>st</sup> June 1863, to serve the route into the town via Ashwood Dale, and the LNWR opened its architecturally similar station on an adjacent site two weeks later, when its line from Whaley Bridge opened for passenger traffic. Buxton LNWR shed opened in 1892, as a sub-shed to Longsight, and was coded 16B. It was responsible for the three small sheds on the Cromford and High Peak Railway, which, by then, had been absorbed by the LNWR. Buxton LNWR shed was located on the east side of the Buxton - Whaley Bridge line, a short distance north of the station. It had a northlight pattern roof, with (initially) six roads, and was surrounded by sidings, on which many locos were stabled, together with a turntable. The Midland Railway had a small two-road shed in Bridge Street, near to its station, but this closed in 1935, when the MR locos moved to the LNWR shed. In the same year, the latter shed was given the code 9D, which it retained until 1963, when it became 9L, thus allowing Newton Heath to be re-coded from 26A to 9D. A new mechanical coaler was installed at the ex-LNWR shed in 1935.

The opening of Buxton LNWR shed (which replaced a small shed on the site of the later diesel depot) coincided with the opening of the Buxton - Hindlow line for freight (mainly stone from the quarries at Hindlow), this line being extended to join the North Staffordshire Railway at Ashbourne by 1899 and serving the quarries at Dowlow *en route* also. Dowlow is the highest point on the line, at 1,260 feet, and is reached after a 1 in 60 climb from Buxton.

The Buxton - Manchester (London Road) passenger services utilised 'Prince' 4-6-2T and 'Precursor' 4-4-2T locos, joined during early LMS days by a few ex-LYR Hughes 'Baltic' 4-6-4Ts on trial, whilst the Buxton - Manchester (Central) services via the Midland route were largely powered by ex-MR 4-4-0s. The advent of the well-known Fowler 'Riverside' 2-6-4Ts by the early 1930s led to the displacement of many of the earlier locos and the new 2-6-4Ts became the mainstay of the passenger services on all the lines in the Buxton area until the DMUs arrived during the 1950s.

By Nationalisation (1<sup>st</sup> January 1948), Buxton shed had 58 locos allocated, as follows:

MR	2P	4-4-0	438/79/83	Total 3
LMS	2P	4-4-0	693	Total 1
MR	1P	0-4-4T	1278, 1421 ( <i>later 58042, 58084</i> )	Total 2
LMS	4P	2-6-4T	2306/15/8/65-8/70-1	Total 9
LMS	5F Hughes/Fowler	2-6-0	2942-3	Total 2
MR	3F	0-6-0	3268-9/71/4/8/82/96, 3387	Total 8
MR	4F	0-6-0	3842, 4019	Total 2
LMS	4F	0-6-0	4080, 4309/60/5/82, 4548	Total 6
LNWR	1P "Chopper"	2-4-0T	26428 ( <i>later 58092</i> )	Total 1
LNWR	1P	2-4-2T	6738	Total 1
LNWR	7F	0-8-4T	7936/54	Total 2
LMS	8F	2-8-0	8326, 8451/64, 8558, 8712	Total 5
LNWR	7F G2A	0-8-0	9009/59, 9132, 9212/4/6/24-5/40, 9305/15/26/31/47/76/86	Total 16

The large number of ex-LNWR 'Super D' 0-8-0s on the allocation will be noted, as it was these locos, together with the Fowler 2-6-4Ts and ex-MR 0-6-0s, which made up the typical 9D motive power from the 1930s until the early 1960s. Some of the Manchester (London Road) to Buxton passenger services were worked by Longsight (9A) locos and these duties brought Stanier 2-6-4Ts and 'Crab' 2-6-0s from 9A to Buxton in addition to the usual Fowler 2-6-4Ts and occasional Class 5 4-6-0s. In October 1956, the first DMUs appeared at Buxton, these being 'Derby Lightweights', but they were soon followed by the Birmingham RCW units (later Class 104), which, in their green livery with 'speed



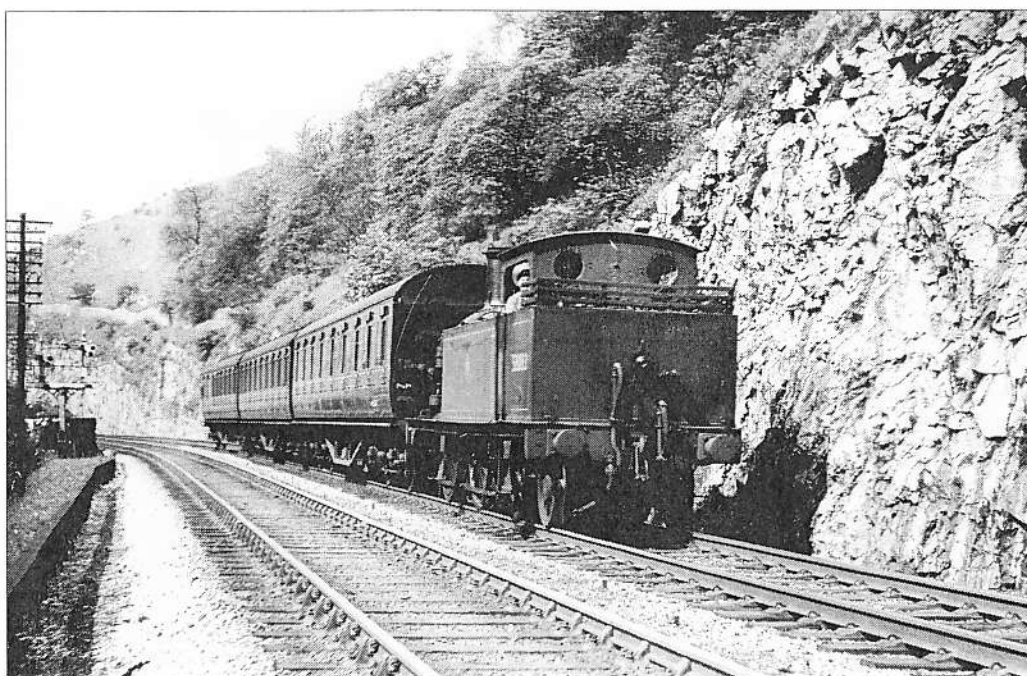
**'Crab' 2-6-0 No. 42942 (a 9D favourite), on a Manchester (London Road) - Buxton train, approaches Middlewood on 15<sup>th</sup> March 1952.**

*Photo: © B K B Green*

whiskers' and white cab ends, looked smart. On the Manchester workings, they displayed 'B3' headcodes. However, despite the coming of the DMUs, some of the Monday - Friday evening peak trains on this route were steam-worked until 1960, and this also applied to the 7.30 am and 7.50 am Buxton - Manchester (London Road) 'commuter' trains. The 7.30 am was regularly worked by a 9D 'Crab', 42942, which was kept in clean condition and was clearly a 'star performer' on this turn.

Turning to the ex-MR Buxton - Millers Dale line via Ashwood Dale, in late LMS days, the Johnson 0-4-4Ts 1278 and 1421 had worked this line and, in May 1952, Webb 2-4-2T 46616 (which had been at Buxton since LMS days) was tried on the push-pull duties. Next to arrive were Stanier 0-4-4Ts 41905-6, which were withdrawn from 9D in November 1959 after a period in store. DMUs were introduced in 1957 but, in October of that year, 3F 0-6-0 43329 worked a through London coach from Buxton to Millers Dale, where it was attached to the rear of the 9 am from Manchester (Central) to St Pancras (prior to 1914, Buxton had a through carriage to Euston, worked via Ashbourne and Nuneaton). As late as January 1962, 2-6-4T 42314 worked the Buxton - Millers Dale service owing to a shortage of DMUs but, not being push-pull fitted, had to 'run round' after each journey. By 1966, railbuses E79961/4, of German build, were in use to save on operating costs but, on 6<sup>th</sup> March 1967, the service was withdrawn as a result of the closure of Buxton (Midland) station.

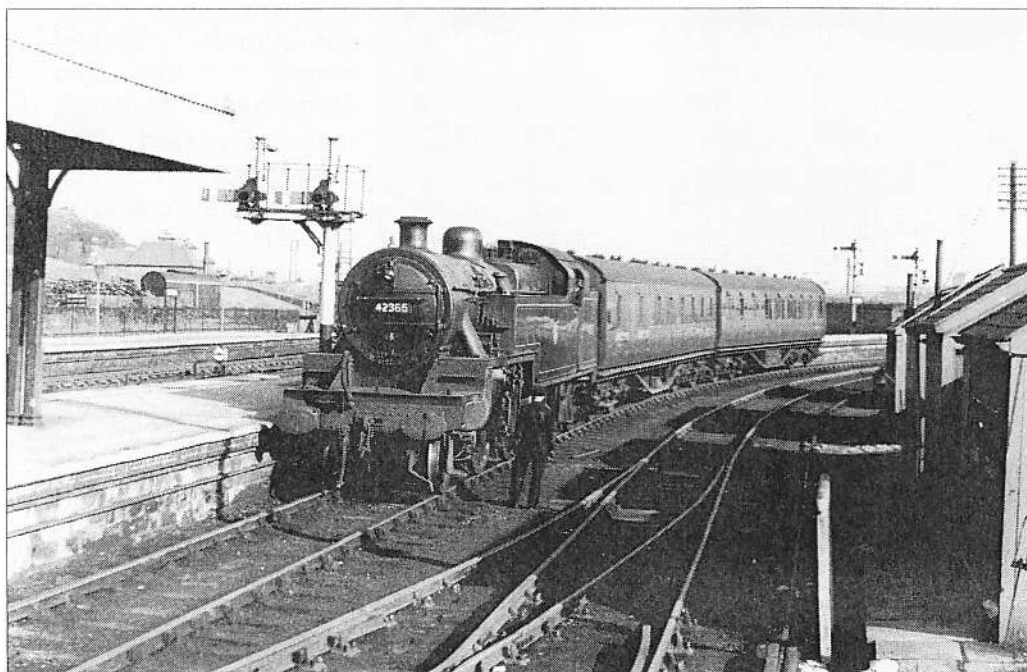
In 1951, the 7.5 am Buxton (Midland) - Manchester (Central) and 5.22 pm back were worked by Kentish Town 'Jubilees', as fill-in turns between their duties on the St Pancras - Manchester expresses. These trains became famous during the 1960s, when Trafford Park and Longsight 'Royal Scots', plus 'Rebuilt Patriot' 45522 and, latterly, 'Jubilee' 45705 were observed working them (by this time, the next day's working from Buxton left at 8 am). The locos were serviced at Buxton shed overnight.



**Ex-MR 0-4-4T No. 58083 (9D) is working a Buxton - Millers Dale push-pull service past Rusher Cutting on 25<sup>th</sup> May 1952.**

*Photo: © E R Morten*





**Fowler 2-6-4T No. 42365 (9D) arrives at Buxton with the 11.40 am from Ashbourne on 30<sup>th</sup> October 1954.**

**Photo: © E R Morten**

In early 1963, Buxton's last Fowler 2-6-4T, 42379, left for Newton Heath but, prior to this, locos of this class had regular workings between Chinley and Sheffield (Midland), these turns later being taken over by Ivatt Class 2 2-6-0s, of which 46401/2/65/80/4/5/92 and 46505 spent periods working from Buxton shed. The Ivatt locos also replaced the 4F 0-6-0s on local freight and banking turns – for example, shunting at Hartington and Parsley Hay on the Ashbourne line – and were popular owing to their enclosed cabs.

On the Ashbourne line, the passenger services were regularly worked by 42368 (9D), although the last scheduled Buxton - Ashbourne train on 30<sup>th</sup> October 1954 had 42665 (5F). The line was still used for freight and excursion traffic (in particular, for well-dressings) until 17<sup>th</sup> October 1963, when it closed south of Hartington. However, during the severe winter of 1963, the line had been kept open with great difficulty, owing to exceptional snowfall. On 21<sup>st</sup> January, a trip to Briggs Sidings (between Hindlow and Hurdlow) from Buxton took all morning to complete, with two 4F 0-6-0s and 2-8-0 48441 (6C) coupled together. The locos managed to reach Ashbourne, pausing to deliver bread and provisions at Hartington, which was cut off from road access. Two of Buxton's locos, 44339 and 49210, had been fitted with snowploughs and 49210 and 49406 also had tender cabs.

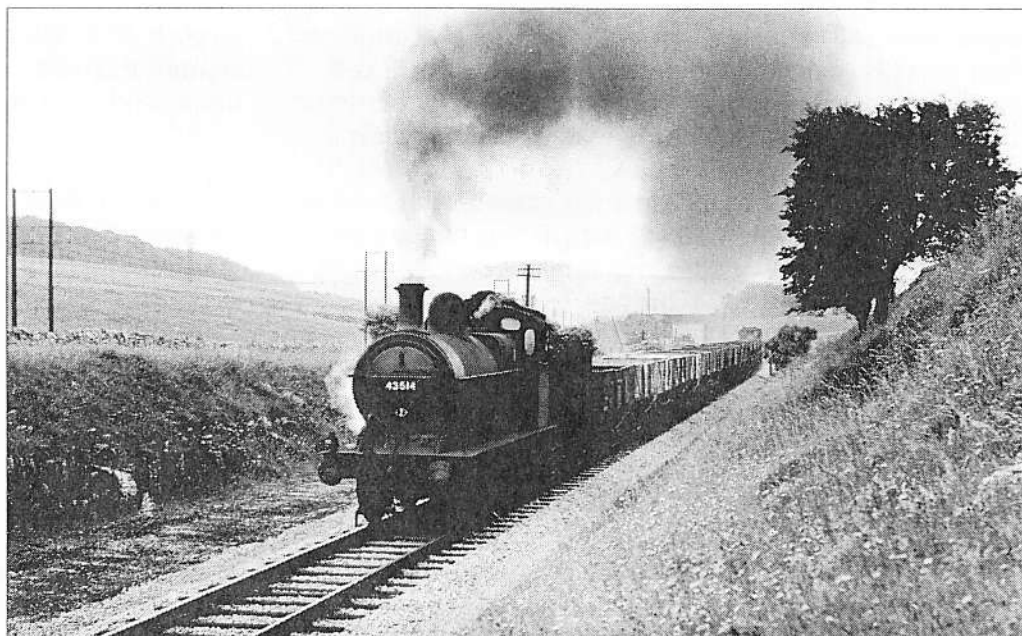


**Stanier 8F 2-8-0 No. 48744 is seen passing Chinley on an up freight on 22<sup>nd</sup> April 1967. 48744 was the last steam loco to leave 9L on 3<sup>rd</sup> March 1968, after which the shed was closed.**

**Photo: © E R Morten**

A brief reference is needed at this stage to the Cromford and High Peak Railway, with which the Ashbourne line connected at Parsley Hay. Locomotives working on the CHPR had been based at Rowsley (17D) for maintenance purposes but, when Rowsley shed closed in 1964, followed by the closure of the Middleton Incline, the locomotives working the Middleton - Friden section (J94 0-6-0STs 68012/79) were transferred to 9L for maintenance. When the CHPR closed in April 1967, 68006/12 were the last locomotives in use on the line.

Owing to the severe gradients encountered in the Buxton area, many freight trains needed banking at the rear and all freight classes at Buxton shed, from 3F 0-6-0s to 8F 2-8-0s, took turns on these duties. The 7F 0-8-0s had worked the Buxton - Ashbourne freights and it is noteworthy that the preserved example, 49395, was based at 9D from April 1957 to November 1959, being withdrawn from there. By late 1962, all the 0-8-0s were in store, except 49406, which was the



**Ex-MR 3F 0-6-0 No. 43514 (9D) is seen on the Buxton - Ashbourne line at Staden (between Higher Buxton and Hindlow) on 25<sup>th</sup> July 1962.**

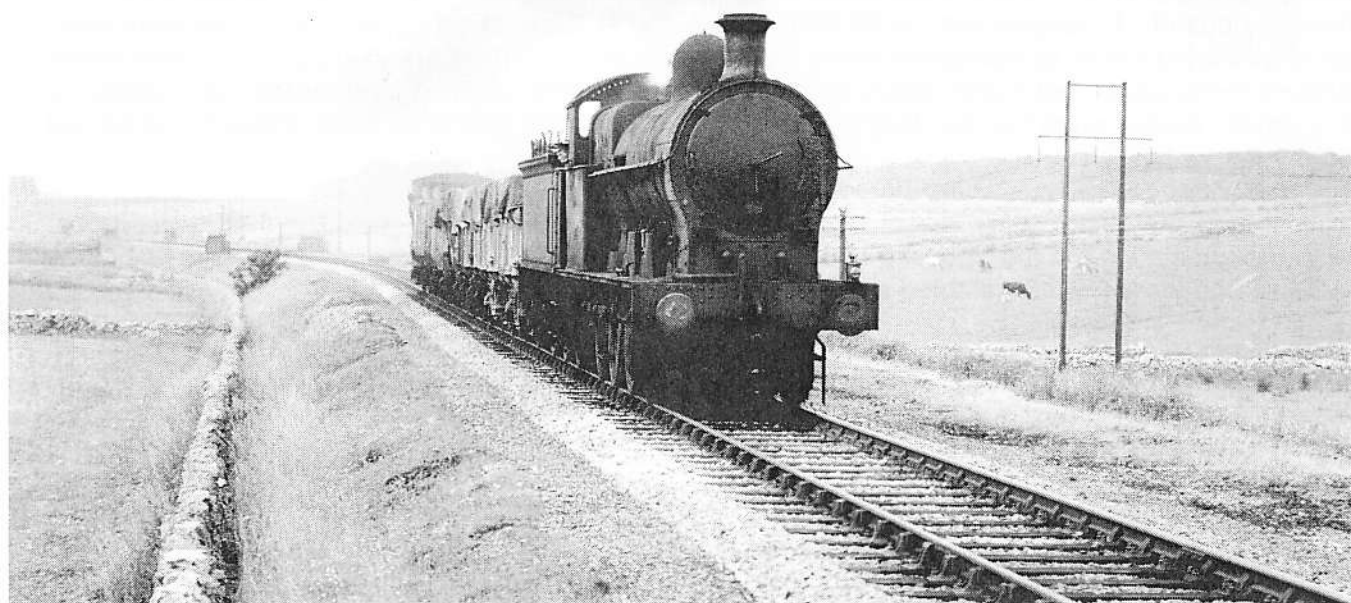
*Photo: © MLS Collection*

stand-by loco for snow plough duties. The 7Fs were replaced by 'Crab' 2-6-0s on the Ashbourne line freights and 4F 0-6-0s on banking and shunting work. By this time, decline was setting in – the last 3F 0-6-0, 43514, which had been the Friden shunter, left Buxton in April 1963, followed shortly after by the last 7F 0-8-0, 49425. By late 1965, the last 4F 0-6-0s were being withdrawn, 44271 being the final one at Buxton. (The 'Crabs' did not last long on the Ashbourne line, with 42772, 42926/40 going during mid-1963.)

At the end of 1965, all through freight trains were diverted from the Buxton - Stockport line via Whaley Bridge in favour of the ex-MR route via Ashwood Dale. Twelve months later, Ivatt 2-6-0s ceased to work the 06.15 Chinley - Sheffield and 09.15 back (running 'light' between Chinley and Buxton), and the Manchester (Central) - Cheadle Heath local trains were withdrawn. In April 1967, BR/Sulzer Type 2 diesels D5091, D5135/7 were working from Buxton on crew-training and banking duties at Peak Forest

**Ex-LNWR 7F 0-8-0 No. 49446 (9D) is seen at Hurdlow on 25<sup>th</sup> July 1962.**

*Photo: © MLS Collection*



but there was still a steam turn on the ex-LNW route to Stockport, this being the 20.00 Buxton - Mayfield parcels, usually worked by a Buxton Ivatt 2-6-0. Throughout this year, Buxton 8Fs were still very active at Peak Forest and were widely photographed there and at Chinley North Junction, Gowhole, Dewsnap and Glazebrook, as well as Hindlow.

On 4<sup>th</sup> March 1968, Buxton steam shed closed, with Northwich and Trafford Park. Steam workings had ceased on 2<sup>nd</sup> March, when 48442 was in use as yard pilot, 48744 worked to Briggs Sidings and 48775 to Peak Forest. 48744 was the last steam loco to leave 9L on 3<sup>rd</sup> March, just after 48775 (which went on to Lostock Hall – 48471 moved to Heaton Mersey for two month's work). On 10<sup>th</sup> March, a visit to 9L found 48336, 48424/42 'dead' at the shed. Preserved 'Jubilee' 5596 ran 'light' from Longsight to Buxton and back on 25<sup>th</sup> March. It had been at Longsight since 22<sup>nd</sup> March, after returning from Hunslet and 'running hot' *en route*. (45596 had often worked to Buxton and New Mills (Newtown) during the period when it was based at Stockport Edgeley shed.)

Finally, a brief reference to some noteworthy visiting locos to Buxton:

1. Last surviving 'Claughton' 4-6-0 6004 arrived at Buxton on a freight from Rowsley on 4<sup>th</sup> March 1948, then worked a passenger train to Manchester (London Road), returning on the 8 pm to Buxton. It remained at Buxton for boiler washout until 9<sup>th</sup> March.
2. Motor-fitted Ivatt 2-6-2T 41286 was sent to Buxton from Sutton Oak in December 1961 to work the line to Millers Dale in place of the usual DMUs. It returned to Sutton Oak two months later. Did it actually work regularly to Millers Dale? It was reported as having failed on 26<sup>th</sup> December and being replaced by 41209 (41C), which was not motor-fitted.
3. On 12<sup>th</sup> July 1960, 'Britannia' 4-6-2 70033 (9E) was at Buxton shed to work the 7.05 am to Manchester (Central) next morning. Was this the first occasion a 'Pacific' had been on Buxton shed? It had only just fitted the 70 ft turntable there.
4. On 11<sup>th</sup> May 1963, B1 4-6-0 61004 *Oryx* (41D) worked the RCTS/LCGB Joint 'North Midlands Rail Tour' from Derby via Ambergate and Millers Dale to Buxton (where it was serviced), returning via Ashbourne and Uttoxeter to Burton.
5. On 6<sup>th</sup> January 1964, B1 61319 (50A) worked the 12.35 pm Longsight - Buxton freight.
6. During April 1968, two rail tours visited Chinley and Buxton. On 20<sup>th</sup> April, Class 5s 45110 and 44949 were utilised and, on 27<sup>th</sup> April, 44781 and 45046 worked the 'repeat' tour. During the subsequent preservation era, there have been several steam-hauled rail tours which have visited Buxton *en route* and, hopefully, there will be more to follow.
7. Not quite classed as 'visitors', records show that, during the years 1954-6, several 350 hp diesel-electric 0-6-0 shunters spent short periods on loan to Buxton from Toton (18A), where they were normally based. Examples are 12046-8/56-7/70-3 and D3120-1/3. It appears that they were used on engineering trains at weekends when repairs were being carried out to Disley and Dove Holes tunnels in particular, but confirmation of this is needed. Interestingly, during the period covered by this article, Buxton shed had no 'Jinty' 0-6-0T locos allocated for shunting, these duties being carried out by tender locos.

After closure of the steam shed, diesel locos operating in the Buxton area used the new diesel depot close to Buxton station, on the opposite of the line to the steam shed. The diesel depot itself has since closed also and locos are now stabled at Peak Forest.

In conclusion, I can wholeheartedly recommend the excellent 'Scenes from the Past', Vols. 2, 7 and 50, by J M Bentley and G K Fox (Foxline Publications), which cover the Buxton area in much greater detail.

For additional help in preparing this article, I am indebted to the following:

RCTS Journal 'The Railway Observer'

Midland Railway Society - British Railways Steam Loco Shed Allocations 1950-1968

"Ultimate Allocations" Vol. 6 – Diesel and Electric 1948-1968 (Michael Mc Manus, Moreton, Wirral)