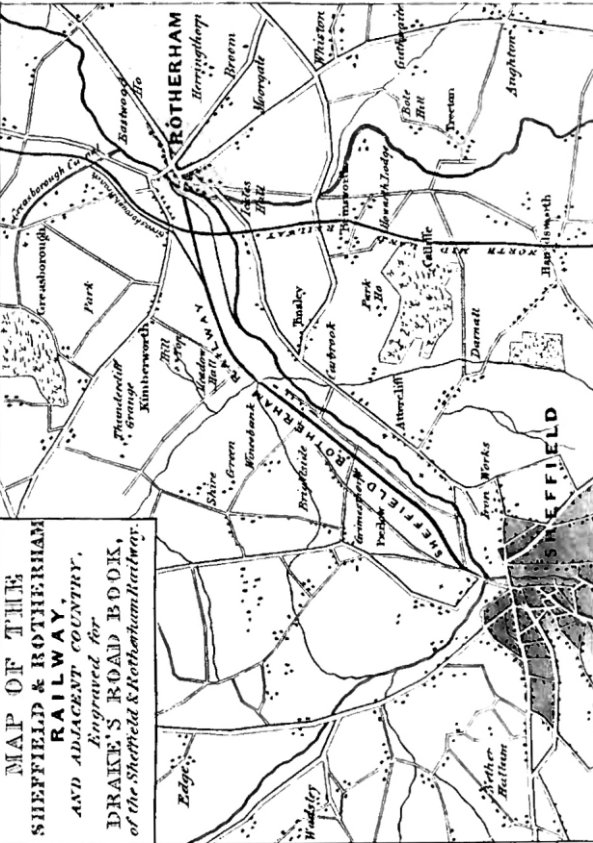


J. Leary del.

VIEW OF POTTERHAM STATION.

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MAP OF THE
SHEFFIELD & ROTHERHAM
RAILWAY,
AND ADJACENT COUNTRY,
Engraved for
BRAKE'S ROAD BOOK,
of the Sheffield & Rotherham District.



SECTIONS OF THE SHEFFIELD & ROTHERHAM RAILWAY

14. 0	15. 0	16. 0	17. 0	18. 0	19. 0
Sheffield	Attercliffe	Attercliffe	Attercliffe	Attercliffe	Rotherham

DEDICATED, BY PERMISSION, TO THE CHAIRMAN AND DIRECTORS OF
THE SHEFFIELD AND ROTHERHAM RAILWAY COMPANY.

DRAKE'S ROAD BOOK
OF THE
SHEFFIELD AND ROTHERHAM
RAILWAY:

WITH A VISITER'S GUIDE TO THE TOWNS OF
SHEFFIELD AND ROTHERHAM.

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TO THE
CHAIRMAN AND DIRECTORS
OF THE
SHEFFIELD AND ROTHERHAM RAILWAY COMPANY,

This Volume

is

BY PERMISSION, RESPECTFULLY INSCRIBED,

BY THE

AUTHOR AND PUBLISHER.

May 21st, 1840.

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CHAPTER I

HISTORICAL ACCOUNT

The Sheffield and Rotherham Railway is a monument of the public spirit and enterprise of its projectors of which they may well be proud. Severe was the contest which they had to maintain in the commencement of their great undertaking, and flourishing and honourable are the laurels which now rest on their brows. Could we add one floweret to that garland of honour, we should consider we had performed a worthy act. But our aim at present is higher than this. Our object in writing this volume is not to weave a wreath for the railway Company, but to carry out still further their praiseworthy designs. They have done all that Science and Art could teach them, to add lightning to the feet of the traveller. We would now humbly profess that we intend, by the aid of Minerva, Apollo, the muses, and all the deities that smile propitiously upon the wielders of the grey goose-quill, to render his flight still more rapid. This we shall endeavour to do by cunningly beguiling each moment as it flies. Courteous traveller, we lay our volume at thy feet,—vouchsafe to make it the companion of thy journey. It will give to thy passage a quicker appearance; and, wherein is that less beneficial than making it actually more rapid? What would it avail thee were thy journey performed in as short a time as the head of Bagdad's monarch was immersed in the water-tub of the learned dervish, if that brief moment were crowded, as in his case, with the sorrows and toils of seven long dreary years?

Away, however, with this trifling, and to our task. Attend, then, in the first place, gentle reader, to the following brief Historical Account of the Sheffield and Rotherham railway,—its

origination, its progress and completion, and its subsequent successful operation.

The project of constructing a railway between Sheffield and Rotherham was first brought before the public in the month of July, 1834. The principal design of its projectors appears to have been, to render coal cheaper at Sheffield; and the saving upon which they calculated, was £30,000 per annum. The bill to invest the directors with the necessary powers, was first brought before parliament by lord Morpeth, on the 11th of March, 1835.

It was strongly opposed by the Duke of Norfolk, a few other landed proprietors, the Canal Company, and the River Don Company. One hundred and twenty highly respectable inhabitants of Rotherham also united with its opponents, and petitioned against it, on the ground that it would probably have the effect of causing the idle, drunken, and dissolute portion of the Sheffield community to flock to Rotherham. The railway Company, however, carried the day, being strenuously supported by the people of Sheffield, and also by the majority of the inhabitants of Rotherham. Upon the committee dividing on the preamble of the bill, two appeared against it, and twelve in its favour. On the 10th of June the committee reported the bill to the House; and on the 23rd it was read a third time and sent up to the Lords.

In the Upper House the Duke of Norfolk's influence proved more formidable; and on the 27th of July, the advocates of the bill had the mortification of beholding it thrown out in committee by a majority of 7 to 5.

Not at all daunted by the failure of their first attempt, the Company were soon in a condition again to take the field. On the 12th of February, 1836, their bill was a second time introduced into the House of Commons; on the 28th it passed through committee without a division; and on the 14th of April, having

been read a third time in the lower House, it was again launched into the perilous seas where it had previously been stranded. Skilful was the piloting which was necessary in order to steer it into the now not distant haven. Twice it was read without opposition. On the 21st it went into committee. Here all the power of the opposition was brought to bear against it; and every nerve was strained by its advocates in order to bear it successfully through. Amongst other objections it was urged, that the deed executed by the shareholders in 1834 was invalid, owing to its not including the Greasborough branch, for which this was the first time of making application. This compelled the company to solicit time to prepare a new deed; and with a little difficulty they obtained a postponement of the question until May the 9th. During this short interval, by means of great exertions, the new deed was prepared and signed. At the appointed time the company were again before the committee; and two days afterwards obtained a favourable decision. Having been reported to the House of Lords the bill was immediately read a third time; and on the 4th of July received the royal assent. Thus terminated successfully the company's parliamentary conflicts, after having lasted from the 11th of March, 1835, to the 4th of July, 1836. By the act then obtained, authority was given to raise a capital of £100,000, in 4,000 shares of £25. each, and £30,000 on mortgage.

The works were commenced in February, 1837, at the Brightside cutting. From that time they proceeded rapidly without any impediment, or the occurrence of any incident calling for remark; and in the month of October, 1838, were deemed in a sufficiently perfect state to authorize the opening of the railway to the public. This event took place on the 31st of October, and was attended with all the pageantry, festivity, and excitement, which is usually manifested on such occasions. Earl Fitzwilliam and a considerable number of the neighbouring nobility and great landed proprietors were present. So also were the Directors of the North Midland railway, George and Robert Stephenson, and many other illustrious individuals interested in

the success of this and similar schemes. The order of the proceedings was as follows:—a trip from Sheffield to Rotherham at twenty minutes before eleven, which occupied seventeen minutes; breakfast at Rotherham Court House; return trip to Sheffield at twelve; and dinner at the Tontine Inn at five.

The history of the railway subsequent to its opening is happily marked by no tragical occurrences, by the relation of which we might give interest to our narrative. Monotonous as the strokes of the piston of a steam engine, events have followed each other in regularly recurring succession, and few days bear any marks by which they can be distinguished from their fellows. The opening of the Greasborough branch took place on August the 10th, 1839. The following is a brief summary of the traffic on the railway during the first year of its operation. "The number of passengers carried (and that without the loss of life or limb, or serious injury to any passenger) from November 1st, 1838, to October 31st, 1839, both days inclusive, is as follows:-

1838.---November, 37,876; December, 44,614.

1839.—January, 28,071; February, 27,729; March, 30,034; April, 38,109; May, 50,325; June, 37,500; July, 43,358; August, 39,882; September, 41,801; October, 36,076; making a total of 455,375."

The amount of money received for these passengers has been £13,204 16s. 3d. The shares at present bear a premium of from £5. to £6.

So much for the past history of the Sheffield and Rotherham railway. Were we disposed to indulge ourselves in a prophecy of the future, very bright would be the colours in which we should paint it; for we cannot close our eyes to the vast increase of traffic which will flow upon this railway, when the sluices of the north and the south are opened into it by the completion of the North Midland line. However justly the inhabitants of Sheffield in

general may complain of the distance at which the North Midland railway passes their town, the proprietors of the Sheffield and Rotherham railway, have good cause to congratulate themselves that it runs just where it does.

In the ensuing session of parliament the company intend to apply for an act to enable them to raise, at such times as they think fit, either by creating new shares or by mortgage, or in both those ways, any further sum they may require, not exceeding £70,000. The new shares will be offered in the first instance to the proprietors of original shares.

Before introducing our reader into the peculiar domains of the Fire-King and commencing our description of railway scenery, we shall, in accordance with the plan of our work, devote a chapter to the history and description of Sheffield.