

### **The Liverpool and Manchester Railway**

The Museum's site, Liverpool Road Station, was the original Manchester terminus of the Liverpool and Manchester Railway, the world's first purpose built inter-city passenger railway. The railway opened in 1825 and was a major development in railway history. The success of the line led to the rapid expansion of the railway during the 'railway mania' of the 1830s and 1840s. The rapid growth of passenger traffic meant that in 1844 Liverpool Road ceased passenger operations when these moved to the newly opened and more convenient Victoria Station. The Liverpool Road site was used for goods traffic until 1975. Following a period of dereliction and a public campaign to save the buildings from demolition, the Museum took over the site in 1983.

The following parts of the Museum are relevant to the history of the Liverpool and Manchester Railway:

- The Liverpool and Manchester Railway Exhibition in the Station Building;
- The Station Building itself;
- The 1830 Warehouse;
- The Power Hall.

### **National Curriculum**

The topic is relevant to History (Victorians/Britain 1750 - 1900).

### **The Liverpool and Manchester Railway Exhibition**

The exhibition occupies the former First Class and Second Class Booking Halls in the Station Building on the ground floor (road level) of the Station Building.

Wheelchair and pushchair users can access the exhibition from The Making of Manchester Gallery. Alternative access, from track level, is via the First Class Waiting Room (now the Community Exhibition Gallery) and down stairs into the First Class Booking Hall.

#### **The First Class Booking Hall**

The room has been reconstructed to show how it might have looked in the 1830s.

#### **Second Class Booking Hall**

Exhibits and displays focus on the construction and early years of the Liverpool and Manchester Railway.

#### *Key Exhibits*

- Station bell: originally mounted at track level (the mountings are still in place) and rung to signal that it was time to board the train.
- Popular prints of the railway's early years of operation depicting locations on the route.
- Sundial (1833): originally on a plinth over the First Class entrance on Liverpool Road.



- Commemorative pottery to celebrate the success of the railway along with memorabilia from the 100<sup>th</sup> and 150<sup>th</sup> anniversaries of the railway's opening.
- Bust and medal of George Stephenson. Stephenson's pioneering civil engineering was essential to the construction of the Liverpool to Manchester line.
- Early railway tickets and timetable.
- A hands-on interactive: build a double-arch bridge similar to Stephenson's bridge over the River Irwell. (This bridge had to be high enough to allow boats to navigate upstream and so determined the split-level layout of the Liverpool Road Station.)
- 10-minute video about the planning and construction of the railway (with seating for approximately 18 people).

### Station Building

In addition to the Booking Halls, the building also housed a carrier's office, a parcel office, a general office and eight shops at road level. The facade above, at track level, disguised a coach shed with space for twenty railway carriages. This is now used as an outdoor lunch area and contains school and adult learning spaces.

The house at the corner of Liverpool Road and Water Street adjacent to the Station Building pre-dates the railway but was used as the Station Master's House.



### 1830 Warehouse

The Warehouse is the world's oldest surviving railway building. It was built rapidly in five months using a timber-framed construction following the construction of the viaduct that carries the railway line. A wide variety of goods were stored in the building over its working life, including butter, shellfish, grain, clog blocks and bleach. Turntables in the railway tracks were used to move wagons into and out of the building for loading and unloading. Goods had to be raised and lowered between the four floors of the Warehouse and between road and track level.

The ground floor of the Warehouse also includes *Warehouse for the World*. A 12-minute audio-visual experience of working life in the 1830 Warehouse. The show runs continuously and includes video reconstruction, archival images, and information drawn from business records and personal accounts.

### The Power Hall

#### Key Exhibits

- Novelty: a reproduction, (see below) with some original parts, of one of the unsuccessful competitors in the 1829 Rainhill Trials.
- Planet: a working reproduction (built by the Museum in the 1980s) of one of the locomotives that ran on the Liverpool and Manchester line in the 1830s. Planet class

locomotives were a development of Stephenson's Rocket, the successful winner of the Rainhill trials. (Rides in Second Class carriages pulled by Planet are available every weekend from April to October.)

- Second Class Carriages: reproductions of the type of carriages used on the Liverpool to Manchester line in the 1830s and 1840s.
- First Class Carriage, c.1840: a restoration using the original body from the Manchester-Birmingham Railway fitted to a more modern chassis.

