

# FOOTPLATE

## THE MAGAZINE OF THE STEPNEY CLUB



SUMMER 2019



**Green all the way**  
**Everything changes**  
**Visitor from overseas**  
**And lots more!**

**ALL IN  
THIS  
ISSUE**



**BLUEBELL RAILWAY**

# A Letter From Stepney

## Hello BOYS and GIRLS!

It was great to see so many of you for my birthday weekend and at the steam fair! I had a lovely birthday, with a delicious cake made out of coal (well I thought it was delicious) and my own 'I am 144 years old' disc, and lots of people had their photos taken with me. I know that some of you had your free fairground rides and lucky dip, and I hope you all enjoyed the fair and watching all the different steam engines at work. In this magazine, you can learn about how the coming of the railways changed life for everyone, and find out how important signals are for we engines. There is a story about a visitor from overseas, and Mrs Molesworth gets into trouble again steering an engine at the steam fair.





# TRACKS AND TUNNELS



Stop at yard and miss a turn!

The points are wrong! Head down the wrong road back to 12. No return.

Go the wrong way through the tunnel - back to 8. No return.

The distant signal says be prepared to stop. Move to 7, then miss a turn!

Great cleaning! Get a head start and move to 7.

You've lost a wheel! Roll back to 1.

To play this game you will need dice and small toys or objects to be counters. Throw the dice and move through the numbers from the start until you reach the finish. Watch out for dangers and lucky breaks!

The points are in your favour - Short cut to 19 and play from there.

Take on water at East Grinstead. Miss a turn!

Take a short cut through the tunnel - Go to 16 and play from there.

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Steaming up the hill now - whizz on to 17.

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EAST GRINSTEAD

HELP STEPNEY TRAVEL TO THE FINISH AND COLLECT HIS CARRIAGES

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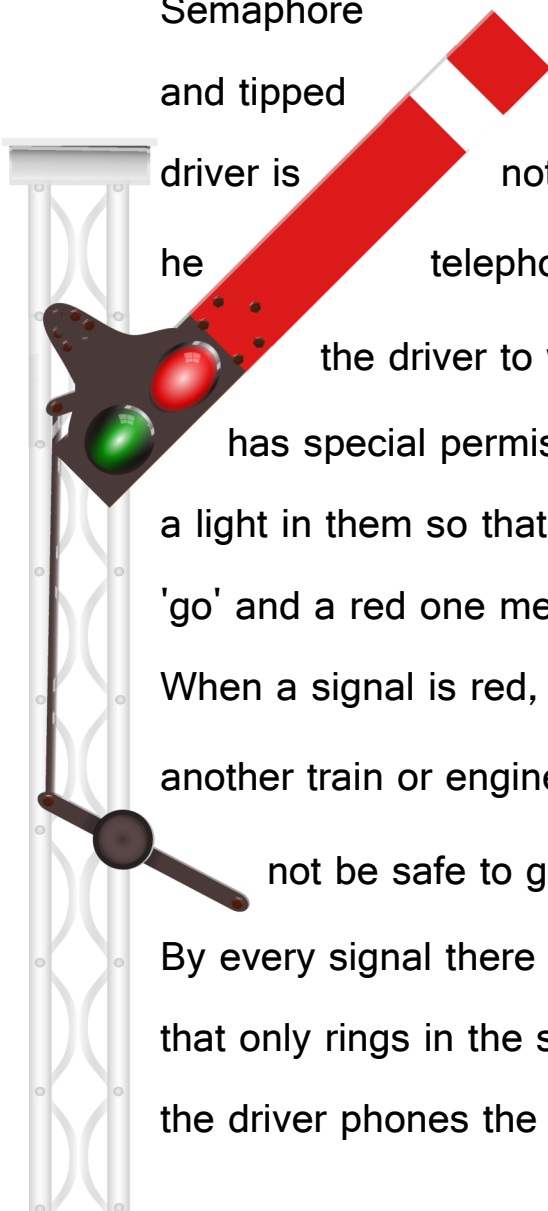


# Green All

The signals that you see along the railway line are very important for the running of the trains, as they are used by railwaymen to tell each other what is happening. The signals on the Bluebell Railway are called 'semaphore signals' and they do the same job as traffic lights do on the road. In fact, on the 'big railway', they even look like traffic lights.

Semaphore signals are straight if they are 'at danger' and tipped up or down if the route is 'clear'. The train driver is not allowed to go past a signal at danger unless he telephones the signal man, who will then either tell the driver to wait until the signal is clear, or that he or she has special permission to go past it. At night, the signals have a light in them so that drivers can see them. A green light means 'go' and a red one means 'stop' – just the same as traffic lights. When a signal is red, or at danger, it usually means that there is another train or engine in the way up ahead, and of course it would not be safe to go any further until it is out of the way.

By every signal there is a little telephone. This is a special phone that only rings in the signalbox. If a train is kept waiting at a signal, the driver phones the signalman to find out how long it will be be-





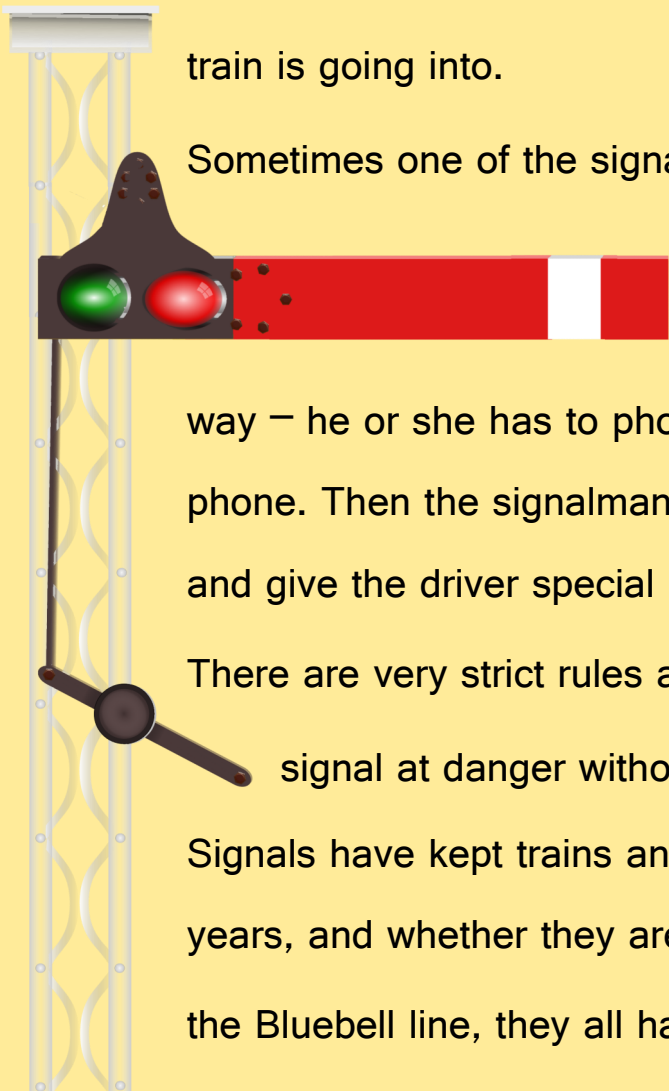
# The Way!

fore they can move. You see, a lot of the signals are a long way from the signalbox, and the signalman can't see the train from his window. The signals that start the train on its journey from the station are painted red with a white band. Further along there are signals painted yellow with a black band, and these tell the driver that he is not far from the next station and more signals. The signals to let the train into the station are red ones again, and sometimes there are more than one on the same post, so that the driver can see which platform the train is going into.

Sometimes one of the signals might go wrong and stay at 'danger' even when it is actually safe to go. The driver isn't allowed to just go past it anyway – he or she has to phone the signalbox from the signal telephone. Then the signalman will say that it is safe to pass the signal and give the driver special permission to 'pass the signal at danger'.

There are very strict rules about this, and any driver who passes a signal at danger without permission will get into trouble!

Signals have kept trains and passengers safe for nearly two hundred years, and whether they are traffic light signals or the wooden ones on the Bluebell line, they all have an important job to do.



# JOKES

***Passenger*** : “How long will the next train be, will it run on time?”

***Porter***: “Same as usual, sir; three carriages and it will run on rails!”

I know an elephant who refused to travel by train because he didn't want to leave his trunk in the luggage van!



When is a tortoise as fast as a train?  
When it's *on* the train!

How would you work out how heavy a whale is?  
You would take it to a whale weigh station!





# CLICKETY CLACK

Clickety clack, clickety clack  
The train runs over the lovely new track  
Clickety clack, clickety clack  
All the way up to East Grinstead and back

Clinkety clank, clinkety clank  
Steaming away along Freshfield Bank  
Clinkety clank, clinkety clank  
Plenty of water in boiler and tank

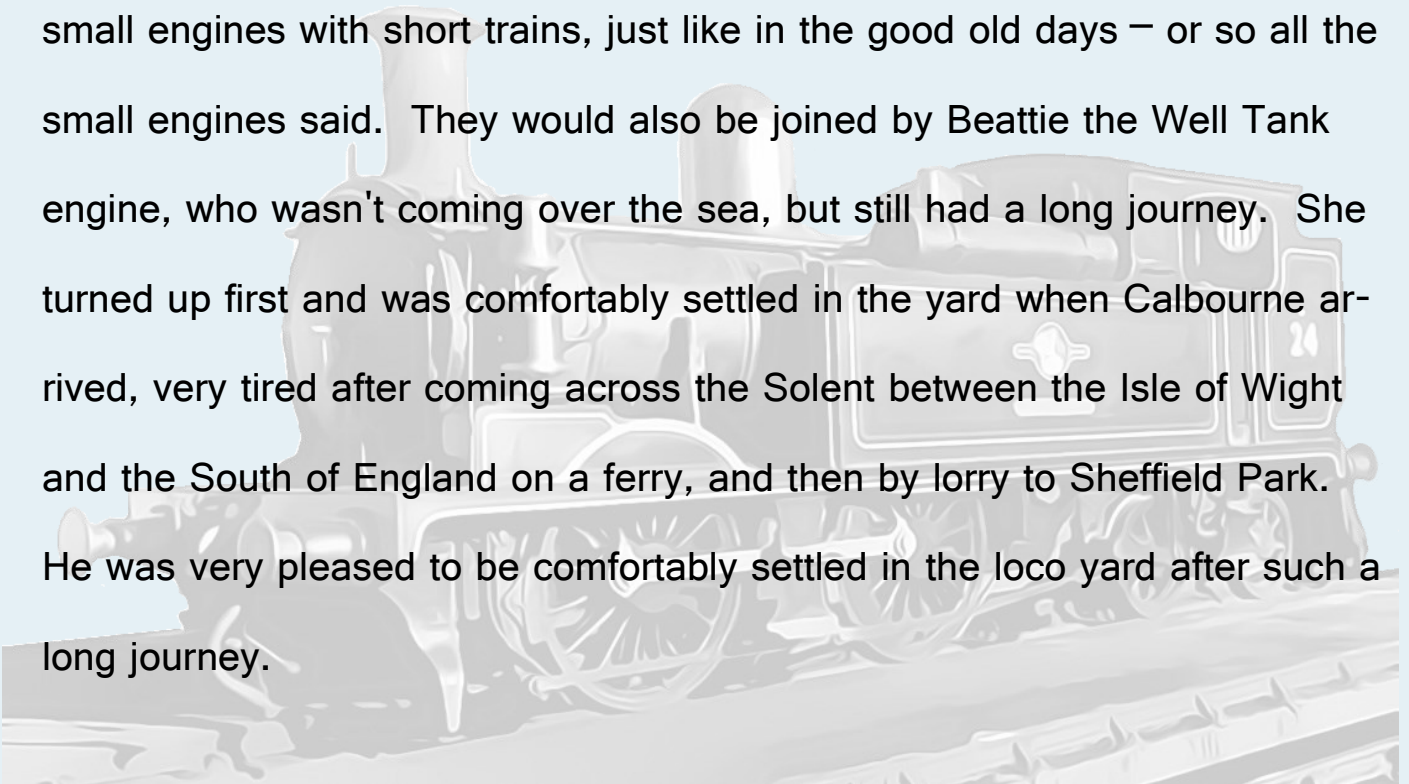
Puffety chuff, puffety chuff  
The train is heavy, the work is tough  
Puffety chuff, puffety chuff,  
But our little engine is quite good enough

Tickety tun, tickety tun  
Rattling home by the setting sun  
Tickety tun, tickety tun  
Take the passengers home and the day's  
work is done



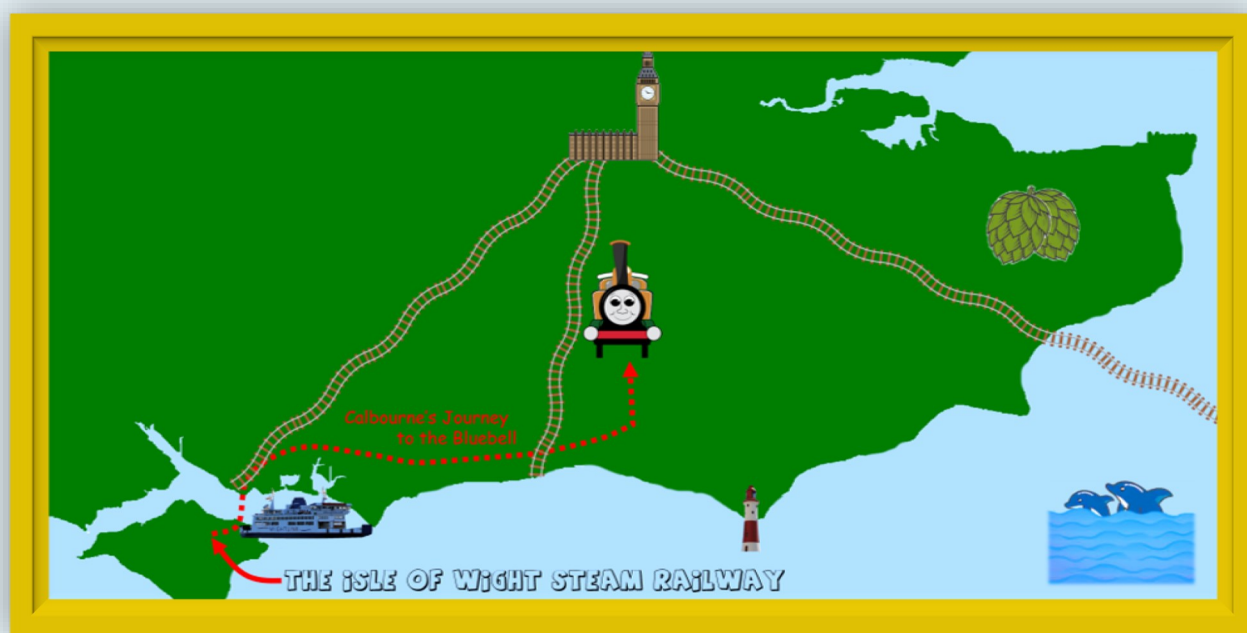
# A VISITOR FROM OVERSEAS

Stepney, Captain Baxter and all their friends in the engine shed were very excited. They had just had the news that they were to receive a visitor from overseas, all the way from the Isle of Wight. The Adams was the most excited of all, as the engine coming to visit was none other than her own long-lost brother, Calbourne, who had gone to work on the Isle of Wight in 1925 and never been off the island since. The two engines had not seen each other for over 90 years! Calbourne was coming along to help out at the Bluebell Railway Branch Line Weekend, when there would be lots of small engines with short trains, just like in the good old days – or so all the small engines said. They would also be joined by Beattie the Well Tank engine, who wasn't coming over the sea, but still had a long journey. She turned up first and was comfortably settled in the yard when Calbourne arrived, very tired after coming across the Solent between the Isle of Wight and the South of England on a ferry, and then by lorry to Sheffield Park. He was very pleased to be comfortably settled in the loco yard after such a long journey.





Branch Line Weekend was very busy, with lots of the older engines and carriages having their chance to be out on the railway, working hard. The Wainwright sisters and their brother the P Class were bustling about and telling all the carriages what to do, and the Q Class was around to help with some of the heavier trains.



Calbourne had air brakes, like all the engines on the Isle of Wight, but all the Bluebell trains have a different sort of brake, called a vacuum brake, so he was unable to pull them on his own, and had to be coupled to another engine all the time. He was coupled to Beattie for most of the time, and the two engines became friends as they found their way around the railway, which was all new to them.

They were both pulling a late train in the evening, the last train of the day, and as it got dark it also got very windy and started to rain hard. They had to go anyway – there were passengers who needed to get back to East

Grinstead. Calbourne was in front, and he worried about finding the way as his oil lamp kept blowing out and his fireman had to light it again at every station! Poor Beattie was having trouble with her injectors, and Calbourne was worried about her as well, as steam blew out of her all the way to Horsted Keynes.

“Do you want us to stop?” asked Calbourne anxiously.

“No, I’m fine” said Beattie bravely, “Keep going, my injector will come on soon!”

Calbourne and Beattie were both relieved when it did, and she had plenty of water in her boiler again.

It was so windy at East Grinstead that both engines found it hard to keep the water column bag in their tanks when they were taking water, and all their crews got rather wet! As they coupled together to go back, it was darker and windier than ever.

“I’m glad that we’re coupled together” said Beattie to Calbourne, “It seems such a long way back along a railway that I don’t know, and I wouldn’t want to do it on my own.”

“Neither would I” agreed Calbourne, “But we don’t really have to worry, the crews know the way and where the signals are so they won’t let us go wrong.”

They arrived safely back in the yard at Sheffield Park, where it was so windy that the wheelbarrows blew across the yard before they could be filled with ash. Both the visiting engines were relieved to be safe and sound after their adventures in the storm!



# MRS MOLESWORTH AT THE STEAM FAIR

Interesting things had been going on in the field for a few days, and Mrs Molesworth had been watching closely from her cottage. A very old fair-ground had turned up, and a roundabout and swing boats were already taking shape. Traction engines had been arriving and parking up on the field and stood ready and waiting. Mrs Molesworth took the dog for a walk around the field several times to keep up with what was going on.

The weekend arrived, and Mrs Molesworth was up and about early, she didn't want to miss anything. Mr and Mrs Molesworth set off from the cottage, Mrs Molesworth in her best summer dress and straw hat, carrying her handbag, and Mr Molesworth had the basket, in case Mrs Molesworth needed her knitting or they wanted to buy anything.

The fair was in full swing when they arrived – traction engines were chugging away as they powered the fairground rides using the electricity that they made with their steam. Mrs Molesworth had a go on the galloping horses first and rode happily round and round and up and down, whilst Mr Molesworth held the basket. Then she had a go on the flying chairplanes, holding tight onto her handbag whilst Mr Molesworth, once again, held the basket.

Then Mrs Molesworth saw a sign. 'DRIVE A TRACTION ENGINE' it said.

“That sounds interesting” said Mrs Molesworth, “I think I will.”

There was no queue, as the traction engine steering hadn't yet started, and traction engine driver Liz was still oiling around her engine and getting ready. Mrs Molesworth was her first customer of the day. Driver Liz helped Mrs Molesworth up onto the engine behind the enormous steering wheel, leaving Mr Molesworth looking a little anxious and holding the basket. Mrs Molesworth hooked her handbag over her arm, took hold of the steering wheel, and they set off over the field, not exactly in a straight line! Steering a traction engine wasn't nearly as easy as she thought it would be. It was very heavy and she found it hard to see the front wheels. As they were steaming up the hill past the other traction engines, they turned a corner and Mrs Molesworth lost sight of the wheels completely! The next thing she knew, an old man was leaping out of a deckchair and there was a crunching sound from under the traction engine.

“My goodness me” said Mrs Molesworth, as Driver Liz stopped the engine and got down to investigate,

“I never would have expected that a man of his age could get out of a deckchair so quickly.”



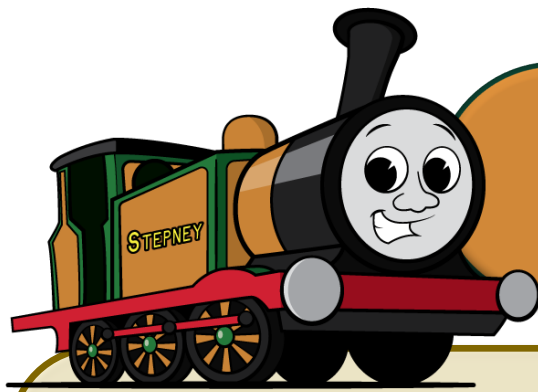
It was a little later in the morning, and most of the fuss had died down. George, the old man in the deckchair, had gone to the beer tent with his friends to recover



and someone had given him a spare chair that they didn't need. Driver Liz had got her traction engine safely back to the fairground, and she had gone to join George and his friends in the beer tent.

“Well,” said Mrs Molesworth, as she met Mr Molesworth coming out of the beer tent, “I think the best thing to do is to go home for a nice cup of tea!”





## DEAR STEPNEY...

*Dear Stepney,*

*Can I tell you something, which is I got my Beavers Explore Badge and Activity Plus Badge for exploring the old Hayling Island Line.*

*First we got off a train at Havant and I went to a toilet that looked quite old. Then me and my mum walked through the Station car park which would have originally, I believe, been a Goods Yard. After that we crossed the old level crossing gates and walked along a path (the old trackbed) and through a car park with walls made of wooden sleepers.*

*Then we walked and reached the old Langstone Station.*

*After some time we had to depart the old route and use the road bridge, because the old bridge, as you very well know isn't around anymore.*

*Then we got back to the path on the actual Hayling Island and walked down to the signal at the first part of the Hayling Island, passing a board which said 'Danger'.*

*Was that board there in your day?*



*After that we walked for half an hour and then had lunch.*

*Then we walked for a very long time until we got to the end of the Hayling Island line in West Town.*

*After that we caught the bus back to Havant and got the train home.*

*Phew, I was exhausted.*

*From David Shane (aged 7 years).xxoo*

Dear David,

Phew, I'm exhausted just reading your letter! I have some very happy memories of the Hayling Island branch and yes, the Danger sign was there in my day, it was a very important sign.

I'm awarding you my special headplate for your lovely letter!

*Best wishes,  
Stepney*



**Write me a letter to earn your very own Star Letter Headplate in the magazine!**

**[Stepney@stepneyclub.co.uk](mailto:Stepney@stepneyclub.co.uk)**

*Dear Stepney*

*I live in the signalbox at Horsted Keynes, and I like to sleep in comfort for most of the day - well, who doesn't? However, when I am cosily curled up on the train register I am constantly disturbed by lots of noises. It seems to be quiet for a little while, and then I am woken up by a lot of loud dinging and ringing of bells and clanking sounds. Why all the noise?*

*Love from  
The Signalbox Cat*



***Dear Signalbox Cat***

All these noises in the signalbox mean something important to the signalman. The dinging and ringing are the bell codes – signalmen from one box to another use these to tell each other that the line is clear, ready for the next train, and each number of dings has a different meaning. The clanking sound is made by the signal levers moving in the frame. If the signalman didn't move the levers, the trains wouldn't go anywhere! Why not go and sleep in the carriage shed? It's always nice and warm in there, so the carriages tell me.

***Best wishes,  
Stepney***

*Dear Stepney*

*We have had a lovely quiet winter in our cosy home at Horsted Keynes Station. Nobody has disturbed us and we have been able to raise a large family under the floorboards - there was plenty of paper to use as a nest. But now there is no peace at all. Feet tramping about over our heads all day, phones ringing, people talking. Why can't we have some peace and quiet?*

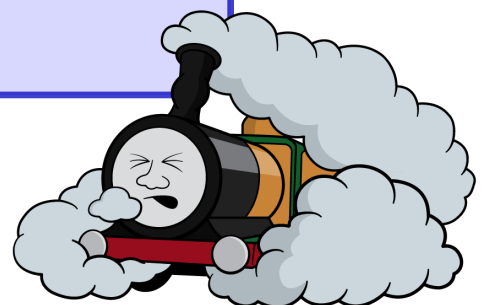
*Love from The Booking Office Mice*



***Dear Booking Office Mice***

What is it with you lot and that cat, wanting to sleep all the time when some of us are trying to run a railway at Horsted Keynes! The winter was quiet because there were no trains running and no tickets to sell. Now the railway is busy again and the booking office is full of passengers buying tickets and phoning to ask about the trains. You will have to put up with the noise, I'm afraid. And I wouldn't make your nest out of the traffic notice, if I were you – the booking clerks will be very cross if you do!

***Best wishes,  
Stepney***



Facebook.com/stepneyclub



# EVERYTHING

It is very hard for us to imagine, but life before the railways was very different. Most people could only get to where they wanted to go by walking, so they could never go very far. Only those with a lot of money could afford to ride a horse or ride in a carriage pulled by horses, and even horses can't travel very fast, and they soon get tired and have to rest. Heavy loads were moved around the country by waterways called canals in big boats called barges. They were very slow, as they had to be pulled by a horse on the towpath next to the canal. Because people couldn't go very far, most of them would live and work all their lives in the village or town where they were born, usually doing the same job that their parents had done. All the food that they ate would come from the farms near their homes, or they would grow it themselves.

The coming of the railways changed everything. It became possible for fresh food to move across the country quickly, so that, for the first time, people could have food that wasn't grown where they lived. People who lived in towns could have fresh food from the farms way out in the country, and people in London, for example, could eat fresh watercress that had been picked in Hampshire very early in the morning and loaded onto a morning train for the city. Certain fruits and vegetables grow best in certain areas of Britain, and the railways could take those foods all over the country for the first time.

The very best cherries and strawberries are grown in

# CHANGES!

Kent, for example, and the best cream comes from Devon – now that the trains were running everywhere, anyone in the country could eat Devon cream and Kent strawberries!

Of course, it wasn't only food that could move around the country on the new trains; people could too. Before the railways, only those few people who could afford to keep horses and a carriage could go out on day trips or go away to visit people, but now it was easy and cheap to go by train, and it didn't take very long to go out to the seaside for the day.

In fact, for the first time, seaside holidays became popular. A journey that would have taken days in a carriage with horses only took a few hours on the train, and seaside

towns began to be built. The busy town of Brighton, where Stepney and his brothers were built, was once a tiny fishing village. It was the railway and the chance of seaside holidays that turned it into the big town that it is today. If it had remained as a small fishing village, it would never have been important enough to have a Railway Works, and then Stepney would not have been built, so he is very grateful for the railway coming to Brighton!



# MY FRIENDS

**Two of the  
many members  
that came to see  
me on my birthday!  
Thank you to  
everyone that came!**



*Aleksi Mitchell (aged 4).*



*Edward Krebs (aged 5).*



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