

Wednesday 5 April

RAILWAY 65

Derby		0815
Sheffield	0845	0911
Manchester Oxford Road	1005	1041
Liverpool South Parkway	1117	1126
Hunts Cross	1131	1136
Southport	1240	1326
Bolton	1425	1436
Manchester Piccadilly	1500	

First advance single Derby to Sheffield £ 7.55

First advance single Sheffield to Manc. £12.30

Day return Manchester to Southport via any
reasonable route £10.45

First advance single Manc to Sheffield £12.30

First advance single Derby to Sheffield £ 7.55

This was going to be a week of hospitals with chemo at The Christie on Wednesday. On Tuesday they cancelled it due to my stent op on 17 April. By that stage I had already purchased my tickets to Manchester, so I decided to buy some back and have a day out. Caroline ran me to the station, I had time for breakfast, then a free cup of tea on the train north. A change onto a Transpennine three car unit at Sheffield - first class fuller, tea served, and a nice ride through the Peaks. There is a lot of work going on at Bamford where they are building a new loop. There will be new signals and a removal of 'boxes too. New track from Stockport into Manchester - whenever I have come to Manchester so far it has been on a Northern service via Marple.

We had left Sheffield late (lack of a driver) and were slow all the way through. I had planned a return to Colne, but had missed that. Southport seemed a good idea and, although you can get a cheaper one only via Wigan, you can also go the pretty way. I wondered about sitting in my first class seat all the way to Liverpool South Parkway, but got off at Oxford Road to buy a ticket. Then new track west. At LSP I popped to Hunts Cross and back to do that final curve, then north through Liverpool - not the most beautiful line, various views of the old docks, but not really any of the Mersey and the coast.



At Southport I found that the first train back to Manchester was cancelled, which gave me time for lunch at a nice café call Love to Eat - I wonder which chapel they nicked their chairs from? Southport must have been quite a station in its day.





The line east through Burscough could almost a line through the Fens - it even has proper signal boxes (this is Burscough Bridge SB). I don't remember going through Wigan - one should always sleep through Wigan - and then we went up to Bolton. I changed there to get an electric train through to Piccadilly. Then I found that the 1513 Transpennine through to Sheffield was cancelled. There was no arrangement to put us on the fast EMR service, but we were allowed to catch the slow Northern service - no first class there but at least I got a seat and dozed. I can't remember where this milepost is.



Back at Sheffield I caught my EMR train south an hour later than I should have done. They were happy for me to use my advanced ticket, and my tea, juice, sandwich and cake restored my faith in train travel.

