

Thursday 25 May

RAILWAY 71

Duffield		1741	
Matlock	1806	1813	
Duffield	1838		£3.85

It had been a depressing day. Tired from yesterday's chemo, then a meeting with the Palliative Care nurse to do my "Respect" form. The day got a lot better when Hannah passed her MRCGP exams, so I escaped for a train ride. The nearest branch line to home has not been done in its whole since Covid, and is now closing for three weeks for engineering works. My upbeat mood was somewhat spoiled when the Cardiac nurse called me to give me the results of my heart scan, and I wondered if the de-fib at Duffield station might be needed.



The original line through Duffield opened in 1840 and a station was built a year later. It was moved in 1867 when the Wirksworth branch was open. Sadly everything was demolished in the 1960s. The Ecclesbourne line station has been closed this year due to a landslip in the cutting just north of the village - hopefully reopening next month.



North through Milford - when you can see many more homes than you can from the A6 - and Belper, then to the junction at Ambergate. It always seems daft that the two lines separate, cross the Derwent and the A6 on different bridges, then run parallel for a while. I'm sure you could move the junction and remove a bridge. Ambergate was a triangular junction, and there is an excellent British Transport film which includes it and the Cromford and High Peak ("Forward to first principles" 1960, on dvd 4, BFIVD743).

Onto Wirksworth which has a footbridge leading up and over the canal. I tried to find



the location of High Peak Junction, but failed. Over the Derwent and on to Cromford. It looks a lovely holiday cottage, but we wouldn't get J over the footbridge! The platform side retains its awning. Most of the stations have been adopted with nice floral displays and children's artwork.



Matlock Bath (above) and Matlock (below) - buildings here need some TLC, and the railway bookshop looks to have gone.





On the way back I spotted an exotic plant at Cromford. I only spotted the guard when she changed ends at Matlock - I tweeted EMR to ask why they had given up on checking tickets. O well, £3.85 well spent.