

Tuesday 22 and Wednesday 23 August
RAILWAY 86

Hexham	1232	£4.05 adv sing
Carlisle	1327 1334	£6.90 adv sing
Preston	1447 1524	£7.45 return
Colne	1633 1652	
Rose Grove	1712 1735	via Todmorden
Man Vic	1825	£8.25

Wednesday bloods are booked for 0850, so I won't get there from here. Lynette offered me B&B so I trained down on Tuesday - an advanced single Hex to Man comes in at £38.10. I made it cheaper. Same taxi to the station and time for a scone, then a nice ride across to Carlisle. I got there to find chaos on the WCML. The 1334 is a TPE service and I quite expected to be told my ticket (booked for the 1349 Avanti south) was not valid - but, no, I was told to board quickly. (I would have boarded more quickly if the info had been given to the guard on the Newcastle train to say that the only train south was to depart in 7 minutes from across the bridge). I was pleased to get a seat, and the train filled as we went south. A lot of people got off at Preston to travel south down the main line, and it was chaos going north too. They were trying to tell people not to board a 5 car TP service to Edinburgh as it was over-crowded, but wait 50 minutes for the next Pendolino - then they wondered why the queues for each doorway were not reducing!

I took the easy option - the local train to Colne (top photo at Preston, third at Colne). It is a branch line I have not done for years, and it was a pleasant (all together now) trundle. I waved at Blackburn Cathedral. I doubt the line will ever be reopened to Skipton, but it would be great if it was. We returned to Rose Grove - I could have gone as far as Accrington, but it's a big bridge between platforms there, Rose Grove is an island. The motorway is next to the line (over the old shed and yards) - it is not a quiet place (photo of motorway through the vegetation). Then the Manchester via Todmorden train was 15 late! It's an interesting ride over Copy Pit, then right onto the new





curve to Tod - so I haven't done the direct line to Heb Bridge (photo top of next column).

At Victoria I could have taken the next train round to Piccadilly, but decided I could walk faster. It's about 15 minutes through to Lynette's and her neighbour had a key for me as L was at a football match. She had left me a casserole, and I had a doze while listening to "Last Words". Lynette came back about 10, and we chatted till gone midnight.

On Wednesday morning I needed to be at The Christie for bloods at 0850. L walked me to the bus and I was early. Bloods taken on time. Dr Barriuso is away. Chemo should have started at 10, but it was 12 when I went up. Still, I was done by 2, so I can't complain. We stopped at Burton-in-Kendal services (cheaper than Tebay), then I dozed off. As I awoke we were leaving the M6, but at Penrith - Pratt-nav was taking us home over the Hartside Pass and through Alston. I had never done this as a passenger. The views are stunning, but it is quite a drive. Home before 6.