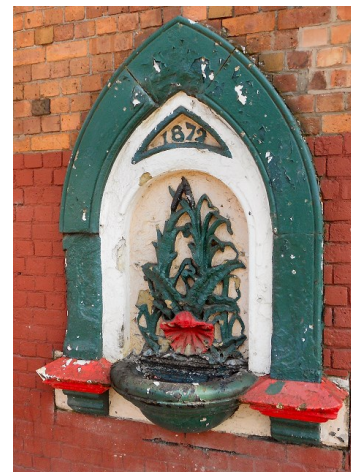


IRLAM STATION DRINKING FOUNTAIN

In the Victorian era, once it was discovered that disease could be passed on through polluted drinking water, it was increasingly common for public buildings to have a drinking fountain installed. The Cheshire Lines railway had fountains installed in most stations throughout their network.

When this line was opened in 1873 a fountain, like this, was installed on the original station house. When the station house was rebuilt in 1893, the old station house was demolished, but the original drinking fountain was moved to this location on the back of the coal shed wall. The exact date is unknown, but during the 1960's the fountain was removed and lost. This may have been due to the increasing availability of quality drinking water on tap.

Despite falling out of use drinking fountains remained a feature on most Cheshire Line stations. From Manchester to Liverpool drinking fountains can still be seen at Urmston, Glazebrook, Padgate and Widnes stations. Flixton station was destroyed by fire in 1997 and demolished in 2001. Whilst the shape, size and design of the fountains are all similar the carvings in the centre all differ, being specific to each station. Design themes have included bulrushes, ferns, lilies and shells.



Widnes Drinking Fountain



Urmston Drinking Fountain



Above: Irlam Drinking Fountain being made 2015.



Above: Irlam Coat of Arms

Irlam Station's new drinking fountain is a replica of the original fountain and was carved in 2015 as part of the Station House restoration. The outer section and bowl are the same as the original. The inner carving however has been changed, as no record could be found of the original fountain design. The new carving represents the Irlam Coat of Arms, which was used by the local council until it was dissolved in 1974. The date on the fountain, 1872, represents the year the station was built.



Glazebrook Drinking Fountain