



# THE WHEELS OF LOCAL INDUSTRY



The railways arrived in Irlam & Cadishead in 1871, built by the Cheshire Lines Committee (CLC). In 1894 the Manchester Ship Canal (MSC) was built and with it a canal-side railway. With the introduction of the canal and the railways, it did not take long for heavy industry to arrive in the district resulting in Irlam & Cadishead becoming a major industrial area.

The larger companies, such as Partington Iron & Steel Works, CWS Soap Works and Margarine Works, all had their own internal railway and many also had rail sidings off both the MSC railway and the main line that ran through Irlam & Cadishead stations.

At one time the MSC Company operated the largest private railway in the UK. Irlam & Cadishead was home to one of its engine sheds and serviced many companies locally with canal-side rail connections.

The railway display at Irlam Station replicates a railway engine and rolling stock that would have been in regular use in Irlam & Cadishead's industrial heyday.

From left to right:

- Steelworks slag carrier
- Cooperative Wholesale Society (CWS) Margarine Works creamery milk tank wagon
- Manchester Ship Canal 5 plank 10 ton coal wagon
- Peckett 0-4-0 saddle tank shunting locomotive (loco) works No. 2027

## Partington Steel & Iron Works slag carrier



As the name suggests this piece of rolling stock was used to carry slag, a glass-like waste of by-products separated from metals during the smelting or refining of ore, such as was produced in the Steelworks manufacturing processes. Slag was often mixed with other products to produce construction fill and asphalt aggregate for roads and pavements, amongst other things.



## Cooperative Wholesale Society (CWS) Margarine Works milk tanker



The CWS opened a margarine and lard factory in Higher Irlam in 1917. Like its sister company the Soap Works, it also had canal-side rail connections. The factory built a creamery for milk distribution and owned a fleet of bulk milk tankers



Both the Margarine Works and the CWS Soap & Candle Works had a network of extensive rail sidings and rolling stock. The CWS factories, as well as the Steelworks, had running rights over the MSC lines and paid fees to the company.

## Manchester Ship Canal (MSC) Company 5 plank, 10 ton coal wagon

The MSC had hundreds of these basic wagons, which could be seen daily on the canal-side railway delivering coal to the various companies that lined the canal's banks and to Partington Coaling Basin.



The Coaling Basin was for both bunkering ships on the canal and exporting coal from the Lancashire and Yorkshire coal fields around the world. In its heyday, Partington Coaling Basin had 5 coal tips servicing the ships on their way to and from Manchester.



The Coaling Basin operated until coal exports ceased in the late 1970s and ships no longer burned coal, ending over 80 years of coal export.

## Peckett 0-4-0 saddle tank shunting locomotive (loco) works No. 2027

Manufactured by Peckett & Sons at their Atlas Locomotive Works in Bristol the loco on display is almost identical to ones used by local industries between the 1890s and the mid-1960s to shunt a vast array of materials around.



Loco No. 2027 left the Atlas Works on the 6th July 1942, having been bought by the Ministry of Supply for dispatch to the Royal Ordnance Factory at Sellafield, Cumbria. The factory produced a chemical compound called TNT and propellants for the war effort.

In the 1980s, when the loco became redundant, it was moved to Carnforth Steamtown Railway Museum where it was stripped down for boiler repairs. Unfortunately, the loco then laid idle in sidings for several years.

The unused loco came to the attention of the Hamilton Davies Trust. Being virtually identical to the Peckett loco used by the CWS Soap & Candle Works, HDT decided to buy the loco from Carnforth in July 2019. The Soap Works operated a 'Soap Works Special' train, pulled by a Peckett loco, to transport office staff to and from the main line at Irlam Station



The loco and wagons were repaired, painted and re-branded locally by Wykes Commercial Services and installed in December 2019 at Irlam Station, completing the 'Wheels of Local Industry' display.

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