

Article: 45145 in the Railway Press

45145 was featured in an article that appeared in the May 1984 edition of 'Rail Enthusiast' magazine. Malcolm Roughly took a cab ride on a Newcastle to Liverpool express 'to review the past present and future of this important inter-city link.' Below is an edited version of the article.

'PEAK' ACROSS THE PENNINES



Deputy Services Briefing Officer David Potter of the Eastern Region enjoys a cab front view of the Pennines.



The author looks out at Stalybridge for the 'right away' for 45145 on the 10.54 ex York to Liverpool.

My companion for the day, Mr David Potter from the Eastern Region PR Department, was waiting in his office in the imposing York Regional Headquarters and we made our way to platform 9B to await the arrival of our train and to meet up with Inspector Eric Spencer, who was to accompany us. Right on time, 45145 drew carefully around the curve and halted by our little group. Eight coaches were on the train and it was fairly full on arrival.

We jumped aboard and driver Giles got the 'Peak' away on time, neatly threaded over the pointwork under Holgate Bridge, then gave 45145 full power. She surged away down the main line and was soon on her maximum of 90mph along the 100mph stretch. Speed was reduced to 70mph to take the junction at Church Fenton, before rising again to the line speed of 80mph on through Micklefield.

Leeds City was reached right on time, 29 minutes for the 25 miles already done. Driver Giles handed over to a Holbeck man, Driver Hodgson, who checked over the controls.

At 11:30 our express pulled away for the scenic run to Manchester, which is a much slower section, with 50 minutes allowed for the 35 mile run to Stalybridge. We called at Dewsbury and again at Huddersfield, the approach to which is made along a high viaduct, affording panoramic views of the Yorkshire town.

45145 was given the 'right away' and the big Sulzer pulled away through the tunnels and out into a cold, dry afternoon, the moors clearly seen in the distance. Our locomotive batted along at around 60mph and soon the semaphore signals at Marsden heralded the entrance to Standedge tunnel and the cab was plunged into darkness for the long passage under the hills. Driver Hodgson eased back the power handle after the long climb up from Huddersfield, a ten mile slog at a ruling gradient of 1:105.

The train coasted down the now falling gradients towards Stalybridge, threading through the Tame Valley, passing the stations of Greenfield and Mossley and rounding the sweeping curves that hug the sides of the valley.

More passengers were collected at Stalybridge and then we were away through Ashton-Under-Lyne and Miles Platting before descending the 1:47 gradient into Manchester Victoria Platform 11. Only three minutes were scheduled for the station stop and every minute was used to complete platform loading.

We again departed on time and our loco squealed her way across the curves at Deal Street and Ordsall Lane before taking the left curve towards Eccles. Further along, the motorway keeps company with the railway and 45145 picked up her heels and left the traffic far behind.

After a brief stop at St Helens Junction, we passed the site of the Rocket 150 celebrations and Rainhill station and soon Merseyside was upon us. With a full application of the brakes, we slid into Liverpool Lime Street Platform 5, our journey done, smack on time at 13:21.

Our dirty nosed engine was admired by a couple of lads, who then darted away to 'spot' another locomotive. All that was left to do was to make our way to the station buffet for a cup of tea, before catching my return journey home.

Steve Dexter