

Lynton & Barnstaple Railway



Past, Present & Future

Building of the Line

During the 19th Century with tourism booming, railways reached Minehead and Ilfracombe. The difficult terrain of North Devon meant that a narrow gauge 1ft 11 ½ inch track was proposed to follow the natural contours of the countryside.

Lynton's wealthy benefactor Sir George Newnes supported this scheme and became chairman of the Lynton & Barnstaple Railway Company. The Lynton and Barnstaple Railway Act was passed in 1895 and construction of the line began in 1896. The line was completed two years later with public services commencing on 16th May 1898.

Starting in Barnstaple at just above sea level the line threaded its way through the town before climbing the Yeo valley past Snapper and crossing the 70ft high Chelfham viaduct over the Stoke Rivers valley.

LYN at Blackmoor Station



At Blackmoor Station, now the Old Station House Inn, the route entered more open country and after circling Parracombe reached its 980ft summit at Woody Bay Station. The line then descended past Caffyn's Halt to Lynton Station perched on the hillside 250ft above the town.

Built to transport passengers, the railway carried only a limited amount of goods traffic – mainly household coal and farm produce. It also carried the mail and brought in the newspapers, keeping local people in touch with the outside world.