

## *Hulls Railways - Goods and Docks*

The main purpose of the Railway Dock, which ran off the Humber Dock (now Marina) was to connect Hull's freight imports to the rest of the United Kingdom via the London and North Eastern Rail system (Hull's Paragon Station to Doncaster and the East Coast Main Line). The docks, but not the freight lines, allowed for mass emigration from Europe to the United States by making a foot connection to Paragon Station as will be seen later. The prime period of this activity was in the 1840's.)

Hulls main rail terminus, Paragon Station was opened in 1848 but prior to that the main Hull Station, called Manor House Street Station, was the main connection to the outside world by rail. This station was near to the site of the later built Railway Dock and not far from the Marina but it was closed soon after Paragon Station was opened and nothing remains of it now.

So where were the goods railways and the system? On the right hand side of the Marina as you face towards the Humber you will see a large, isolated warehouse, now an Italian Restaurant and luxury flats. This was a dockside warehouse when the dock was called the Humber Dock and it was a commercial dock, connecting to the estuary via a lock pit. At the side of this warehouse lay a major goods station and beyond this a network of sidings and freight lines, connecting to Hull's Paragon Station and the lines to the west. Near this warehouse, sunk into the road surface you will see railway lines running down the side of the Marina towards the River Humber. These lines swung left, across the lock pit, and across to Humber Street and its warehouses, later to become the wholesale fruit market, and back up the Dockside, towards what is now the A63 dual carriageway. This was part of an extensive railway serving the Humber Dock and the Railway Dock. Goods wagons were turned on small turntables –



there is one outside of the original warehouse mentioned.

The first thing you will notice are the railway lines sunk into the road. It is not a currently used rail line, so fear not, there will be no trains. Occasionally you may have to wait at the crossing bridge between the Marina (Humber Dock) and the estuary, to allow boats from the Humber Estuary into the Marina and vice versa, and any wait is interesting in itself.

Back up towards the Green Bricks pub on the Eastern Side of the Marina and the A63 is now a fine road but beneath was the original railway lines round the Dock. This photograph shows the lines running on the East Side of the Dock in the direction of the Humber but they then swung back across the lock pit of the dock and up to the North around the far dock side. These lines were exposed by alterations to the area in advance of 2017 City of Culture Year.



Perhaps you would want to consider life here in the 1840s for it is in this area, having arrived from the continent by sea, that emigrants from Europe were marched, somewhat unceremoniously, up the side of the Marina (then Humber Dock), across what is now the A63 but then simply walking in to Town, where, in Postengate, they were billeted in the Lazarus Hotel. This is no longer a hotel and is used for various commercial purposes but the outside has a blue plaque on a building near to Trinity Square commemorating its previous use.



From this hotel they were marched to the main railway station, Paragon Station, and on to a special platform on your left as you enter the station, platform 1 – the platform ended somewhere near what is now the “Tigers Lair” – Tigers being Hull City Football Club nickname. The Tiger’s Lair is in fact the same building that immigrants were received in, albeit it had a rather different purpose then. From this platform they were hustled on to special trains for Liverpool and on to America.

Why this undignified treatment – well this was the 1840’s and they were not people who had passed through inoculation and quarantine and there was a fear that if they came into contact with local people, disease could spread.

Back to the present day on the right hand side of the Marina looking towards the Estuary are modern buildings servicing in the main, needs of the Marina. Dominant on that dockside is a large warehouse from an earlier period(No 13 mentioned). On the South (Humber) side of this warehouse, magnificently restored from its working original, is the entrance to the Italian Restaurant called Al Portos and if you go in to this entrance, halfway to the restaurant on the first floor at floor 0.5 is a large photograph of many steam engines of the period which served a very large goods railway network to the west.

Back out (maybe following a rest stop or meal?) you will be back onto the road with inlet rail lines and the small turntable photographed above– this was for wagons only.

If you were to head further up the Dock towards the A63 main road you would cross a modern copy of a Dutch Bridge you will see the Holiday Inn to your left and in front of that is an extension to the Marina (then Humber Dock) called the Railway Dock opened in 1846 designed by John Hartley (not the fictitious fly fishing man sometimes seen on TV) .

This dock served a link between rail freight and the docks until the turn of the last century when the docks effectively ceased for ship traffic when newer and bigger docks on the waterfront, both to the West and East were opened. You can walk around this dock and the Northern side is now the back of Holiday Inn. The views here are very good and it is well worthwhile taking this in and maybe contemplating it as a busy commercial dock in the late 1800’s.

To return re cross the Dutch Bridge and walk down the side of the Marina to the end, then left and across the bridge and back to the Minerva Pub but before you do so have a good look around.

This is the Marina as seen from the new Dutch Bridge looking across the Dock towards the far East corner of the dock.



And here, from the same vantage point, you will see the Spurn Light Ship, mentioned in the walking guide and other boats in the Marina. The area beyond is the A63 main road. The Church in the centre background is of course Holy Trinity and beyond Hulls Old Town.



In conclusion then, the whole area was served by an extensive rail system, built at the end of the 1700s when capstans and horse provided wagon propulsion, later steam locomotives, and the system peaked in about 1840. It continued right up to around 1900 when newer and bigger docks removed commercial trade from this dock and the railway system that served this area.