Furness Railway Loans Box

Signal lamp

Originally signals were given by hand, using either flags or lamps. The work was first assigned to policemen.

In the days of the Furness Railway there were lots of signalmen and the trains were passed by them all the way up the line, so the position of any train was known.

It was checked that all drivers of trains had good vision so he could see signals or problems ahead on the line. But the fireman would also look out as well (he was responsible for keeping the fire going so that the steam engine of the locomotive would power the train to its final destination).
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Flags

Originally signals were given by hand, using either flags or lamps. The work was first assigned to policemen. Railway policemen wore uniforms which looked very similar to those worn by the police on the streets.

The signals worked like this:

“When the line is clear and nothing to impede the progress of the train the policeman will stand erect, with his flag held downwards but show no signal.

If it be necessary to proceed with caution, the green flag will be elevated”

The red flag meant an immediate stop.

A country signalman had a very different working life to someone working a major railway junction. At busy times of the day at London’s Waterloo “A” box in 1889 three trains departed every four minutes!
Waistcoat

Just after 7am on 22nd September 1892 at Lindal, the driver of a Furness Railway locomotive, Thomas Postlethwaite, noticed cracks opening up in the ground right below. He jumped for his life, as soon as he was clear the earth opened up to expose a sheer-sided hole 30 foot across and similar in depth. The locomotive fell into it front first, with only a small part visible above the surface. The rails on which the engine had been standing were snapped off and went down with it.

Later on that day the hole opened even further and swallowed the entire 35 ton locomotive. Fortunately no-one was hurt. The book, Thomas down the mine (Thomas the tank engine) is probably based on this story.

But the driver had lost his waistcoat and gold watch and regretted ever after that he hadn’t picked it up when he jumped for his life!
This spanner is much larger than one that you would normally find in the home. Railway locomotives (they are the engines that pull carriages) are very large and in the days of the Furness Railway had six wheels. The locomotive that fell into a hole at Lindal was 35 ton. That means:

35 tons equals 31,751 kg

The average weight of a man today in the UK is 83 kg

So, 35 tons equals the weight of 382 men!

How many children would equal the weight of a locomotive?
**Furness Railway Loans Box**

*Cap*

This cap belonged to a **train driver** and dates to the days when one organisation, British Railways, ran all railways in Britain from 1948 to 1997. In the days of the Furness Railway the engine driver or train driver was a very important job. There were many **different** jobs in the railways and it took a long time to rise up to the position of train driver. It was a **responsible** job and they were **well paid**. It was a job that many young boys, seeing trains pass by them on the line, wanted to have.
How do you communicate in the days before mobile telephones? On the train itself a communication cord was first installed in the 1860s. This meant that a passenger could pull on the cord to summon a member of the train staff. Nowadays there are buttons on trains to communicate in emergencies.

As the train is a moving object it was very important that problems, delays or emergencies could be communicated along the length of the journey. Communication was important not just to members of staff on the train but also between the stations.

This telephone probably dates to the 1930s. By this point telephones had become more affordable and many were installed in middle class and upper class homes in Britain.
**Guard’s Cap**

*Guards* worked with the public and so were given more *lavish* uniforms than some of the other workers for the railways. The passenger guard was an *important* position. The *responsibility* for the goods or passengers rested with the guard. He (they were always men in the nineteenth century) would also have to keep records, pacify irate passengers and look after unaccompanied women travellers.
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Furness Railway crest or coat-of-arms

_Cavendo Tutus_ (Secure by Caution) became the company motto when the Furness Railway was formed in 1844. It was also the _Duke of Devonshire's motto_ and he was one of the _principal shareholders_ of the Furness Railway. This meant that he invested a lot of money into the Furness Railway and then, if the company made a profit, he received a share of the _profit_ (a _dividend_).

The _decoration_ on the crest is based on the _Great Seal of Furness Abbey_. It shows the Virgin Mary holding the infant Jesus, whilst in her right hand she carries an _orb, symbolising_ the world. She stands beneath the centre of three arches and is _flanked_ by two _shields_, each supported by a _monk_. Each shield is surmounted by sprigs of _deadly nightshade_, symbolising the valley in which Furness Abbey is built.

This crest was in the _Station Master's office_ of Barrow Central (the main station on Abbey Road).
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Timeline

1830s Barrow was becoming the most important loading point for locally-mined iron ore due to Walney Channel being a natural and sheltered harbour.
A railway line would make the transportation of iron ore much quicker and more reliable.

1844 Furness Railway Act passed by parliament. Land was purchased.
1846 James Ramsden (age: 23) became Locomotive Superintendent
3rd June Opening of the line to passengers and freight

1861 Durham line opened which enabled coke from Durham to help the rapid expansion of Barrow ironworks and creation of steelworks in 1865
1865 Work on the dock scheme started, funded by the Furness Railway
1867 Barrow officially became a town and James Ramsden the first mayor
1890s Older iron ore mines are worked out

The Furness Railway starts to concentrate more on tourism

1922 By government order, the Furness Railway was absorbed into the London Midland and Scottish Railway at midnight on the 31st December 1922.

The Dock Museum, North Road, Barrow-in-Furness, LA14 2PW
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