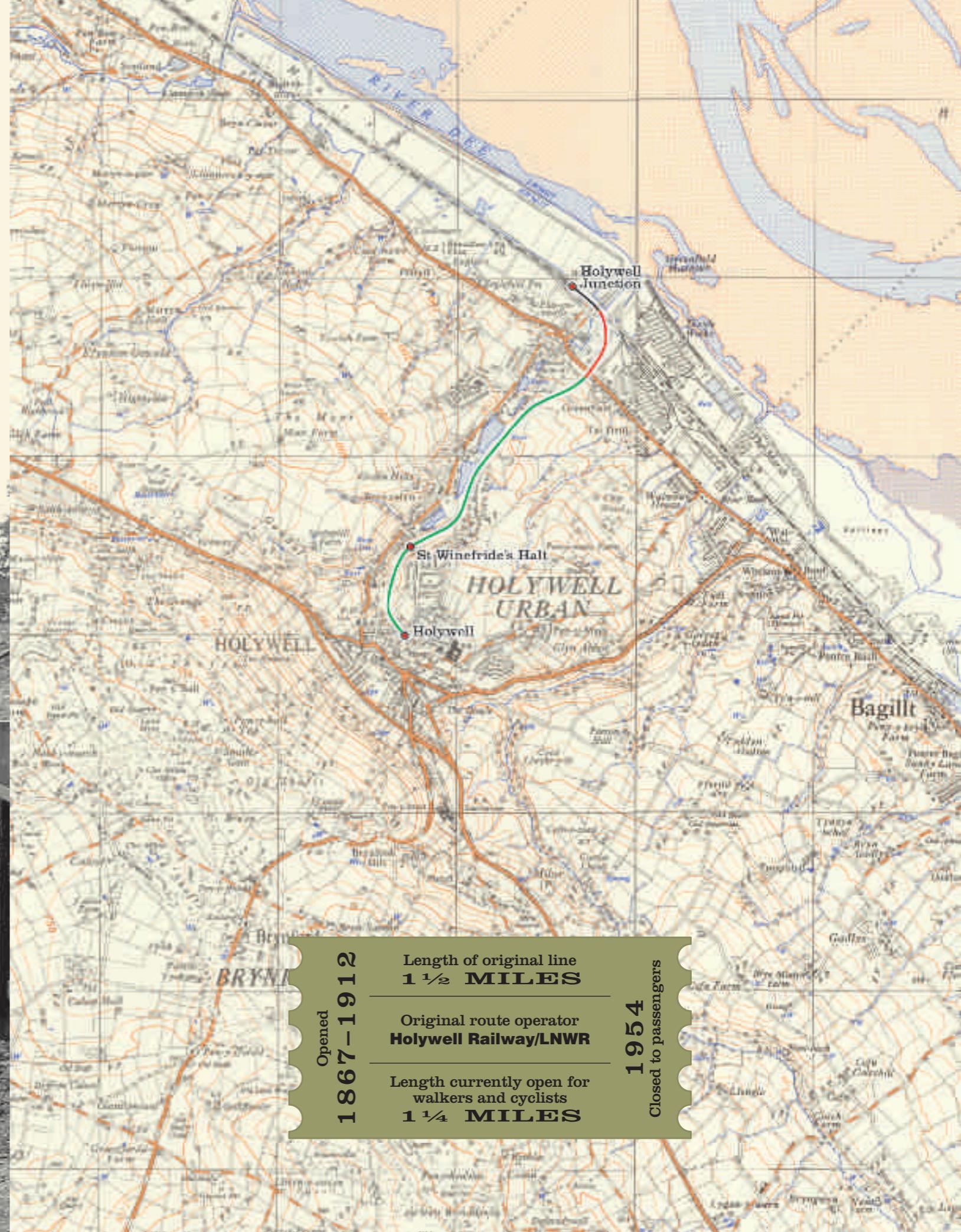
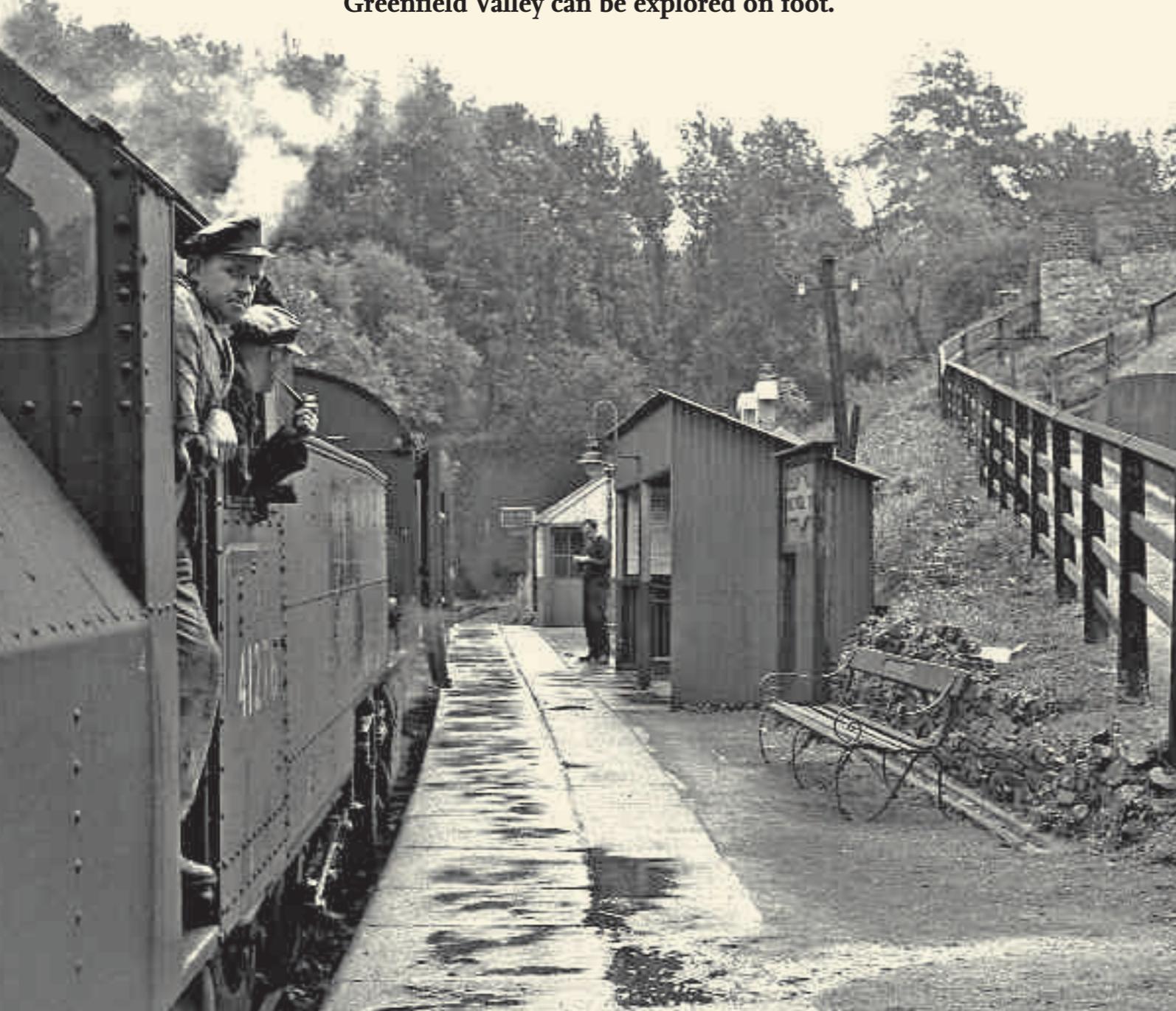


HOLYWELL JUNCTION TO HOLYWELL

Starting life as an early horse-drawn tramway serving cotton mills, copper smelters and limestone industries, the 1½-mile branch line to Holywell in Flintshire was also popular with pilgrims visiting a nearby holy well. The railway had mixed fortunes and was an early victim of competition from road transport, closing to passengers in 1954. Today, much of its short route up the Greenfield Valley can be explored on foot.





ABOVE: Whitedale station building has been sympathetically restored and is now a private residence as the Hornsea Rail Trail passes between the two platforms.



BELOW: Station staff pass the time of day at Sigglethorpe station in August 1956. The station was originally named Hatfield but was renamed to avoid confusion with other stations of the same name. The staggered platforms either side of the level crossing were common at several of the stations on the Hornsea branch. Today the southbound platform has survived intact alongside the Hornsea Rail Trail, while the station building is now a private residence.

Since closure, almost the entire route of the branch line from Wilmington in Hull to Hornsea has been reopened as a traffic-free footpath and cycleway known as the Hornsea Rail Trail. It also forms part of National Cycle Network Route 65 and the Trans-Pennine Trail.

Although signposted through the streets of Hull as the Trans-Pennine Trail, the off-road section of the Rail Trail starts at Danson Street, about one mile northeast of Hull Paragon station. For the first 2½ miles the Trail heads northwards through the city's suburbs, passing the site of Sutton-on-Hull station en route, which has been landscaped as a children's play area.

The Trail soon reaches open countryside and heads northeast to cross Holderness Drain on a bridge – immediately to the north on the east bank are the earthworks of a prehistoric castle. The Trail then heads across the flat Holderness landscape for 1½ miles to reach the site of Swine station – here the platforms were staggered on either side of a level crossing although only the station building, now a private residence, and the brick base of the signal box have survived. A further 1½ miles from Swine, the Trail crosses the busy A165 to the site of Skirlaugh station, where there is a car park and picnic site in a woodland setting alongside the surviving platforms.

Beyond Skirlaugh, the Trail passes the site of the original Ellerby station which closed in 1902 and is now a private residence, before reaching the village of New Ellerby. Here there is a large car park on the station site – the station was originally named Burton Constable but was renamed Ellerby in 1922. Although there is no sign of the station

building the platform edge can be seen hidden in the undergrowth. The road overbridge here has been blocked up, requiring a short detour up and across the road to rejoin the old railway route. Refreshments can be taken at the adjacent Railway Inn.

The next station along the Trail is at Whitedale, where the beautifully restored station building and its two platforms patiently wait for the next train, which will sadly never arrive. Now following a dead-straight line towards Hornsea through tranquil Holderness farmland, the Trail reaches Sigglethorpe station where the concrete up platform is still in remarkably good condition – the down platform and station building (also a private residence) are on the opposite side of the road which was once guarded by a level crossing. The station was originally named Hatfield but was renamed Sigglethorpe in 1874, despite the fact that its namesake village lies some three miles to the northwest!

From Sigglethorpe the level and straight Trail continues towards Hornsea passing the 'market days only' station of Wassand, now a private residence. It was originally named Goxhill but was renamed in 1904 and closed to passengers in 1953. Continuing northeastwards, the Trail enters a long cutting before passing the site of the demolished Hornsea Bridge station and ending in style at the superbly restored red-brick Hornsea Town station. Although the elegant canopy and platforms have long gone, the station buildings are now used for housing. In front of the station there is a paved area with a modern sculpture celebrating the end (or start) of the Trans-Pennine Trail from Southport. Car parking and the delights of Hornsea seafront are but a short distance away.



The attractive red-brick station building at Hornsea has been restored as private residences while in the foreground a piece of modern sculpture marks the start of the Trans-Pennine Trail to Southport.