

Wath Marshalling Yard, also known as Wath Concentration Yard

Opened in 1907

The main destinations from the yard were via the Woodhead line to Mottram Yard (Manchester) where coal was then distributed across the North West. This line closed in 1981. To the East coal was delivered to New Clee (near Grimsby) for the Steam trawlers . After 1912 Immingham was a key destination where the coal went for export.

Generated a complex pattern of rail traffic from the 45 collieries within 10 radius of Wath.

Pits fully nationalised in 1947 (only partially nationalised during WW2)

1970's Clean Air Act reduces greatly the demand for coal.

1984/1985 Miners strike.

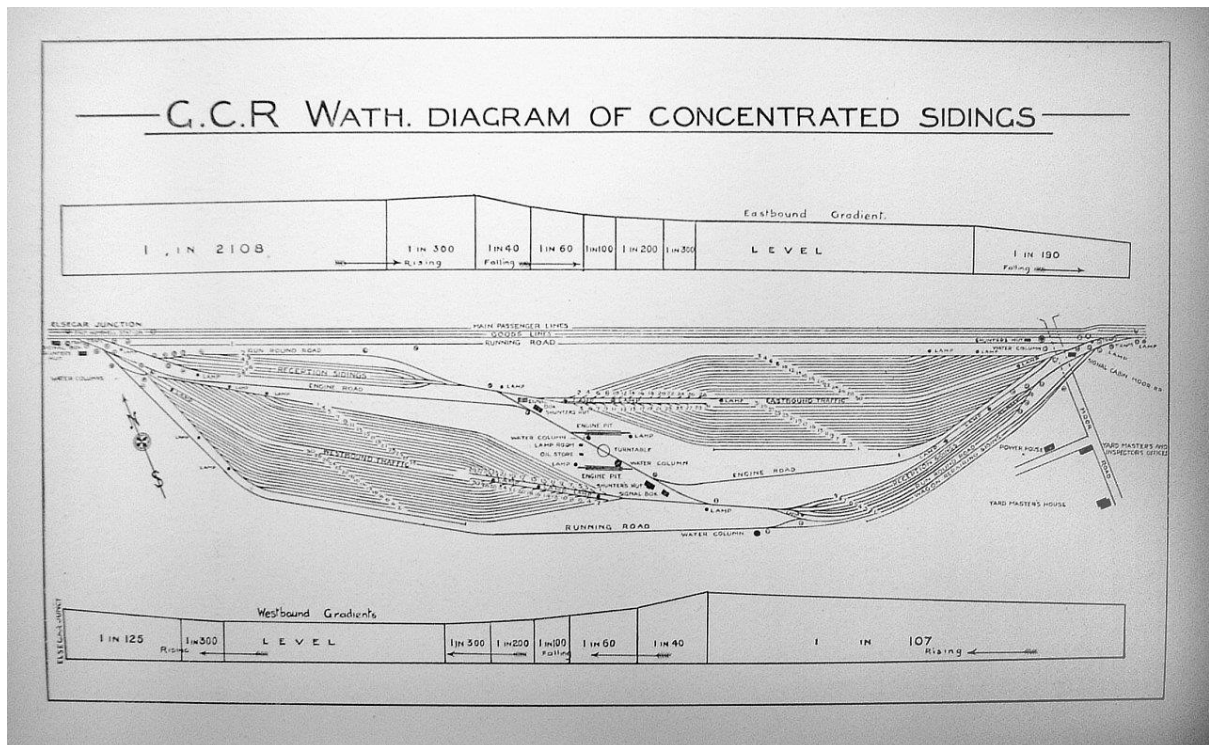
Closed 1988 along with the last of the collieries.

The yard was set to the south of the main line from Doncaster and Barnsley. It was built on the 'hump' principle, where trains were uncoupled and then propelled over a hump, allowing the wagons to run by gravity into sidings to await collection. However unlike later hump yards it was built without automatic retarders to slow the rolling wagons down. Instead the yard employed human runners who chased the rolling wagons to pin down their hand brakes and control their With a total length of over 1¼ miles, between [Wath Central railway station](#) and Elsecar Junction, and with over 36 miles of track this was two yards in one: Eastbound traffic was received in eight reception sidings feeding 31 departure sidings and controlled by "B" Box, whilst for westbound traffic there was a fan of nine reception sidings, again feeding 31 departure sidings and controlled by "A" Box. The western entry/exit to the yard was under the control of Elsecar Junction signal box whilst the eastern end was controlled by Moor Road signal box, with additional control from the Wath Central signal box, which controlled the main lines through the yard and was situated by the station. The yard could handle as many as 5,000 wagons per day. movement through the sidings. This was a particularly hazardous occupation.

Both 'humps' or summits over which wagons were pushed dealt with either incoming western or eastern traffic and had a network of reception and sorting sidings in which the compressed air operated points were controlled by a signal-box.

After a train load of wagons had been pushed over the 'hump' sections of the inward bound train fell down a decreasing gradient from 1:40 to level into their relevant sorting sidings, ready to form outward bound trains.

Potential capacity at Wath yard was estimated at a staggering 5,000 wagons every 24 hours and provided employment for 35 men in eight hour shifts.



Wath Main Colliery opened in 1876. Sunk to a depth 650 metres. At its peak in 1933 it employed 2369 men (1823 below ground 546 surface).

Produced around 700,000 tons per year.

Closed 25th March 1988.

Disaster (5 or more fatalities) 24th February 1930 killed 7 men.

John Dyson

Herbert Allott

Ernest Cusworth

Tom King

John Russell

John Poole

Leon Unwin