

THE DISTRICT RAILWAY PLATFORM INDICATORS

A POSTSCRIPT – MANSION HOUSE

by Kim Rennie

Following the in-depth article on the District Railway (MDR) platform indicators published in *Underground News* No.742, a chance discovery of a photo dated 1924 in the LT Museum on-line photographic archive has revealed a hitherto unknown (to the author) additional design of 'non-stopping' plate. This featured an un-serifed black condensed text on a white background and appeared on the indicator at Mansion House westbound platform 1 (was platform 4, q.v.). In 1912, however (Fig. 1), the plate was lettered STH. KENSINGTON, but when RICHMOND NON-STOP was provided, the former was moved to the other column, where it replaced the HAMMERSMITH display (Fig. 2).

Also visible was a suspended double-sided 'First Train Out' indicator (Fig. 3) used to show which platform the next westbound train would depart from (i.e. platform 1 or bay road platform 2). This survived into the 1980s at least, albeit with a changed typeface, before being replaced by dot-matrix technology.

Until the late-1960s, a second bay road was situated to the north of the eastbound line. This was originally numbered as 1 – the remainder being, eastbound 2, the other bay road 3, and the westbound platform 4.

WESTBOUND PLATFORM 1 (originally platform 4)

Fig.1 looking west 1912

| | | | |
|---------------------|-----|-------------------------------|-----|
| EALING | q 2 | EALING NON-STOP | q 1 |
| WIMBLEDON | | WIMBLEDON NON-STOP | |
| HAMMERSMITH | | HOUNSLOW NON-STOP | |
| INNER CIRCLE | | STH. KENSINGTON | |
| RICHMOND | | PUTNEY BRIDGE | |

Fig. 2 looking west 1924

| | | | |
|------------------------|-----|-------------------------------|--|
| EALING | q 1 | EALING NON-STOP | |
| WIMBLEDON | | WIMBLEDON NON-STOP | |
| STH. KENSINGTON | | HOUNSLOW NON-STOP | |
| INNER CIRCLE | | RICHMOND NON-STOP | |
| RICHMOND | | PUTNEY BRIDGE | |

Fig. 3 'First Train Out' indicator 1924

| | |
|------------------------|---------|
| NEXT TRAIN WEST | |
| q-----s | n-----p |



Mansion House platform 4 (now 1) looking west in 1924, with the hanging 'First Train Out' indicator to the fore. The westbound indicator had fixed "When No Through Train is Shown ..." signage below it.

Photo: LT Museum

The mid-1960s saw the MDR indicators lettered in Johnston Condensed Type (Fig. 4). By 1979, the number of destination options at Mansion House had been reduced from ten to five, and all grouped in the column furthest from the platform edge. Note the lack of provision for, say, Ealing Common or Putney Bridge, albeit these were not that commonly-timetabled moves.

Fig.4 looking west 1979

| | | | |
|--|--|-------------------------|-----|
| | | PARSONS GREEN | |
| | | RICHMOND | q 2 |
| | | EALING BROADWAY | q 1 |
| | | CIRCLE LINE | |
| | | VIA HIGH ST. KENSINGTON | |
| | | WIMBLEDON | |

The 'First Train Out' sign (Fig. 5) was now lettered in Johnston Bold, and the direction arrows changed to the 'Signalling' version, as used on shunt signal I.D. plates. The northern bay road had been decommissioned from 4 February 1968, leaving only platforms 2 to 4 in use. On 3 August 1969, the remaining platforms were renumbered to LT conventions, with the westbound becoming 1; and thus the middle bay road 2, and eastbound 3.

For many years, the surviving bay road (platform 2, ex-platform 3) had a non-standard destination indicator. This comprised of 9 grey glass panels in a single column and was of a design not used anywhere else on the District Line.

Fig. 5 'First Train Out' indicator 1979



Platform 1 in 1979 looking east with an R38 Stock arriving. The number of destinations on the indicator has been reduced from ten to five. The 'First Train Out' sign hangs below a 'Self-Winding Clock Co. of New York' timepiece. To the left, the non-standard 9-panel indicator on platform 2 is partly visible.

Photo: LT Museum

EASTBOUND PLATFORM 3 (originally 2)

No representations of the eastbound indicator at Mansion House appear in Mike Horne's online research. He does state, however, that the original MDR-type did not appear 'east of' Mansion House, which implies they were fitted on the eastbound platform at Mansion House itself. If so, the layout would probably have been similar to those at Blackfriars and Temple, albeit obviously omitting MANSION HOUSE as a potential destination, though without corroborative evidence this can only be speculated.

Right: The non-standard platform 2 indicator.

Photo: Author's collection

