

THE HISTORY OF THE NORTHERN LINE

By Roger Taylor

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FOREWARD

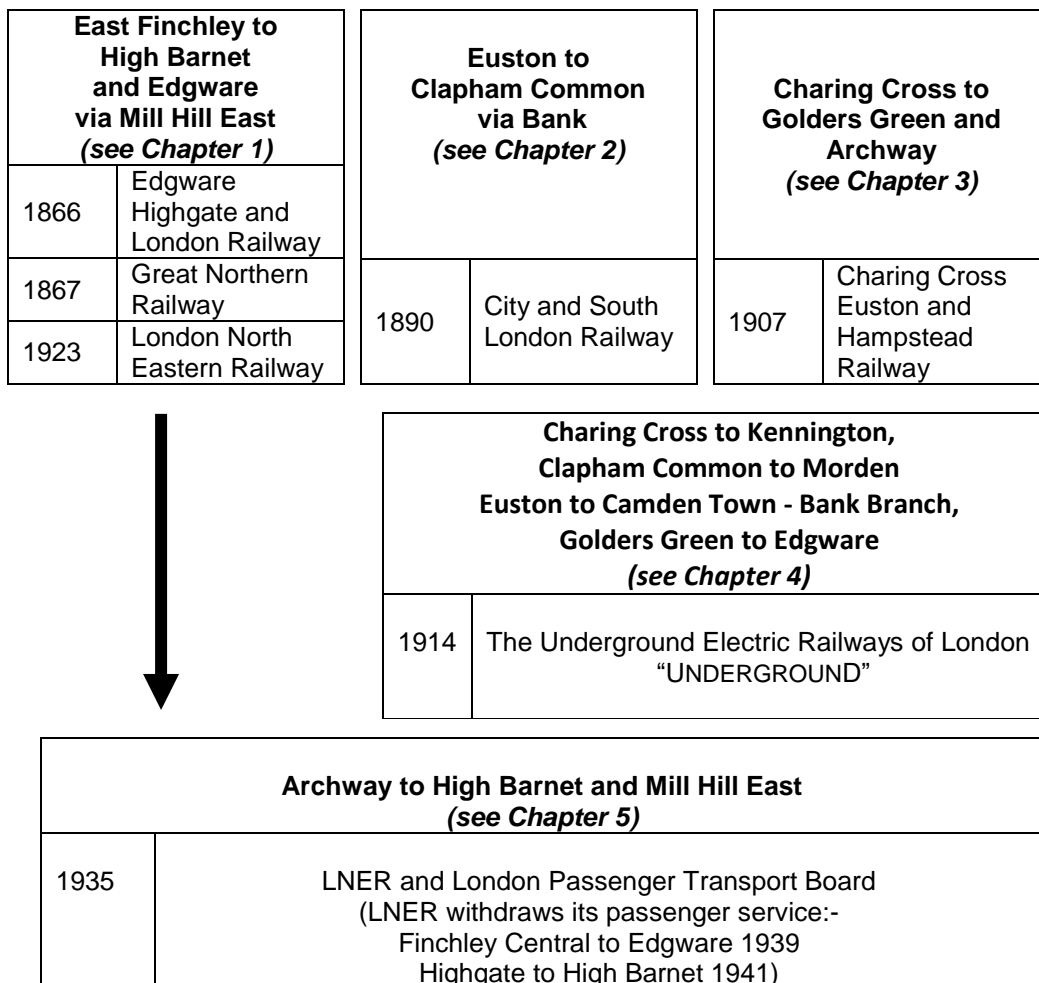
I first became interested in the history of the Northern Line in 1966 when I went to the Church Farm House Museum at the top of Greyhound Hill, Hendon. They had an exhibition called "The First Railway to Edgware" and it kindled an ongoing curiosity in me to find out more. In those days, of course, finding any information meant seeking out any publications, going to libraries, and other such efforts, so I sort of let it lie dormant after a few months, and gave a presentation of what I had found to the local youth group I went to. The advent of the internet, however, rekindled my interest and I found a wealth of information, and photographs, so made this book.

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Roger Taylor

HISTORY OF THE NORTHERN LINE - INTRODUCTION

The Northern Line is an amalgamation of railway lines built by different railway companies over a period of 75 years or so. The summary below gives what got amalgamated into what we know today as the Northern Line, the name of the original railway companies and the date they built their railway. The chapters referred to go into more illustrated detail of these companies, and how they merged into what is now **The Northern Line**.



The London Passenger Transport Board (LPTB) then went through various name changes depending on which government body had responsibility.

1970	London Transport Executive (GLC)
1984	London Regional Transport (The Government)
2000	Transport for London (Greater London Authority)

You can read about the Latter Day History of the Northern Line in **Chapter 7**.

There was also another company involved whose railway, built in 1904, was integrated into the Northern Line from 1937 to 1975, but later excluded from the "black line" on the tube map. This was the **Great Northern and City Railway** and you can read about it in **Chapter 6**.

CHAPTER 1 – THE NORTHERN HEIGHTS

The Edgware, Highgate & London Railway obtained an Act in 1862 to build a line from a junction with the Great Northern Railway (GNR) at Seven Sisters Road (now Finsbury Park) to Edgware. The following year the Midland Railway received authority to build a line between Bedford and St. Pancras which would provide a quicker route into central London from the Mill Hill area, so to improve the prospects of their Edgware line the EH & LR proposed a branch from Highgate to Muswell Hill serving the new Alexandra Palace leisure complex and an extension of their line from Edgware to Watford.

Both proposals were approved by Parliament in 1864 as was a further branch from Finchley to High Barnet in 1866. In 1866 a further act was obtained by the independent Muswell Hill & Palace Railway (MH & PR) to extend the branch from Muswell Hill to a terminus adjoining Alexandra Palace.



Fig1 Extract of 1900 map showing the Edgware (sic) Highgate and London Railway

The 'branch line' between Seven Sisters Road (Finsbury Park) and Edgware proved more costly than expected and shortly before completion the local company was taken over by the Great Northern Railway (GNR) who opened the line on 22nd August 1867 with intermediate stations at Crouch End, Highgate, East End Finchley, Finchley & Hendon, and Mill Hill; but the extension to Watford was never built.

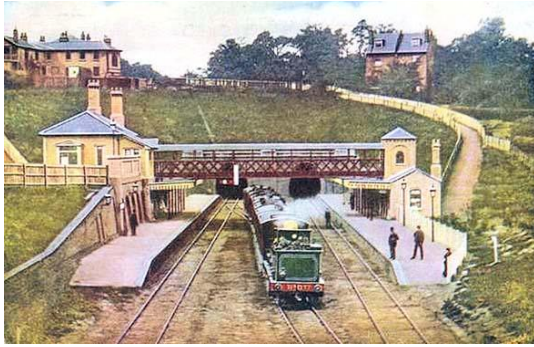


Fig 2. Highgate 1868



Fig 3. Crouch End 1904



Fig 4 Finchley Church End 1906. Shuttle service to Edgware with a High Barnet train pulling out in the other platform.

On the 1st April 1872 the High Barnet branch was opened, with intermediate stations at Torrington Park (now Woodside Park) and Totteridge, and the Alexandra Palace branch opened on 24th May 1873. The section between Muswell Hill and Alexandra Palace was still owned by the Muswell Hill & Palace Railway although worked by the GNR. The Alexandra Palace branch was an immediate success providing the most convenient route to the Palace from central London but the services was suspended a few weeks after opening when the palace was gutted by fire and was not reinstated until May 1875. Initially the branch was well used but within a year the MH & PR was in financial difficulty as passenger numbers fell dramatically. Several periods of closure for the terminus followed as the GNR failed to attract residential traffic to the line.



Fig 5 Muswell Hill 1905



Fig 6 Muswell Hill forecourt 1905 at the top of the hill

Crouch End station in Crouch End Hill in 1904.

Although the station building has gone now, the bridge over the railway is still there, as the trackbed is now a footpath called Parkland Walk, which runs from Finsbury Park to Highgate tunnels, and you can look down on the old station from the bridge. The platforms are still there!



Suburban growth on the line as far as Finchley began in the 1860's and a further station at Stroud Green was opened on 11th April 1881



Fig 7 Stroud Green 1904

Residential traffic between Muswell Hill and Highgate was also improving and an additional station at Cranley Gardens was opened in 1902 but Alexandra Palace station continued to be underused.



Fig 8 Cranley Gardens 1905

In 1911 the Muswell Hill & Palace Railway was purchased by the GNR and although passenger numbers had improved this was halted by competition from the new more convenient tram services. Through trains to central London outside the rush hour were withdrawn during WW1 when a weekday shuttle between Finsbury Park and Alexandra Palace was introduced.

Although the full weekday service was restored at the end of the war the branch was never to fully recover and passenger numbers at all stations between Highgate and Alexandra Palace plummeted.

Elsewhere on the line, an additional halt, Mill the Hale, between Mill Hill East and Edgware, was opened in 1906.

So there we have the beginnings of the Northern Line – nothing whatsoever to do with the tube – a railway built as a main line branch into the leafy countryside of Finchley, Mill Hill, and Muswell Hill. What was to happen over the next 40 years was probably never envisaged.

Before we move on to the “underground” tube history, here are a few more old photographs of the Northern Heights GNR branch line.



Fig 9 Crouch End station 1920's

Fig 10 Alexandra Palace station 1937.

Note the initials LNER (London North Easter Railway) on the side of the N2 locomotive. This because in 1923, under the grouping of the railway companies in the UK, the GNR (Great Northern Railway) was grouped into the LNER.



Fig 11 Highgate station 1920.
An island platform has replaced the 19th century twin platforms



Fig 12 Edgware station forecourt 1905

The location of Edgware station here is not the site of Edgware station today. This station, built by the GNR, was further down Station Road towards High Street, next to the Post Office. It was demolished in 1961.



Fig 13 Edgware station 1937 with a shuttle from Finchley pulled by a Gresley K2



Fig 14 Another Gresley K2 waits at Mill Hill the Hale in June 1937 with the shuttle to Edgware from Finchley



Fig 15 Park Junction at Highgate on the last day of passenger service to Alexandra Palace July 1954. Note the conductor rails in place on the south bound road, and the tube depot in the background.



Fig 16 Mill Hill East station mid 1930's

Fig 17 Mill Hill East forecourt 1935



Fig 18 Woodside Park 1937

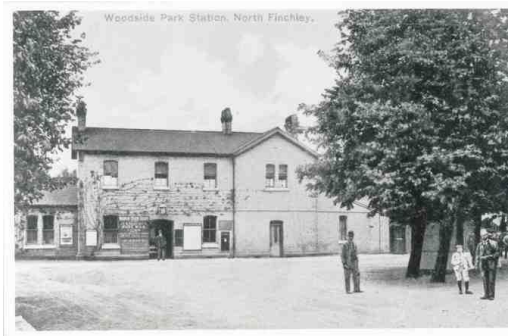


Fig 19 Woodside Park forecourt 1900's and as it is today – not very different!

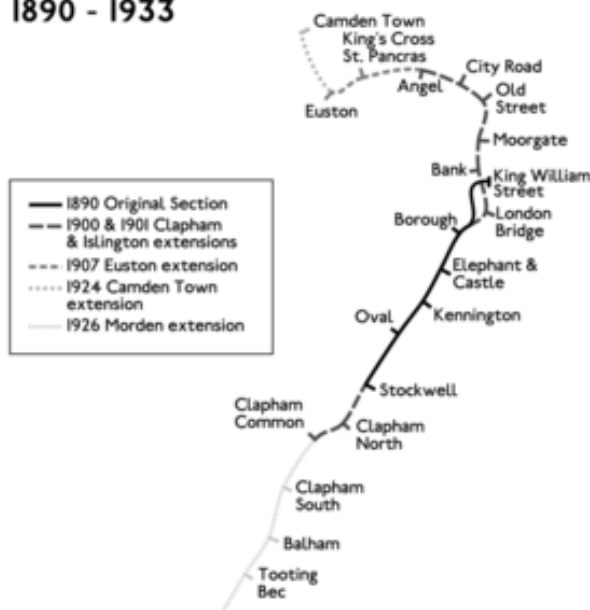


Fig 20 West Finchley entrance 1935 LNER trains only. Before the parade of shops built

CHAPTER 2 – THE CITY AND SOUTH LONDON RAILWAY

In 1890 The City and South London Railway built the first electric underground railway, in the world, between King William Street and Stockwell. It was the first underground railway to be built using a tunnelling machine. The machine was called the Gateshead Shield. Fitting into the bore of the tunnel, it enabled those workmen at the front digging out the tunnel to be shielded from the bore just dug with the machine holding the walls of the bore in place. Circular metal sections were then bolted together behind the bore, and then the machine moved forward to enable the digging out to continue.

CITY & SOUTH LONDON RAILWAY 1890 - 1933



In 1900 they then built a line from Moorgate to join this railway at Borough with another station at Bank, the original line from Borough to King William Street was closed. They then extended the line from Stockwell to Clapham Common. In 1907 they extended the line from Moorgate to Angel, then onward to Euston.

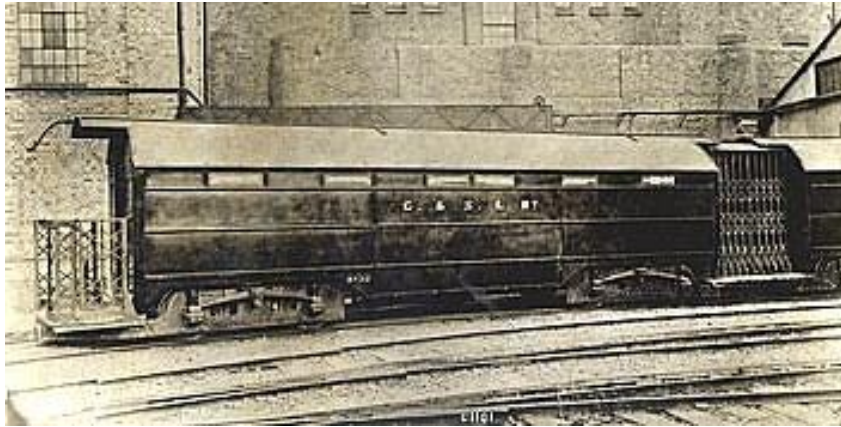
It basically became what is now known as the “Bank” branch of the Northern Line.



Stockwell Station on the C&SLR



C&SLR Electric train



The original service was operated by trains composed of an engine and three carriages. This 1920's picture shows one of the carriages in Stockwell yard. Thirty two passengers could be accommodated in each carriage, which was provided with longitudinal bench seating and sliding doors at the ends, leading onto a platform from which they could board and alight.

It was reasoned that there was nothing to look at in the tunnels so the only windows were in a narrow band high up in the carriage sides.

Gate-men rode on the carriage platforms to operate the lattice gates and announce the station names to the passengers. Unlike other railways, there were no ticket classes or paper tickets; when the railway began operations, a single flat fare of two (old) pence – nearly 1p - collected at a turnstile, was charged for all passengers.

Despite the cramped carriages and competition from existing bus and tram services over its route, the railway attracted 5.1 million passengers in 1891, its first year of operation. To alleviate overcrowding, the fleet of rolling stock was enlarged.

The inside of the coaches were well furnished with upholstered seating. They became known as “padded cells” because of the claustrophobic conditions. Note the floor is grooved, a feature that was included on all later tube stock because a discarded cigarette end and matches would fall into the groove and prevent a person slipping.

After smoking was banned on the tube, of course, a grooved floor wasn't needed.





Euston station in 1907 was the terminus of the C&SLR. It was built, like Stockwell, as an island platform with a crossover set of points so the trains could use either platform. Here it is in 1908 - Note the somewhat portly gate man standing by the door!

Note also the carriages now have windows.

These two photos of Euston station, Bank branch show the original C&SLR island platform. The top one, taken just before the one above, shows the platform in 1907, the lower one was taken in September 1950. Both are looking north. The top one shows the conductor "rail" where the C&SLR trains picked up the electricity – quite different to how it is done today, where the outside conductor rail supplies the current, and the centre conductor rail is the return current rail. The actual tracks were used as the return rail for the C&SLR trains.

The island platform was removed when the Victoria line was built to interchange with the Northern Line in 1966.



CHAPTER 3 – THE CHARING CROSS EUSTON AND HAMPSTEAD RAILWAY

In 1907 The Charing Cross Euston and Hampstead Railway obtained government assent to build an underground line from Charing Cross to Heath Street Hampstead. The line was built under the management of the Underground Electric Railways Company of London and opened on 22nd June 1907 as “The Hampstead Tube” with the following stations

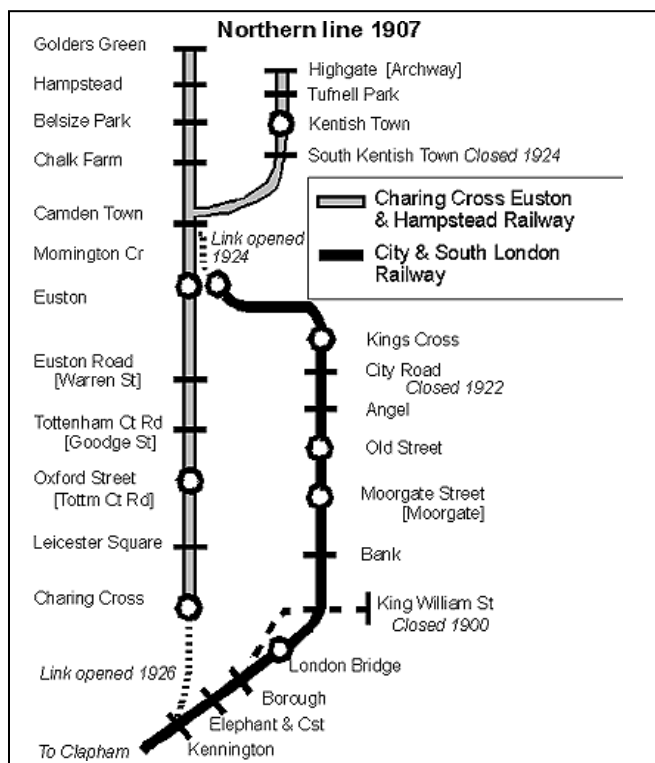
- Charing Cross
(to make an interchange with the South Eastern Railway terminus; renamed Strand in 1915, reverted to Charing Cross in 1979)
- Leicester Square
- Oxford Street (renamed Tottenham Court Road in 1908)
- Tottenham Court Road (renamed Goodge Street in 1908)
- Euston Road (renamed Warren Street in 1908)
- Euston (to make an interchange with the newly extended City and South London Railway)
- Mornington Crescent (planned name was Seymour Terrace)
- Camden Town

Golder's Green branch – note the original spelling here of Golders Green

- Chalk Farm
- Belsize Park
- Hampstead
- Golders Green

Highgate branch

- South Kentish Town (closed on 5 June 1924)
- Kentish Town (to make an interchange with the Midland Railway)
- Tufnell Park
- Highgate (renamed Archway in 1939)



The line was over 8 miles in length. In 1914 it was extended south from Charing Cross to Embankment.

This map shows the state of the Northern Line in 1907 (although it wasn't called that then). The proposed links between the Charing Cross Euston and Hampstead Railway and the City & South London Railway, will effectively give us the Charing Cross and Bank branches of the Northern Line-(see next chapter)

None of the stations were built like the C&SLR with island platforms. They all were in separate tunnels and had their own platform. This was a godsend later on when the line became busy, because overcrowding on an island platform was dangerous, and most had to be rebuilt.

The surface station buildings on the CCE&HR were designed by Leslie Green in the early 1900's and many still have the original buildings. Below is Tufnell Park station as it looks today with the original design.

This consisted of two-storey steel framed buildings faced with red glazed terracotta blocks and wide semi-circular windows on the upper floor.

Each station was provided with two or four lifts and an emergency spiral staircase in a separate shaft.



Before the Underground roundel started to appear on the station platforms, each railway company had their own way of putting the station name on the underground platforms. The Charing Cross Euston and Hampstead Railway simply painted the station name on the tiled platform walls. A lot of these have now disappeared as a number of the station platforms have been refurbished. But a number have been preserved and are still there today, with the original station name in some cases.



These pictures were taken in July 2017.



All the lettering is 5 tiles high and written in brown or black so as to stand out from the white tiles.

Mornington Crescent

I thought I'd give Mornington Crescent its own page in this history book. Opened on 22/6/1907 by the Charing Cross Euston and Hampstead Railway, it was very little used.

It's amazing that the station was never closed down, like South Kentish Town, but it survived and became a quirky moniker, lampooned on the radio in the programme, *"I'm sorry I haven't a clue!"* (see below).

These two pictures opposite show the station building. The first was taken in 1925, and the second shows the station building today. Note the Leslie Green design. Because of the under use, however, the station was only open on weekdays, and when the LPTB took over in 1939, northbound Edgware trains did not stop at the station until 1966.

On 23 October 1992 the station was shut so that the 85-year-old lifts could be replaced. The intention was to open it within one year. However, the state of neglect of the rest of the station meant other work had to be completed, and the station was closed for almost six years until 27 April 1998.



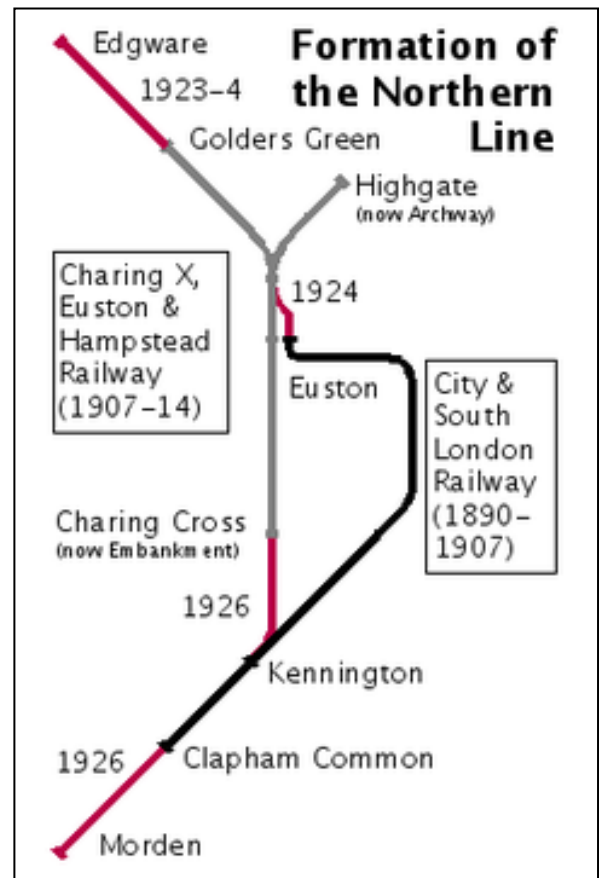
It was fortunate that the increase of population around the station saved it from permanent closure. Not much has been altered over the years. The bank branch, when extended by the Underground in 1924, although taking a more westerly route between Euston and Camden Town, did not have an intermediate station.

The radio programme, *"I'm sorry I haven't a clue!"*, chaired by Barry Cryer and popular in the 1990's had a game called Mornington Crescent where the panel of players, who were equally like minded zany comedians, appeared to move around the tube system, in turn, naming station after station with apparent rules for connection. The game ended when one of the players announced "Mornington Crescent" as the next obvious connection, and won the game. If you want to find out how to play the game, you must ask someone who understands the rules!

CHAPTER 4 – THE “UNDERGROUND”

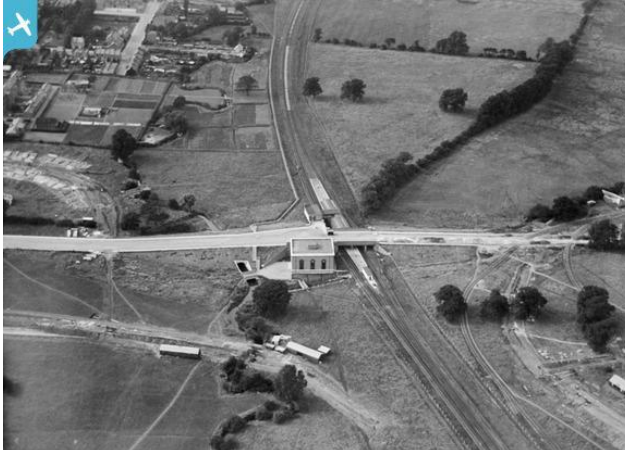
Just before the first world war all the companies building the underground electric railways came under the management of the Underground Electric Railways Company of London, who were with government funding. The name stuck, and that is why the whole tube system is still known today as the Underground. World War I then delayed any further building and the tube stations were used as air raid shelters (from Zeppelin bombs).

After the war, government backed financial guarantees were used to expand the network, shown on this map in red. In 1924 a line known as the “Euston Loop” was built to take the City and South London railway into Camden Town, avoiding Mornington Crescent, and in 1926 extending from Clapham Common to Morden. Also in 1926 joining the Charing Cross Euston and Hampstead to the City and South London railway at Kennington, thus completing the links of Charing Cross and Bank branches.



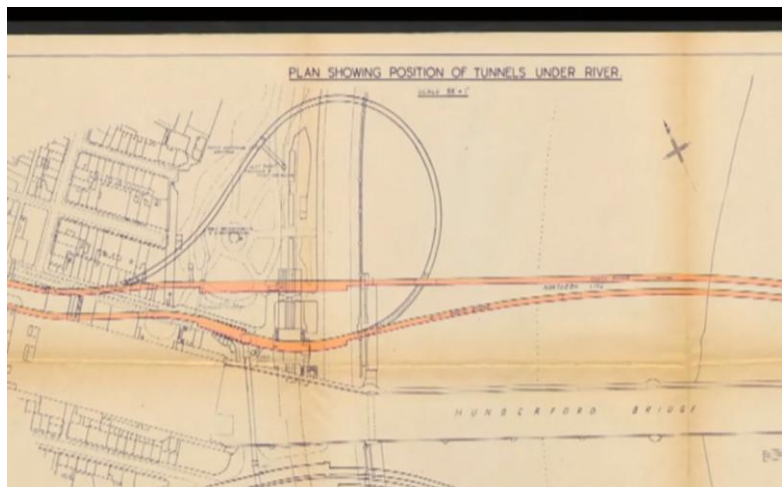
The UNDERGROUND were also the first to use a recognisable logo for their name. In capital letters with a larger U at the beginning and D at the end. Here is such a sign at Belsize Park in 1935. Note the station design by Leslie Green.

In 1923 the Charing Cross Euston and Hampstead line from Golders Green was extended to Hendon Central, then in 1924 extended again to Edgware, across mostly open countryside via Burnt Oak and Brent. This extension to Edgware was, effectively, the beginning of the end of the first railway to Edgware where this book started. The LNER steam service to Edgware ceased on 11th September 1939, now being served by the new tube, thus removing the passenger service to Mill Hill East until electrification in May 1941.



Aerial view of Burnt Oak station in 1926 showing new road from the Edgware Road and initial construction work for the Watling Estate.

Hendon Central station in 1928 looking north with the old tube stock



The extension from Charing Cross (now called Embankment) to Kennington removed the loop built by the Charing Cross Euston and Hampstead railway which enabled the trains to simply go round in a circle and then back the other way – see diagram above. A new southbound platform was built, but the new northbound platform, however, had to be built on the tight curve of the old loop (see above). It is one of the tightest curved platforms on the Underground and creates quite a gap between the train and the platform. The recording “Mind the gap!” was used to warn passengers to take care. You can read about that recording on the last page of this book. A similar loop was built at Kennington when the line was extended and is still used today.

These extensions, built under the management of the UNDERGROUND, almost completed the Northern Line – the only missing bit was the section known as the Northern Heights from Archway to East Finchley and the old LNER steam railway to Alexandra Palace, High Barnet, and Edgware via Mill Hill, still being a branch line from Kings Cross through Finsbury Park.

CHAPTER 5 – THE LONDON PASSENGER TRANSPORT BOARD (LPTB)

In 1933 all the underground railways and all of the London area tram and bus operators were merged with the Underground into the London Passenger Transport Board (LPTB). In 1935 the LPTB proposed a “New Works Plan” which would see the remaining part of the Northern Line integrated into the rest. It was as follows:-

- Take over the LNER line from Finsbury Park to Edgware, Highgate to Alexandra Palace, and Finchley Church End (now Finchley Central) to High Barnet, and electrify it.
- Extend the line north of Archway to join this line at East Finchley, and build a new station to accommodate both the electric trains and the LNER steam trains.
- Double the track from Finchley Church End to Edgware, and electrify it.
- Extend the line north of Edgware to Bushey Heath with new stations at Brockley Hill and Elstree South, with a new depot at Aldenham.

Under the LPTB both of the original company’s lines were merged together and called the “Edgware Highgate and Morden Line”. It wasn’t until 1937 that suggestions to rename this were invited. Suggested names at the time were along the same vein in which the Bakerloo line was named (linking Baker Street to Waterloo), with names such as Mordenware and Medgway, but, thankfully, the moniker Northern was chosen because it was going to serve the Northern Heights.

Over the next six years a lot of infrastructure work to accommodate this New Plan was put in place. The line was extended underground from Archway, to meet the LNER tracks at East Finchley. A brand new station designed by the underground architect William Holden, was built at East Finchley in July 1939. See the picture below taken recently.



Note that above the Underground roundel in the window there is a fish shaped window. This would have carried the LNER logo as the station was designed to serve both the Underground and the LNER service from Kings Cross. It is still there today.



On 19th January 1941, the new deep level Highgate station opened beneath the surface one. At the time it had the longest escalators on the Underground.



The entrance to West Finchley 1944 showing both Underground and LNER signs.

Conductor rails were laid from East Finchley to High Barnet in 1939. As a consequence the building of houses increased on a major scale and the Woodside Park estate was built. Because of the New Works Plan, LNER decided to build another station between Finchley Church End and Woodside Park, called West Finchley. It opened on March 1st 1933 and it was built from bits of closed down stations from the other parts of LNER. Note also the slip road has been built to serve the parade of shops.

Electricity substations to support the electric tube trains were built at Finchley Central, Muswell Hill, Crouch End and Finsbury Park. The route from Edgware to Bushey Heath was obtained and the viaduct on which Brockley Hill station was to exist was started. A 500m tunnel was also dug to accommodate Elstree South station – the site of which is now a petrol station on the A41 roundabout near the M1. Then the second world war broke out, but during the latter half of 1939 and 1940 a lot of the New Works Plan still carried on alongside the existing steam services. A second track was laid between Mill Hill East and Mill Hill the Hale, and The Hale station was enlarged to provide an interchange with Mill Hill Broadway on the LMS. Although electrification was halted from Finchley Central to Edgware, conductor rails were laid between Finchley Central and Mill Hill East in 1941, to serve the barracks there (there was a war on) thus re-instating the service to Mill Hill East.



1939 doubling the track between Mill Hill East and Mill Hill the Hale. The aerial view shows John Laing's builders works and Bunns Lane running across the top. Also note the electric sub station being built alongside the track.



Roughly the same view as the picture on the left, but now. The little patch of open ground and trees on the RHS of the picture above would have been where the railway passed under Page Street and went past the old John Laing's site, now a housing estate. Bunns Lane still running across the top.



1924 Mill Hill Broadway station with Mill Hill the Hale station between the two bridges

The Highgate Wood depot was converted from the old LNER depot for the Northern Line tube stock in 1939, and conductor rails were laid to run the tube trains into the depot from East Finchley along the LNER track.



Here is a picture of an LNER service to High Barnet entering East Finchley after the conductor rails were laid for the tube trains to use the Highgate Wood depot. The probable date is later in 1939. The LNER continued to run their trains alongside the new tube trains, but not for long.



The London Passenger Transport Board redesigned the UNDERGROUND logo and introduced the iconic roundel. This is their logo in 1933, and later was to be used for all future signage. Note how they have kept the larger “U” at the beginning and “D” at the end

In 1940, during the war, the first electric (tube) trains started to run north of Archway to High Barnet. The passenger service started on April 14th 1940.

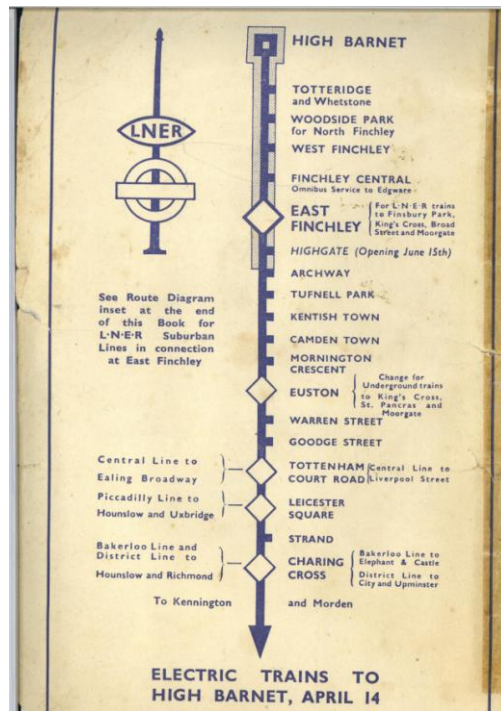
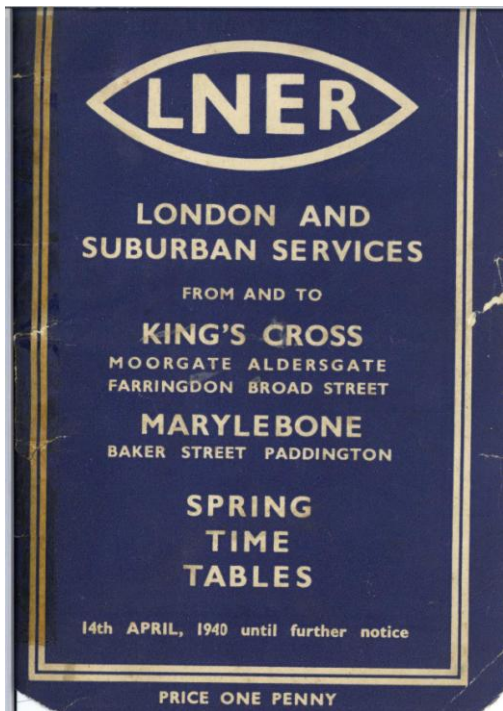
High Barnet station in early 1940 with tube train alongside steam service



Finchley Central 1940
with tube train to High Barnet
alongside steam train
to Finsbury Park

It was also planned to run nine-car tube trains (instead of the seven car trains) to cope with the expected increase in passengers. To that end, both the new Highgate and East Finchley stations were built to accommodate the nine car trains, and you can see above, Finchley Central station being extended for the same. Nothing more was done after Finchley Central, of course, because of the cost of extending those platforms which were underground.

On 14th April 1940, the LNER published their Spring Timetable for London Suburban Services out of Kings Cross and Marylebone. See how they refer to the New Electric service to High Barnet.

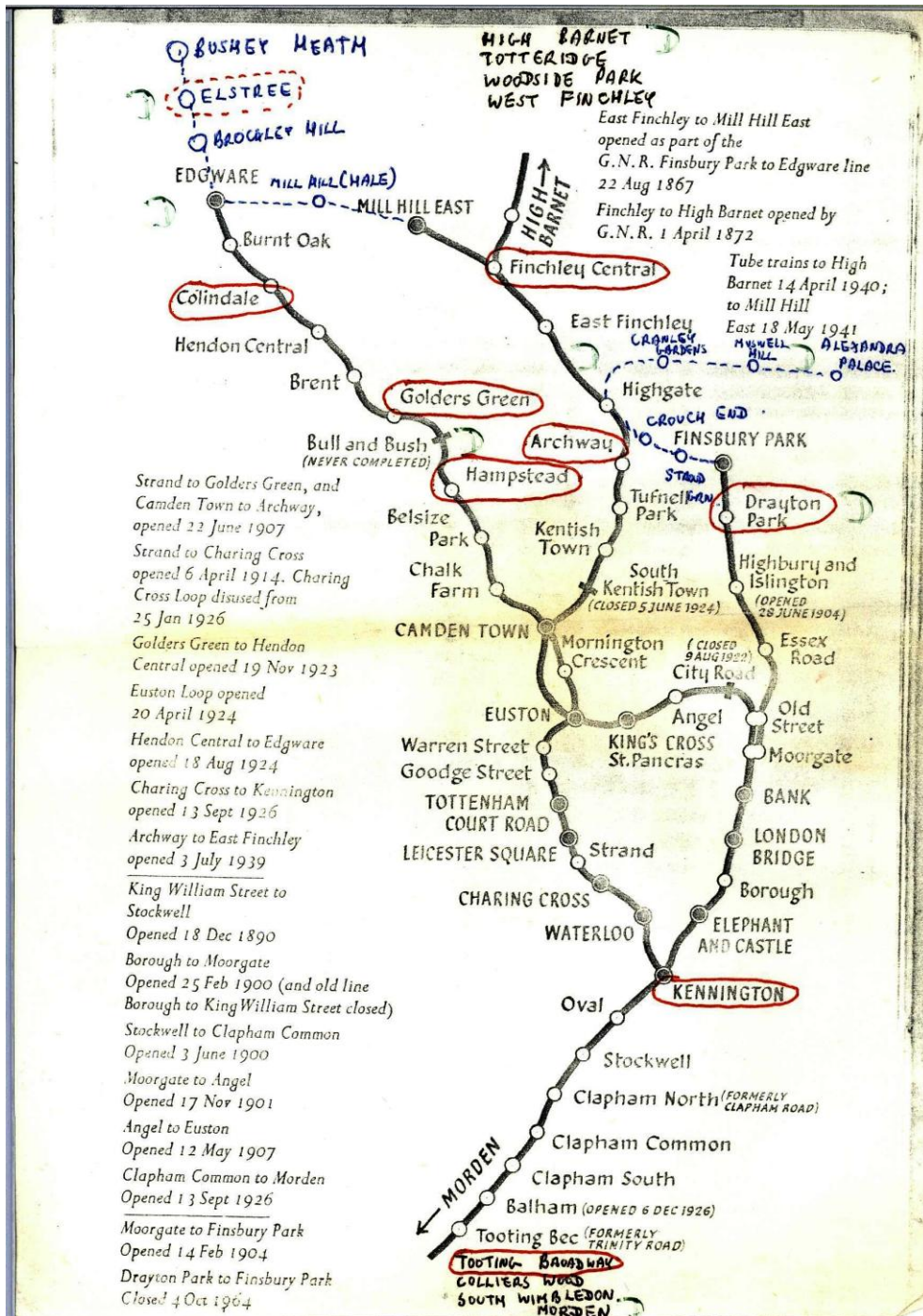


And a page from the timetable showing the weekday "rush-hour" trains (LNER steam services) from High Barnet – a timetable that was to last less than a month.

HITCHIN, HATFIELD, HERTFORD (North), HIGH BARNET, ALEXANDRA PALACE, BROAD STREET, KING'S CROSS and MOORGATE									
WEEKDAYS									
	a.m.	a.m.	a.m.	a.m.	a.m.	a.m.	a.m.	a.m.	a.m.
1	HITCHIN	dep.	7 20	7 28	7 36	7 44	7 52	8 00	8 08
2	Stevenage	arr.	7 20	7 28	7 36	7 44	7 52	8 00	8 08
3	Knebworth	arr.	7 20	7 28	7 36	7 44	7 52	8 00	8 08
4	Welwyn North	arr.	7 20	7 28	7 36	7 44	7 52	8 00	8 08
5	Welwyn Garden City	arr.	7 20	7 28	7 36	7 44	7 52	8 00	8 08
6	Hatfield	arr.	7 20	7 28	7 36	7 44	7 52	8 00	8 08
7	Hatfield	dep.	7 49	7 55	8 01	8 07	8 13	8 19	8 25
8	Brookman's Park	arr.	7 49	7 55	8 01	8 07	8 13	8 19	8 25
9	Potters Bar and South Mimms	arr.	7 49	7 55	8 01	8 07	8 13	8 19	8 25
10	Hatley Wood	arr.	7 49	7 55	8 01	8 07	8 13	8 19	8 25
11	New Barnet	arr.	7 49	7 55	8 01	8 07	8 13	8 19	8 25
12	Oakleigh Park for East Barnet	arr.	7 49	7 55	8 01	8 07	8 13	8 19	8 25
13	New Southgate and Friern Barnet	arr.	7 49	7 55	8 01	8 07	8 13	8 19	8 25
14	HERTFORD (North)	dep.	7 31	7 38	7 45	7 52	8 00	8 07	8 14
15	Bayford	arr.	7 31	7 38	7 45	7 52	8 00	8 07	8 14
16	Cuffley and Goff's Oak	arr.	7 31	7 38	7 45	7 52	8 00	8 07	8 14
17	Crews Hill	arr.	7 31	7 38	7 45	7 52	8 00	8 07	8 14
18	Gordon Hill	arr.	7 31	7 38	7 45	7 52	8 00	8 07	8 14
19	Enfield Chase	arr.	7 40	7 47	7 54	8 01	8 08	8 15	8 22
20	Grange Park	arr.	7 45	7 52	8 00	8 07	8 14	8 21	8 28
21	Winchmore Hill	arr.	7 48	7 55	8 02	8 09	8 16	8 23	8 30
22	Palmer's Green and Southgate	arr.	7 51	7 58	8 05	8 12	8 19	8 26	8 33
23	Bowes Park	arr.	7 54	8 01	8 08	8 15	8 22	8 29	8 36
24	Wood Green (Alexandra Park)	dep.	8 08	8 10	8 12	8 14	8 16	8 18	8 20
25	Horsney	arr.	8 08	8 10	8 12	8 14	8 16	8 18	8 20
26	Harrington	arr.	8 08	8 10	8 12	8 14	8 16	8 18	8 20
27	HIGH BARNET	dep.	7 43	7 46	7 49	7 52	7 55	7 58	8 01
28	Totteridge and Whetstone	arr.	7 43	7 46	7 49	7 52	7 55	7 58	8 01
29	Woodside Pk. for N. Finchley	arr.	7 43	7 46	7 49	7 52	7 55	7 58	8 01
30	West Finchley	arr.	7 43	7 46	7 49	7 52	7 55	7 58	8 01
31	Finchley Central	arr.	7 43	7 46	7 49	7 52	7 55	7 58	8 01
32	East Finchley	arr.	7 43	7 46	7 49	7 52	7 55	7 58	8 01
33	EAST FINCHLEY	dep.	7 59	8 01	8 03	8 05	8 07	8 09	8 11
34	ALEXANDRA PALACE	dep.	8 02	8 05	8 08	8 11	8 14	8 17	8 20
35	Pluswell Hill	arr.	8 02	8 05	8 08	8 11	8 14	8 17	8 20
36	Cranley Gardens	arr.	8 02	8 05	8 08	8 11	8 14	8 17	8 20
37	Highgate	dep.	8 31	8 33	8 35	8 37	8 39	8 41	8 43
38	Crouch End	arr.	8 31	8 33	8 35	8 37	8 39	8 41	8 43
39	Stroud Green	arr.	8 31	8 33	8 35	8 37	8 39	8 41	8 43
40	FINSBURY PARK	arr.	8 04	8 10	8 16	8 22	8 28	8 34	8 40
41	FINSBURY PARK	dep.	8 07	8 12	8 18	8 24	8 30	8 36	8 42
42	Canonbury	dep.	8 08	8 11	8 14	8 17	8 20	8 23	8 26
43	Dalston Junction	arr.	8 08	8 11	8 14	8 17	8 20	8 23	8 26
44	Shoreditch	arr.	8 08	8 11	8 14	8 17	8 20	8 23	8 26
45	BROAD STREET	arr.	8 08	8 11	8 14	8 17	8 20	8 23	8 26
46	York Road (King's Cross)	dep.	8 19	8 21	8 23	8 25	8 27	8 29	8 31
47	KING'S CROSS (Terminus)	arr.	8 13	8 18	8 21	8 26	8 29	8 34	8 39
48	Kings Cross (Metropolitan)	dep.	8 22	8 26	8 30	8 34	8 38	8 42	8 46
49	Farringdon	arr.	8 26	8 30	8 34	8 38	8 42	8 46	8 50
50	Aldersgate and Barbican	arr.	8 28	8 32	8 36	8 40	8 44	8 48	8 52
51	MOORGATE	arr.	8 30	8 34	8 38	8 42	8 46	8 50	8 54

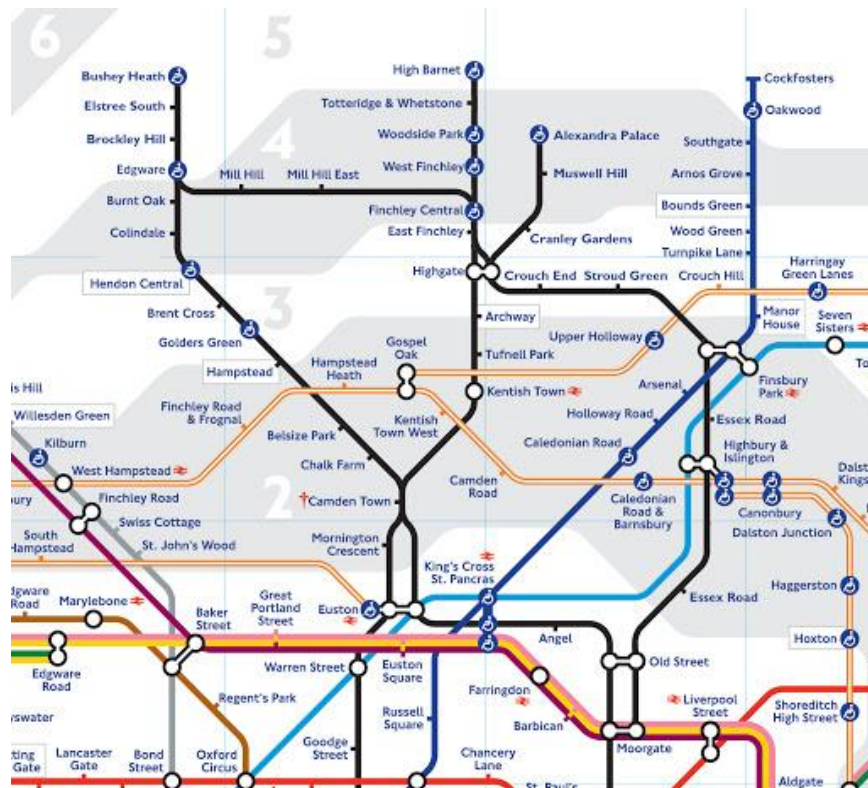
A New electric service—subject to alteration on and from 20th May. Passengers from these stations change at East Finchley.

And, most interesting of all, a loose leaf insert in the timetable, with the date history of the Northern Line, and someone had drawn in the LPTB New Works Plan extensions. The stations ringed red were where trains could be reversed, and the green letter "D" signifies a Depot.



So there we have it. On 18th May 1941 the electrification of the track between Finchley Church End (Finchley Central) and Mill Hill East, completed the Northern Line as we know it today.

With the ambitious plan underway, albeit hampered by the second world war, the map of the Northern line northern section should have eventually looked like this on the Underground Maps, but it doesn't. What happened?



With the tube trains now running through from central London, to High Barnet via Archway (from April 1940), and to Edgware via Golders Green (from August 1924), the LNER steam passenger service from Finchley Central to Edgware was withdrawn by LNER in September 1939, and the LNER service from Finsbury Park to High Barnet was terminated at East Finchley in May 1940. Later, in 1941, all steam passenger services from Finsbury Park went only to Alexandra Palace, using old locomotives and ancient rolling stock.

After the war, in 1945, the major blow to the LPTB New Works Plan was delivered by the government in the shape of the new Green Belt Policy. This was to provide an area of unbuilt-upon open countryside around London and no building of houses was to be allowed on the designated land. The section of the Northern Heights extension from Edgware to Bushey Heath ran right through this Green Belt, so it was abandoned, as there would be no point building a railway if there were going to be no houses built there. At the same time, the electrification of the Alexandra Palace branch from Finsbury Park was also abandoned.

You can watch a video on You Tube that describes the LTPB New Works Plan, and why it failed, here:-

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jjuD288JICs>

(By the way, Beeching had nothing to do with any closures related to the Northern Line!)



Here are two pictures of Golders Green, taken from very much the same viewpoint. The first was taken in 1904 before the tube was built there. The second was taken in 1909, just a year after the tube reached Golders Green.



This sort of development could have easily happened between Edgware and Bushey Heath!

The LNER steam service between Kings Cross and Alexandra Place was suspended between 1951 and 1952 to save coal, and after that there was only a shuttle service between Alexandra Palace and Finsbury Park until July 1954, then all stations between Finsbury Park and Alexandra Palace were closed to passenger traffic.

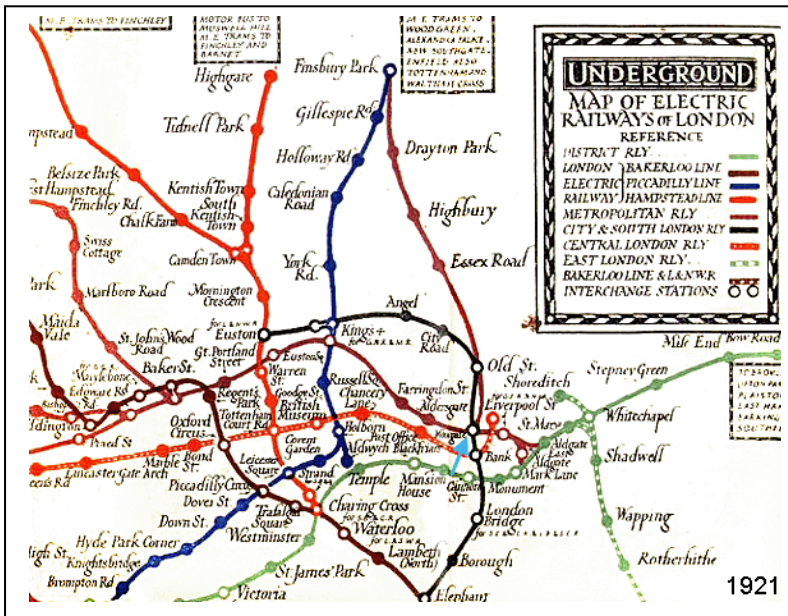
Freight and coal trains continued to run through to Alexandra Palace until 1957, but in 1958 the track between Park Junction at Highgate and Alexandra Palace was lifted. Similar steam hauled freight and coal trains continued to High Barnet and Edgware using the line from Finsbury Park. They ceased to High Barnet in 1962 but continued to run to Edgware until 1964, primarily to serve the gas works at Mill Hill East. After that, the track between Mill Hill East and Edgware was lifted and the area used for Mill Hill the Hale station had the M1 motorway built over it.

The line between Finsbury Park and Highgate Wood Sidings was used, using battery locomotives, between 1966 and 1970 for the transfer of the tube stock from the Northern City line at Drayton Park to the Highgate Wood depot. (see Chapter 6) Here is one at Crouch End in July 1969. This ceased in Sept 1970 due to weak bridges on the route, and the track was lifted between Finsbury Park and Highgate West tunnels from 1971 to 1972



Northern City line stock movement passing through Crouch End

CHAPTER 6 – THE GREAT NORTHERN AND CITY RAILWAY



The Great Northern and City Railway built a separate railway between Moorgate to Finsbury Park in 1904. It was intended to allow mainline trains of the Great Northern Railway to run from Finsbury Park directly into the City of London. The tunnels were made large enough to take a main line train, unlike those of the other tube railways being built at the time.

GN & C railway Finsbury Park to Moorgate. Taken over by the Metropolitan Line in 1913, and integrated as part of the Northern Line from 1937 to 1975, although completely separate from the other lines.

The line ran as part of the Northern Line, known as the Northern City Line between 1937 and 1975, separate from the rest of the line with termini at Moorgate and Finsbury Park, and was shown on the tube carriage maps – see below.



The old stock on the Northern City line was replaced with the new red tube trains, built in 1938, that also ran on the rest of the northern line. In 1964, when the Victoria line was being built, it was decided to integrate the Northern City Line platforms at the Finsbury Park terminus so as to provide easy interchange with the Piccadilly Line at Finsbury Park. The Northern City Line was then cut back to terminate at Drayton Park, which is actually a surface station.

Drayton Park southbound 1960's with 1938 LPTB tube stock.



The London Passenger and Transport Board also planned to modify the track layout at Drayton Park to allow the tube trains to run into Finsbury park main line station using the old LNER platforms that served the line to Crouch End, Highgate (surface), Alexandra Palace, East Finchley, Edgware, and High Barnet. But this didn't happen.



Platforms 9 and 10, looking North at Finsbury Park, on the west side of the station, serving the Northern Heights stations mentioned in Chapter 1. These were closed in 1954, but the track shown still serves platform 8 for the northbound slow trains to Welwyn and Hertford North.

The island platform, 9 and 10 was largely demolished in 1972. This photo was taken just before demolition

Finsbury Park platform 8 in 1996. The north end of the island platforms 9 and 10 can still be seen



The Northern City Line was also where the most serious railway accident occurred on the London Underground, on February 28th 1975, when a rush hour tube train ran into the Moorgate terminus of the line without braking and hit the dead end wall at speed, killing 43 people and injuring many more. The whole line was later that year handed over to Network Rail. It had a wider bore, and could take stock that ran on the main line. Engineering work was carried out to divert the trains leaving Drayton Park into the main line station of Finsbury Park. It now serves as part of the main line under the designation of the Moorgate Line with trains from Hertford and Welwyn Garden City.

CHAPTER 7 – THE LATTER DAY HISTORY OF THE NORTHERN LINE

When the new 1938 tube trains started running on the Northern Line, they were built to the LPTB design in Birmingham by Metropolitan Cammell, and the iconic red tube train was first seen on the Northern and Bakerloo Lines from 1939. Here is one at Mill Hill East with the destination plates that had been made under the LPTB New Works Plan, but is a destination that never was. The last of the original 1938 stock ran on the Northern Line on 14th April 1978.



Later versions of the stock continued to run, but it was all finally withdrawn from the Northern Line on 19th May 1988. Here is a picture of the interior of the 1938 stock.



The 1938 stock at Mill Hill East in 1966 with the shuttle that ran to and from Finchley Central at weekends.

Note the original wooden platform from 1866. It was covered with asphalt in the 1990's, then rebuilt as concrete between 2000 and 2010.



Old Piccadilly line stock was used to replace the 1938 stock as it was withdrawn. Built in 1959 it was transferred to the Northern line between 1975 and 1979.

By the mid-1990s these units were getting old and were in need of works attention. By this time, all the remaining 1959 Stock was concentrated on the Northern line. Minor refurbishment of the stock took place, painting the blue/grey interiors white and replacing some of the seat moquettes. This was done in a haphazard manner, the white interiors becoming very dirty inside by 1998, and with a failure rate that had risen to 1 in 1,864 miles the 1959 Stock was in urgent need of replacement. Withdrawal of the 1959 Stock was a drawn-out affair, and when the last example was withdrawn on 28 January 2000, it was the only remaining tube train to be crewed with a motorman and a guard. One unit was repainted in "heritage" red and cream livery in 1990 to commemorate the line's 100th anniversary.

In 1995, new tube stock was rolled out on the Northern Line.



Northern Line 1995 stock seen here leaving Highgate northbound (That's why there is no driver in the cab)..

Built by the French company Alstom, the trains are quite different to previous Northern Line stock. Each carriage is longer than previous stock and the train's length can be accommodated in six carriages, not seven as before. Previous stock used pneumatic doors that gave that "Tssshhh..." noise of escaping air as they closed. These trains' doors are operated by electric motors and you

cannot push them open once they start to close. The trains' motors are more powerful and the trains can actually accelerate up the inclines on the Northern Line, where previous stock laboured.

They are also one man operated, the person in the driver's cab operating the doors as well as driving the train. In February 2013 work started on automating the trains with the section between West Finchley and High Barnet being the first to switch over. The rest of the line completed in June 2014 with computers controlling the signalling and driving of the trains. The person in the cab doesn't drive the train and is there for safety reasons, and to open and shut the doors. All signals were covered over, but have not been removed, and the frequency of trains throughout the day is every three minutes.

So there we have it, from the beginnings of a steam branch line and the first underground electric railway in the world, to an automatic electric service with a service frequency measured in minutes. And the history will go on with a planned extension from Kennington to Battersea and even a possible split into two separate lines – who knows?

SOME CURRENT FACTS AND FIGURES (2017)

- The Northern Line is one of the oldest and busiest tube lines on the London Underground network. The line covers 58km and includes 50 stations (36 of them below ground).
- The line is used by more than 900,000 passengers a day and more than 200 million passengers a year.
- The Northern Line features the London Underground's deepest station (58.5m below ground level) at Hampstead, and the highest point above the ground (18m or 59ft) on the Dollis Brook viaduct over Dollis Road between Finchley Central and Mill Hill East.
- Angel station now features the longest escalators (60m) in Western Europe.
- The line also features the longest (27.8km) tunnel in the underground network which is located between East Finchley and Morden (via Bank).
- *"Mind the gap"* - London Underground used a voice recording at several platforms that were on a curve to warn passengers of the gap between the platform and the train. These slowly got phased out because such recordings carried royalty fees. So they made their own recordings, and in 1969 a chap called Oswald Lawrence made the recording used on Northern Line platforms, especially Embankment northbound platform because of the curve. When Oswald Lawrence died in 2007, his widow used to go to the northbound platform at Embankment so she could hear his voice again, which she did quite regularly, but the recording disappeared on 1/11/2007 as LUL were implementing digital technology to replace such recordings. His widow then asked LUL to re-instate it as she liked to hear her departed husband's voice, and they did, but only for Embankment northbound platform. It is still used there today, and is also used during the New Year fireworks display on the Thames, as it became an iconic part of the history of the Underground. Latterly, however, (certainly from 2017), the voice of Oswald Lawrence has been removed from the fireworks display and substituted with a female voice. The original recording is still at Embankment, however.
- The line also has one out of only three stations on the Underground, to have only one platform for the trains. This is at Mill Hill East, the other two being Chesham and Heathrow Terminal 4.
- And, (here's a quiz question answer for you!), has the only station on whole of the underground with the letter "Z" in its name – Belsize Park!