



The Malmesbury Branch

For TS2016



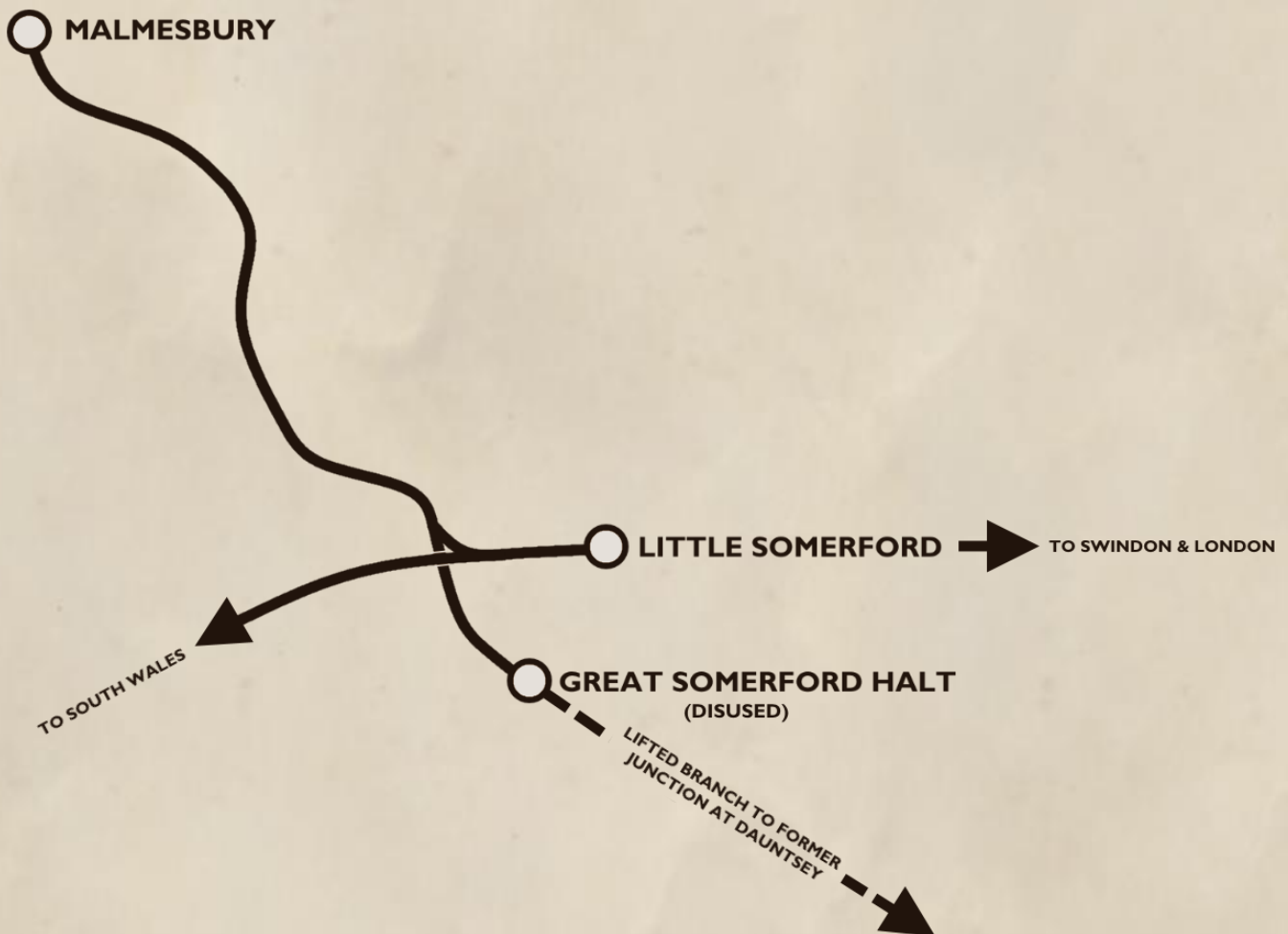
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History of the Route

Originally opened in 1887 by The Malmesbury Railway Company, the Malmesbury Branchline was a 6.5 mile line running from Dauntsey on the Great Western Mainline, north to the Cotswold town of Malmesbury in Wiltshire. The construction of the line was partially funded by the Great Western Railway and the line was fully absorbed by the GWR in 1880.

1951 Route Map:



Between Malmesbury and Dauntsey there was one station at Great Somerford. This was a small station serving the nearby villages. A small goods yard was located there with access provided by a ground frame in the station building.



Malmesbury itself was the terminus of the line. The station had extensive facilities for such a small terminus. There was a large Goods Shed, an Engine Shed (which still exists today), a Water Tower and a Coaling Stage, a Cattle Dock and a small Signal Box.



In 1903 the South Wales Direct Line (Badminton Line) was built. It cut across the Malmesbury Branch just north of Great Somerford, with a new bridge being built across the Branch, Number 16a. The height required to pass over the Malmesbury branch and the adjacent river Avon required a viaduct, so after crossing bridge 16a the mainline crossed onto the substantial Somerford Viaduct.



A station was also built on the Badminton Line adjacent to the viaduct, this station was Little Somerford.



In 1933 a link line was built to join the Malmesbury Branch to the Badminton Line. The connection rose up a 1 in 50 incline and into the Up Platform at Little Somerford station. Once the connection was complete the southern section of the branch, to Dauntsey, was closed and shortly after the track was lifted, but only as far as Great Somerford halt. This southern section of branch between Kingsmead Crossing and Great Somerford Halt was to become Kingsmead Siding, which was used for storing scrap wagons and during the Second World War it was host to ammunition trains being stored away from the cities and the Luftwaffe's bombs.



The Train Simulator route is set during the British Railways era, a couple of years after the GWR was nationalised in 1948. BR was quick to try and close the branch with passenger services finishing in late 1951 and the branch completely closing in 1962.

The run down bucolic atmosphere of this country branchline during the last few years of steam is what I have endeavoured to recreate. I've created many custom assets for the route including many of the landmarks around Malmesbury, as well as the overwhelming majority of the railway structures on the branch. I hope I have managed to capture the atmosphere of the time and place, and I hope that you'll enjoy driving the route as much as I've enjoyed creating it.

I'd just like to add a big thanks to Mike Fenton, author of the book "The Malmesbury Branch", as this book has been an absolutely brilliant source of information and inspiration during this project.

Rolling Stock

Included with the route is a GWR Diagram AA3 “Toad” Brake Van.

There is a model of No. 17501 “R. U. Malmesbury” which was the dedicated branch van from the late 1930s into the 1950s. There’s also a generic version included which has a selection of prototypical numbers that will automatically be generated when placed.

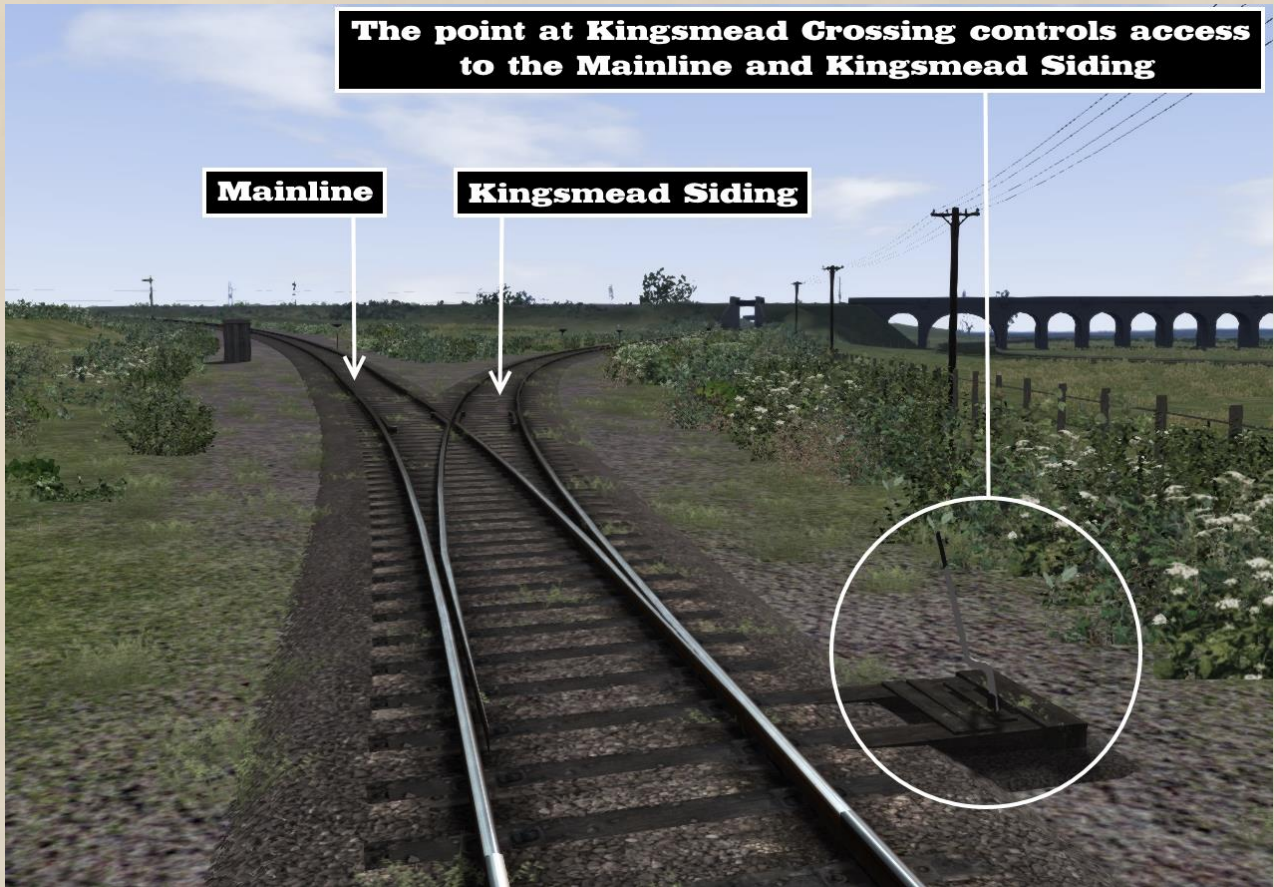


There’s a Guard’s view available by pressing 5, this will switch you to a view from the veranda; Useful when propelling a train as well as giving a nice view to enjoy the scenery.

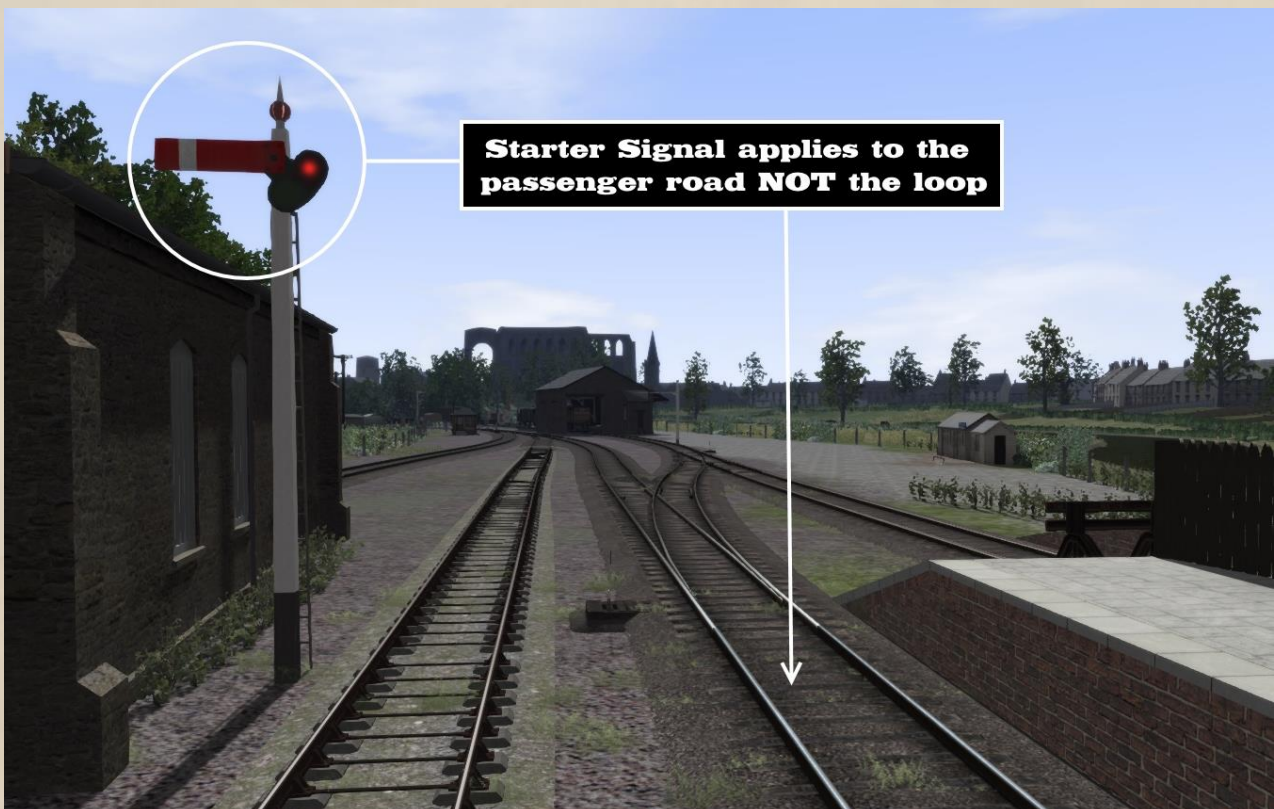


Operational Notes

The manually controlled point at Kingsmead Crossing, to provide access to mainline, is easy to forget to throw. There is also a 15mph restriction over the crossing.



The Malmesbury Starter signal, as in reality, is not adjacent to the track it applies to.



Below is a GWR “STOP” board; its purpose is to remind drivers not to go beyond it during shunting operations. This board was not present in reality, but due to the signalling constraints of Train Simulator it’s necessary to prevent shunting moves from going beyond the Home Signal:



Malmesbury has a combined Water Tower and Coal Stage. It should be operated as shown in this diagram:



Scenarios

The route comes with several scenarios covering passenger services, freight trains and mixed trains. A brief overview of the scenarios follows:

Scenario 1: Afternoon Trip to Malmesbury

This scenario involves running a summer afternoon passenger service from Little Somerford to Malmesbury. Once at Malmesbury, a run round is required before bringing the return working back.

Stock: 57XX Pannier Tank and couple of coaches.

Weather: Clear and Sunny.

Time to complete: Approximately 25mins.

Scenario 2: Mixed Train to Malmesbury

This scenario involves taking the morning mixed freight/passenger service to Malmesbury, Once at Malmesbury some shunting is required to position the wagons in the yard. Once the wagons have been positioned it's time for a swift run back to Little Somerford with the return passenger working. The timings are quite tight so you may need to be liberal with the regulator!

Stock: 57XX Pannier Tank, two coaches, a few wagons and the branch Brake Van.

Weather: Sunny with showers.

Time to complete: Approximately 30mins

Scenario 3: Winter Freight

This scenario takes place on a cold and foggy morning. With visibility highly restricted you'll be tasked with taking the morning freight to Malmesbury, shunting it into the yard and bringing back any outgoing wagons to Little Somerford. The rails will be icy and the signals obscured by the fog, so great care will have to be taken!

Stock: 57XX Pannier Tank, a few wagons and the branch Brake Van.

Weather: Dull, snowy, icy and foggy!

Time to complete: Approximately 35mins

Scenario 4: Shunting the Pickup Freight

On a blustery autumn afternoon, bring a pickup freight across Somerford Viaduct and into Little Somerford station. Once you're at the station the wagons will need marshalling in the yard. Plan your shunting moves carefully and don't get distracted by the traffic passing on the adjacent tracks. Remember to keep an eye on the signals as Train Simulator signalling doesn't quite function prototypically and you may need to Ctrl+TAB/TAB to pass some signals during shunting.

Stock: 68XX Grange, a long train of wagons and a guards van.

Weather: Stormy!

Time to complete: Approximately 30mins.



Scenario 5: Siphons for Scrap

This scenario takes place on a pleasant summer's morning. Some Siphon vans have been in store at Great Somerford and the time has come for them to be taken to Swindon for scrapping. With a Brake Third coach in tow, you'll head down to Kingsmead Crossing, where you'll throw the points and head along Kingsmead Siding. Once at Great Somerford you'll add the Siphons to your train before running down to Malmesbury to run round and head back up to Little Somerford. Quite a bit of shunting is required as you need to keep the Brake Third at the rear of the train to act as a brake van.

Stock: 57XX, Brake Third and Milk Siphons.

Weather: Clear and pleasant.

Time to complete: Approximately 50mins.

Credits

Jack Royle - Route Developer and 3D Artist

www.textures.com – Source of royalty free images used for texture creation.