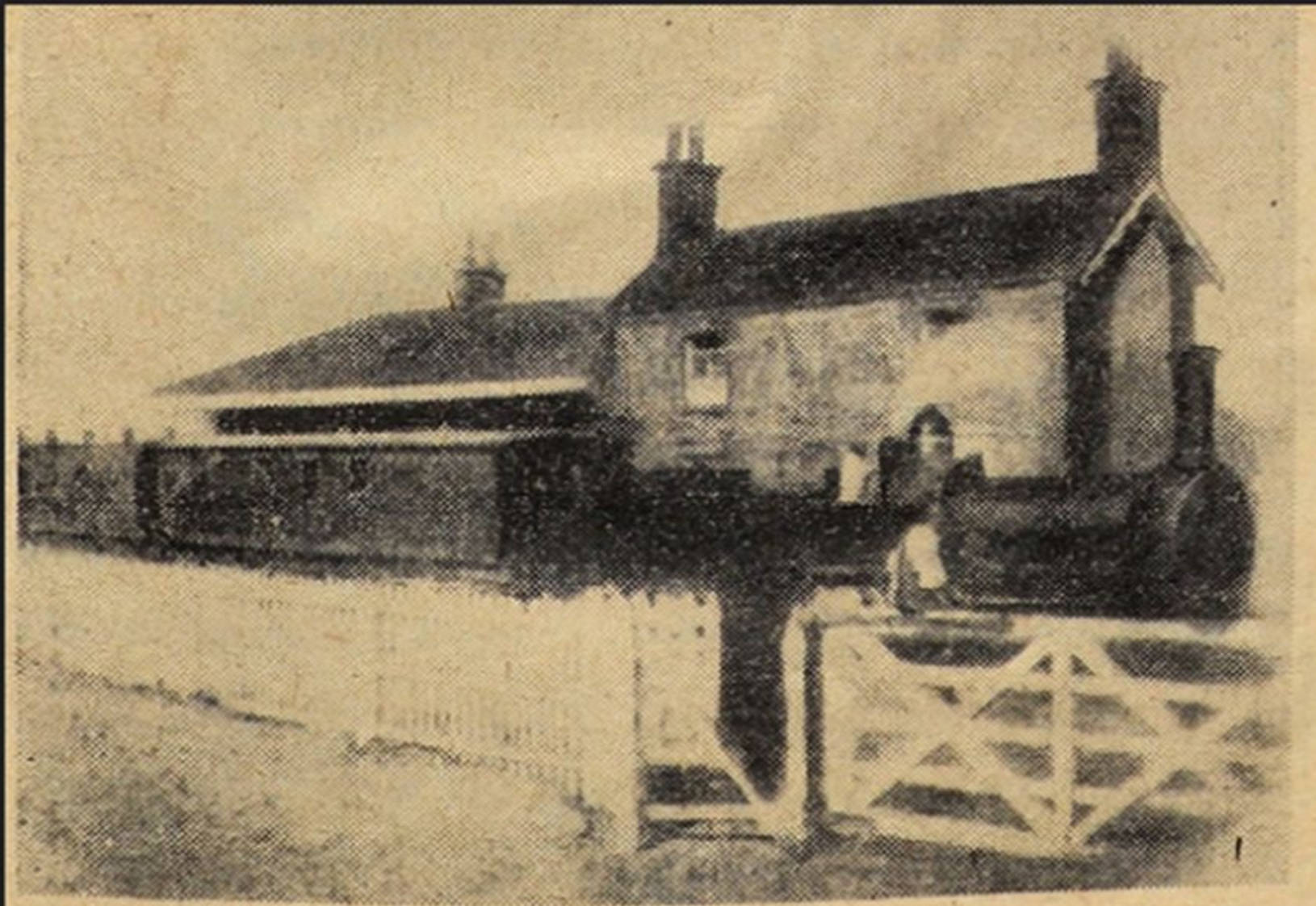


Formby Railway

Why was the railway built in Formby and what impact did it have on the area?



This is how Formby Station used to look.

Why a railway line at Formby?

- In the mid 19th century road communication between Liverpool and Southport was difficult.
- In 1847 an act of parliament was passed for the construction of a Liverpool, Crosby, Southport Railway.
- Construction began in March 1847 and the station formally opened in July of 1848.
- It was cheap and quick to build because of the flat landscape.

Changes

- The station has had many changes over time.
- Take a look at the photographs

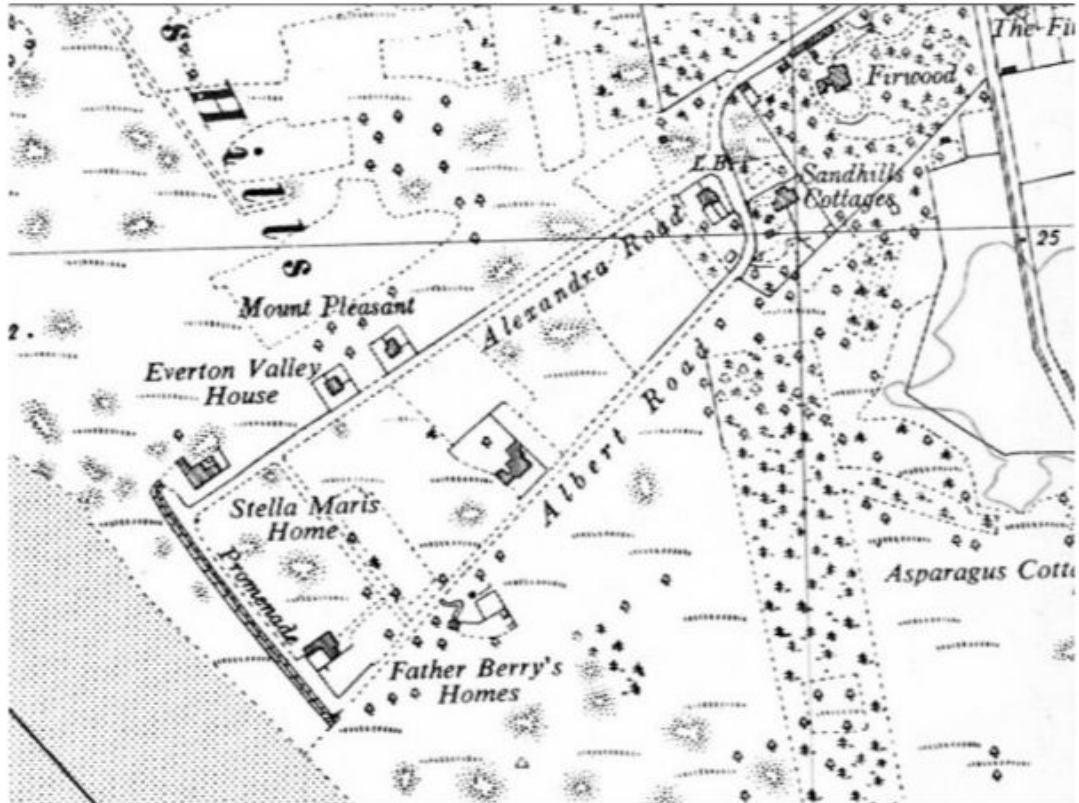
<https://www.flickr.com/photos/formbycivicsociety/albums/72157624364064498>

- <https://flic.kr/s/aHsjrbSPru>

Asparagus

- Formby cultivating rye, wheat, potatoes and asparagus.
- From 1848, when the railway line running from Southport to Liverpool was completed, the local crops could be easily transported into bustling Liverpool by train.
- The train line helped solve the problem of Liverpool's excess of human waste (poo). Thomas Fresh, the Inspector of Nuisances arranging for it to be relocated to Formby and Freshfield on the train.
- The asparagus crop grew well on Liverpool 'night soil'. Formby asparagus was then shipped daily by train from Liverpool to London's Covent Garden and around the world by liner.

'Formby-by-the-Sea'



Formby by the Sea 1955



This story started in 1875 when Formby Land and Building Co. bought 105 acres of land along the Ravenmeols coast, overlooking the River Mersey.

They had big plans! They wanted to rival the nearby success of Southport with its parks, promenades and piers.

The railway loop line of Liverpool-Southport would connect Formby to the the outer world. They built a narrow-gauge railway track from Formby station to move building materials to the coast, and a brick promenade between two new roads Albert Road and Alexandra Road.

Behind the promenade, two other roads were partly made; one was named Lord Street. The company constructed the first item on their programme, a double-tiered promenade of brick, joining up the westerly ends of the two new roads , Albert Road and Alexandra Road. However, the work came to a halt and the company went out of business in 1902. The 1000 ft promenade still exists but is now entirely covered by dunes.



Formby Shore with Stella Maris in the background , 1923.



Formby-by-the-sea. © R.K. Gresswell.



The remains of the steps of what would have been the promenade at Formby-by-the-Sea (Image: Colin Lane/Liverpool Echo)