

VICTORIAN BRITAIN A Happy Nation?

How did the railways change the lives of people in Victorian Britain?



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Source 1:
Epsom races

Most of the working people, who came to the Great Exhibition on the 'Shilling Days', arrived by rail, often from the north of England. King's Cross station had been opened in 1850 and there were nearly 7,000 miles of track linking London with the towns of the Midlands and the North.

The most popular way of getting to the Great Exhibition was by buying a ticket that included a return rail journey and entry. These could cost 4, 5 or 6 shillings. Hundreds of thousands of people took advantage of these day trips, which were the idea of Thomas Cook.



Source 2:
Great Exhibition 1851



Source 3:
Swanage seaside resort

Thomas Cook started his business in 1841, but the Great Exhibition gave him his big chance. He booked trains from all over Britain to take people to the Great Exhibition and charged them a fixed price for the return trip and the entry ticket. Overnight he had invented the 'Day Out'. As Cook's business grew he began to offer excursions to more and more places, including trips to other European countries. When Thomas Cook's son took over the family business he increased the tours abroad and offered a wider choice of excursions. Soon the railway companies began to run their own excursions.



Source 4
Beach, Isle of Wight

At first, railway companies tried to avoid catering for the masses and preferred to run trains that only offered second and first class carriages. They also tried to avoid stopping their trains at every station. But in 1844 the Railways Act stated that at least one train a day must stop at every station and include third class carriages. Now large numbers of Victorians could afford to travel. Rich people could even take their horses with them on special hunting excursions!

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Source 5:
Tourist poster

The railways were to make a huge difference to the leisure activities of the Victorians. Not only were opportunities for holidays and day trips increased, sporting events also grew in popularity. Special trains and trips were run to take people to the races, cricket matches or the FA Cup Final, which was held for the first time in 1872. It was not only spectators that benefited, the football clubs that were being started in many of Britain's Happy cities could now travel away to play against each other.



Source 6:
Footballers



Source 7:
Cocoa Advert

In 1888 the Football League was founded. This was made up of professional teams. It would have been impossible for the first teams to have travelled to play away matches without regular trains. So the railways were very important in the development of professional football in Britain.



Source 8:
Soap advert

But many of these developments only affected the better off people in Britain. For most working people, the important changes were the cheap day returns that many railway companies started to offer.

In 1871 Bank Holidays were introduced and so began the great British tradition of the day at the seaside, along with sticks of rock, candy-floss, walks along the pier, fun-fair rides and fish and chips. The first fish and chip shops appeared in the 1860s.



The Railways

The Victorian age was the greatest period of the railways in Britain. The railways almost completely wiped out all other forms of transport and made long distance travel possible for large numbers of people for the very first time. Every town of any importance was linked by the national network, however many smaller towns were not connected.



This meant that people could, for the first time, live miles away from their places of work. Around London, suburbs began to develop for the first time and people travelled up to twenty miles in to London to work every day. Colonel Charles Sibthorp, who was a great opponent of the Crystal Palace, was also opposed to the development of railways. However, he dropped his opposition when he realised that it would be possible for him to travel to and from his constituency in Lincoln much more quickly.

But people could also travel in the opposite direction and for the first time seaside resorts began to flourish. In the past, places like Brighton had only been for the wealthy, from the mid-nineteenth century more and more people were able to enjoy the delights of the seaside and a great British tradition was created.



Source 1

Task

1a How many differences can you see between the railway carriages that the different classes of passengers used?

2a What do you think was the artist's opinion of the people in each class of carriage?

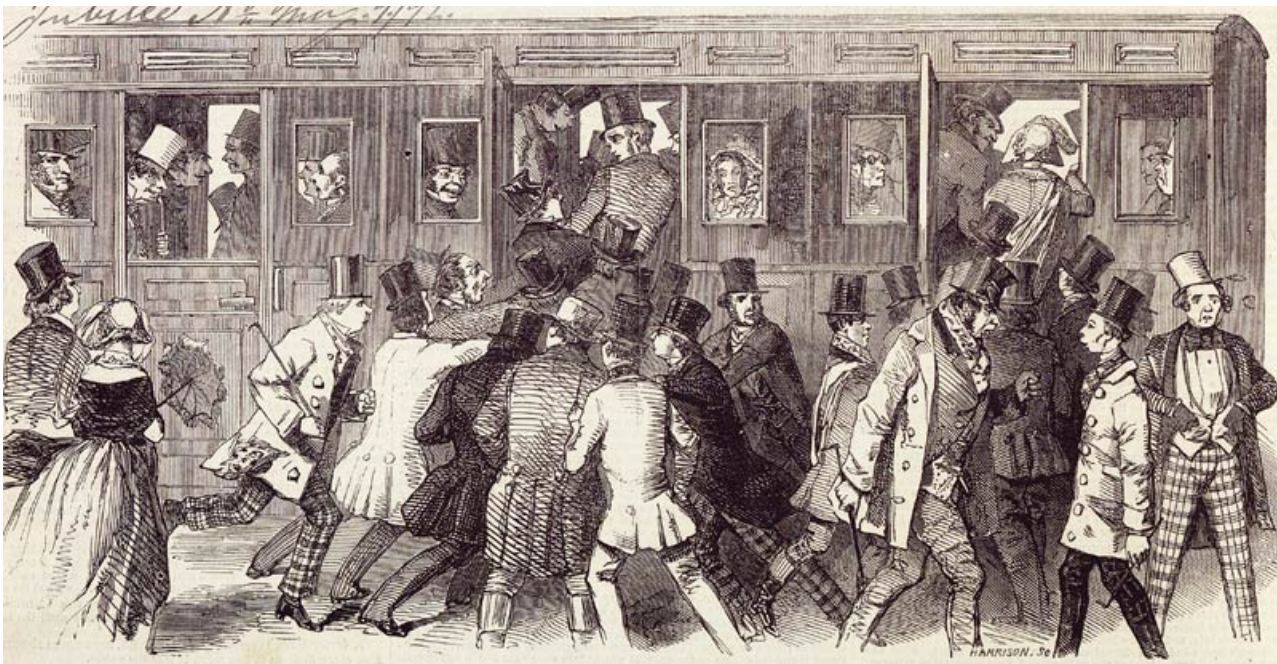
3a Why do you think there are no more third class carriages on trains today?

Source 1

These engravings are taken from the Illustrated London News, 22nd May 1847. They show first, second and third class passengers travelling to Epsom races.

<http://www.learningcurve.gov.uk/victorianbritain/happy/source1.htm>

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(PRO ref: ZPER 34/10)



Source 2

Task

2a Can you find any evidence in the poster that different social classes were being encouraged to visit the Great Exhibition?

2b Why do you think there are such differences in the prices quoted on the poster? Look back at source 1 to help you with this.

2c Can you find any evidence in the poster that the safety of train travel was a concern for travellers?

Source 2

Poster advertising train journeys to the Great Exhibition, 1851



THE WONDER OF 1851! FROM YORK TO LONDON AND BACK FOR A CROWN.

THE MIDLAND RAILWAY COMPANY
Will continue to run

TWO TRAINS DAILY

(Excepted Sunday, when only one Train is available)

FOR THE GREAT EXHIBITION,
UNTIL SATURDAY, OCTOBER 11.

Without any Advance of Payment

RETURN SPECIAL TRAINS leave the Euston Station on MONDAYS, TUESDAYS, THURSDAYS, & SATURDAYS at 11 a.m., on WEDNESDAYS and FRIDAYS at 1 p.m., and EVERY NIGHT (Sundays excepted) at 9 p.m.

First and Second Class Tickets are available for returning any day (except Sunday) up to and including Monday, Oct. 20. Third Class Tickets issued before the 6th instant are available for 14 days, and all issued after the 6th are returnable any day up to Monday the 20th.

The Trains leave York at 9-40 a.m. every day except Sunday, and also every day, including Sunday, at 7-20 p.m.

Fares to London and Back:--

1st Class 15s. 2nd, 10s. 3rd, 5s.

The Midland is the only Company that runs Trains Daily at these Fares.

Ask for Midland Tickets!

Children above 3 and under 12 years of age, Half-price. Luggage allowed—112 lbs. to First Class, 100 lbs. to Second, and 56 lbs. to Third Class Passengers.

APPROVED LODGINGS, of all classes, are provided in London for Passengers by Midland Trains. The Agents will give Tickets of reference on application, without charge, and an Office is opened in London, at DONALD'S WATERLOO DINING ROOMS, 14, Seymour-street, near Euston Station, where an agent is in regular attendance to conduct parties who go up unprepared with Lodgings.

The Managers have much pleasure in stating that the immense numbers who have travelled under their arrangements have been conducted in perfect safety—indeed in the history of the Midland Lines, *no accident, attended with personal injury, has ever happened to an Excursion Train.* In conducting the extraordinary traffic of this Great Occasion the first object is to ensure safety, and that object has hitherto been most happily achieved.

With the fullest confidence, inspired by past success, the Conductors have pleasure in urging those who have not yet visited the Exhibition, to avail themselves of the present facilities, and to improve the opportunity which will close on the 11th of October.

All communications respecting the Trains to be addressed to the Managers, for the Company,

John Cuttle & John Calverley, Wakefield;
Thomas Cook, Leicester.

October 2nd, 1851.

T. COOK, PRINTER, 28, GRANBY-STREET, LEICESTER.

(Thomas Cook Archive)
(PRO ref: 87/53)



Source 3

Task

3a Look at the poster carefully and describe the type of resort that you think Swanage was. Think about possible things to do and the people shown in the poster.

3b Why do you think a railway company produced this poster?

Source 3

This poster is advertising the seaside resort of Swanage. By London & South Western Railway company. (PRO ref: COPY 1/275, f3711)

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LONDON & SOUTH WESTERN RAILWAY

SWANAGE

**EXPRESS
TRAINS
FROM
WATERLOO**

"I FEEL SO
JOLLY
HERE"

CHAS. J. OWENS, General Manager.



Source 5

Task

5a Look carefully at the poster. What sorts of people would be able to go on the tours shown?

5b What changes do you think have happened to Thomas Cook's business since 1841? See if you can find at least three. You might want to read introduction text first.

5c How important were the railways for Thomas Cook's business?



Source 5

Poster advertising some of the different tours offered by Thomas Cook



(Thomas Cook Archive)



Source 6

Task

- 6a** Look carefully at the photograph and the painting and list as many differences that you can think of between the footballers of 1870 and 1899.
- 6b** Now list the differences between Victorian Footballers (use the photograph) and those of today.
- 6c** What evidence is there in the photograph that football had become a popular spectator sport.
- 6d** Explain what impact the railways had on leisure activities such as watching sport.

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Source 6

6i Painting of England versus Scotland football match c.1870, Richmond Park



(PRO ref: COPY 1/120)

6ii Photograph of the England football team before playing against Scotland, 1899.

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(PRO ref: COPY 1/452)



Source 7

Task

7a Explain what sport you think the people shown in the advertisement are taking part in.

7b Why were these people shown in the advertisement?

7c What does this tell us about the importance of sport to Victorians?

Look carefully at the advertisement and look back at source 6

7d Why do you think that Cadbury's chose to advertise their product like this?



Source 7

An Advert for Cadbury's Cocoa, 1896

A GRAND COMBINATION.

The Typical English Game



of Football calls for greater muscular strength and activity than any other pastime, and it is important that those who indulge in it should prepare themselves by a proper diet. For this purpose there is nothing to equal Cocoa, which in its absolutely pure form, as in **CADBURY'S**, contains all the elements of strength and vigour necessary to give force and firmness to the muscles and nerves, and to impart staying power to the player. Before the game, it supplies a high degree of energy; after the game, it imparts a restful and comfortable feeling. Be sure, however, that you drink



“Cadbury's,” the Typical English Cocoa.

(PRO ref: COPY 1/119, f.276)



Source 8

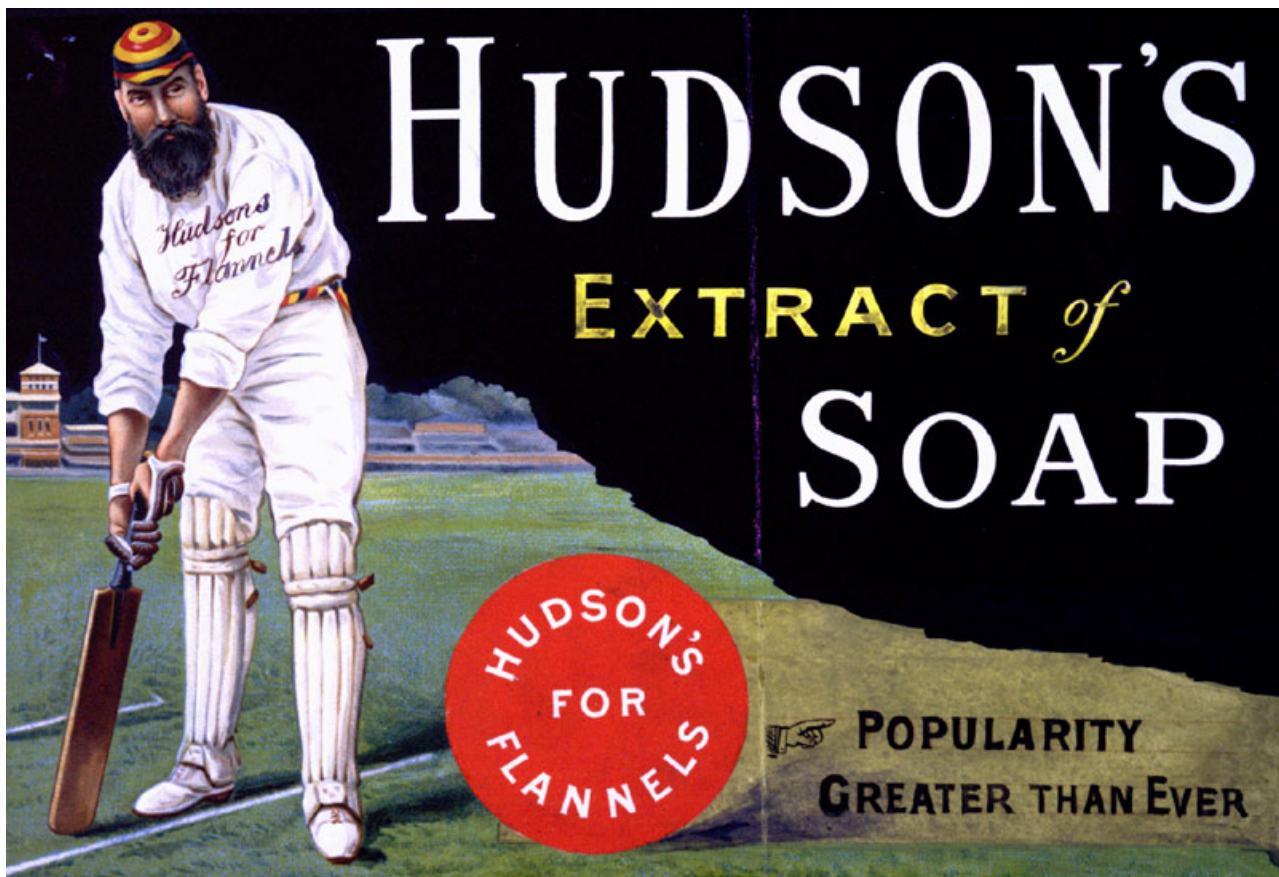
Task

- 8a.** Why do you think Hudson's used W.G. Grace to advertise their product?
- 8b.** Look at sources 6, 7 and 8 and explain if you think sport was popular in Victorian Britain.

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Source 8

This is an advertisement for Hudson's washing soap. It features a famous cricketer from the Victorian Era, W. G. Grace. He began playing in 1865 and by the time he retired he had scored 54,211 runs in first class games and taken 2,808 wickets. Grace stopped playing First Class cricket in 1908.



(PRO ref: COPY 1/119, f.221)