



(L – Alan Holtom, senior conductor for WMR, R – Thomas Allen, Alan’s grandfather)

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Railway worker uncovers over 100 years of family history linked to the rail industry

A senior conductor based in Worcester has spoken about his family’s 100-year association with the railway industry on the latest edition of West Midlands Railway’s (WMR) “On the Rails” podcast.

The podcast celebrates Railway 200 – a campaign marking the 200th anniversary of the modern railway.

Alan Holtom has worked in the industry for over fifty years, experiencing the evolution of British Rail to Central Trains to London Midland and now West

Midlands Railway.

Alan's grandfather, Thomas Allen, started working for the railway industry in 1916, where he worked as station master at Hampton Loade. He went on to work as a signalman at Highley signal box before transferring to Chipping Campden on the Cotswold Line. When he was drafted to serve in the first World War, the railway was one of the few industries to restore workers' positions, so Thomas was able to return to his role once the war ended. When he finally retired in the 1960s, he'd served over 45 years.

Alan's mother, Marion, followed in her father's footsteps and took a job working at Chipping Campden booking office, where she worked from 1940 to 1955. That's where Alan's parents met, as his father Geoffrey Holtom worked as a relief clerk in the Worcester area from 1936 to 1983 with a gap in the war years as he served from 1940 to 1945.

Continuing in the family industry, Alan's daughter Charlotte Holtom joined the industry in 2018 and is now a senior conductor based in Worcester.

Alan Holtom, senior conductor at West Midlands Railway, said: "When my dad told me to get a job at Worcester Shrub Hill, it was as simple as speaking to the Area Manager and asking for a role. I was lucky as well as my mother knew the HR officer at the time.

"The railway has been a major part of my family's life, going back over 100 years, so I didn't question whether I wanted to join too – it was already part of me. Now my daughter is a senior conductor at Worcester, and I couldn't be prouder. She worked hard to get the job, and now she's thinking about becoming a driver."

The full podcast episode, which also features other interviews with rail workers with long family histories and a look at future careers in the industry through apprenticeships, is available to stream and download via www.wmr.uk/podcast

About West Midlands Trains

For further information on this release, email press.office@wmtrains.co.uk

West Midlands Trains operates both West Midlands Railway and London Northwestern Railway services.

- **London Northwestern Railway** services operate between Liverpool and Birmingham, and on the West Coast Main Line to and from London Euston.
- **West Midlands Railway** services operate to destinations across the West Midlands via Birmingham New Street and Birmingham Snow Hill.

For more information on these services visit westmidlandsrailway.co.uk or londonnorthwesternrailway.co.uk

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