

## 8. The Railway Station

On 8 October 1848 the first railway line in the Iberian peninsula was inaugurated between Barcelona and Mataró, driven by the Mataró-born Miquel Biada i Bunyol. Almost nine years later, on 10 January 1857, the line was extended to Arenys de Mar, linking Caldes to the city of Barcelona. The arrival of the train – held as a great event – changed the life of this seaside town and encouraged the arrival of more summer holidaymakers.

At that time there was a train service which left Caldes at 8 am and went directly to Barcelona, reversing the journey at 8 pm. It was known as *The Golden Arrow*. Witnessing its arrival, something which was often done by many a curious resident, was an event in itself.

A large wooded park was created behind the station. This became a meeting place and point of reference for all the people who came and went on the train. Josep Brunet described it as follows in *L'Avenç* (August 1890): *“The most surprising thing to those that come here for the first time is the luscious and green beauty of the station’s small park or garden, which the rail company takes special care to properly cultivate in order to safeguard the plants’ and the trees’ natural beauty; the leaves are so thick that they do not let the sunlight through even at midday ( ...) they give the garden an abundance of shade and coolness”*.