

IMPACT OF THE RAILWAY

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On the 21st May 1838 the London & Southampton Railway was officially opened to the public from Nine Elms to the temporary terminus at Woking.

The timetable (right) gives the times and prices for the trains to Nine Elms (Waterloo was not built until 1848), but it is worth pointing out that at the time Nine Elms (or Vauxhall as we would now call it) was the nearest main line station to the centre of the city, just beating Euston, and over a mile closer than Paddington.



The London & Southampton was much better than the Great Western in other ways too, as the diary of William Lucas of Hitchin (A Quaker Journal, published 1934) reveals - "1838, 7th Month, 9th day. To Uxbridge by Great Western Railway, sad want of punctuality at starting, and when off, rate only fourteen miles an hour. How have the mighty promises of Brunel fallen.

13th day (same month and year). Went to the Kingston Station of the Southampton railroad, saw several trains, punctuality admirable, rate above 30 miles per hour, not many passengers."

At Nine Elms you could ride on an omnibus or cab, or catch a boat or steamer on the Thames. The fare from Blackfriars Bridge was 1s.3d. The area around the station was partly occupied by villas, and partly by garden grounds and wharfs. The first station after Nine Elms was Wandsworth (Clapham Junction), followed by Wimbledon, Kingston (Surbiton), Ditton Marsh (Esher), Walton & Weybridge.

Despite what William Lucas noted about usage, in the first week after opening about 10,000 passengers used the line, mainly because of the races at Epsom, and on Derby Day, eight special trains were in operation from Nine Elms Station, which at one time had to be closed when 5,000 people stormed the gates. The company was obviously not put off by this, as Sam Fay in his book 'A Royal Road' reported "it is evident - that they were not discouraged, for a few weeks later they were found advertising trains to Woking for Ascot races. The second venture appears to have been conducted as well as the few wheezy locomotives at their command would permit."

A Board Meeting on the 30th August 1838 reported an average of well over 7,500 passengers a week, almost four times the numbers expected. Expenditure was £4,620, gross receipts £13,390, a working profit of £8,770 for the first three months!

LONDON & SOUTHAMPTON RAILWAY.

The London and Southampton Railway IS NOW OPEN for the conveyance of Passengers and Parcels from London to Woking Common (near Guildford), and the intermediate places.

The times at which the Trains will start are as follow:

FROM LONDON.		FROM WOKING COMMON.	
Morning	8	Morning	half-past 7
Ditto	10	Ditto	10
Afternoon	1	Afternoon	1
Ditto	half-past 3	Ditto	half-past 3
Ditto	6	Ditto	7

EXCEPT ON SUNDAYS,
When the Trains will start

FROM LONDON.		FROM WOKING COMMON.	
Morning	8	Morning	8
Ditto	10	Ditto	10
Afternoon	2	Afternoon	5
Ditto	5	Ditto	6
Ditto	7	Ditto	7

The Fares will be charged as under, viz.

From the Terminus at Nine Elms, NEAR VAUXHALL,

	FIRST CLASS.			SECOND CLASS.		
	£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.
To WOKING COMMON	0	5	0	0	3	6
To WEYBRIDGE	0	4	0	0	2	6
To WALTON	0	3	6	0	2	3
To DITTON MARSH	0	3	0	0	2	0
To KINGSTON	0	2	6	0	1	6
To WIMBLEDON	0	1	6	0	1	0
To WANDSWORTH	0	1	6	0	1	0

No Fee or Gratuity will be allowed to be received by any Servant of the Company.

Times at which the Trains are appointed to arrive at the undermentioned Stations, until further notice:

DOWN.							UP.						
FROM		8 A.M.	10 A.M.	1 P.M.	3½ P.M.	6 P.M.	FROM		7½ A.M.	10 A.M.	1 P.M.	3½ P.M.	7 P.M.
Nine Elms	ARRIVE AT	Miles	h. m.	h. m.	h. m.	h. m.	Woking Comm.	ARRIVE AT	Miles	h. m.	h. m.	h. m.	h. m.
Wandsworth	2½	8	7	10	7	1	7	3	37	8	7	5	7
Wimbledon	5½	8	18	10	18	1	18	3	48	6	18	3	48
Kingston	10½	8	31	10	31	1	31	4	1	6	31	4	1
Ditton Marsh	13	8	41	10	41	1	41	4	11	6	41	4	11
Walton	15½	8	51	10	51	1	51	4	21	6	51	4	21
Weybridge	17½	8	59	10	59	1	59	4	29	6	59	4	29
Woking Comm.	23	9	15	11	15	2	15	4	45	7	15	4	45

By Order of the Directors,
W.M. REED, Secretary.

N.B. Omnibuses will convey Passengers to and from the Company's Station at NINE ELMS, near Vauxhall, from the following places, viz.
Spread Eagle, Gracechurch-street; Swan with Two Necks, Lad-lane; Cross Keys, Wood-street; White Horse, Fetter-lane; George and Blue Boar, Holborn; Golden Cross, Charing-cross; Universal Office, Regent-circus, Piccadilly.

Arrangements have been made with the London and Westminster Steam Boat Company, in consequence of which Steam Boats will be provided for conveying Passengers to and from the Station at Nine Elms, from and to the undermentioned places, viz.
DYER'S HALL WHARF, Upper Thames-street; and RINGERFORD MARKET.

Woking Common was the end of the line for just four months as the railway was soon extended to Shapley Heath (Winchfield), opened on the 24th September. One of the main difficulties on this section came from the Basingstoke Canal Company who had managed to insert a clause into the Railway Company's amendment bill of 1837, to build a bank to protect their horses from seeing and being frightened by the trains. Where the line was 25ft above the towpath a bank of 4ft was required to be planted with a close furze hedge. Where the railway was below the level of the

canal a wall 6ft - 8ft high was to be built. The fact that the canal horses had seen trains in operation whilst the line was being built without any adverse effects did not matter, the wall still had to be built.

It was obviously a delaying tactic rather than a serious concern for the horses - a way of delaying the inevitable when most of the canal's trade would be transferred to the railway when it opened to Basingstoke on the 10th June 1839. At the same time the section between Winchester and Southampton was also opened (see timetable below), with the

RAILWAYS.

—00—

LONDON AND SOUTHAMPTON RAILWAY.

STATION, VAUXHALL, LAMBETH.

This Railway is now opened from LONDON to BASINGSTOKE, and also from WINCHESTER to SOUTHAMPTON.

The Trains start as follow, until further notice, viz:—

FROM VAUXHALL.

MORNING.

To Basingstoke	½ past 7
To Woking Common	9
To Basingstoke	10
To Woking Common	11
To Basingstoke (Stopping Train)	12

AFTERNOON.

To Basingstoke	3
To Basingstoke (Stopping Train)	5
To Woking Common	6
To Woking Common	7
To Basingstoke (Mail Train)	½ past 8

TO VAUXHALL.

MORNING.

From Basingstoke (Mail Train)	½ past 3
From Basingstoke (Stopping Train)	½ past 7
From Woking Common	½ past 7
From Basingstoke (Stopping Train)	½ past 10
From Woking Common	½ past 10

AFTERNOON.

From Basingstoke (Stopping Train)	2
From Basingstoke	4
From Woking Common	½ past 5
From Basingstoke	7
From Woking Common	½ past 7

The Trains to and from Woking Common will stop to take up and set down Passengers at all the intermediate Stations, as will also the Trains from Basingstoke at Three-quarters past Seven, Half-past Ten and One o'clock; and the Trains to Basingstoke at Twelve at Noon and Five in the Afternoon.

The Trains to Basingstoke at Half-past Seven and Ten in the Morning and Three in the Afternoon, will stop at Woking Common, Farnborough and Winchfield only.

The Train from Basingstoke at Seven in the Evening will stop to set down Passengers who may be booked at Basingstoke, Winchfield, Farnborough or Woking Common, for those Stations nearer London.

SUNDAY TRAINS.

The Trains to and from VAUXHALL call at the intermediate Stations excepting the Mail Trains.

MORNING.

To Woking Common	9
To Basingstoke	10
To Woking Common	½ past 10

AFTERNOON.

To Woking Common	2
To Basingstoke	5
To Woking Common	½ past 7
To Basingstoke (Mail Train)	½ past 8

MORNING.

From Basingstoke (Mail Train)	½ past 3
From Basingstoke	8
From Woking Common	½ past 8
From Woking Common	½ past 10

AFTERNOON.

From Basingstoke	5
From Woking Common	6
From Woking Common	½ past 7

The Trains leave Southampton for Winchester at Half-past Seven and Eleven in the Morning, and One, Four and Six o'clock in the Afternoon, and leave Winchester for Southampton at Nine and Twelve in the Forenoon and Half-past Two, Five and Half-past Seven in the Evening, and, excepting the Train from Southampton, at Six in the Evening, and from Winchester, at Nine in the Morning, will enable Passengers to meet the London Trains to and from Basingstoke.

On SUNDAYS the Trains leave Southampton for Winchester at Nine in the Morning, Half-past One and Five in the Afternoon and leave Winchester for Southampton at Ten in the Morning and Half-past Two and Half-past Six in the Afternoon.

(The Servants of the Company are prohibited receiving any Fee or Gratuity.)

PRIVATE CARRIAGES, HORSES, &c. are conveyed, provided that such Carriage, &c. be ready at the Station a quarter of an hour before the departure of the Trains.

OMNIBUSES convey Passengers to and from the Station, near Vauxhall; from the Spread Eagle, Gracechurch street; Swan-with-two-Necks, Lad lane; Cross Keys, Wood street; White Horse, Fetter lane, George and Blue Boar, Holborn; Golden Cross, Charing cross; and Universal Office, Regent circus.—FARE, 6d.

STEAM BOATS convey Passengers to and from the Railway, from Old Swan Pier, Upper Thames street; Hungerford market, near Charing cross; and Waterloo and Westminster bridges.—FARE, 4d.

POST HORSES are kept at the Station, and Carriages are taken to, or fetched from, any part of London, at a charge of 10s. 6d. including the driver, 2s. 6d.

Timetable for the London & Southampton Railway from Piggot's Directory of 1839.

final section from Basingstoke to Winchester opened on the 11th May 1840

In the meantime, during the winter of 1839-40 there was said to have been more rain than at any time within living memory and as a result many of the embankments and cuttings were seriously damaged. On the 25th December 1839 a large slip at Goldsworth blocked one line and endangered the other. Men worked all night on the slip and by noon the following day were partially successful, but in the end they were forced to call for an engine and materials from Nine Elms to complete the job.

There were only six stations between Woking and Southampton, at Farnborough, Winchfield,

Basingstoke, Micheldever (originally called Andover Road Station), Winchester, and Bishopstoke (Eastleigh). The first train reached Southampton shortly before 11.00am and was met by a twenty-one gun salute. By now the name of the railway had changed to the London and South Western.

The timetable for November 1840 shows the following trains:

7.00 am. Mixed train leaves Nine Elms, first stop Woking (7.57) and reaches Southampton at 10.30 am.

9.00 am. Stopping train leaves Nine Elms, (Woking at 10. 15) and reaches Southampton at 12.48 pm.

9.30 am. Stopping train leaves Nine Elms and

reaches Weybidge at 10.30 am.

11.00 am. Fast train leaves Nine Elms, first stop Woking (11.46) and reaches Southampton at 2.00 pm.

12.00 noon. Goods train leaves Nine Elms, first stop Kingston, (Woking 1.54) and reaches Southampton at 6.00 pm.

12.00 noon. Stopping train leaves Nine Elms, and reaches Weybridge at 1.00 pm.

1.00 pm. Stopping train leaves Nine Elms, (Woking 2.15) and reaches Southampton at 4.48 pm.

4.00 pm. Stopping train leaves Nine Elms, and reaches Weybridge at 5.00 pm.

5.00 pm. Stopping train leaves Nine Elms,



(Woking 6.15) and reaches Southampton at 8.48 pm.

6.00 pm. Stopping train leaves Nine Elms, and reaches Woking at 7.15 pm

8.30 pm. Fast Mail train leaves Nine Elms, first stop Kingston (8.52), second stop Weybridge (9.09), third stop Woking (9.24) and reaches Southampton at 11.40 pm.

8.45 pm. Goods train leaves Nine Elms, first stop Kingston, (Woking 10.39) and reaches Southampton at 2.45 am.

The trains from Southampton were:-

2.00 am. Mail train (Woking 4.07) reaching Nine Elms at 5.40 am.

6.00 am. Stopping train (Woking 8.27) reaching Nine Elms at 9.46 am.

8.30 am. Stopping train (Woking 10.57) reaching Nine Elms at 12.16 pm.

10.00 am. Goods train (Woking 2.05) reaching Nine Elms at 4.00 pm.

11.00 am. Fast train, Woking last stop before Nine Elms (1.07), reaching Nine Elms at 2.00 pm.

1.30 pm. Stopping train (Woking 3.57) reaching Nine Elms at 5.16 pm

6.00 pm. Stopping train (Woking 8.27) reaching Nine Elms at 9.46 pm

8.00 pm. Goods train (Woking 12.05am) reaching Nine Elms at 2.00 am.

One train left Woking for Nine Elms at 7.45 am and reached Nine Elms at 9.00 am. Three left Weybridge for Nine Elms at 10.45 am, 2.00 pm, and 7.00 pm, reaching Nine Elms at 11.45 am, 3.00 pm, and 8.00 pm respectively. All were

stopping trains.

There was a reduced service on Sundays where the Goods and Mail trains remained the same but the stopping trains were rearranged as follows,

8.00 am. Woking to Nine Elms 9.15 am.

9.00 am. Nine Elms to Woking 10.15 am.

10.00 am. Nine Elms (Woking 11.15) to Southampton 1.48 pm.

10.00 am. Southampton (Woking 12.27) to Nine Elms 1.46 pm.

10.30 am. Nine Elms to Woking 11.45 am.

11.00 am. Weybridge to Nine Elms 12.15 pm.

2.00 pm. Nine Elms to Woking 3.15 pm.

5.00 pm. Nine Elms (Woking 6.15) to Southampton 8.48 pm.

5.00 pm. Southampton (Woking 7.05) to Nine Elms 8.46 pm.

6.00pm. Weybridge to Nine Elms 7.15 pm.

7.30pm. Nine Elms to Woking 8.45 pm.

8.00pm. Weybridge to Nine Elms 9.15 pm.

Fares were twenty shillings for a first class train (which only carried first class passengers although servants and livery could be carried at thirteen shillings each). This took just three hours to travel from London to Southampton with Woking being the first stop. Mixed trains cost eighteen shillings for first class, or twelve shillings for second class. The Mail train called at Kingston, Weybridge, Woking and all stations west for the same fare as the mixed train. Passengers from Woking to London paid six shillings on a first class train, five shillings (first class) and three shillings and sixpence (second

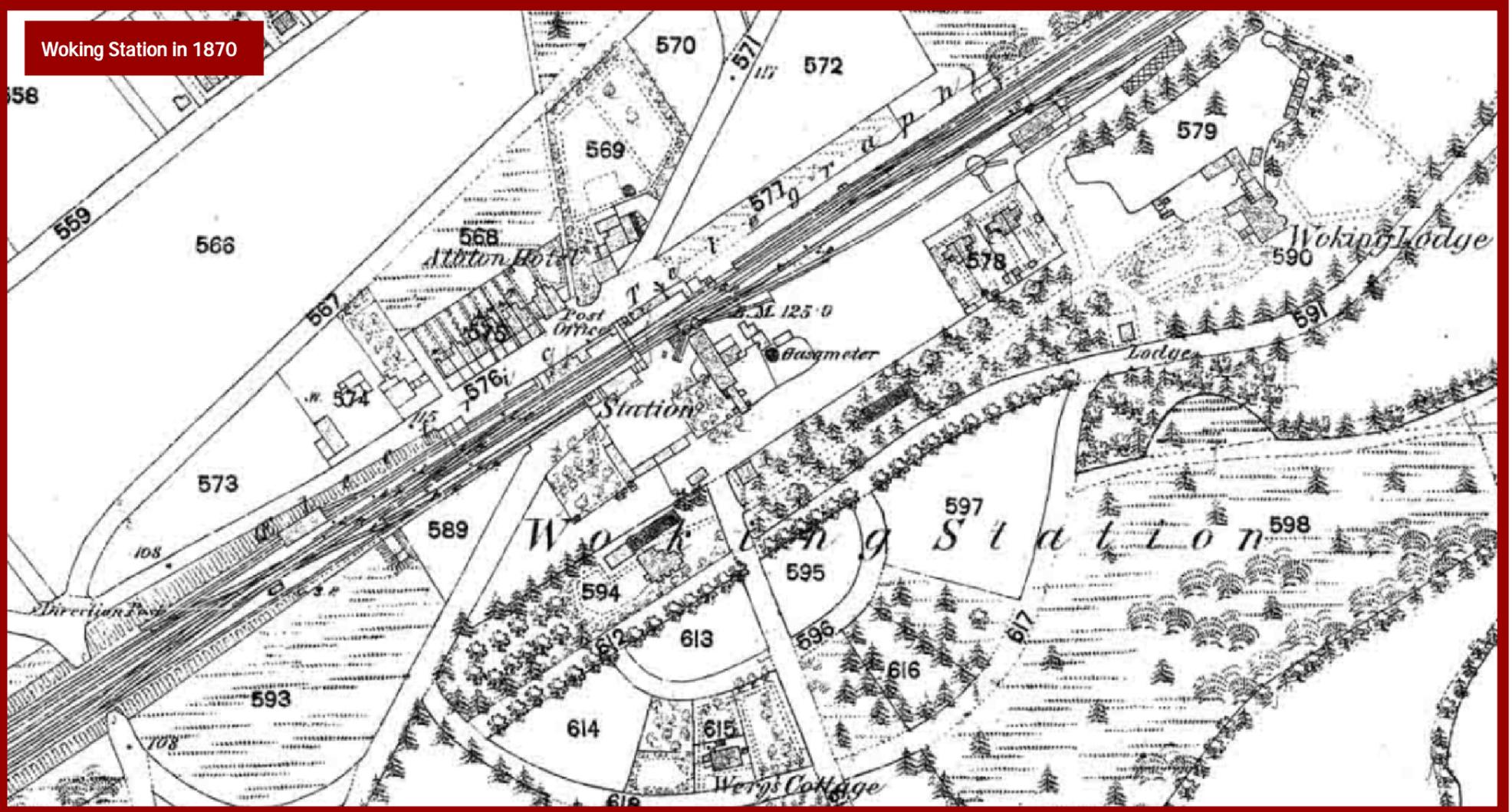
class) on a mixed train, and two shillings and sixpence for third class on a Goods train.

The first class carriages have been described as being 'so small that it was only with inconvenience that people could sit facing each other' and the second class carriages were open with 'an iron post at each corner supporting a simple roof.'. Compared to the stage-coaches, however, they were far superior where 'the four inside passengers were more cramped than four passengers in a First Class railway carriage, and all the other passengers in a stage coach were exposed to the elements precisely in the same manner as the Third Class passengers on the railway'.

It is interesting to note that in those days apparently the guard used to sit on top of the carriages, (as a coachman would have done on the roads), and in order to revive him the instruction was made that he 'be provided with coffee at the Woking and Basingstoke stations'. Also of note was the regulation for passengers that prevented smoking. Anyone caught was removed from the premises and forfeited their fare! There were also regulations for drivers who could be fined, lose their pay or be dismissed. One driver was fined forty shilling and reprimanded for an incident at Woking. On returning to Woking, after taking the 5 o'clock mail on 4th March 1839, he stopped by a cottage to pick up two young ladies for a 'footplate excursion'. Soon after he was dismissed for allowing a passenger to ride on the tender and avoid paying their fare.

In 1842 the Southampton Dock Company opened the new Outer Dock (Princess Alexandra Dock), and in 1843 the London & South Western Railway were able to link up with the newly constructed Le Havre to Paris Railway using the South Western Steam Packet Company's ships. Despite having similar

Woking Station in 1870



names, the same financiers, and the same directors the two companies were in no way connected! The boat trains were taken as near as possible to the ships, the railway being extended across Canute Road to the quayside. On 18th September 1843 the Peninsular, Mediterranean, Oriental and West Indian Mails were transferred from Falmouth to Southampton and in 1845 the Mail Packet for the Channel Islands was transferred from Weymouth.

All around the station was open heath. The nearest house being half a mile away, and there was few facilities for the early commuters. As the railhead for Guildford, Godalming and the rest of West Surrey (the only station between Weybridge and Farnborough) many coaches and carriages descended on Woking Common to connect with the fast and efficient train service to London.

The impact on the turnpike road through Ripley was obviously immense. Before the Turnpike Act of 1749 it apparently took a day to reach Guildford from London. After it was built it was possible to reach Portsmouth in the same amount of time and by the 1820's there were about twenty-seven coaches regularly on the road between London and Ripley.

Some did continue for a time on the Ripley route - such as the mail coach that didn't

transfer to Woking Station until the Post Office opened there in the 1860's - but by 1863 Arthur Mumby recorded just one carrier a week on the road from Ripley to the capital.

Russell's Guildford Directory of 1842 listed a few coaches 'to from and through' the town, but noted 'railway coaches' from Godalming (calling at the Star Inn) leave the Crown Inn, Guildford for the Woking Station four times per day, varying to suit the stoppage of the railway trains'.

The directory also advertised 'vans for passengers and luggage from Chichester to Woking Station' leaving The Ram in Guildford on Monday's and Thursday's at five in the afternoon, with Mr Jenman (presumably the proprietor of the coach) leaving at eleven in the morning on Tuesday's and Friday's.

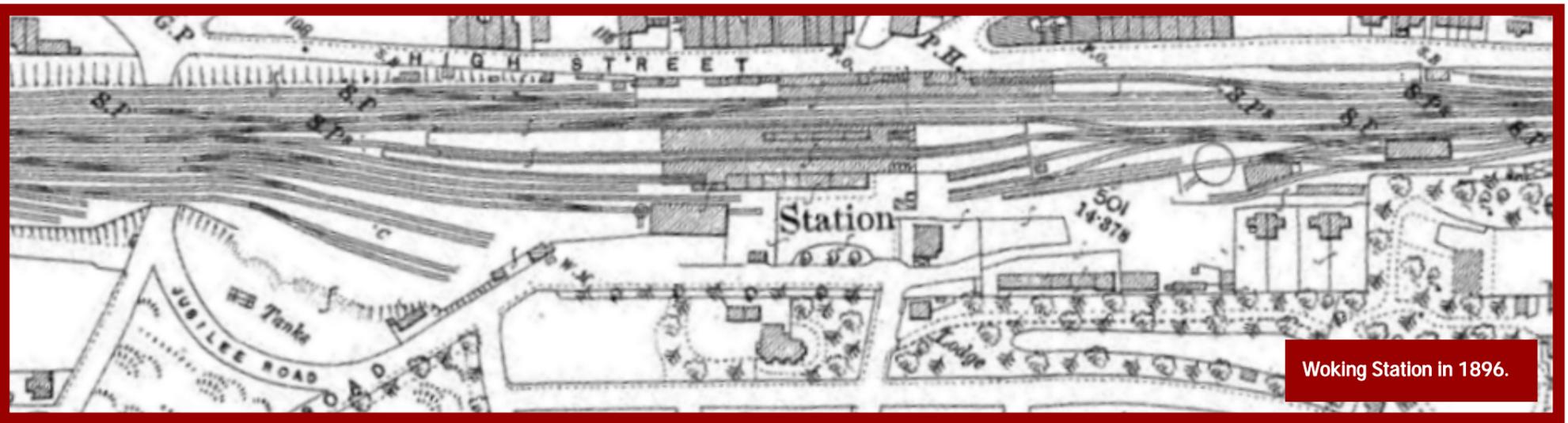


Woking Station Staff in the late 19th century.

Woking's first Station Master was Mr R. Gunnell, but he was succeeded by Mr Tolfrey as new stations opened along the line. The original station was a small, two-storey building on the south side (Heathside) of the railway. It consisted of a booking office, a general waiting room, a separate ladies waiting room and conveniences. There were two platforms connected by a footbridge and a few facilities for handling freight. To the east was a shed built at right angles to the down line, and to the south, where the taxis and cars wait now, was a stable block for the horses employed at the station for shunting carriages. There were two water columns at the end of each platform, at the west end of the down platform, and the east end of the up platform. To begin with there was a large bell on the roof of the station, which was rung five minutes before a train departed, but this was replaced by a hand bell when Woking was no longer a terminus.

Woking Station's gain was Ripley's loss.





As far as freight was concerned some wagons continued to ply on the Ripley Road and barges still used the Wey Navigation to get to London, but eventually even some of that trade was lost.

But in 1842, when Russell's was produced, there was still enough trade in the villages of West Surrey to allow for numerous local carriers to exist, such as Mr Hall who operated a cart between Mayford and Woking on a Wednesday and Saturday to the Dolphin in Guildford (arriving at nine in the morning and leaving at four in the afternoon).

Mr Hale also operated from the Dolphin on Tuesdays, Fridays and Saturdays, with Mr Spong on Saturdays between the two villages and the pub. The Dolphin appears to have been a popular starting point (or ending place, depending on how you look at it), for carriages from Woking as Mr Turner also operated a cart from there on Wednesdays and Saturdays, returning to Woking at four in the afternoon.

Meanwhile a Mr Boylett ran a service between Horsell, Woking and the Horse & Groom in Guildford on Wednesdays and Saturdays, arriving at the public house about nine in the morning and leaving at four in the afternoon.

Knaphill was served by Mr Cherryman who called at the Angel and 'Neate's' in Guildford on Saturdays and also Mrs H Cook, who also served Bisley from the Horse & Groom pub in the town on Wednesdays as well as Saturdays.

The Knaphill and Bisley carriers probably entered Guildford by the Bagshot Road, but the Woking and Mayford coaches undoubtedly added to the traffic heading to and from Woking station from Guildford.

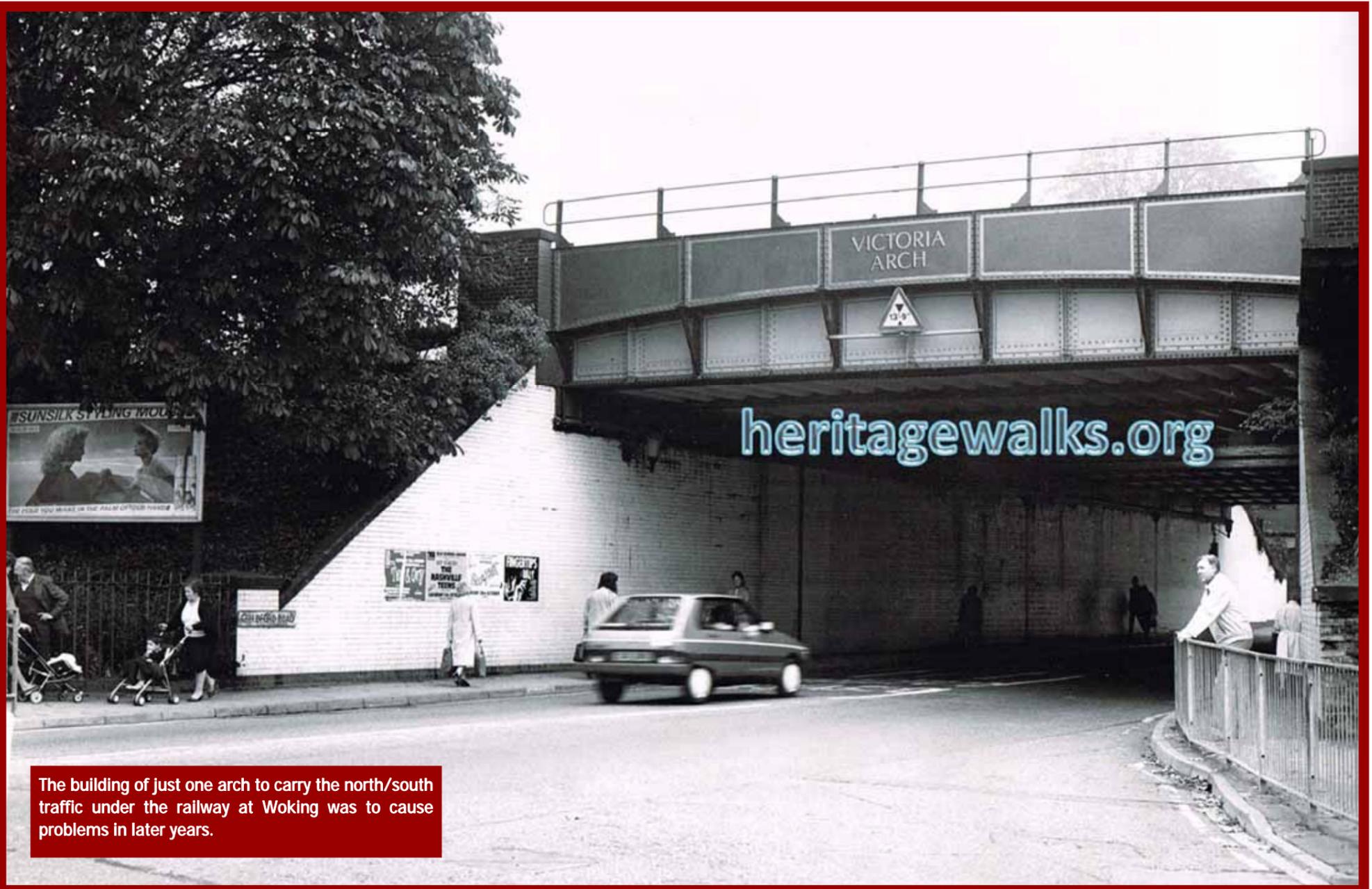
Edward Ryde (in his history of Woking) recalled "The roads in many parts were too narrow for such traffic, it being only with great difficulty that two stage coaches could pass each other in many places; and there was an entire absence of stable accommodation at Woking Station. In addition to the public conveyance the whole of the inhabitants of Guildford who possessed horses found that their best way to get to London was to arrive at Woking Station."

This continued until the Guildford branch was opened (1845), and so for some time the Prince Albert Coach, which left the White Hart Inn at Guildford for London, was diverted through Stoke-next-Guildford and Mayford to Woking Common Station. The Chichester Coach was also diverted and the Railway Company ran its own coach service between Woking and

Guildford. To cater for the sudden influx of coaches a local businessman, Edward Woods, built a hotel near the station. It was built in 1840, at the junction of several tracks across the common, and was named the Railway Hotel (now the Sovereigns). The Railway Hotel's gain, was the Talbot Hotel in Ripley's loss.

The railway had another impact on the area that in later years was to have a major effect on the area. The station was built where the roads from Guildford to Chertsey and Woking to Chobham crossed the line – now Station Approach, Chertsey Road, White Rose Lane and Church Path/Chobham Road. The traffic on those roads was not then significant, so they were all diverted slightly to the west to go under one railway arch – named 'Victoria Arch' in 1898 after the jubilee of the Queen.





The building of just one arch to carry the north/south traffic under the railway at Woking was to cause problems in later years.

Guildford Road and Victoria Road were the new diversions on the south side of the line, with the High Street and Commercial Road taking the traffic to the east on the northern side. Another track from the Goldsworth to Heathside area

was also cut off by the new line and diverted under the arch, taking the old Goldsworth Road away from what is now Poole Road and truncating Heathside Road (once known as Harris Lane) at its junction with Guildford Road.

The result, of course, was just one narrow arch for effectively six routes of traffic – not a problem when there was only one horse and cart on the roads, but quite a problem now!

