

PHOTOGRAPHIC MEMORIES



OF THE OLD WIGSTON STATIONS

Photographic Memories of the old Wigston Stations
Compiled & Presented by Tony Danvers

Second Edition January 2015

Front Cover Illustration:
Wigston South Railway Station circa 1905 (See page 7).

PHOTOGRAPHIC MEMORIES OF THE OLD WIGSTON STATIONS

Based on an exhibition of photographs presented by Tony Danvers
at the Bassett Street Library, South Wigston, October 2014.



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Foreword

Professor Hoskins told us to “write our history down” but Tony has gone one better, he has produced a story in pictures. We are told, via these wonderful photographs, of the stations and the trains that once existed in Wigston in far more graphic detail than words could possibly do. Finding, collecting, collating and presenting the past in a format that leaves nothing to the imagination, Tony has a gift for searching out photos and information and presenting them in such an interesting way.

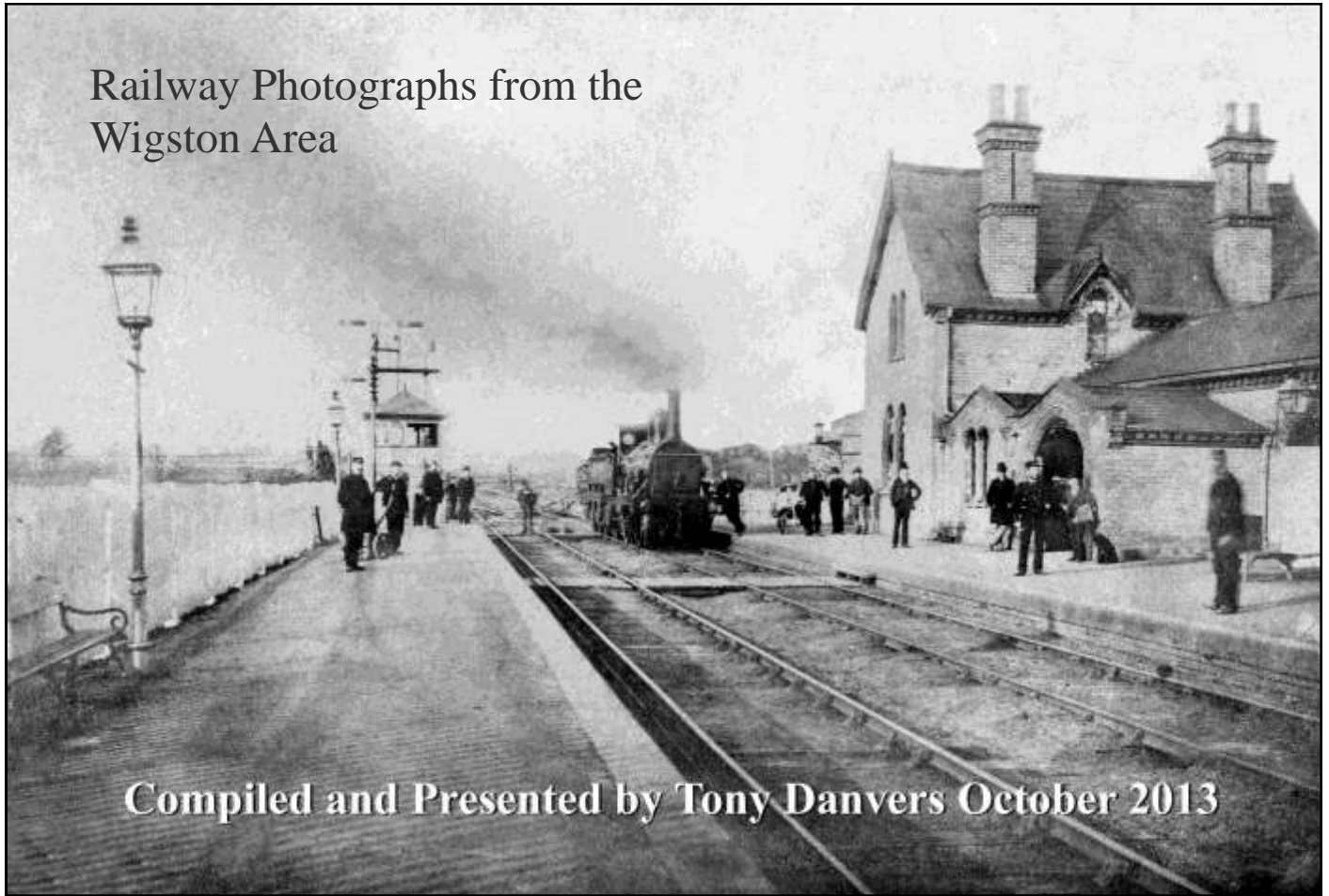
This book makes one suddenly realise that nearly 50 years have passed since the South Wigston railway line and the “beloved” level crossing over the Blaby Road was closed. Not long after the closure of the line British Rail proposed that the line should be re-opened and electrified, that is until someone pointed out to them that they had already sold the land to Nabisco.

Not many people may know that there once existed a fourth Wigston station and Tony has even included part of a map showing where it once existed close to Glen Parva Station (see page 136). So thank you Tony for continuing to preserve our past and by doing so enabling future Wigston generations to appreciate and to fully understand their fascinating past history.

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Duncan Lucas". The script is cursive and fluid, with the first name "Duncan" and the last name "Lucas" clearly distinguishable.

Duncan Lucas, April 2014

Railway Photographs from the Wigston Area



Compiled and Presented by Tony Danvers October 2013

The old Wigston (L&H) Station 1885 (see page 46).

Introduction

Whilst taking photographs for one of my first books on “Businesses in South Wigston Past & Present” I asked Mick Phipps if he would allow me to photograph him standing in front of his men’s hairdressing salon on Blaby Road. After the photography was completed he told me it was his last day in the shop. Knowing his salon was filled from floor to ceiling with photos of the Wigston area I asked him what he was going to do with them all. On hearing that they were being given away I asked if he had them on computer and whether or not he would allow me to have a copy of them.

They proved to be a wonderful selection of pictures but there was also a wealth of railway photos which I felt I had to use in some form or another. These photos combined with many more from my good friend Duncan Lucas gave me the beginnings of an idea for another book on the photographic history of Wigston and in this case the history of the three main railway stations that once served the Wigston area prior to their closure.

It is not intended as a detailed written history in itself, it is simply a pictorial record of a time which is now slowly fading into obscurity. Very few of the younger generation may be aware that a level crossing once existed across Blaby Road in South Wigston as it is now almost 50 years since it was closed. I just hope readers will enjoy looking at these old photos and get the same pleasure as I did compiling them.

The book is divided into six chapters, the first three chapters deal with the three stations in the order that they opened. Beginning with Wigston South followed by Wigston Magna and Wigston Glen Parva Station. Then follows the Wigston Motive Power Depot and in chapter five the sites of the stations today. And finally there is a chapter dealing with the viaduct at Crow Mill. I have tried to put the photographs into some sort of chronological order beginning with the earlier photos but if they have something in common I have linked them together.

Tony Danvers October 2013



Mick Phipps in his hairdressing salon, which used to be on Blaby Road, showing him with part of his collection of old photographs of the Wigston area which once covered most of the walls in his salon.

Chapter One; Wigston South Railway Station

Wigston South was the first station to be opened in the Wigston area on the 30th of June 1840. It was built by the Midland Counties Railway to serve the village of Wigston Magna and at first it was known as Wigston station. However in 1844 the MCR was absorbed into the Midland Railway so when the Midland Railway decided to open a new railway station in 1857 Wigston Magna found itself with two stations with the same name. This continued for the next ten years until in 1868 the railway company decided to rename the first station Wigston South and the latest station Wigston (L&H).

Wigston South was originally opened as the first stop on the line to Rugby. Initially Wigston South had two platforms which faced each other on the North side of Blaby Road but due to increasing traffic and the resultant delays caused by the level crossing the 'up' platform was moved to the South side of Blaby Road in 1890. At the same time the signal box was moved to the North side of Blaby Road and a footbridge was also added. Interestingly when South Wigston started to be developed in the 1880's the village took its name from the railway station which up till then had been in open fields a mile away from the old village of Wigston Magna. In 1959 the complete route to Rugby was proposed for closure but this didn't occur until 1962 when the station was initially closed to passengers. The station was finally closed on the 2nd of April 1966 after which the railway track was lifted and the station buildings were demolished in 1970.

The site is now occupied by the South Wigston Health Centre on the North side of Blaby Road and the South Leicestershire College on the South side of Blaby Road. One of the few remaining pieces of evidence of where the track used to run is the line of poplar trees on Blaby Road Park which ran along the rear of the 'up' platform to Rugby. After the closure of all three stations serving the Wigston area a new station was opened on Saturday 10 May 1986 and named South Wigston Station, this was situated only a few hundred yards from where the old Wigston Glen Parva Station once stood.



Chapter One
Photographs of Wigston South
Railway Station.



An early photograph of Wigston South Railway Station taken in 1905 with ladies and gentlemen in their best hats and clothes waiting to catch the train on the 'down' platform on their way to Leicester.



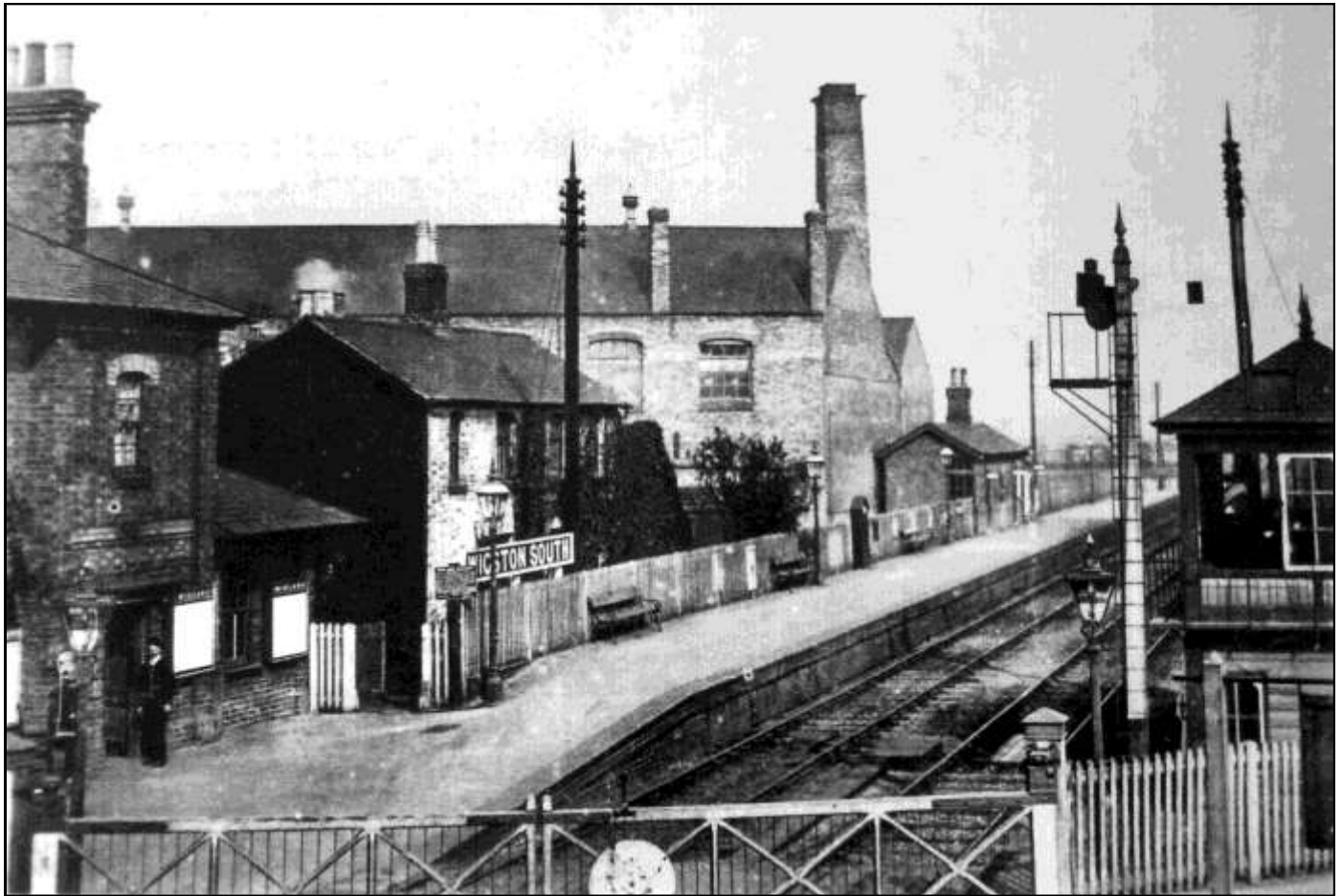
A photograph taken from the 'up' platform of Wigston South Railway Station.
Photograph from the Peter Mastin Collection.



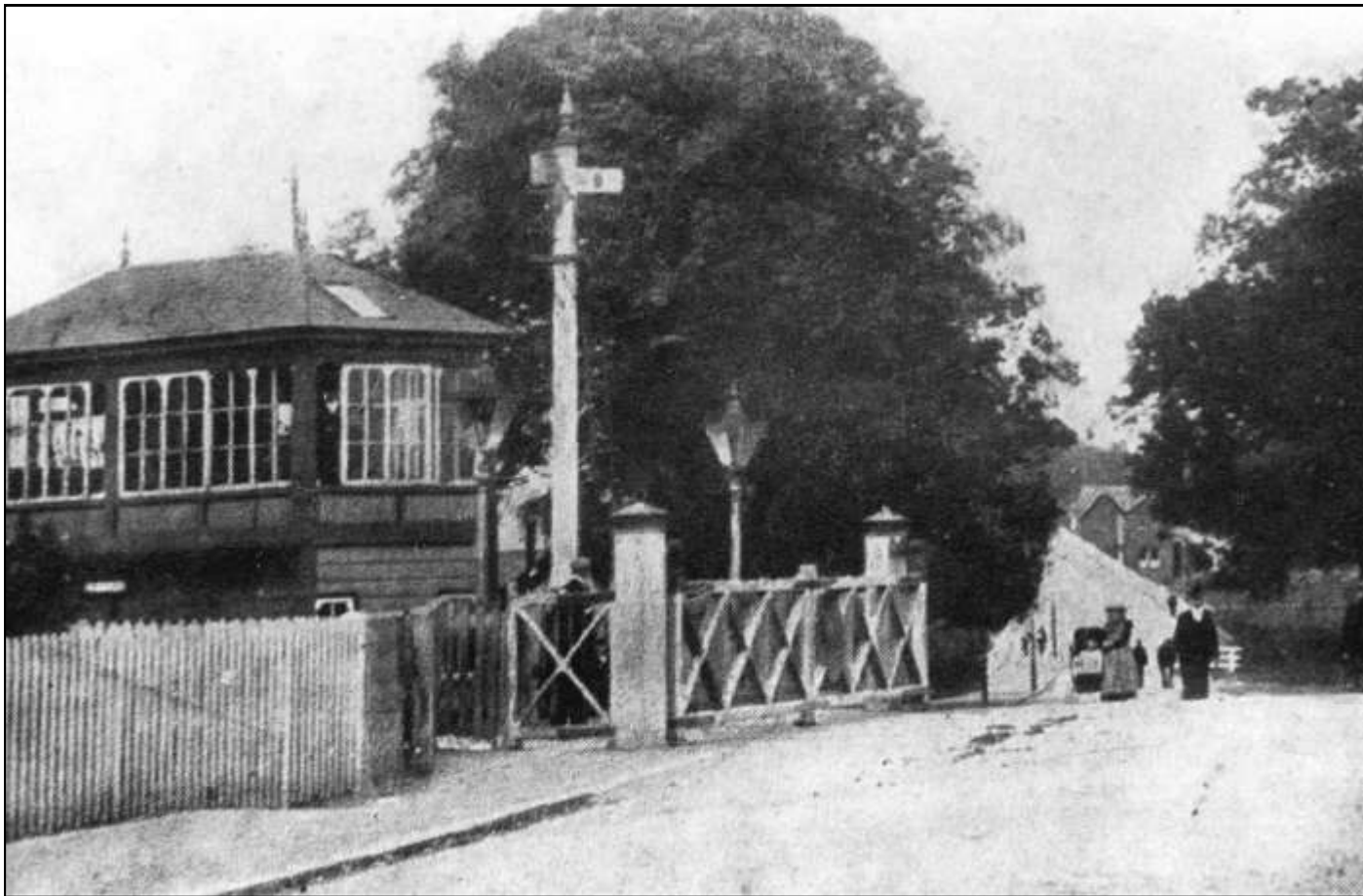
Another view of Wigston South Railway Station, similar to that on the opposite page, taken from the 'up' platform looking northwards to the down platform through the footbridge spanning the railway. The photograph was taken in 1961.



A third view of Wigston South Railway Station taken from a similar spot on the 'up' platform to those on the previous two pages, unfortunately this photograph is undated.



A photograph of Wigston South Station taken from the footbridge overlooking the closed level crossing gates which allowed traffic to proceed along Blaby Road, circa 1920. *Photo John Stretton collection.*



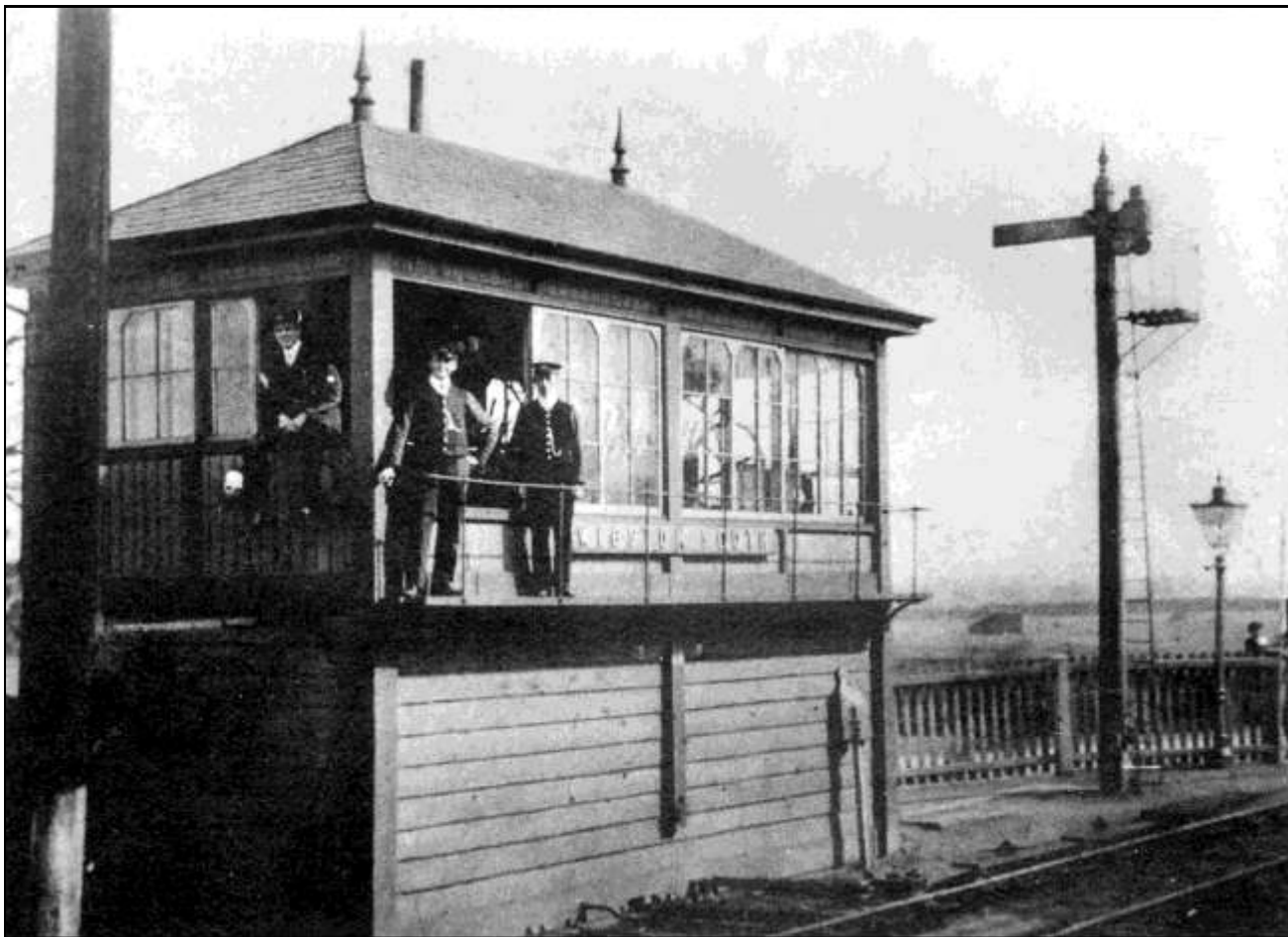
An early photograph of the level crossing on Blaby Road taken in 1903. By this time the overbridge on Blaby Road, which is behind the figures on the right of the picture, had been opened for a year.



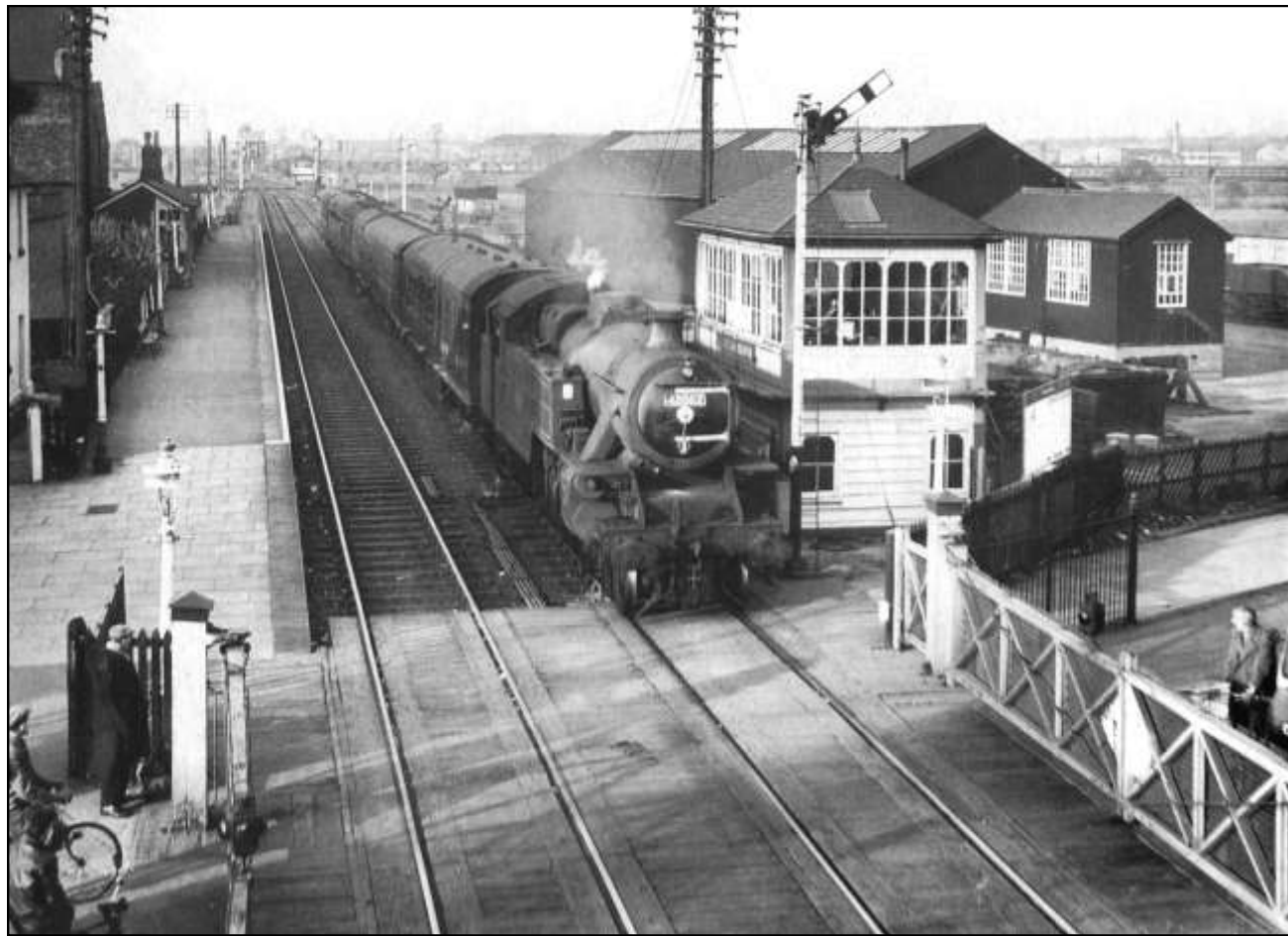
Another photograph of the Blaby Road level crossing taken around 1962.



An undated photograph of the railway staff taken on the platform of the Wigston South Station.
Photograph from the Peter Mastin Collection.



Another early photograph of some of the members of the Wigston South staff taken on the signal box.
Photograph from the Peter Mastin Collection.



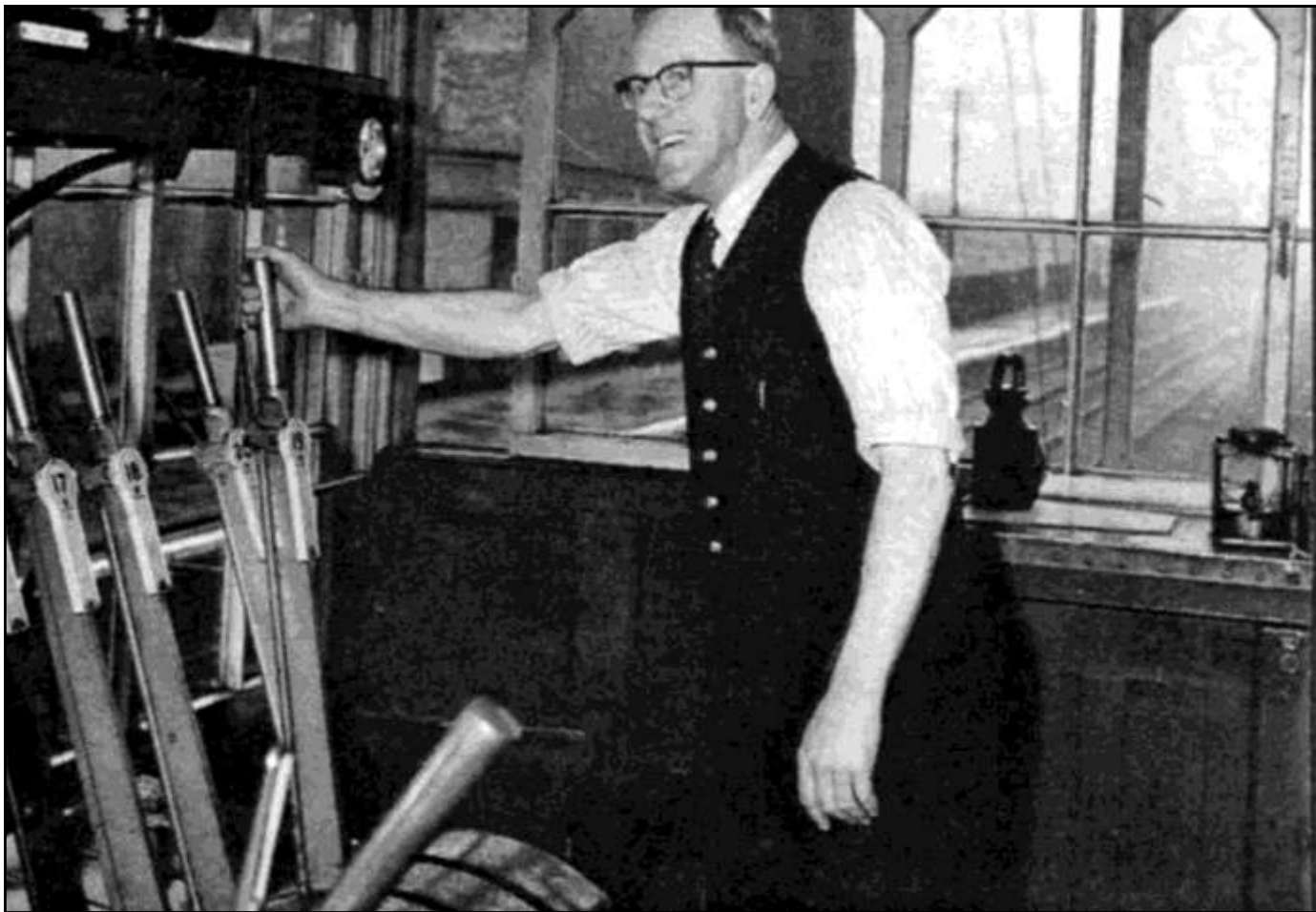
A passenger train hauled by tank engine number 42062 a Fairburn designed class 4MT 2-6-4, crossing the Blaby Road from Leicester on the 'up' line to Rugby on the 27th of March 1961. *Photo Mike Mitchell.*



Locomotive number 42331, A Fowler designed class 4MT 2-6-4, heading a local passenger train on the down line from Rugby to Leicester, pulling into Wigston South Station in 1961. *Photo Horace Gamble.*



A passenger train passing through the level crossing at Wigston South Railway Station circa 1960.



Mr. Reg Parry in action in the Wigston South signal box



The Signal Box that controlled the crossing over which the line from Wigston South crossed the spur line from Glen Parva which joined the main London Line just before Wigston Magna Station.

Photograph from the Peter Mastin Collection.



A Fowler 2-6-4 class 4 MT locomotive number 42331 heads a passenger train over the Wigston Magna - Glen Parva curve on its way to Leicester from Rugby on the 28th of August 1961, see also page 17. *Photo Geoff King.*



A 4-4-0 class 2P Fowler rebuilt Johnson locomotive number 40402 heading a passenger train leaving Wigston South Station on its way to Rugby in the mid 1950's. *Photo Geoff King.*



A photograph of the Wigston South up platform which stood on the South side of the main Blaby Road. The line of poplar trees are all that is left to remind us where the old Rugby line was. The site is now occupied by the South Leicester College. Photo taken sometime in the 1950's. See page 125.



A photograph of Wigston South Railway Station looking northwards from the 'up' platform taken sometime prior to the station being closed to passengers in 1962.



Diesel number 10800 heading a passenger train approaching Wigston South passing a group of railway workmen at the end of the “up” platform on the 9th of November 1957. *Photo Geoff King.*



A Leicester Railway Society Special waiting to leave Wigston South Station for Rugby on the 30th of December 1961. Headed by steam engine number 42331 a 2-6-4 Fowler class 4MT. *Photo M. Beattie.*



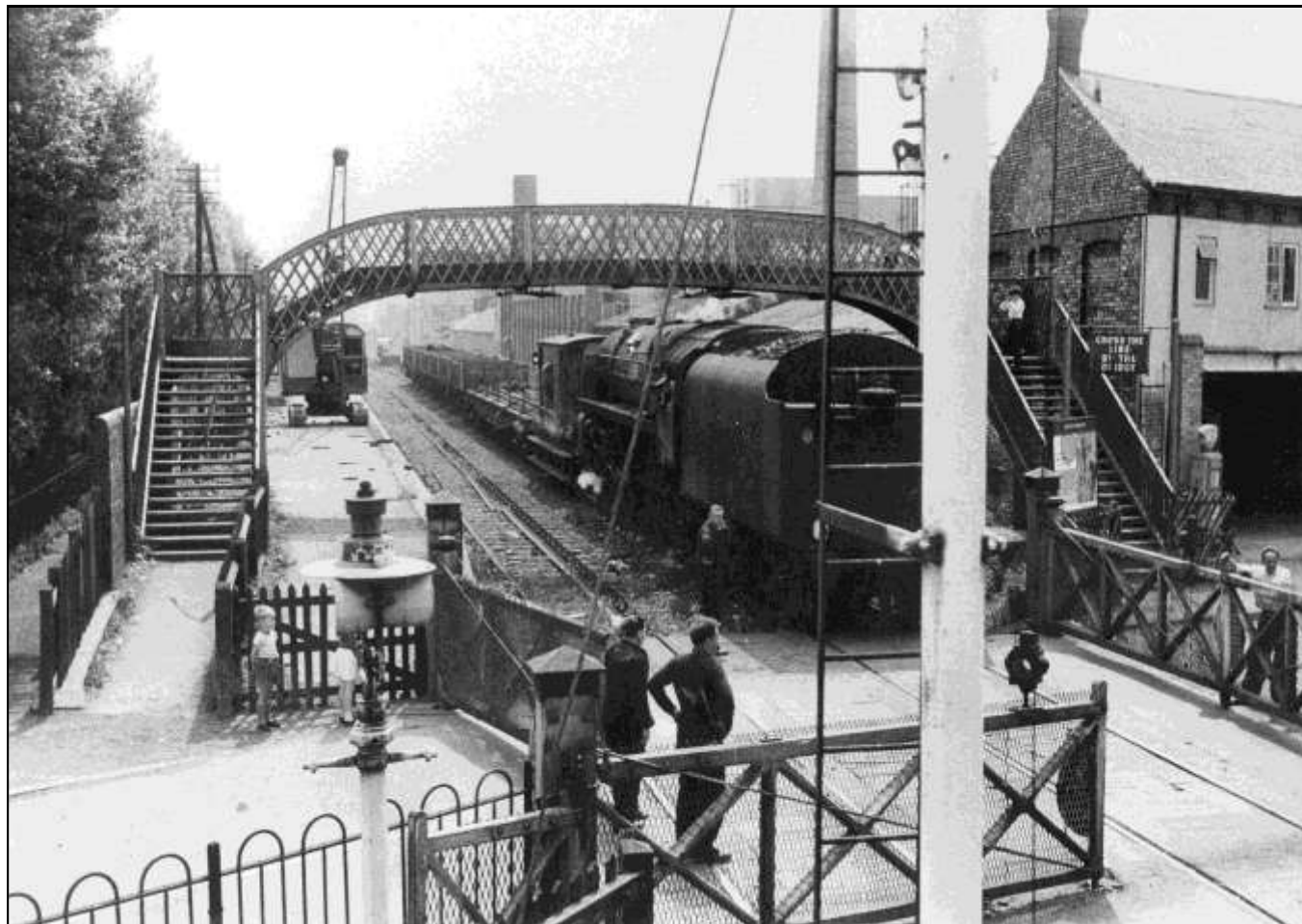
The same Leicester Railway Society Special as on the previous page heading towards Wigston South Station on the 30th of December 1961, crossing the lines on the right that lead to Wigston Glen Parva Station.



A Diesel Metropolitan Unit signalled to cross the Blaby Road in July 1961. *Photo B. Hilton.*



A Stanier 'Black Five' number 45238 heading a Leicester to Dudley excursion train at the Wigston North Junction crossing the old Leicester to Rugby lines on Whit Tuesday 1963. *Photo Geoff King.*



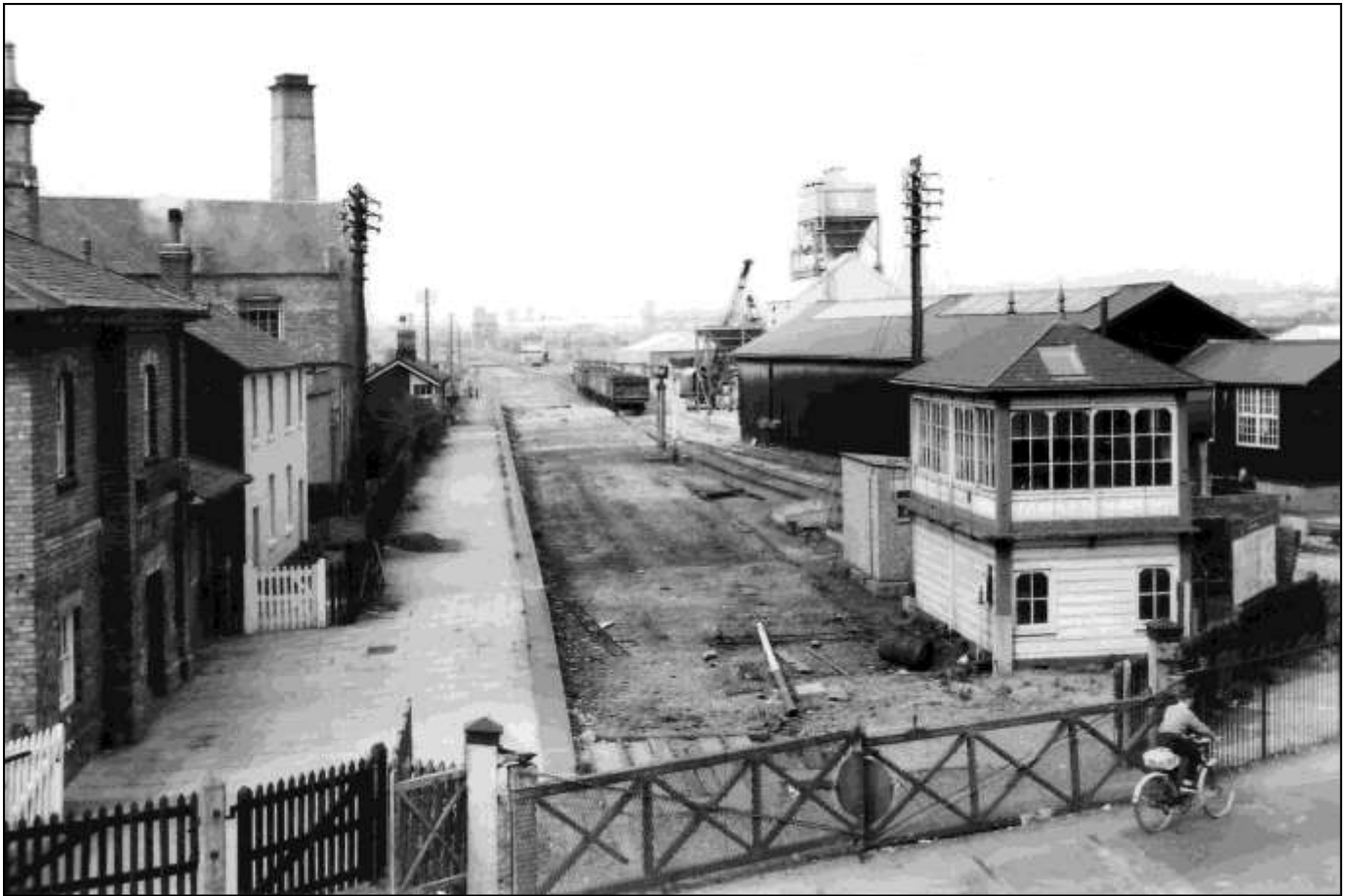
A demolition train and a crane taking up lengths of the track at the Blaby Road level crossing circa 1966.



Although poor in quality this is an interesting photograph of the same train removing the railway lines from in front of the 'up' platform of Wigston South Station. *Photograph from the Peter Mastin Collection.*



A photograph of the now disused Wigston South Railway Station taken in October 1964.



Another later photo of Wigston South Railway Station after the remainder of the tracks were finally removed in 1970. Note the railway lines still in existence on the goods sidings that ran behind the signal box.



The main booking office at Wigston South Station. Since the closure of the railway line in 1966 this site has been redeveloped and is now covered by the South Wigston Health Centre. See page 124.



A rather desolate view of the abandoned goods and passenger station at Wigston South taken on the 21st of January 1978, just before the site was cleared for re-development.



A Stanier design class 8F 2-8-0 locomotive number 48699 hauling coal wagons on the line to Birmingham just passing the site where the new South Wigston Station would be built.



The Mayor of Oadby & Wigston (Mr Roy Hughes) at the opening of the new station at South Wigston on Saturday the 10th of May 1986.



The opening of the new South Wigston Railway on Saturday the 10th of May 1986. Members of the band that welcomed the first passenger train may be seen on the bottom right. *Photo Chris Milner.*



A DMU class 150 number 08 is waiting at the second platform on the South Wigston Station on the East side of the footbridge. Again like the photo opposite this photograph was taken when the new station was opened in 1986. *Photo Chris Milner.*



A 'Sprinter', number 150114, enters South Wigston Station with a Coventry to Nottingham train on Wednesday the 12th of October 1988. *Photograph Horace Gamble.*



A mixed passenger / parcel train on its way to Birmingham from Kettering approaching the Glen Parva junction on the 19th of October 1988. *Photo Horace Gamble.*



The Flying Scotsman heading a Special passenger train through South Wigston Station on its way towards Leicester on the 6th October 2008. *Photo Tony Danvers.*



Restored London Transport steam locomotive L94 an ex-GWR pannier tanker number 7752 and ex-GWR class 57xx number 9600 hauling a double headed passenger train on the 'down' line towards Nuneaton. Note the newly raised and strengthened bridge. *Photo: Tony Danvers August 2012.*

Chapter Two: Wigston Magna Railway Station.

Wigston Magna station was opened 17 years after the Wigston South Station on the 8th of May 1857 when the Midland Railway constructed a line to London via Hitchin. It was sited only a few hundred yards due East of the Wigston South Railway Station on the Blaby Road. Originally there was a level crossing on the site but due to increased traffic on the main road between South Wigston and Wigston Magna it was deemed necessary to build an bridge over the railway which meant that the railway station had to be rebuilt. It took two years to complete the bridge and the new station was finally opened on the 22nd of September 1902.

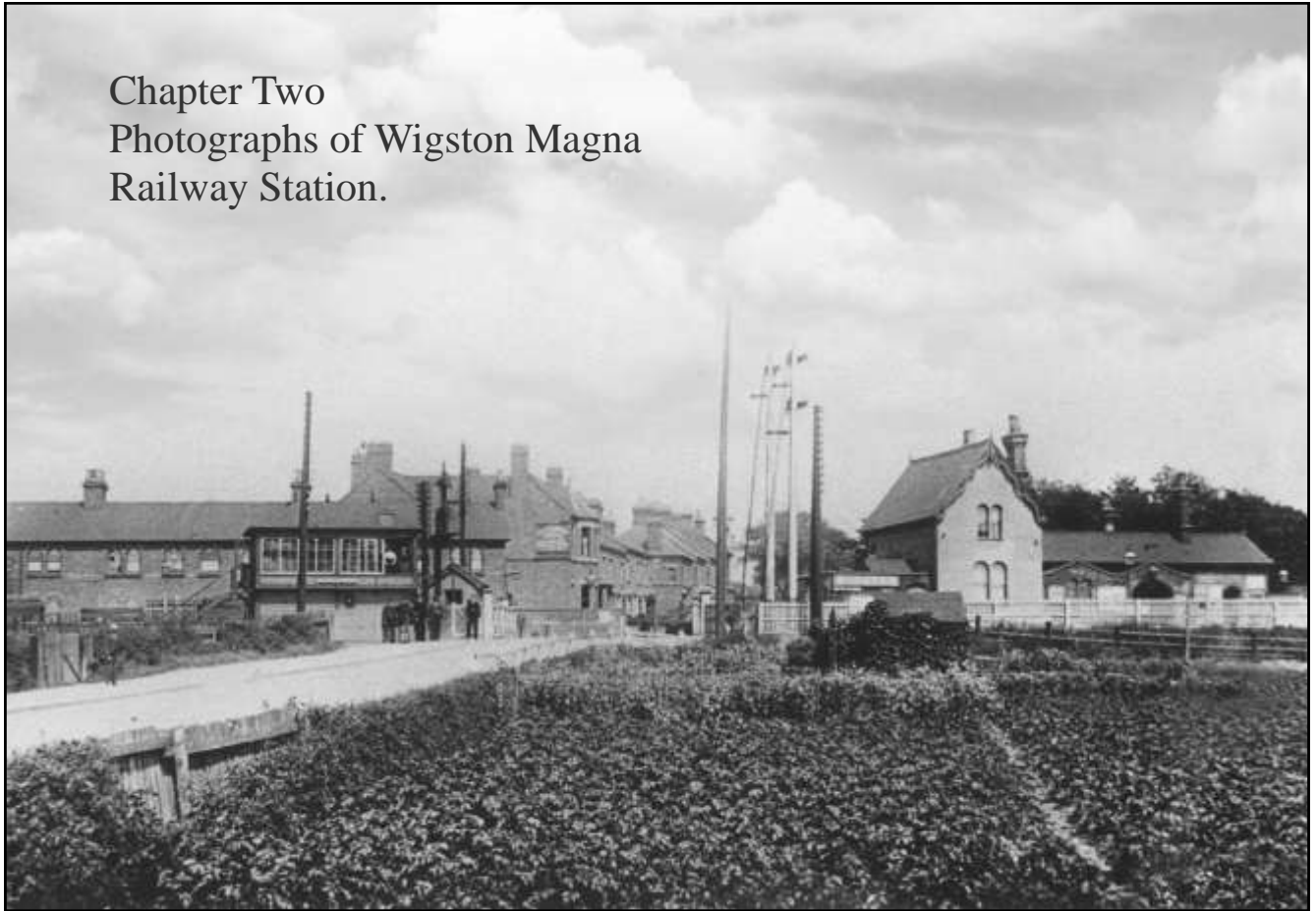
The new station was much larger in size with waiting rooms and toilets on the platforms. Access to the two platforms was through entrances on the overbridge parapet (see page 53). The ticket office was also at road level at the entrance to the down platform. The station was still named Wigston (L&H) and it wasn't until 2nd of June 1924 that the LMS finally decided to rename the station Wigston Magna.

Wigston Magna eventually became the most important of the three stations serving the Wigston area but by the middle of the 1950's rail traffic was limited to the early morning and evening rush hours. When the Beeching report came out in March 1963 Wigston Magna and several other of the stations serving the local trains between Leicester and Wellingborough were proposed for closure.

Eventually on the 30th of August 1967 closure was decided upon and on the 1st of January 1968 Wigston Magna and three other stations were finally closed. The only evidence that the Wigston Magna station ever existed is to be seen on the parapet of the bridge on Blaby Road where new brickwork may be seen against the older bricks where the station entrances were bricked up for the last time. Also slight indents have been made in the brickwork where the entrances used to be. (see page 129).



Chapter Two
Photographs of Wigston Magna
Railway Station.



A photograph taken in 1899 of the level crossing where the Leicester to London railway line crossed the Blaby Road, because of delays to traffic a new overbridge was opened in 1902 which became known locally as Spion Kop.



Wigston Station in 1885, the locomotive is standing on the level crossing over which the main Blaby Road used to run.

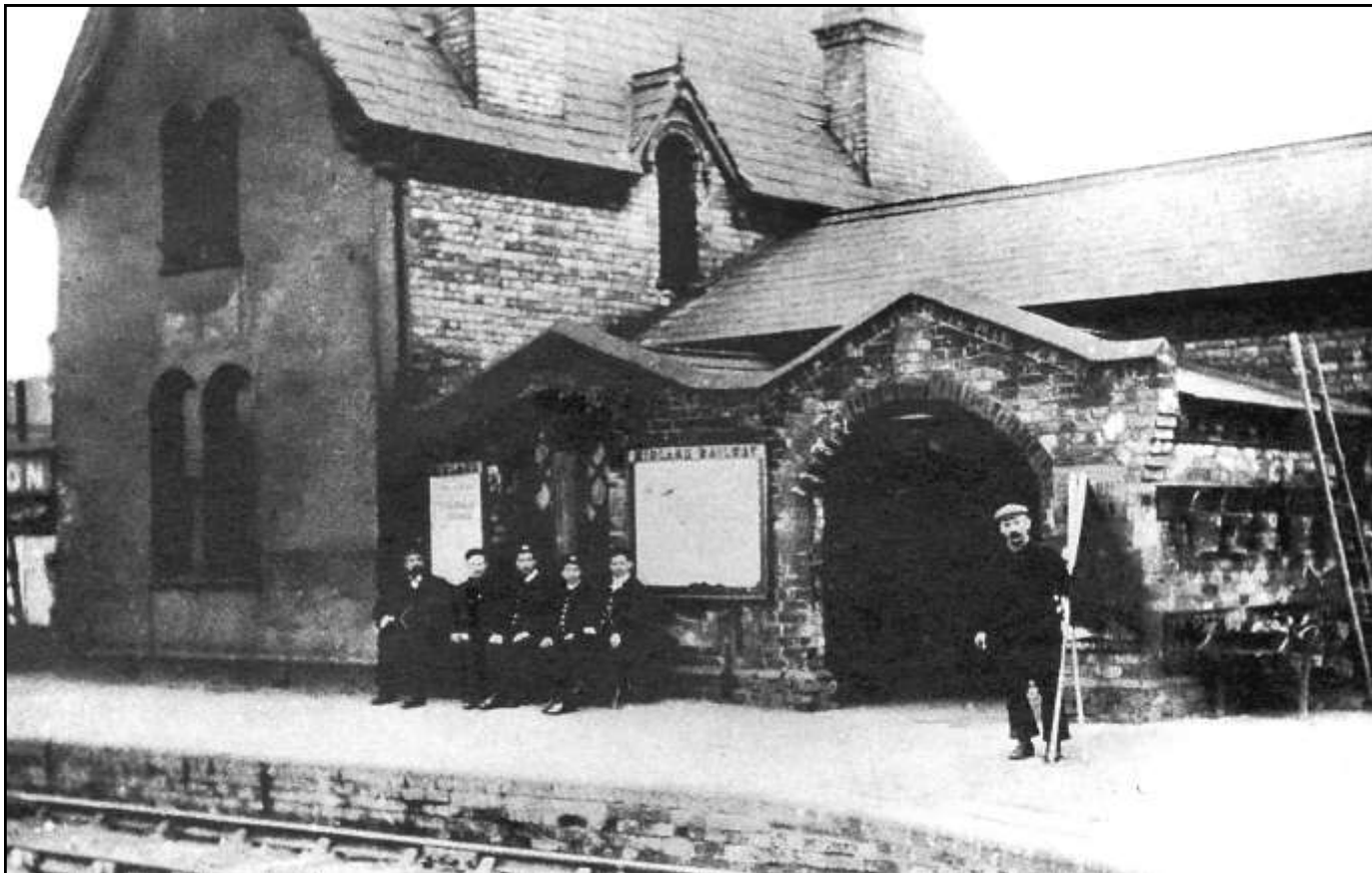


A photograph of the road entrance and the station yard at the old Wigston Station taken circa 1896.
Photograph from the Peter Mastin Collection.



A photograph of Wigston Station taken circa 1900 not long before the station was pulled down and rebuilt.
This was due to the need to build the overbridge to avoid traffic congestion on the Blaby Road.

Photograph from the Barry Hilton Collection.



A photograph of the railway staff at the old Wigston Station taken in March 1900, not long before this station was demolished and a replacement built and opened two years later.



A photograph of Wigston (L&H) Station taken circa 1921. This station replaced the old Wigston Station in 1902, it was later renamed Wigston Magna by the LMS in 1924.



A photograph taken from the down platform looking northwards on Wigston Magna Railway Station.



A photograph of the Methodist's Ladies outing taken in the 1930's. They are waiting on the down platform for a train to take them to Leicester. In the background is the entrance to the covered way that gave access to the platform from the parapet of the bridge on the main Blaby Road.



The two entrances to the Wigston Magna Railway Station that led down to the platforms from the bridge on the main Blaby Road from South Wigston to Wigston Magna. Compare this photo to the one on page 129.



A photograph of a rehearsal the local authority organised using local schoolchildren to prepare for the reception of a large number of evacuees that were expected to arrive after the outbreak of War in 1939.



A photograph of a Sunday School outing taken around 1934. Adults and children are waiting on the up platform for a train to take them most probably to Wickstead Park in Kettering for the day.



A double-headed excursion train headed by steam engine number 44123, a 0-6-0 class 4F locomotive, just passing the Wigston South Junction signal box as it pulls out of Wigston Magna Station.

Photograph from the Peter Mastin Collection.



A brand new British Standard Class 9F 2-10-0 number 92055 hauling a mixed freight train past the Wigston South Junction signal box on the up line towards London. *Photo Horace Gamble 1955.*



Steam engine 45326, a Stanier designed 'Black Five', hauling a mixed freight train out of a goods siding onto the branch line that went through Glen Parva Station towards Nuneaton and Birmingham.

Photo Mike Mitchell 28th June 1965.



A very busy view with another 'Black Five' number 45430 hauling a mixed goods train from the goods sidings onto the spur that runs towards Glen Parva Station. The photo was taken from a slightly different viewpoint from the photo on the opposite page. *Photo Mike Mitchell.*



A Cup Final Special heading from Hinckley to St Pancras Station from the branch line that ran through Glen Parva Station hauled by a Jubilee class locomotive number 45649 named 'Hawkins'.

Photo Horace Gamble, May 1961.



A Leicester Railway Society 21st Anniversary Special that is heading towards the Wigston Magna Station from the Glen Parva branch line onto the main line towards London. *Photo Horace Gamble May 1961.*



A passenger train leaving the main line and entering the branch line that runs through Glen Parva Station.



Another photograph of a light passenger train heading from Leicester towards Wigston Glen Parva Station and on to Nuneaton & Birmingham.



Working hard, a Stanier designed 2-6-2T class 3MT locomotive number 40087 heading a passenger train towards Wigston Glen Parva Station on the down line from Leicester. *Photo Barry Hilton March 1957.*



Locomotive number 41123 a class 4P 4-4-0 Compound heading a mixed passenger and goods train past a goods siding on its way from Leicester towards Wigston Glen Parva station. *Photo Barry Hilton May 1957.*



An Ivatt Class 4MT 2-6-0 steam locomotive number 43042 hauling a passenger train past the signal box on the main London line. In the background are the row of Midland Cottages built for the families of the railwaymen who worked in the Motive Power Depot and on the Wigston stations. *Photo Mike Mensing Aug 1958.*



A similar view to the photo opposite showing a 'Jubilee Class' locomotive number 45615 named 'Malay States' hauling a passenger train past the Wigston South Junction Box on its way to London. Also showing another interesting view of the Midland Cottages. *Photo Barry Hilton April 1957.*



A passenger train leaving the main line to Leicester and entering the spur that goes through Wigston Glen Parva towards Birmingham headed by British Rail 2-6-0 class 2 steam engine number 78028. Compare this photo to the one on the opposite page. *Photograph taken on the 10th of April 1965 by Barry Hilton.*



A diesel locomotive passing the loop that runs towards Wigston Glen Parva Station. As may be seen from the photo, the lines that joined the main London line are in the process of being removed, Note also that by the time this photo was taken the Wigston South Junction Box has also been removed.



A restored Fowler class 4F 0-6-0 steam locomotive, LMS number 4027, pulling a diesel engine past the Wigston South Junction signal box.



A Johnson steam locomotive class 2F 0-6-0 number 58300 built in 1901, shunting wagons along the line that ran behind the 'up' platform on Wigston Magna Station. The engine was withdrawn from service and scrapped at Derby Works in 1955. *Photo: Michael Beattie circa 1954.*



A Fowler designed class 4F locomotive, number 44575, heading a passenger train through Wigston Magna Station towards Leicester in 1961. The engine was withdrawn from service in 1964. *Photo Mike Mitchell.*



A British Rail Standard class 4 locomotive 4-6-0 number 75063 heading a local passenger train through Wigston Magna Station on its way to Leicester in 1963.



British Standard 4-6-0 class 4MT number 73059 running northwards from Wigston bound for Leicester shed on the 17th December 1965. It was withdrawn from service 2 years later. *Photo John Cooper-Smith.*



An 0-6-0 class 3F Fowler rebuilt Johnson steam locomotive shunting railway stock in the sidings between the three Wigston junctions in 1960. This engine was withdrawn from service the following year in 1961. *Photograph Alec Ford.*



A view of the Wigston Magna Station taken on the 30th December 1967, only two days before it was finally closed to passengers on the 1st of January 1968. *Photo Barry Hilton 1967.*



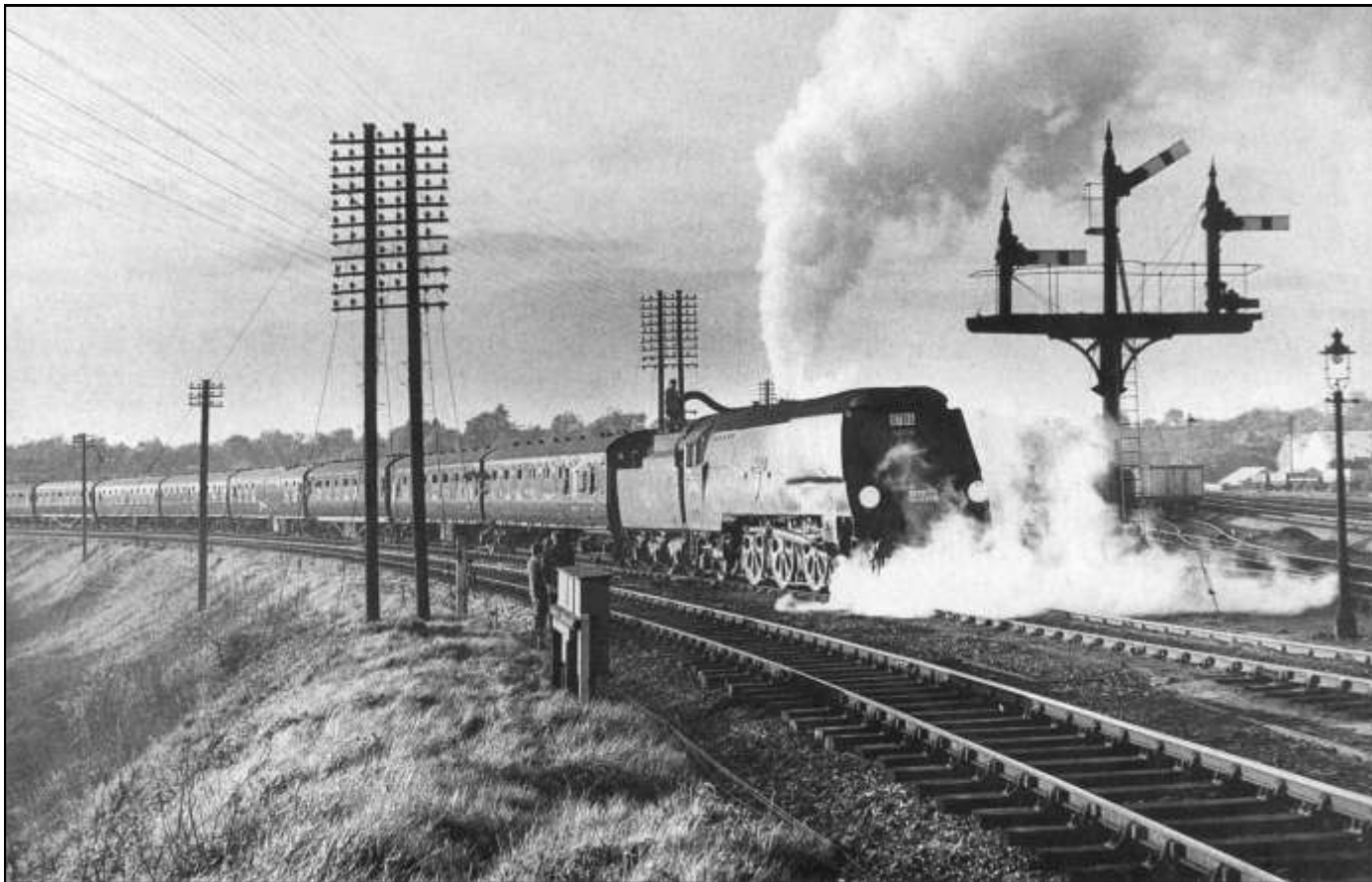
Passengers rushing to catch the local passenger train on Wigston Magna Station also taken only two days before closure on the 1st of January 1968. Compare this scene to the one on page 51. *Photo M. Mitchell 30th Dec 1967.*



A powerful Beyer Garratt steam engine class 2-6-6-2T number 47984 heading a goods train on the 'up' line towards London through Wigston Magna Station. *Photo from the Peter Mastin Collection.*



A class 45 diesel engine number 45141 passing the Wigston South signal box at the at the head of a passenger train on its way to St Pancras Station on the 18th of August 1979. *Photograph Tom Heavyside.*



“Bude” a Bulleid steam locomotive number 34006 taking on water at Knighton South Junction prior to entering Wigston Magna Station on the 11th of May 1963. See opposite. *Photograph Geoff King.*



A group of excited boys looking at a rare sighting of a Southern Region Bulleid steam locomotive number 34006 named 'Bude' waiting at the head of a passenger train on the 'up' platform in Wigston Magna Station on the 11th of May 1963. *Photo Barry Hilton.*

Chapter Three: Wigston Glen Parva Railway Station.

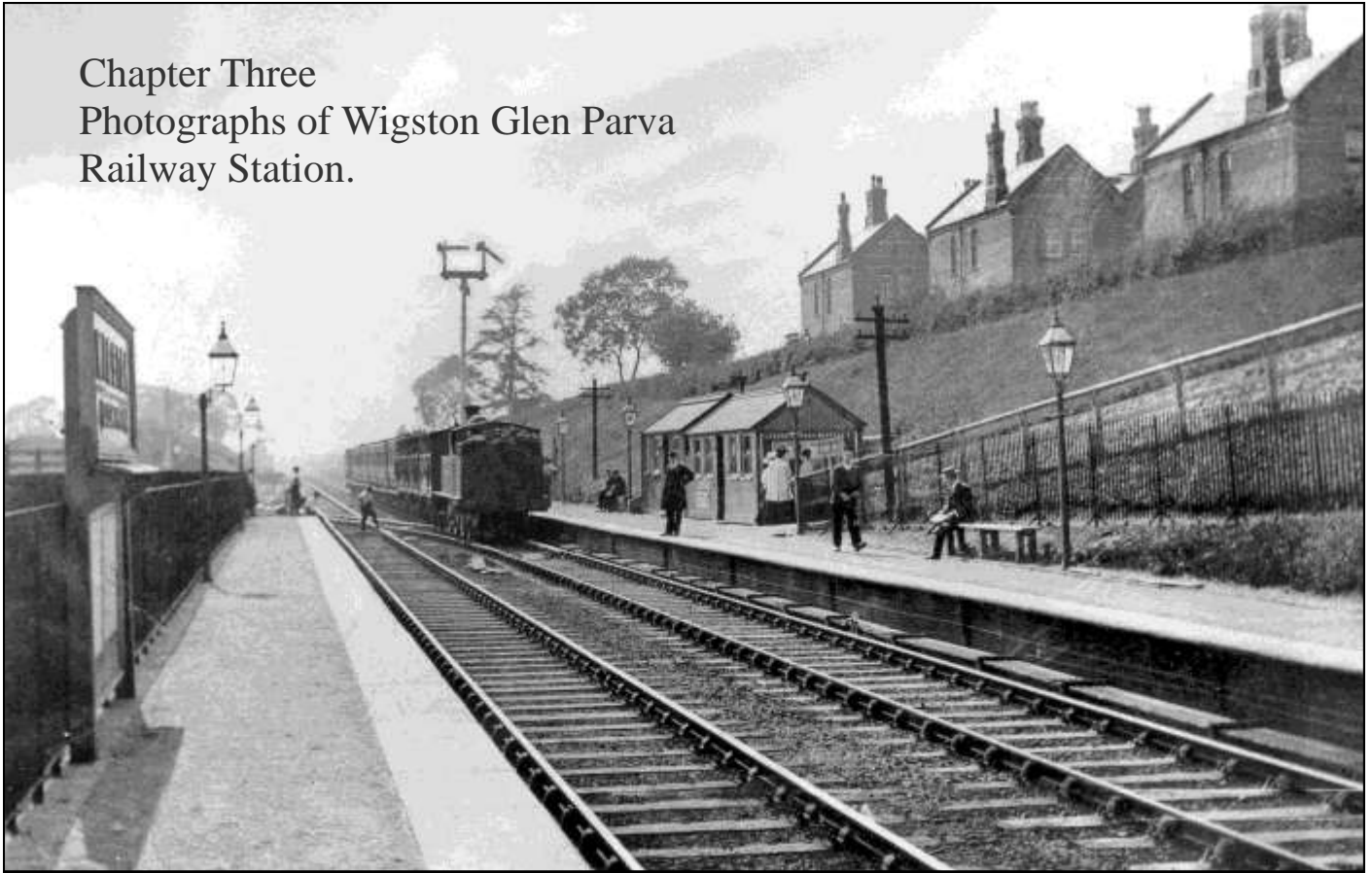
Glen Parva station was the last of the three stations to be opened for passengers in the Wigston area. It came into being when the South Leicestershire Railway constructed a line from Leicester to Nuneaton in 1864. The South Leicestershire Railway came to an agreement with the Midland Railway to use their line for the last few miles into Leicester. This agreement also allowed the Midland Railway to use their line to Hinckley and Nuneaton. Initially the South Leicestershire Railway did not plan to have a station built at Glen Parva possibly because there was little or no local community to serve at that time. Later in 1867 the London & North Western Railway took over from the South Leicestershire Railway at a time when the old single track was being doubled. Things began to change in 1881 when the Army built the Glen Parva Barracks for the Leicestershire Regiment. The Barracks ran alongside the railway where it went under the Saffron Road. In response the LNWR opened a station at Glen Parva in 1882 solely for the use of the military, but with the population of South Wigston growing very rapidly it wasn't very long before the railway company realised the potential commercial possibilities that offered and opened the station for the public to use on the 1st of April 1884. Later in the September of 1887 the original name of the station was changed from Glen Parva to Wigston Glen Parva.

Due to financial problems the railway company was facing at the time the station was built on a shoe-string. The main ticket office was little more than a wooden hut as was the waiting room on the up platform to Leicester. In 1904 a separate waiting room for ladies was added. The down platform initially had no cover for passengers until 1913 when another wooden building was erected. A local brickworks extracted clay from a quarry near to the railway line and the LNWR connected a spur to the quarry from just beyond the down platform which may be seen in several of the pictures. In common with the other two Wigston stations Glen Parva was scheduled for closure and on the 4th of March 1968 the station was finally closed to all traffic. Apart from some steps and a brick wall little evidence of the site is now visible, see page 123.



Chapter Three

Photographs of Wigston Glen Parva Railway Station.



A delightful photograph of Glen Parva Station, taken around 1905, showing a well kept station and a proud Station Master waiting to welcome the train now approaching the 'up' platform on its way to Leicester. Note the addition of the ladies waiting room which was built in 1904.



Wigston Glen Parva Station, taken from the bridge on Saffron Road about 1930. The photo shows the spur that was built to take goods trains into the clay quarry, which may be seen on the extreme left, see page 97.



A very early undated photo of Glen Parva Station, possibly taken around 1905 as the separate waiting room for ladies, which was added in 1904, may be seen towards the left of the picture.



A rather grainy photo of Glen Parva Station and the station master. The signalman may be seen standing at the end window of his signal box. The photo is undated but must have been taken in the early 1900's.



A photograph showing the staff working at the Glen Parva Railway Station circa 1885. Again the signalman may be seen standing at the end window of the signal box. *Photograph from the Peter Mastin Collection.*



A much later photograph of the Wigston Glen Parva Signal Box which is interesting to compare with the most recent photograph of what is now left of the site on page 123.



An early photograph taken from where the spur line runs into the quarry just outside Glen Parva station.
Photograph from the Peter Mastin Collection.



An undated photo of Wigston Glen Parva Station with two workmen to be seen under the railway bridge that takes the traffic on the Saffron Road over the railway line into South Wigston.



A photo of Wigston Glen Parva Railway Station taken circa 1900 on the 'up' platform looking Eastwards. The 'down' platform on the right of the picture didn't have any cover for passengers until 1913 when another wooden building was erected. *Photograph from the Peter Mastin Collection.*



A photo of a Class 2P 4-4-0 Fowler locomotive number 40447, pulling out of Wigston Glen Parva Station with a passenger train, on it's way to Leicester. *Photo Horace Gamble July 1952.*



Glen Parva Station Master S. F. Willsmer tending a hanging basket of geraniums in readiness to enter the best kept station competition which was held in August 1951.



A mixed goods train entering Glen Parva Station headed by a poorly maintained Fowler designed 4-6-0 Patriot class locomotive number 45533 named 'Lord Rathmore'. *Photo from the Chris Banks collection.*



A mixed goods train passing through Glen Parva Station headed by a Stanier class 5MT 4-6-0 locomotive number 44862. *Photo Mike Mitchell 6th March 1965.*



A Stanier 2-6-4 4MT locomotive, number 42588, hauling a passenger train through Glen Parva Station. This photograph also shows a steam engine on the spur line into the old quarry workings.

Photo Mike Mitchell 3rd November 1962.



A view of the old quarry that once existed alongside the Wigston Glen Parva Station.
It is now very hard to believe that such an huge clay pit once existed on this spot.



A passenger train passing through Wigston Glen Parva Station on its way to Hunstanton headed by a Stanier designed Jubilee class 4-6-0 locomotive number 45669 named 'Fisher'. *Photo M. Mitchell.*



Steam locomotive number 61082, a Thompson class B1 4-6-0, heading a Cleethorpes to Exmouth passenger train passing through Wigston Glen Parva Station. *Photo Mike Mitchell 28th July 1952.*



An Ivatt class 4 locomotive heading a passenger train through Glen Parva Station towards Leicester.



A Stanier designed 5MT 4-6-0 locomotive, number 45020, heading a passenger train passing through Wigston Glen Parva Railway Station on its way to Birmingham. The photo is undated.



A Stanier designed 5MT 2-6-0 locomotive, number 42954, hauling a mixed goods train through Wigston Glen Parva Station towards Birmingham. *Photo Mike Mitchell May 1963.*



An Ivatt class 4MT 2-6-0 locomotive, number 43053, heading a passenger train leaving Wigston Glen Parva Railway Station on its way to Leicester. *Photo Barry Hilton.*



A scene just outside Wigston Glen Parva Station where a goods train is signalled to wait whilst a passenger train headed by a DMU has the signal in its favour to continue on the line towards Nuneaton.

Photograph from the Peter Mastin Collection.



A passenger train headed by two locomotives, number 45237, a Stanier class 5MT and 40087, a Stanier class 3MT heading towards Wigston Glen Parva Station. *Photo Mike Mensing, 22nd August 1959.*



A very clean Jubilee Class locomotive, number 45669, named 'Fisher' pulling out of Wigston Glen Parva Station with a mixed goods train, on it's way to Nuneaton. *Photo Barry Hilton, 4th August 1962.*



An immaculate Patriot number 45537 named 'Private E Sykes VC' at the head of a freight train makes its way to Nuneaton on the 4th of March 1961 passing the Wigston North Junction. *Photo Barry Hilton.*



A photograph of Wigston Glen Parva Station taken on the 2nd of March 1968, two days before the final closure of the station to passengers in March 1968, see opposite. *Photo Barry Hilton.*



A photograph of a deserted Wigston Glen Parva Station, taken on the 5th May 1968 two months after the final closure of the station on the 4th March 1968. *Photo Mike Mitchell.*



A Stanier 4-6-0 Jubilee Class locomotive number 45643 named 'Rodney' hauling a mixed goods train through Wigston Glen Parva towards Birmingham on the 17th May 1963. *Photo Mike Mitchell.*

Chapter Four: The Wigston Motive Power Depot.

Opened by the Midland Railway in 1873 the Wigston Motive Power Depot housed the usual MR single roundhouse which had about 40 engines allocated to it, mostly consisting of Midland Railway 0-6-0 goods engines, together with a few small Midland tank engines.

Over the next ten years streets of terraced houses were built to house the large number of railway workers and also for the employees of several nearby factories which had opened after Orson Wright, the builder of South Wigston, had seen the opportunities offered by the existence of the three railway stations in the immediate area.

Early maps show the extensive sidings that were constructed near to the Wigston Magna Station and also the carriage and wagon workshops that were also housed there. The depot required six signal boxes to control the large number of sidings. The largest of these, Wigston South Junction box, was opened in November 1900. The shed was given the code number of 11 which identified those engines that were housed there and this code was kept by the LMS until the engine shed was closed early in May 1935.

In 1943 the shed was re-opened to accommodate some of the engines from the sheds in Leicester and the old roundhouse was replaced by the LMS for a new one but by April 1955 the sheds were gradually run down and in the late 1960's the locomotive sheds were demolished leaving a wagon repair depot operating on the sidings next to where the shed used to be. This wagon facility continued in operation for another ten years before it was finally closed. The Wigston depot was then used for the storage of wagons throughout the 1960's.

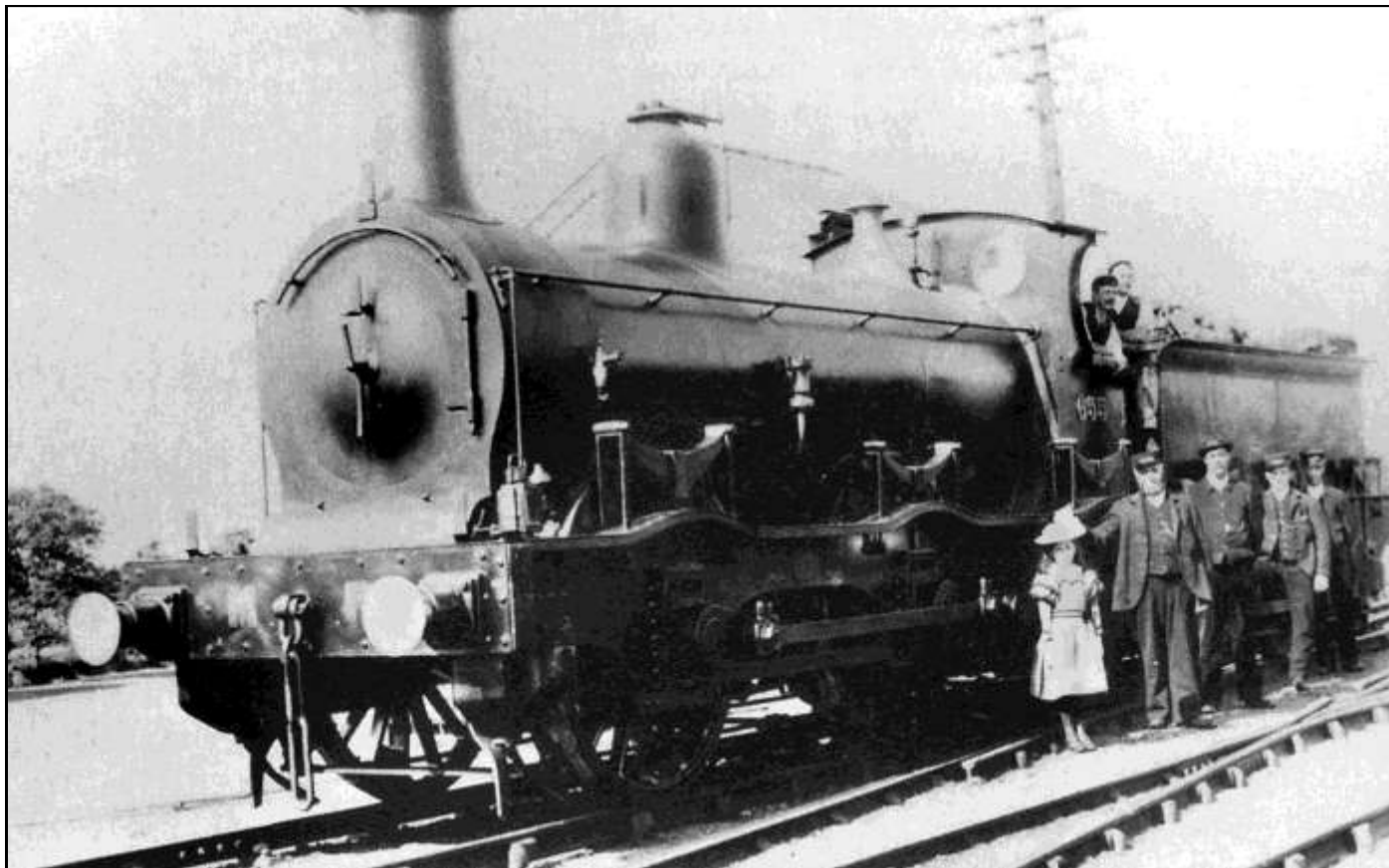


Chapter Four

Photographs of the Wigston Motive Power Depot.



A photograph of the Wigston Motive Power Depot and the extensive sidings taken in 1905. The Wigston South Junction signal box, which was opened in 1900, may be seen in the bottom right hand corner.



Ethel Howe, the daughter of the Wigston Station Master, standing alongside a Kirtley 0-6-0 class 1F locomotive number 655 together with the engine driver, the fireman and other members of the railway staff in 1902. This locomotive was listed as being at the Wigston Shed in 1920



A photograph taken around 1931 of a group of railway workers posing on a former Midland Compound 4-4-0 at the rear of the Wigston sheds.

Photograph from the Peter Mastin Collection.

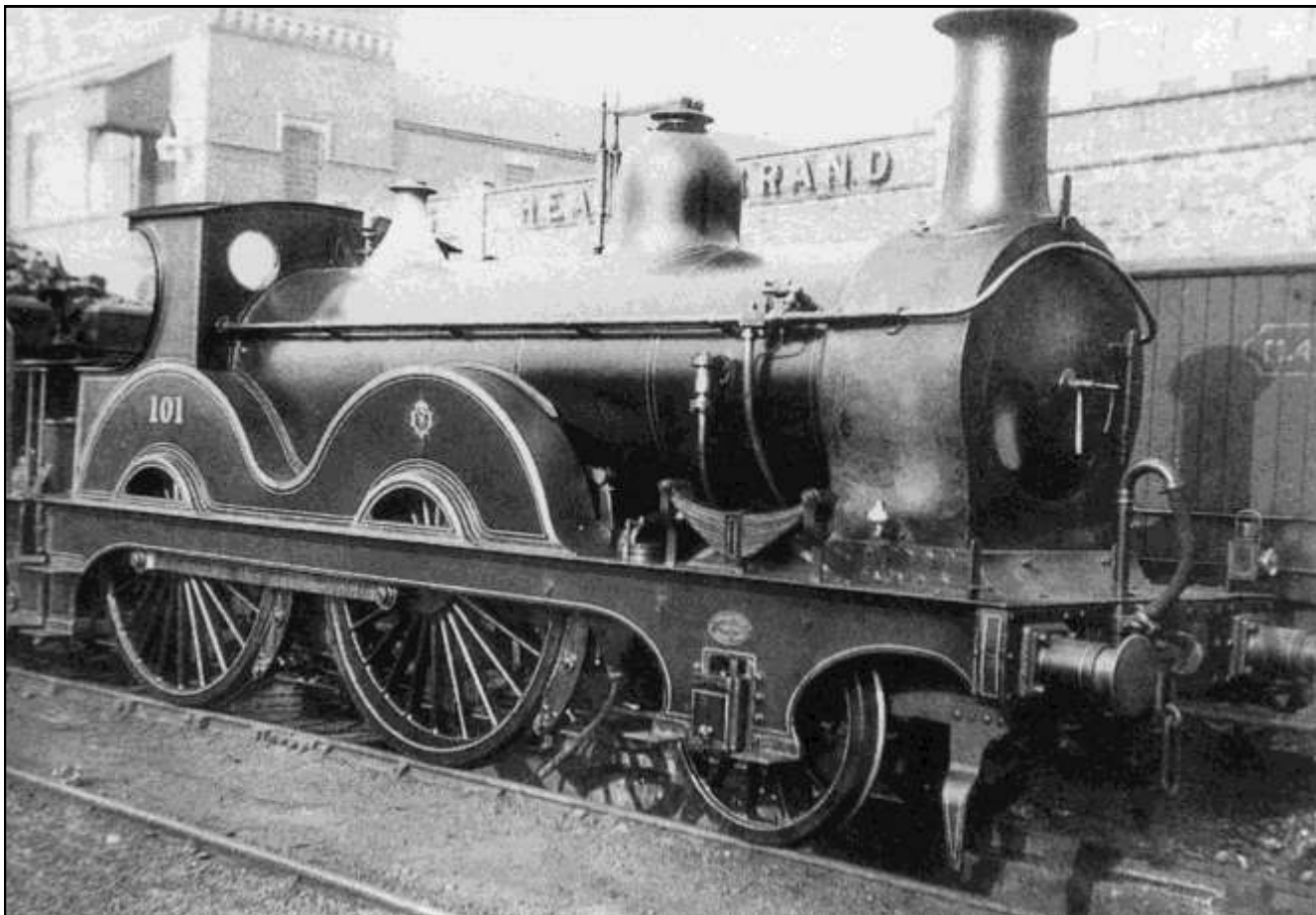


A photograph taken in the Wigston Railway Yards, on the 26th of December 1902, of the various members of the railway staff employed at the Station and in the Wigston Motive Power Depot.

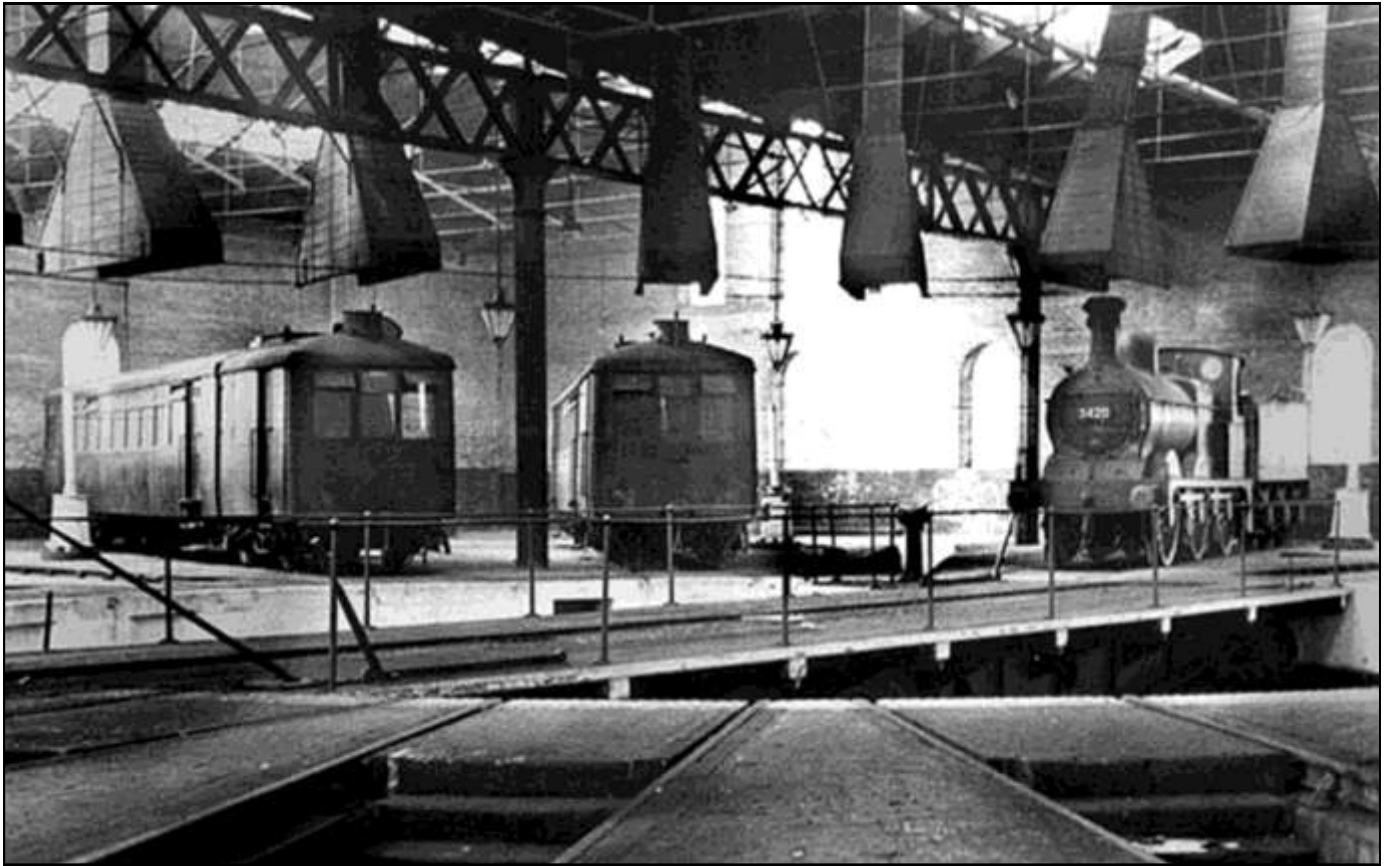


A Johnson Class 2F 0-6-0 steam engine number 2938 built circa 1875 that was allocated to Wigston. The Wigston Shed plate number 11 may be seen on the front of the boiler under the engine number.

This engine was listed as being there in 1920. *Photograph from the Peter Mastin collection.*



A Johnson Class 1P 2-4-0 number 101 that was built between 1877-1881. This engine was allocated to the Wigston Sheds and was also listed there in 1920. *Photo from the Peter Mastin Collection.*



A photograph taken inside the Wigston Motive Power Depot roundhouse in 1934. On the left of the picture are two Sentinel steam railcars. On the right is a Johnson 0-6-0 class 2F number 3420 steam locomotive with a sack over its chimney which means that it was probably being stored there and was not a working engine.

Photo H. N. James 24th December 1934.



Another photo of inside the Wigston Motive Power Depot roundhouse in 1934, with a more detailed view of the Johnson 0-6-0 class 2F locomotive number 3420. This engine was taken over by British Rail in 1948, when the railways were nationalised, and re-numbered to 58260 and its home shed was at Royston. Some 12 years later it was withdrawn from Royston and scrapped at the Derby Works sometime around 1960.

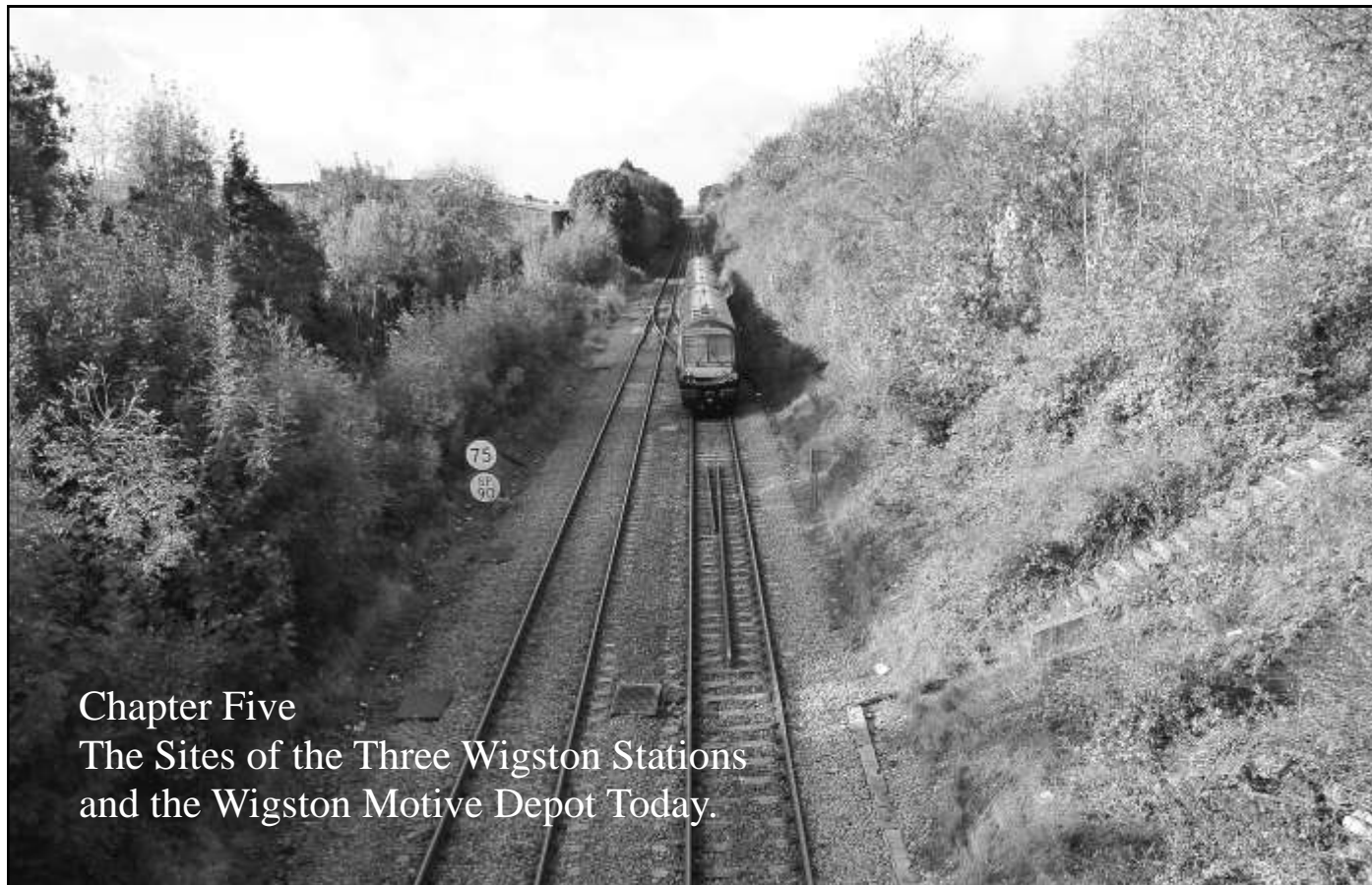
Photo H. N. James 24th December 1934



Another view of the Wigston Motive Power Depot showing a large stock of wheels ready to service any rolling stock that required urgent attention. This repair facility remained open for several years after the main locomotive depot was demolished in the late 1960's.



The Wigston sheds in a very poor state of repair. The sheds were first opened in 1873 and in 1920 a total of 52 engines, mostly freight, were allocated to them. The sheds were closed in 1934 but were re-opened again in 1943 as a sub shed of Leicester. It finally went out of use in the mid 1950's. *Photo H. Gamble, July 1951.*



Chapter Five

The Sites of the Three Wigston Stations and the Wigston Motive Depot Today.

Although very overgrown it is still possible to see the steps that led down to the Wigston Glen Parva signal box and part of the brick wall that surrounded it on the near right hand side of the photograph.

Compare this image to the photograph on page 88. *Photograph Tony Danvers, October 2013.*



Another view of all that is left of the Wigston Glen Parva Station showing a more detailed view of the brick wall that once surrounded the signal box and the steps that led down to it. See page 88.

Photograph: Tony Danvers October 2013.



The South Wigston Health Centre which now stands on the site of the main Wigston South Station.
Compare this to the photograph on page 34. *Photograph: Tony Danvers, October 2013.*



South Leicestershire College now occupies the site near to where the Wigston South 'up' platform once stood. Compare this image to the photo on page 23. *Photograph: Tony Danvers, July 2013.*



A photo of the single goods line that now runs from the main London line towards South Wigston Station. Note the differences in the track layout in this photo to those in the photo on page 68.

Photograph: Tony Danvers, November 2013.



The site of the Wigston Magna Station, compare this photo with the one on page 54. Construction work appears to be taking place on what was once the goods sidings behind the 'up' platform.

Photograph: Tony Danvers, November 2013.



In the distance is the huge yellow and white Cromwell Tools warehouse which now occupies the site where the Wigston Motive Power Depot and sidings used to be. Compare this photo to the one on page 68. *Photograph, Tony Danvers November 2013.*



The site of the old Wigston Magna Station entrances on the Blaby Road bridge. Indentations in the brickwork indicate where the entrances used to be. Compare this to the photo on page 53.

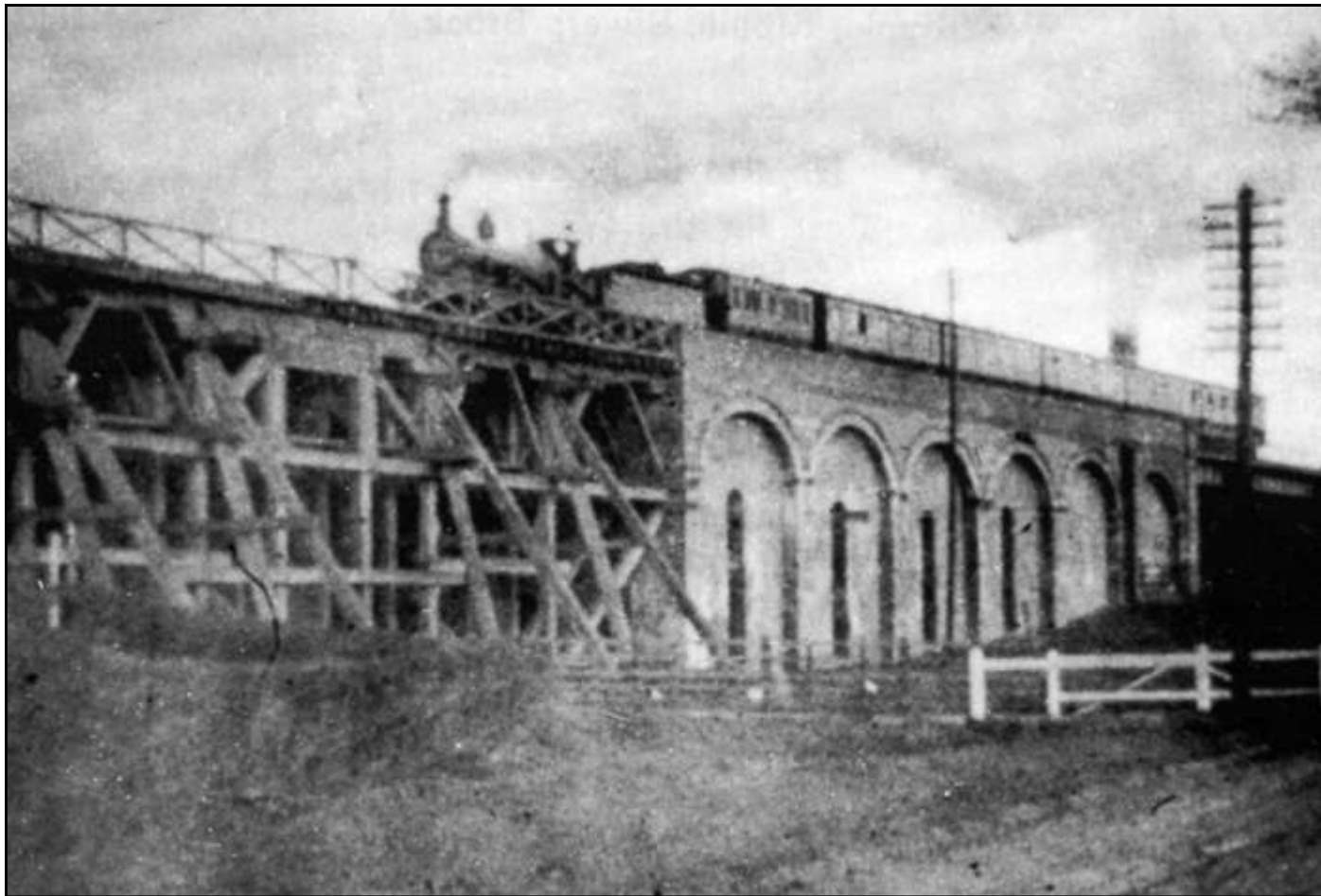
Photograph: Tony Danvers, November 2013.

Chapter Six - Crow Mill Viaduct.

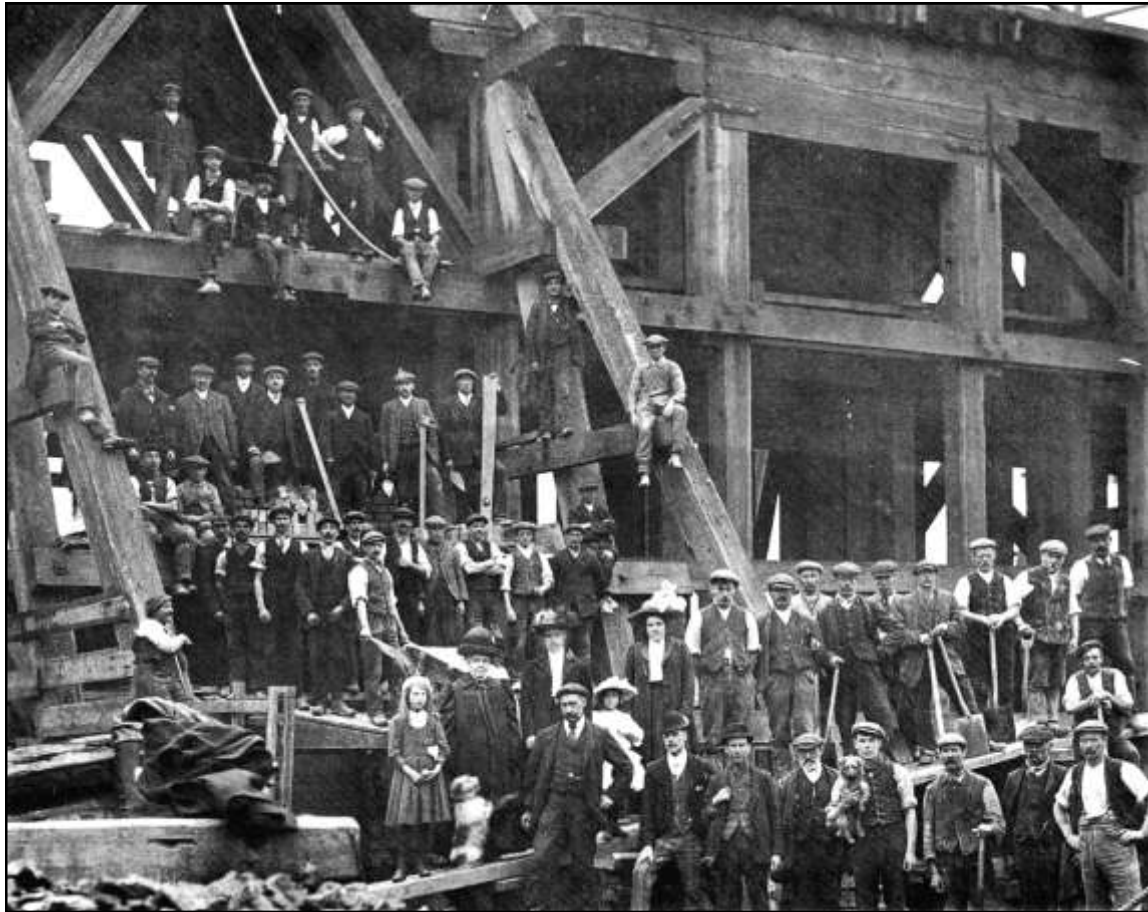
This chapter is devoted to those photographs that refer to the Crow Mill Viaduct which is where the Rugby line from Wigston South Station once crossed the canal and the river Sence. In 1852 due to severe flooding the piers of the original bridge were undermined and the bridge collapsed. It was the quick-witted thinking of the Miller who lived nearby who prevented a major disaster by stopping a train just in time. The bridge was initially rebuilt in timber but later completely rebuilt in brick and steel in 1912, see page 134.



The Crow Mill railway viaduct destroyed by flood water in 1852.



A poor quality but a unique early photo of a train crossing the rebuilt Crow Mill Viaduct around 1903.



A photograph taken on the 2nd of September 1912 of the men who would demolish the old wooden structure of the Crow Mill Viaduct and replace it with a brick and steel bridge.



The workmen examining the timbers of the Crow Mill Viaduct under very difficult circumstances.



The newly built bridge spanning the river Sence. All evidence of this bridge has now gone only the embankment remains to remind us where the railway line to and from Rugby once existed and it is now used as a public footpath.

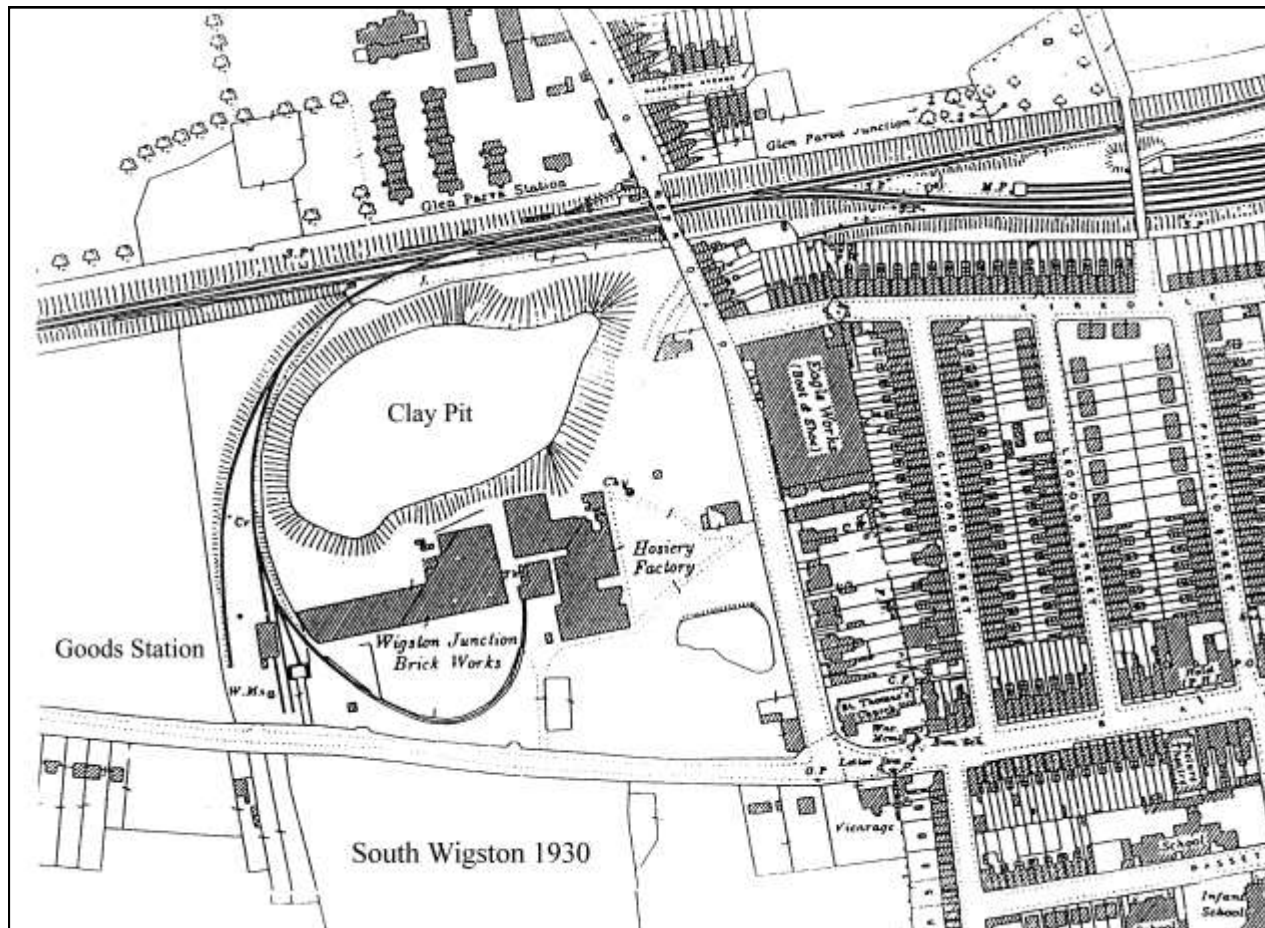
Postscript

Soon after I had finished putting this book together a friend told me of a fatal accident that had happened to his great, great, grandfather on the railway line close to Wigston Glen Parva Station which I thought was worth recording here as an interesting postscript to this book.

His great, great, grandfather James Marshall, was 69 years of age at the time and lived in a small cottage in Glen Parva. He was employed as a platelayer on the railway, when at midday on the 20th of May in 1886, having just left the gang with which he had been working, was walking between the lines close to Glen Parva Station, when a train going from Saltley to London, came towards him from behind. Under the impression that it was a London and North - Western train, James stepped onto the Midland line by mistake, and sadly he was knocked down and killed instantly.

The driver of the train, George Crabtree, said later, that he was nearing the Glen Parva Station when he saw James on the line and noticing the danger in which James was placed made every effort to warn him by sounding his whistle to attract his attention, but without any effect. The driver then attempted to pull up his train, but this could not be done in time, and James Marshall was knocked down and run over. The driver pulled up after the accident, and Reginald Greenhill, the guard, went to see if he could help James, who was lying between the rails, but he was already dead.

William Kind, a bricklayer of South Wigston, who was working on a building next to Glen Parva Station, heard an engine whistling, and on looking up saw the train coming to a standstill. He noticed James Marshall, whom he had just before seen walking up the line with some tools in his hands, lying on the railway lines. William found a door, and took it to where James body was lying. The body was placed on the door and carried to the Glen Parva Barracks, where Brigade Surgeon Low examined the body and found that the base of the skull had been fractured. He therefore recorded that death would have been almost instantaneous.



A 1930 map of the area near Glen Parva Station which shows where Wigston's 4th station was located at the end of the spur line near the clay pit, towards the middle left hand side of the picture.

Acknowledgements

My grateful thanks go to Barry Hilton for his patience and effort in going through this book and trying to identify the names of all the authors who produced the photographs. Also for his generosity in allowing me to use some of his own precious photographs.

I would also like to extend my thanks to John Stevenson for allowing me to use valuable information from his four fascinating websites, which appear under the broader heading of “Disused Stations”, to embellish the notes in this book.

I am also extremely grateful to Alan Kind for allowing me to have access to the late Peter Mastin’s fascinating collection of notes and photographs that Peter made of the three Wigston Railway lines. I would also like to thank my wife Carol for checking this book and correcting my many mistakes.

Finally many thanks must also go to Duncan Lucas for taking the time and trouble to write a foreword to this book and to give it his authoritative stamp of approval.

Whilst I have tried to obtain as many of the names as possible of the authors who have produced the photographs that I have used to illustrate this book there are still many more that are still unidentified. If I have unknowingly failed to acknowledge any authors’ work and they would like to contact me at the email address below and I will make sure that their names are mentioned in any future publication of this book.

I am also indebted to Michael Beattie for supplying me with additional information and another two photographs which have enhanced this the second edition of my book on the Wigston Railways.

Email address: tonydanvers@talktalk.net



The sources of reference that have been very useful in preparing this book.

Wigston Magna and South by Duncan Lucas, Tricia Berry and Peter Mastin.

The Last Days of Steam in Leicestershire & Rutland by John M.C. Healy.

Leicestershire Railway Memories by John Stretton

The Wigstons by Duncan Lucas and Tricia Berry.

Leicestershire's Stations by Andrew Moore.

Also

Mick Phipps Collection of Photographs.

The late Peter Mastin's photographic collection.

The following websites sourced by John Stevenson
which have also provided a wealth of background information.

http://www.disused-stations.org.uk/w/wigston_south/index.shtml

http://www.disused-stations.org.uk/w/wigston_magna/index.shtml

http://www.disused-stations.org.uk/w/wigston_glen_parva/index.shtml

http://www.disused-stations.org.uk/w/wigston_glen_parva/wigston_shed/index1.shtml

Rear Cover illustration:
The old Wigston (L&H) Station 1885 (see page 46).

PHOTOGRAPHIC MEMORIES

OF THE OLD WIGSTON STATIONS

