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## The Waterloo Story

*Waterloo station wasn't meant to become the grand railway terminus that we see today. Instead it was designed as a 'roadside' station much like Vauxhall station is today.*

*Before the opening of the first station on this site on Tuesday 11 July 1848, the London terminus of the then London & Southampton Railway had been at Nine Elms. It had opened to serve the first section of line from Woking Common station a decade earlier on 21 May 1838. However, it was inconveniently situated in marshlands close to Windmill Wharf where city bound passengers had to continue their journeys by river. The later renamed London & South Western Railway (LSWR) sought to secure a site for a new terminus that would be closer to the main bridges across the river, or better still, in the city of London itself.*



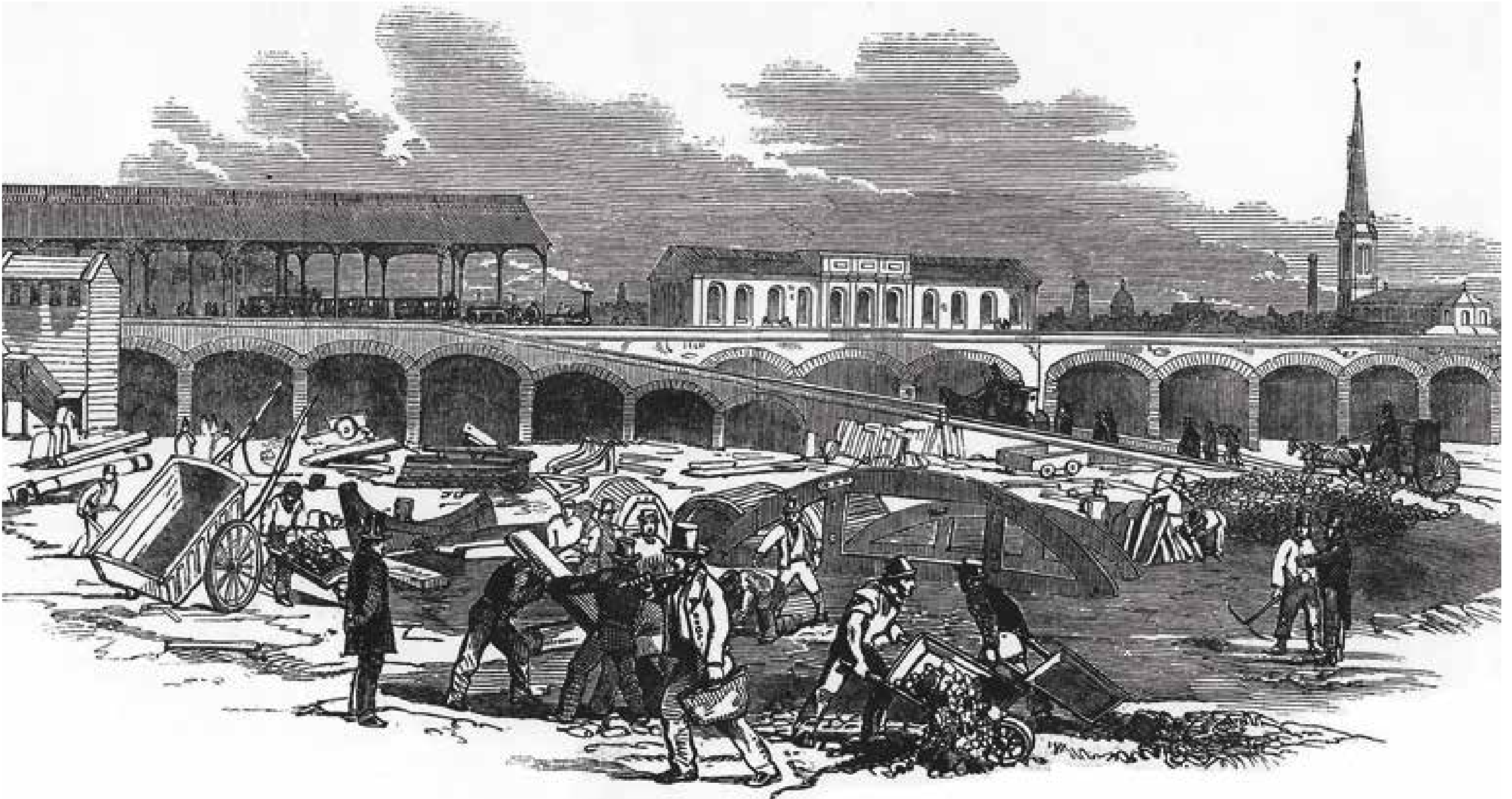
**At that time the LSWR had, like all of the main line railway companies, been forbidden by Parliament to build lines into or under a large portion of the city known as the London Quadrilateral, an area bounded by The Strand in the South, Euston Road in the North and City Road in the East, essentially the route of today's Circle Line.**

This caused the LSWR to build its one and three quarter mile 'Metropolitan Extension' from Queens Road Junction on a sinuous two mile route that avoided Lambeth Palace, Lambeth Gas Works and the hugely popular Vauxhall Pleasure Gardens which continued to flourish until 1859.

The new railway was carried 22 feet above the riverside marshland to an area formerly occupied by 'hay stalls, cow-yards, dung heaps and similar nuisances' where a station was built on the slight curvature that we can still see today, making it unlike all other contemporary railway termini in the Capital.

This curvature allowed for the line to be continued on to a hoped for new terminus next to London Bridge or perhaps even in the city itself via a new railway bridge that would have to be built to cross the river.





THE (PRESENT) WATERLOO STATION, YORK-ROAD.

## 1848 – Waterloo Bridge station opens

**The station was originally named Waterloo Bridge to emphasise its proximity to the bridge of the same name over the Thames which now enabled rail passengers easier access to the city either by horse drawn transport or on foot.**

The first train, the 1.15am mail train from Southampton carrying just 40 passengers in seven carriages hauled by a LSWR locomotive named Hornet arrived without ceremony at 4.30am.

Waterloo Bridge, or York Road station as it was sometimes known, had three platforms each just 300 feet long which were later doubled in length as trains became longer. When carriages needed to be exchanged between the four tracks they had to be manhandled using one of the more than twenty small turntables provided at intervals along the platform lines.

The building with the large windows and water tanks on the roof was the locomotive servicing depot which, unusually, would be subsumed within the later sprawling station for more than 60 years.

The restricted nature of the site coupled with the lack of space to service steam locomotives with coal and water ready to make their return journeys required an ingenious solution known as ‘roping’ or ‘tailing’ in.

This saw arriving trains first stopped at ticket platforms on the Westminster Bridge Road Bridge for tickets to be collected – a practice which enabled passengers to leave the train at Waterloo Bridge station without having to queue to pass through any form of ticket barrier.

Whilst the trains were halted a rope was attached to the carriages after which the locomotive would gently restart the train up to a speed of 10mph before quickly releasing the rope and heading to the locomotive servicing shed. The points in the track would be swiftly switched behind the locomotive so that the following carriages would be directed to the Arrival platform where they would be gently brought to a stop by the guard applying his brake. This practice was discontinued following an accident in October 1866 when an arriving passenger train collided with a stationary locomotive, although empty coaching stock trains from Clapham Junction sidings continued to arrive in this fashion until as late as 1895.

Around this time the Waterloo ticket platforms were removed from Westminster Bridge after which all incoming trains, including the fastest expresses, called at Vauxhall for two minutes to allow for tickets to be collected by a small army of ticket collectors who were known as ‘The Vauxhall Mob’. This practice, and calls by all trains at Vauxhall, ended around 1910 when sliding barrier gates were installed and tickets collected at Waterloo.





The first station had just three platforms. In this view we can see a Southampton train in the main departure platform while next to it is a train to Richmond. The stone built buildings on the departure side of the station dated from 1853 and had replaced the original temporary wooden buildings. This first station would be where the present day platforms 7 to 12 now are. In its first year seventeen trains a day departed, five to Hampton Court, four to Guildford and eight to Southampton.

The all stations slowest service to the latter called at Vauxhall, Clapham Common, Wimbledon, Malden, Kingston (later moved westwards and opened as Surbiton), Esher & Claremont (opened as Ditton Common), Walton & Hershaw, Weybridge, Woking, Farnborough, Fleetpond (later Fleet), Winchfield (opened as Shapley Heath), Basingstoke, Andover Road (later renamed Micheldever), Winchester and Bishopstoke (later renamed Eastleigh).

To ensure punctual departures a notice advised would be late comers that 'the doors of the station will be closed five minutes before departure to prevent an undue rush at the last moment'.



In the days before electricity train departures were signalled by the ringing of a platform bell, each platform bell having its own distinctive tone. On New Year's Eve it was customary for all the station's platform bells to be rung in unison to herald in the New Year.

175  
YEARS



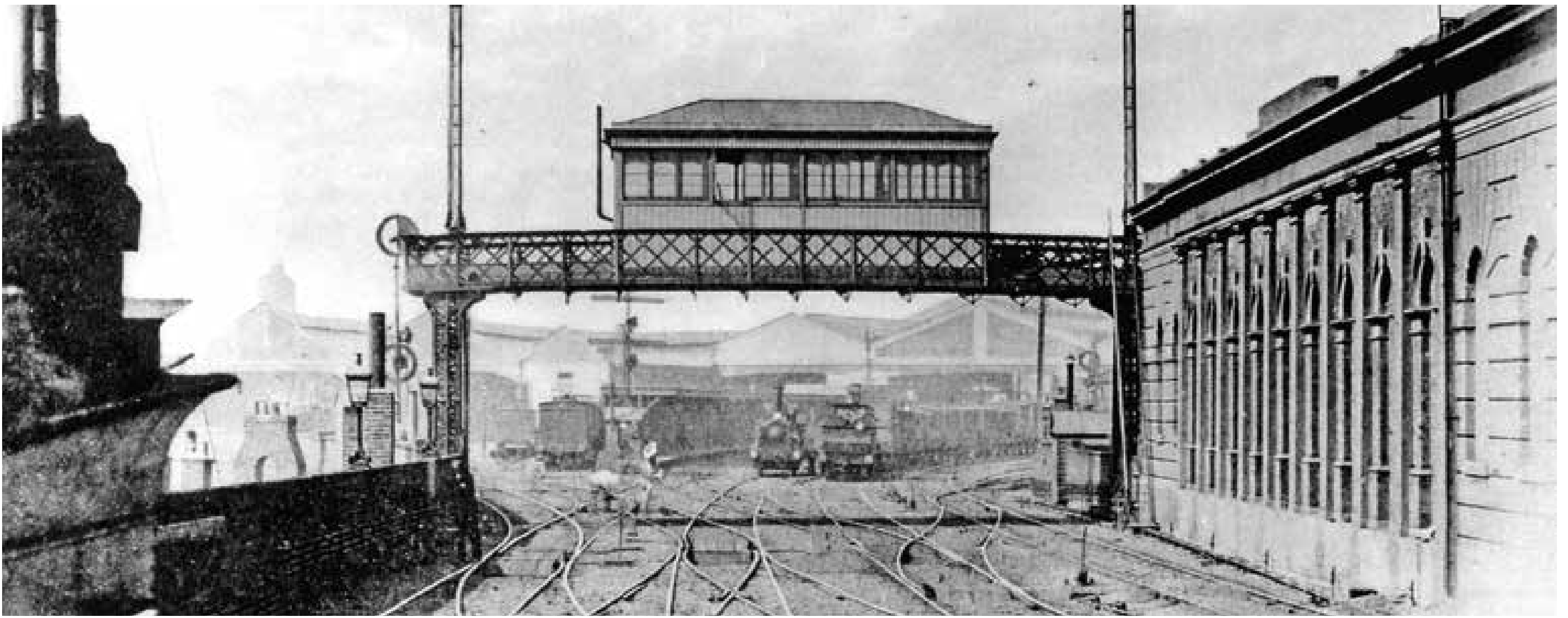


Image: Science Museum Group

**Above is the original four platform extension added to accommodate Richmond, Reading, and Windsor and Hounslow line trains which had opened on 3 October 1860. In this 1867 photograph there are just the original four tracks on the approach to the station. Straddling these tracks is the first Waterloo 'A' signal box which was commissioned later that year.**

When the station first opened it was controlled by one single signal. It was of the disc type mounted high up on a post so that it could be seen more readily by drivers and guards of both arriving and departing trains. This type of signal was then replaced by these then new semaphore signals controlled from a signal box and in 1936 by three, and four, aspect colour light signals.

### Necropolis station opens

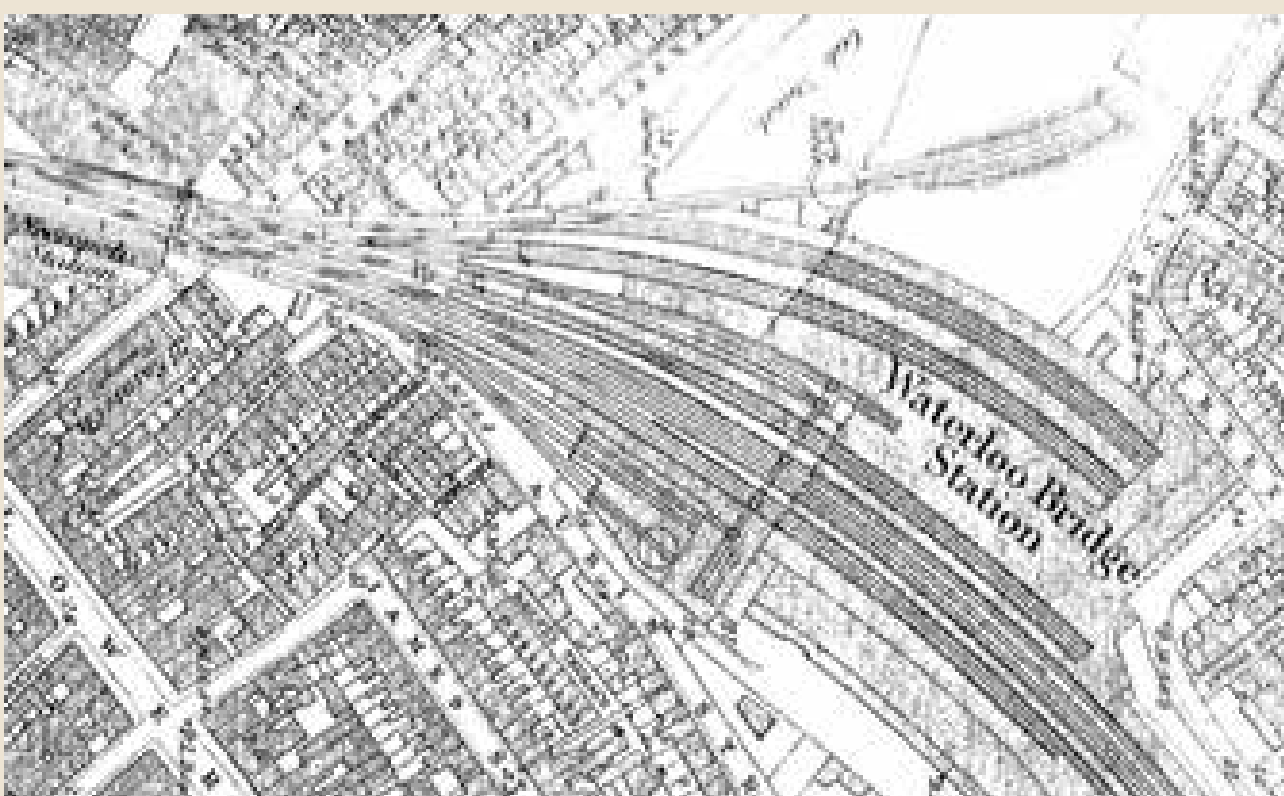
On the right is the first Necropolis station opened in 1854. In the year that Waterloo station opened cholera had killed more than 14,000 people in London alone. With population of the Capital more than doubling since the turn of the century the pressure on burial grounds meant that new sites were being sought outside of London. This saw the newly formed London Necropolis & National Mausoleum Company purchase large swathes of land to the west of Woking where it developed a rail served cemetery at Brookwood.

For ninety years a 'Necropolis Train' usually departed for Brookwood at around 11.30am conveying first, second and third class mourners along with their loved ones conveyed in especially designed coffin carrying carriages. On arrival at Brookwood the train would reverse into the cemetery siding before first calling at the cemetery's North station which was for Roman Catholics and other denominations. A little further on was the other station, the South, which was for the exclusive use of Anglicans.

Both boasted licensed refreshment rooms which may explain the note in the LSWR Working Timetable that requested a "prompt" departure at 2.15pm for the return train to Waterloo!

After first causing the Necropolis company to give up one of its platforms to allow the LSWR to expand the number of tracks into its Waterloo station, by the turn of the 20th century the further expansion of Waterloo as part of the Great Transformation required the acquisition of the whole of the site occupied by the Necropolis Railway's private station. This forced the LSWR to provide the Necropolis company with a replacement station next to its original site.

In later years the Necropolis train continued to run, but less frequently, as the rise in cremations meant less call for burials. The end of the Necropolis railway station came on the night of 16-17 April 1941 when it was destroyed by a landmine dropped from a German aircraft. Trains hired from the Southern Railway by the Necropolis company continued to run sporadically from the main station until the operation finally ceased on 11 May 1941.



### No laughing matter

By 1895 the Waterloo station complex had grown to encompass seven separate stations – Central (1848), the South (1878), the (1885) North or Windsor station – plus in the bottom right the single platform New Waterloo (1865), situated on the 'First Class Road', the link line to the South Eastern & Chatham Railway's Cannon Street station. In total there were 14 platforms handling more than 500 trains each day. All of this led to much confusion and ridicule, including this cartoon in Punch magazine.





Seeing this level of daily chaos and confusion it is perhaps no surprise that Queen Victoria spurned the overcrowded and confusing Waterloo station preferring instead to travel initially from the former Nine Elms station, even though by now it was merely a goods depot. Later her Royal Train departed from a specially built Royal Station on the opposite side of the Main Line, just off Wandsworth Road.

On one memorable early Royal journey by train things didn't go quite according to plan.

On Wednesday 23 April 1856 a number of special trains ran in conjunction with the Spithead Review of Britain's Baltic Fleet at anchor in the Solent celebrating the end of the Crimean War.

Alas, one of the early departures, a 26 carriage train conveying some 800 passengers, stopped for a considerable length of time, blocking the line near what is now Surbiton after the underpowered locomotive gave up the struggle to try to haul the monster train.

This in turn delayed the Royal Train conveying Queen Victoria and her guests which had started out from the Royal station at Vauxhall but which as a consequence arrived at Clarence Yard in Gosport some 45 minutes late.

It is therefore fair to assume that Her Majesty would famously not have been amused by this embarrassing delay to her Royal Train.



Image: Science Museum Group

## Cross River connection

**The LSWR's dream of one day reaching the City of London, led to the opening of the 'First Class Road', a short 100m direct link to the adjacent newly opened Charing Cross Railway at what is now Waterloo East station. This new, mainly peak hour service, had its own dedicated platform 'New Waterloo' situated on the bridge over Waterloo Road.**

Here the photographer is standing on the 'First Class Road' link line to the South Eastern Railway (SER) with North station on the left hand side of the divide. Trains began using the link line from Willesden Junction via Addison Road (later renamed Kensington Olympia) to Cannon Street, in July 1865 and later again from New Waterloo to Willesden Junction with the opening of the Charing Cross Railway's Waterloo Junction station in 1869.

**Before it finally closed in 1911 this link, which enabled her to pass through the station without stopping, was used by Queen Victoria to travel from Windsor on journeys to and from the Channel ports.**



After the track was removed a passenger walkway linking Waterloo and Waterloo Junction stations was laid along its route. This has since been replaced by a covered aerial walkway but the bridge itself still spans Waterloo Road. When the link line was closed the wooden Waterloo Junction signal box was taken down in 1926 and re-erected at Ryde St Johns Road station on the Isle of Wight where it remains in use today keeping watch over the passage of re-purposed former District Line Underground trains.

This short lived link even featured in H G Wells' 1898 classic War of the Worlds when the writer imagined that this railway route would be used to move troops and artillery from Woolwich to Woking in a doomed attempt to defeat the alien 'Fighting Machines'.





**This was the Central station with the covered footbridge lined with offices on the right. On the left is the canopy of the New Waterloo platform on the bridge carrying the link line to the Charing Cross Railway, the underside of which appears in the top left of this picture. There is resonance with today's operations with the words South Western Railway displayed on the station front.**

Today the same bridge still spans Waterloo Road and is used to store a very 21st century mode of commuter transport – electric cycles!







*Image: Science Museum Group*

## Off to War

**Soldiers say goodbye to their families before they join their train at Waterloo en route to South Africa to fight in the first Boer War. While the infantry left from Waterloo, the cavalry, and their horses, departed for their ships at Southampton from the old Nine Elms station.**

The carriages are in the LSWR's standard salmon pink and chocolate livery while the locomotive would also have been painted in a chocolate, later Indian Red livery. The guard wears the smart LSWR dark blue uniform with its bright vermillion tie which like an engine driver's red neckerchief could, in the event of an emergency, be removed and waved as a warning signal.

A contemporary writer described a similar scene at Waterloo after the Relief of Mafeking like this "Crowds of men, women and children thronged the terminus until midnight waving flags and streamers; there was vociferous cheering and patriotic songs were sung by hundreds of voices. When each train departed flags were waved from all the windows while the din increased by the explosion of numerous fog signals which had been laid on the track".

From the outset Waterloo station has been no stranger to the mass movement of passengers be they race goers or troops heading to war or for ceremonial duties. This was most recently and successfully executed when nine special trains brought over 4,000 service personnel into Waterloo to play their part in the events around the Coronation of King Charles III.





### Beyond Waterloo

The LSWR had purchased a strip of land for a line of route and suitable site for its new city terminus to the west of London Bridge. However, in the face of continuing financial difficulties following the fallout from the damaging Railway Mania of 1845, it was forced to abandon the scheme in 1849 declaring that Waterloo was to be its London terminus, although it wasn't until 1886 that it dropped the suffix 'Bridge'. The LSWR's proposed extension also provided for a branch across the river to The Strand but in the event this route was used instead by the Charing Cross Railway.



*Image: Andrew Lamport*

### Short Lived station

The former Charing Cross Railway station at Blackfriars closed on the opening of Waterloo Junction (now renamed Waterloo East) by the SER on 1 January 1869. In its short life it was served by 13 trains each way each weekday between Willesden Junction, New Waterloo and Cannon Street.



*Image: Andrew Lamport*





### Pelham Street – the station that never was

In 1882 the LSWR made one last attempt at providing a second London terminus with a proposal to construct the London & Kingston Railway. This was to have been a joint venture with the District Railway which would have seen a completely new LSWR line leaving the main line at Surbiton for a new terminal station at Pelham Street in South Kensington adjacent to the District Railway's own station via a new District Railway route through Roehampton and Putney. In the event the scheme failed through the latter's inability to provide sufficient capital for the project. This picture shows part of a model of a major London terminal that wasn't to be, imagined by South Western Circle member Ian Hopkins.

### A City link at last

The independent Waterloo & City Electric Railway opened on 8 August 1898, with wooden American built cars supplied by Jackson & Sharpe, later American Car & Foundry, of Rochester NY, running from its own platforms forty feet underneath the main line station to Mansion House station which was later renamed Bank. To save the cost of paying for wayleaves to pass under privately owned property, after tunnelling under the river the builders of the line studiously followed the street layout to reach its City terminus.



*Image: Science Museum Group*



*Image: Science Museum Group*

Its opening meant that city commuters were no longer at the mercy of horse drawn cab drivers and delays to cross river transit while bridge tolls were collected. It had been ceremonially opened by the Duke of Cambridge on 11 July 1898 to coincide with the 50th anniversary of Waterloo station.

As can be seen from this picture the cars were elevated over the traction motor bogies at each end leading to a them and us upstairs /downstairs unofficial segregation even though both sections were fitted out with the same hard unforgiving wooden seating! It soon became known as 'The Drain'.



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Image: Science Museum Group

## A mighty maze

**“A mighty maze without a plan”** was how a contemporary observer described Waterloo as by 1897 the station had grown to sixteen platforms.

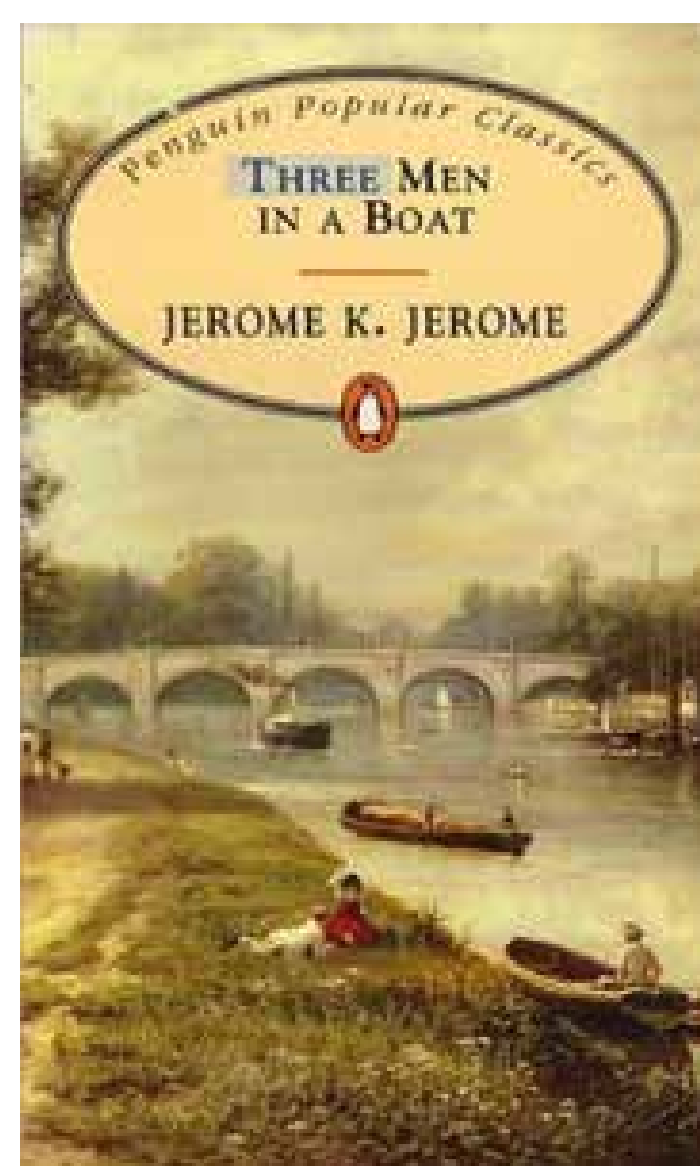
However these were only known by ten numbers with some numbers duplicated including platform 7 at which you could board trains from either the 1860, or the 1885 station! This led the LSWR to embark on the ‘Great Transformation’ which was to take 13 years to complete!

## Three Men in a Boat

The ‘Great Transformation’ couldn’t begin soon enough for Waterloo’s hapless travellers, a state of affairs that was most famously, and accurately, parodied in Jerome K Jerome’s comedic *Three Men in a Boat* of 1889.

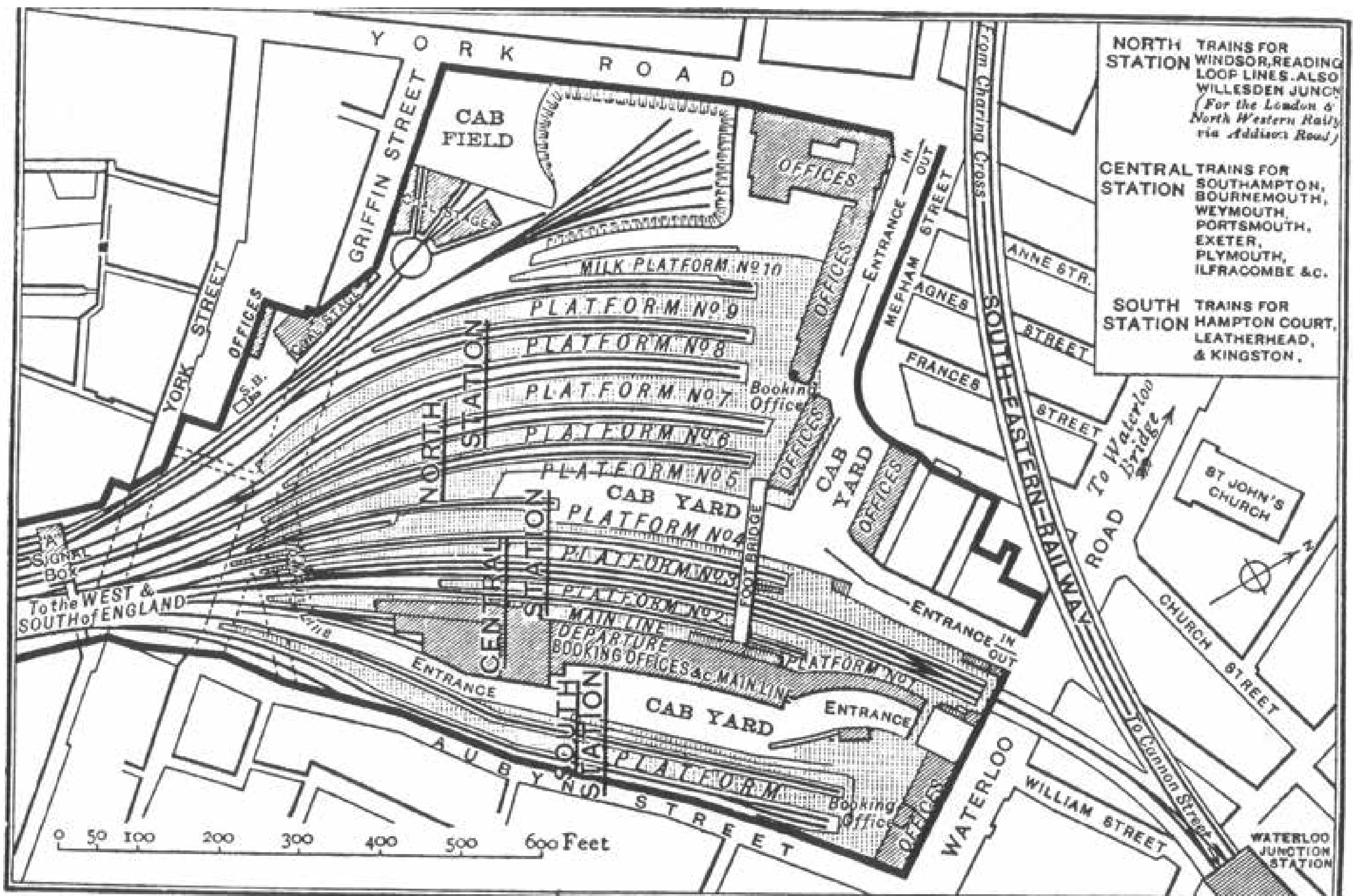
In one classic sequence that neatly satirised the confusing layout of the station, “J” enquires “which platform for the 11.05 to Kingston?” Two porters, and then an inspector, all give him conflicting information after which he pays a bribe to the driver to take them to Kingston!

By 1891 the number of approach tracks had grown to six, by 1905 to seven, and to eight by the time of the opening of the whole new expanded complex in 1922.



175  
YEARS

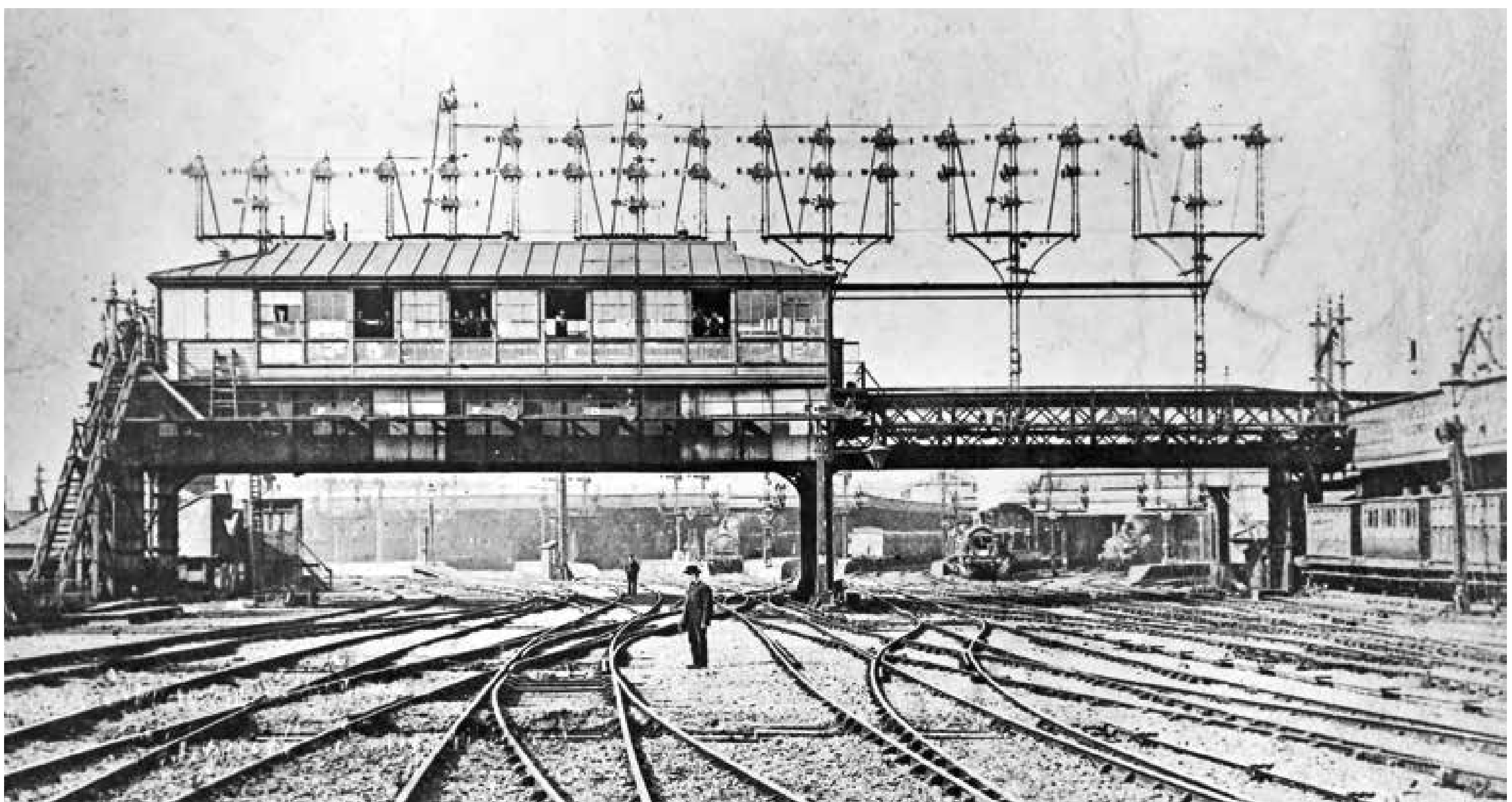




PLAN OF WATERLOO STATION, LONDON.

## Into a new Century

By 1895 the Waterloo station complex had grown further and now encompassed the Central station (the original Waterloo Bridge of 1848), the first Windsor station of 1860, the South or Cyprus station after the island was leased to Britain in that year of 1878, the North and second Windsor or Khartoum station of 1885 after the treaty that had been signed with King John of Abyssinia in the previous year – plus in the bottom right the single platform New Waterloo of 1865, situated on the link line to Cannon Street.



This expansion of the LSWR's station area required the acquisition of the site occupied by the Necropolis Railway's private station and the provision by a replacement station in 1902. The remaining single platform of the old station along with a funeral train can be seen on the extreme right of the picture.





### To the Races!

**Racegoers have always been big business at Waterloo. Here they crowd the North station's concourse eager to board trains to Ascot Races in about 1900. A temporary ticket booth stands underneath the clock. These booths multiplied in number over the years with almost 20 being required during Ascot race meetings in the early 1960s!**

Next to the Grill Room on the right was the Barmaid's Room public bar. Both were popular haunts for Edwardian race goers not only to Ascot but also to the courses at Epsom, Sandown Park, Kempton Park, Hurst Park and Salisbury.

In the evenings, these rooms, and the other catering establishments on the station, were also popular with the thousands attracted nightly to the many music halls and other entertainment venues in the district.

These included Astley's Amphitheatre, where in its circus ring one could watch spectacular performances featuring dancing horses and sometimes elephants, or the Royal Victoria Theatre, now the 'Old Vic', and the Canterbury Theatre of Varieties where they would be entertained by music hall performers beneath the approach tracks to the station.

175  
YEARS





### Boat train battle for business

**American Eagle boat trains ran to Devonport from 1907 where the passengers and their baggage transferred to the tender Victoria to be taken out to their American Lines ship anchored in Plymouth Sound.**

Before the LSWR developed Southampton to become Britain's premier trans-Atlantic port, Liverpool and Plymouth had held that accolade, and from 1904 until 1910 the LSWR and Great Western Railway were rivals in this lucrative trans-Atlantic liner trade. This wasteful competition ended when the two companies signed an accord with the Great Western route to Paddington retaining the business and the LSWR selling its specialised rolling stock, including sleeping cars equipped with double beds, to the GWR.



*Photo: Science Museum Group*

175  
YEARS





### The 'Tube' reaches Waterloo

**10 March 1906 and the Underground arrives with the opening of the Baker Street & Waterloo Railway, later renamed the Bakerloo Line.**

This was one of the three then new Tube lines formed by the London Electric Railway Company. They, the Charing Cross, Euston & Hampstead, the Great Northern, Piccadilly & Brompton were known as 'Yerkes Tubes' after their Philadelphia born financier and creator, Charles Tyson Yerkes.



### Morning arrivals

**First, second and third class commuters from the Windsor line mingle as they file through the ticket barrier. Milk churns stand on the adjacent Milk Dock yet to be converted to platform 10 after which these vital milk supplies for the South West London area would be unloaded from milk tanker trains from the West Country at Vauxhall station.**





## The 'Great Transformation' begins

The Great Transformation gets underway. The first new section of the new Waterloo – the suburban side – platforms 1 and 2 opened on 24 January 1909. The new platforms 4 and 5 opened under the new roof in the following March with platforms 6 to 10 opening by December 1913.



*Image: Science Museum Group*



## War comes to Waterloo

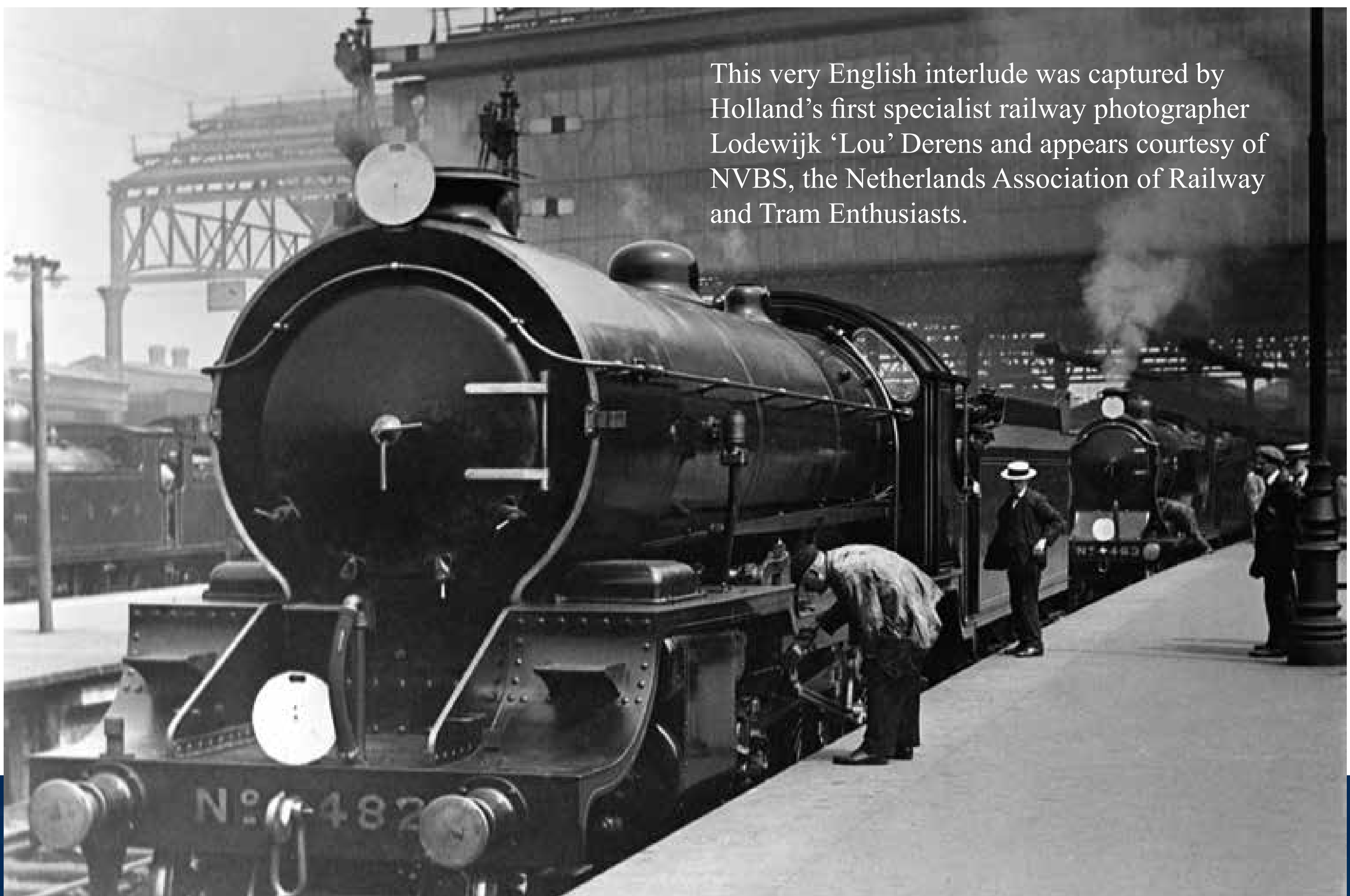
**It's Saturday 11 July 1914 and it's the stations 66th anniversary but this, and the following four years are going to be like no other. Three weeks later World War One will break out and Waterloo station will, for the next four years, witness the departure of thousands of troops heading to the bloody battlefields of Europe.**

In this gentle pre-war study it looks like the LSWR are taking the opportunity to try out this pioneer locomotive No. 482 entrusting it to pilot the regular train engine, No. 463, probably as far as Salisbury. We can see that their drivers are making last minute checks to ensure that their respective steeds are in tip top condition before this trip for this virtually new

locomotive. Its sparkling clean olive green livery reflects the July sunshine thanks to the LSW's engine cleaners application of a customary thin film of grease.

By this time new platforms 1 to 11 had opened along with the new central cab road up from Westminster Bridge Road.

Electric lighting has been installed on the new platforms but those semaphore signals wouldn't be replaced until 1936. Daylight can still be seen at the back of the new station roof as the present day offices had yet to be built along with the new roof over platforms 12 to 16.



This very English interlude was captured by Holland's first specialist railway photographer Lodewijk 'Lou' Derens and appears courtesy of NVBS, the Netherlands Association of Railway and Tram Enthusiasts.





### First look at the new look Waterloo

Commuters of all three classes – first, second and third – file through the newly installed sliding Bostwick Gates. These gates had closed off the platform exits for the first time, enabling ticket checking and collection to take place at Waterloo, ending the practice of all trains having to call at Vauxhall for this purpose.

The jumble of offices, including those housing the parcels, and lost property offices known to staff as ‘The Village,’ were later removed from platform 5 on the right to make way for new platforms to be built.



*Image: Science Museum Group*

It's now 1915 with the 1885 Windsor station housing platforms 17 to 21 on the left retained, the construction of the new station has reached the original platform 1 of the old station. By the end of the following year only the last two platforms – Nos 4 and 6 – would remain to complete the transformed station.





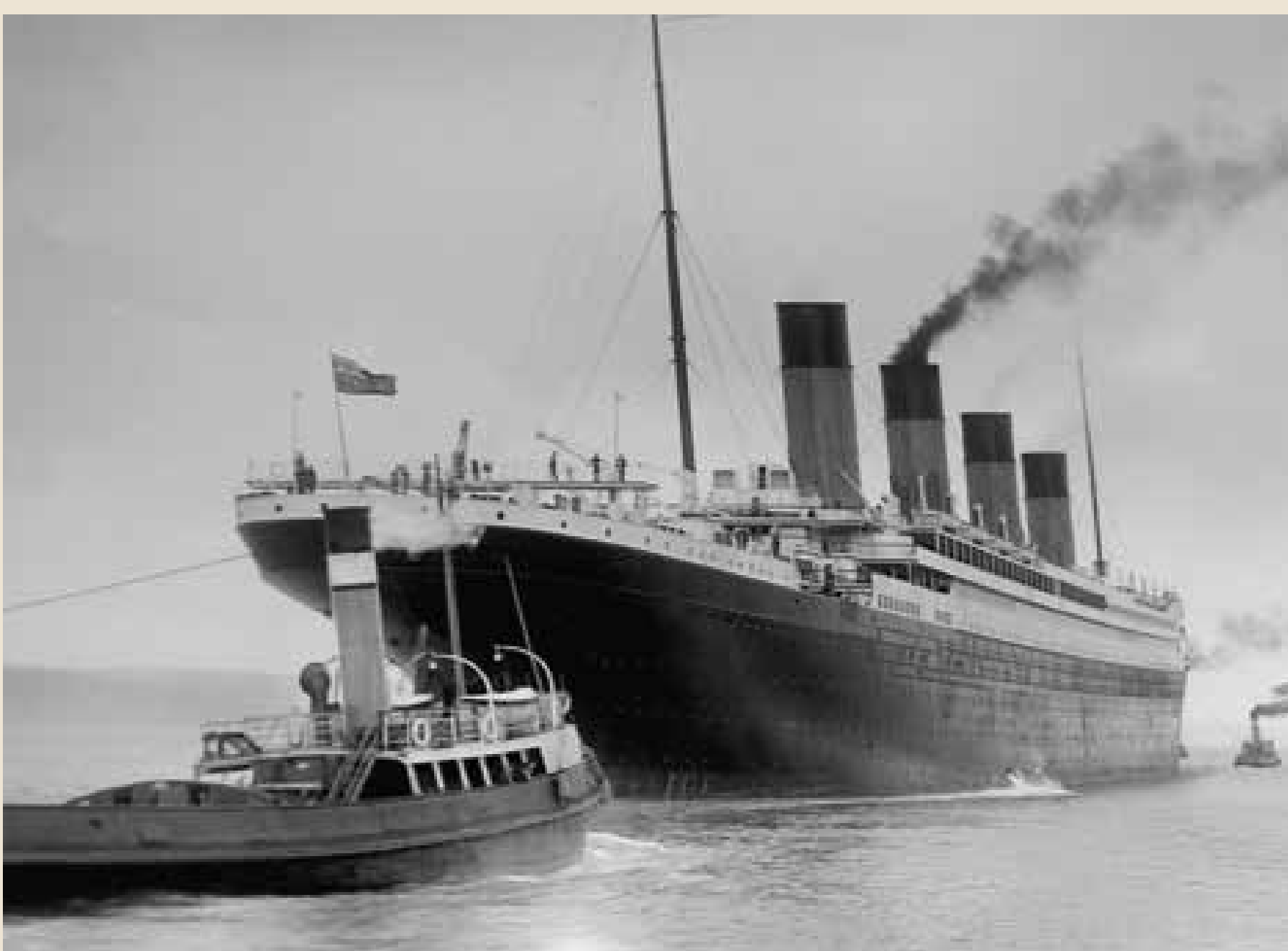
Image: Science Museum Group



### New Main Line Ticket Hall opened

The Main Line Booking Hall opened in June 1911 but its architectural glories are currently hidden behind the walls of today's M&S store as this sign reminds us.

The former Surrey dining room and cocktail bar is now the home of Foyles bookshop and where the one-time pay booths can still be found. It, and the Windsor and Long bars, were regular haunts of both travellers and those seeking pre-music hall and theatre refreshment.



### Titanic departures

On 10 April 1912 two special boat trains left Waterloo for Southampton Docks conveying passengers to sail on the ill-fated maiden voyage of the Titanic.





## French Connections

Victoria station might have been the departure point for the ‘Grand Tour’, but from the outset Waterloo had been the starting point for the overnight ship crossings from Southampton to Le Havre and St Malo.

So confident was the LSWR of the service, and so familiar with it were the regular clientele that the company attached simple ‘St Malo’ destination labels to the Southampton bound carriages making it seem almost as normal as taking a train to Staines or Shepperton.

None of those involved at the time could have known that sixty years later, with the opening of the Channel Tunnel rail link, it would indeed become possible to board a train at Waterloo without leaving your seat and find yourself borne directly to a destination in France.

Up until the 1950s the Normandy Coast Express departed three nights a week from Waterloo at 9.00pm carrying eager travellers to the beaches, bars and casinos of Normandy and Brittany.

After the closure of the Southampton to Le Havre route Anglo French connections were maintained from Victoria, and for a time also from Charing Cross station linking to BR’s Cross Channel hovercraft operation. This was until 1994 when Waterloo regained the crown with the commencement of Eurostar direct rail services to Paris and Brussels. This was to be a short lived revival of Waterloo’s connection to the Continent as all Eurostar services moved to St Pancras International with the opening of the HS1 rail link in 2007.

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	Every Week Night.	Saturday only.		Every Week Night.	Saturday only.		
LONDON (Waterloo)	9.00 PM	11.00 AM	11.00 AM	11.00 AM	11.00 AM	11.00 AM	
SOUTHAMPTON	10.00 PM	12.00 PM	12.00 PM	12.00 PM	12.00 PM	12.00 PM	
HAVRE (Steamer)	11.00 PM	1.00 PM	1.00 PM	1.00 PM	1.00 PM	1.00 PM	
ST. MALO (Steamer)	12.00 AM	2.00 PM	2.00 PM	2.00 PM	2.00 PM	2.00 PM	
PARIS (St. Lazare)	1.00 AM	3.00 PM	3.00 PM	3.00 PM	3.00 PM	3.00 PM	

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**PICTURESQUE NORMANDY.**

For fares and general information see pages 14, 15 & 16.



Image: Science Museum Group

We don't know if this Edwardian family had just returned from France, but by the look of those parasols rolled up in what looks like a windbreak, it's more likely that they would have holidayed in somewhere like Swanage or Sidmouth, or perhaps Padstow.

In this charming study, a wash drawing from 1906 entitled 'The End of Holidays', they find themselves caught up in the usual holiday season chaos of the old Waterloo station as an LSWR porter tries to hail them a cab.





### A breather before battle

**World War I and infantrymen rest as they wait for their troop special to arrive. Waterloo was the main departure point for British Expeditionary Forces in both 1914 and 1915. A Free Buffet was set up in the station subway for the tens of thousands of troops that would pass through the station.**

Its success was such that it received visits from King George V and Queen Mary who chatted with the troops before they joined their trains taking them to war.



*Image: Getty Images*

### Women take on new roles

**With so many men away at war (including the LSWR's own in-house photographer, meaning that this picture was taken by an agency photographer) women began to take on more and more uniformed roles, including this of a ticket collector at Waterloo. She is at the entrance to one of the newly rebuilt platforms served by the new electric trains first introduced in 1915.**

Despite the privations of war, work continued on the station leading to the completion of the final stages and the opening of platforms 11 to 21 by the end of 1919. Escalators had also been installed linking the concourse with the subway level along, of course, with the iconic four faced station clock and the coining of the phrase "meet me under the clock?" for meeters and greeters up to this day.

On 23 December 1921 the Marble Hall Buffet, containing what was then claimed to be London's longest bar, and equipped with a 'modern coffee machine', opened.



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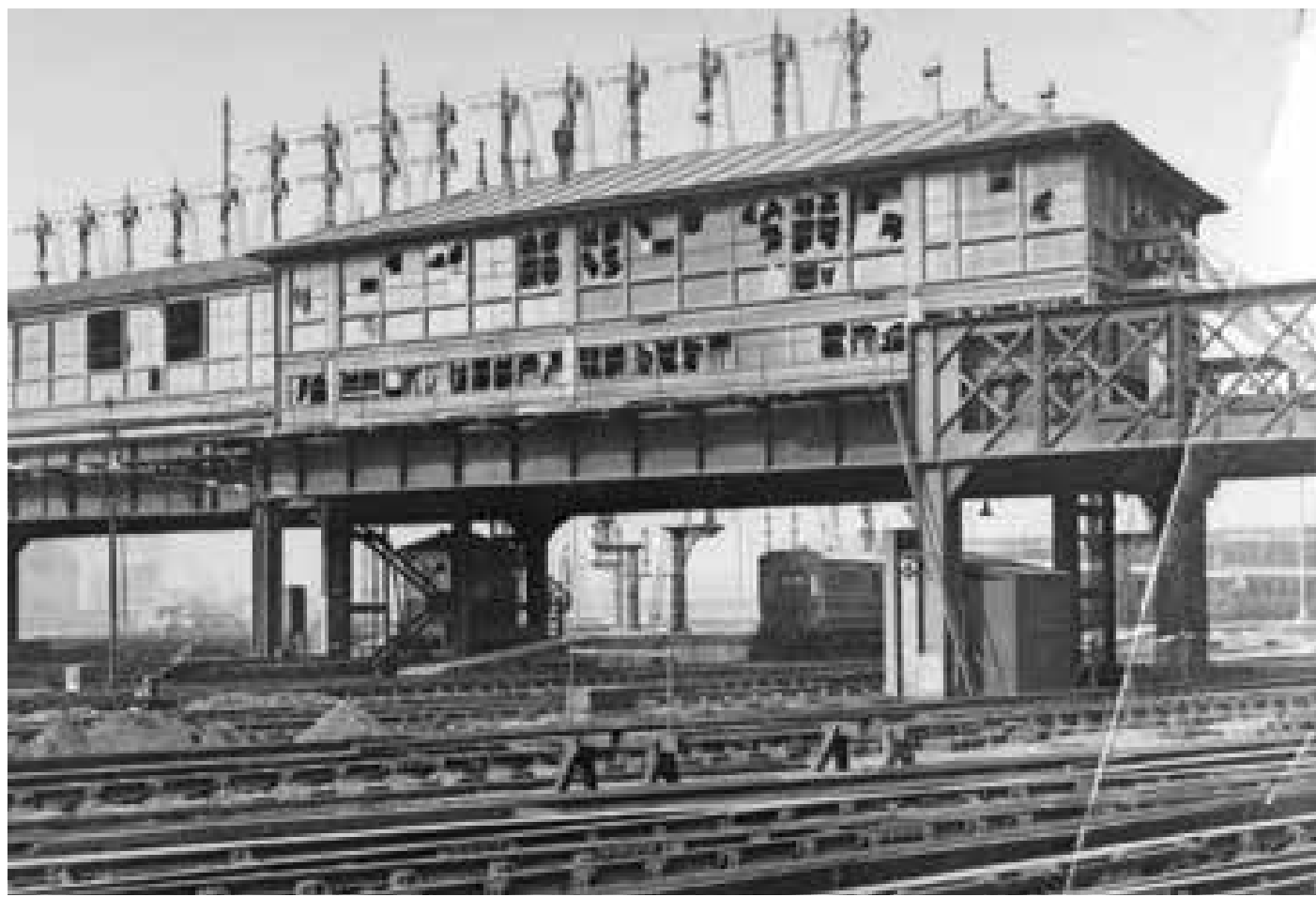


## Electric trains introduced

**Despite war raging in Europe the LSWR continued to innovate and expand and on 25 October 1915, in the face of increasing competition from the expanding urban tram network, the first 600vDC third rail collection electric trains began running from Waterloo to Wimbledon via East Putney.**

The following year electric train services replaced steam trains on the Kingston via Malden and Richmond, Hounslow loop, Shepperton and Hampton Court branches. Their introduction brought about the reduction from three to two classes of travel as none of the new electric trains offered second class accommodation although this remained on offer to passengers on other LSWR services.

The new electric trains were an immediate success, and a 1913 low of 23 million passengers per annum increased to 40 million by 1918 and to 50 million by the following year.



## Bombs damage signal box

Waterloo station sustained damage from bomb damage from enemy action in World War One. This was the station's fourth signal box, dating from 1892, after bombs were dropped on to the approach tracks in September 1917 damaging an empty passenger train as well glazing in the new station roof.

## Concourse complete

**The transformation of the station and its rebuilding in the 'Grand Manner' style of the early Edwardian period had been completed under the guidance of the LSWR's Assistant Architect James Robb Scott.**

He went on to become the Southern Railway's Architect leaving a legacy of Art Deco stations including those on the Chessington branch line and at Wimbledon, Richmond and Surbiton. Robb initially worked on the project under the guidance of the LSWR's Chief Engineer J.W Jacomb-Hood who had earlier sailed to New York to study contemporary US major railroad station design in particular at New York City's principal stations of Grand Central which opened in 1910 and Pennsylvania station which was completed in 1913. Sadly, Jacomb-Hood didn't live to see his dream of a similarly styled station at Waterloo come to pass as he died whilst out riding in 1914.

The new station, which was operationally complete by 1917, comprised 21 platforms rather than the planned 23 as the introduction of electric trains lessened the need for long layovers in platforms that their steam predecessors required.

The Windsor station of 1885 was also reprieved and was instead incorporated, along with its lower level roof line, into the new station by the simple extension of the new main concourse. In stark contrast to the previously confusing array of platform lengths and numbers, platforms 1 to 11 terminated in a continuous

line of ticket barriers leading on to an uncluttered concourse covering some two acres. All of these platforms were equipped with hydraulic buffer stops capable of withstanding the impact of a 400 ton train travelling at 10mph.

At the end of the cab road between platforms 11 and 12 and beyond the cab road tunnel opening from street level were two short double facing bay platforms for non-passenger traffic such as parcels, cars, horses and even coffins. There was also a similar unnumbered bay platform on the side of platform 21 making 26 platform faces in total.

Separating the entirely new station from the reprieved Windsor station was the range of offices known to staff as 'The Village'. It, and the Windsor station, were swept away and replaced by the new Waterloo International station in readiness for the commencement of Eurostar services direct to Paris and Brussels in 1994.







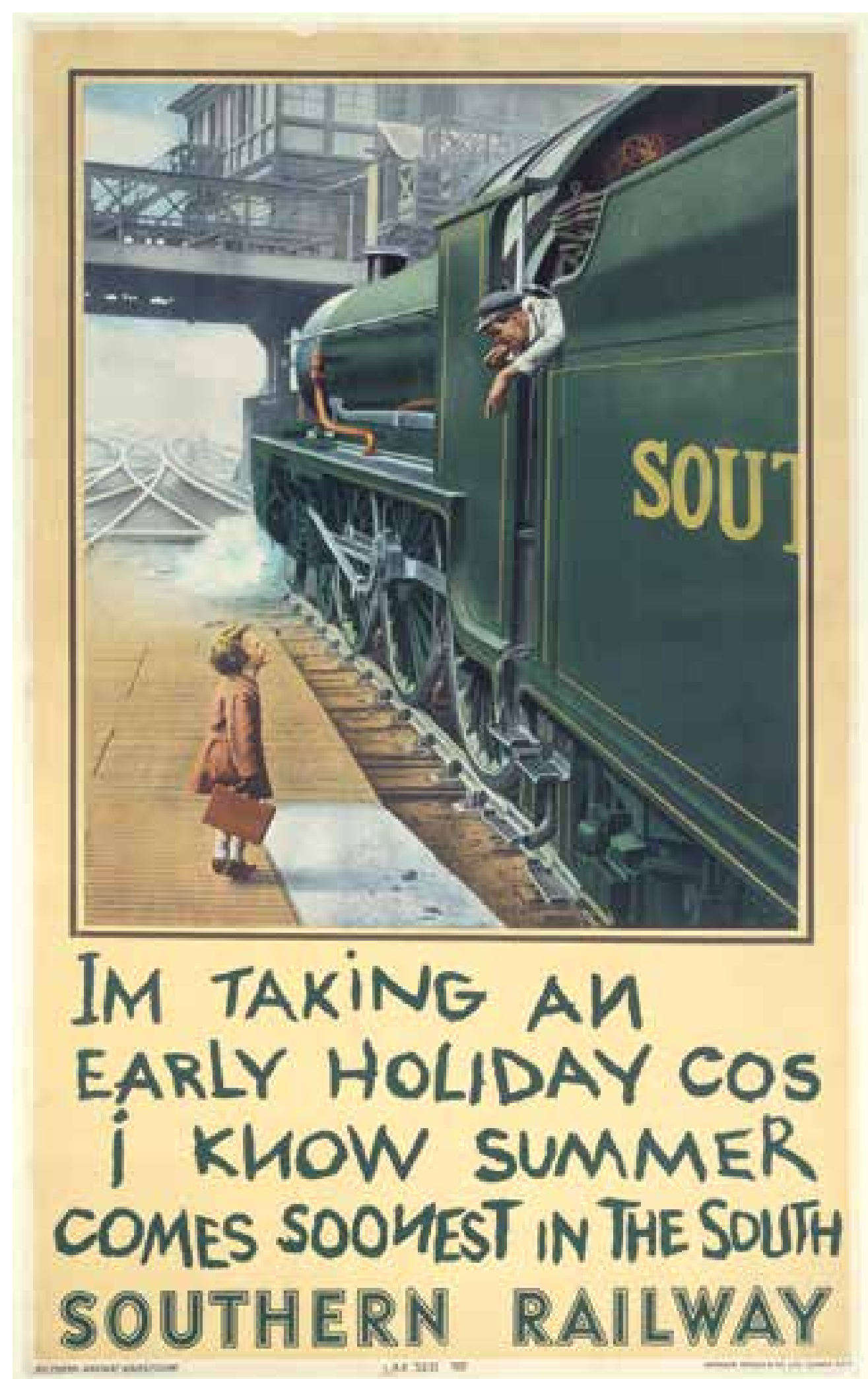
## Royal approval

On a cold and snowy 21 March 1922, the £2.27m 'Great Transformation' of the 24 acre site was declared complete when Queen Mary, deputising for an unwell King George V, broke a blue silk ribbon across the new station entrance.

Clearly impressed with the station's transformation, she recorded the event in her diary as follows 'In the afternoon I opened for George the new Waterloo station buildings and Memorial Arch, a very fine building...'



Image: Getty Images



## Southern (Railway) style

The Grouping of Britain's railways in 1923 saw the LSWR become part of the new Southern Railway (SR). It was the SR who produced this classic railway poster featuring an express train of the period about to depart from platform 10 and out under the Waterloo 'A' signal box.

The original black & white photograph was taken by commercial photographer Charles E Brown in 1924 and features locomotive fireman W. Woof talking to young Ronald Witt, the son of Wilfred Witt, a railwayman who worked in the Southern Railway's electrical engineering department.

The poster was an instant success and the Southern Railway, who had not been involved in the taking of the original picture, tried to trace the boy leading to several hopeful parents producing pictures of their offspring claiming to be the boy. However, these efforts were to no avail as the boy and his family had already emigrated to California.

The locomotive in the picture, N15 Class No. 750, became Morgan le Fay of the King Arthur class. This was another SR marketing success making as it did a link between the railway and the romanticism of the Arthurian legends in the area of North Cornwall served by the Southern Railway.



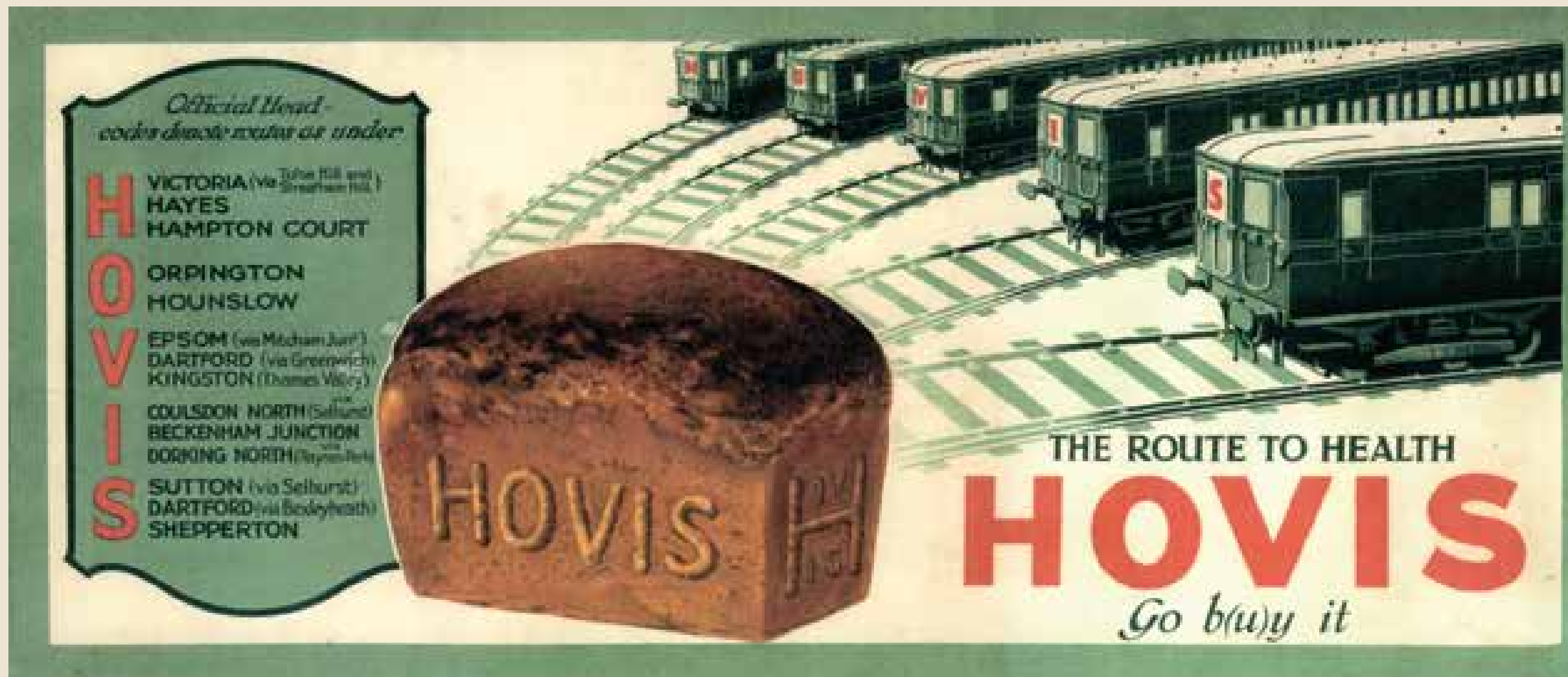


Image: Science Museum Group

**Waterloo commuters of the 1920s and early 1930s would have also been familiar with another piece of genius SR marketing, this time in the promotion of its expanding network of electric services.**

Playing on the fact that each train carried single letter headcodes to aid both passengers and staff to readily identify the routes that they served, these were famously portrayed in an advertisement for a loaf of bread featuring H (for Hampton Court) O (for Hounslow) V (for the Kingston Loop) I (for Dorking, electrified in 1925) and S (for Shepperton).

From the outset in LSWR days these electric trains were painted in a dark green livery. This became the standard colour for all Southern Railway, and later British Railways Southern Region passenger rolling stock, until it too was replaced by the all over blue and blue and grey British Rail liveries. These in turn gave way to the brighter red white and blue colours of Network SouthEast in 1986.

1932 and loudspeakers are trialled on the station to help English and Scots rugby fans travelling to and from Twickenham on 19 March for the final Home Nations match. England won, but Ireland were the overall winners of the 1932 tournament.

## News Theatre opens

**Art Deco styling is well in evidence in the News Reel Theatre that opened on 27 August in 1934. In that pre-television age, it provided entertainment for waiting passengers showing news reels, short films and cartoons. Built for and operated by Capitol and Provincial News Theatres (later to become the Classic Cinemas chain). In 1934 it was open daily from 9am until 11pm.**

Located at the end of the main concourse of Waterloo Railway Station beside the entrance to Platform 1, the facade was a striking example of Art Moderne style with sweeping curves and stylised 1930s Deco signage.

The pay booth was at concourse level and patrons walked up an open staircase to access the auditorium. Unusually, the cinema had no toilet facilities and patrons had to ask permission for a pass-out to go to the public toilets on the station concourse.

In the late 1950s, the News Theatre went over to screening one hour long continuous programmes of cartoons, but later in the 1960s went over to screening double bills of old Hollywood 'classics', and it was re-named Classic Cinema Waterloo. It closed on 14 March 1970 screening a double bill programme of Hitchcock's "Torn Curtain" and "An Inspector Calls" and was demolished in 1988.

The site of the News Theatre became one of the most lucrative outdoor advertising sites in any UK railway station. In the 1990s it saw the first installation of British Transport Advertising's Ultravision automatic vertical flap advertising displays famously providing a hiding place for an actor in a sequence for the 2007 film *The Bourne Ultimatum*.

1936. In the year that the BBC began its pioneering television service a television set is installed in the waiting room by platform 16.



Image: Science Museum Group





Image: The late Geoff Marsh

## New Signalling

**In October 1936 the new, and thanks to technological advances in signalling, the last signal box at Waterloo was opened. It controlled the electrically operated signals that had replaced the semaphore signalling between Waterloo and Nine Elms until it was closed in 1983.**

In 1937 'muzak' was introduced and played at peak times for the next three decades to 'manage' the passage of commuters through the station.

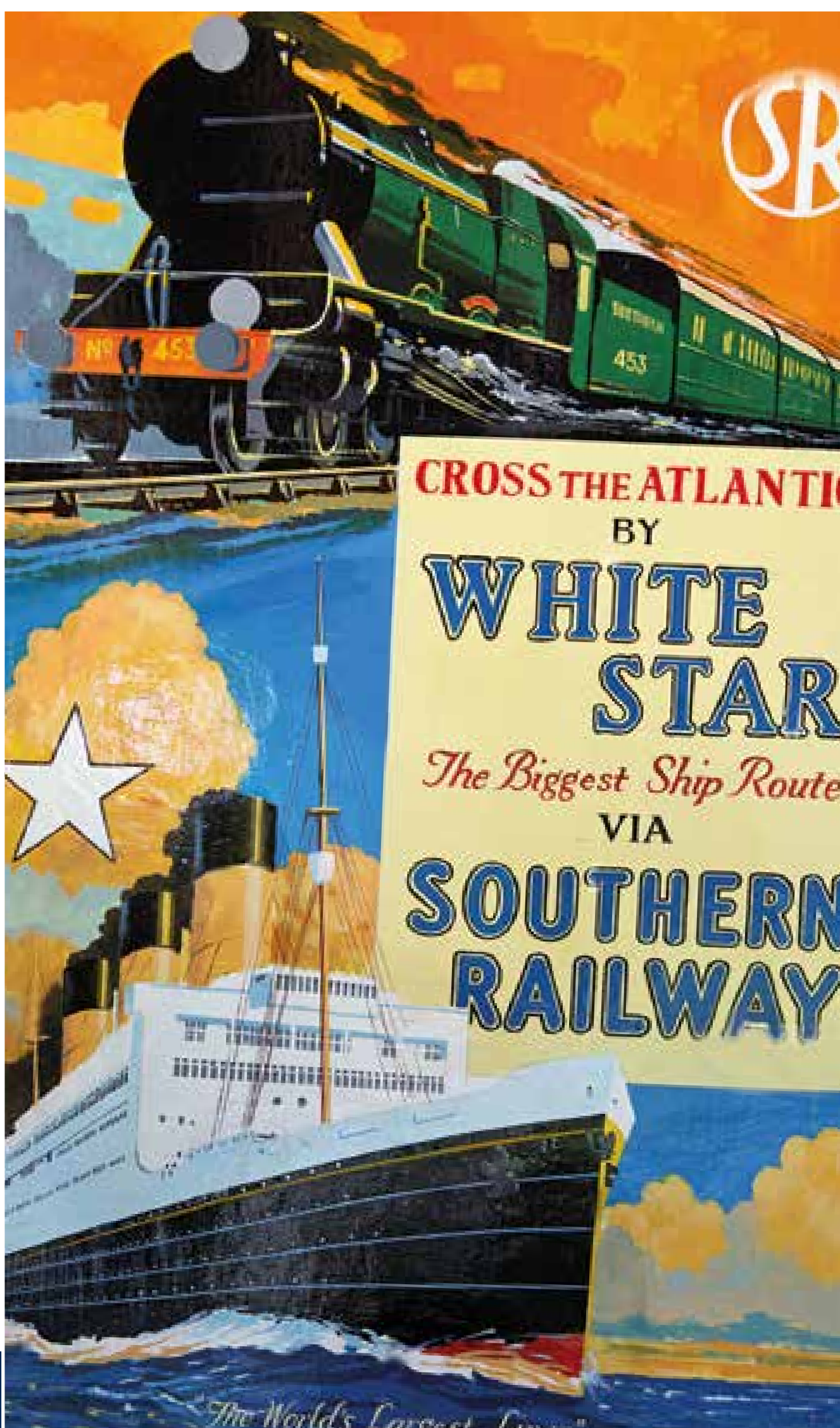


Image: George Reeve Collection

## Trans-Atlantic boom times

**The White Star line transferred its New York express operation from Liverpool to Southampton in June 1907 initially with the 25,000 ton Adriatic and later with the 46,000 ton Olympic.**

She shared the twice weekly trans-Atlantic service with ships of the American Line while Cunard sailed weekly to Canada, Union Castle Line weekly to Africa and the Royal Mail Steam Packet to Brazil and Argentina. Waterloo became synonymous with international travel and the boat trains which began those journeys.





*Image: HES Collections*

### Southampton supreme

**Southampton Docks had been developed by the LSWR and was its jewel in the crown both in terms of freight and passenger traffic. From the outset boat trains had connected ocean liners from around the world but especially on trans-Atlantic routes with London. Here RMS Queen Elizabeth is berthed and no doubt awaiting the next several train loads of US bound passengers from Waterloo.**

Each time she and her sister ship the RMS Queen Mary arrived at Southampton from New York it took five Ocean Liner Express's trains to convey all of the passengers and their baggage to London. This meant that Waterloo station was the gateway to the UK and in the days before Heathrow Airport took the crown, Britain's press corps would descend on Waterloo station to record the departures and arrivals of the stars of stage and screen. The rapid development of air travel saw the eventual demise of this lucrative market but even up to the early 1960s there were still some 1,000 boat trains a year in each direction between Waterloo and Southampton.

175  
YEARS



25



## Gateway to Britain – Gateway to the World

Until Trans-Atlantic travel switched from ocean liners and boat trains to air travel in the 1960s, Waterloo station was the haunt of press photographers looking to record the arrivals and departures of stars of stage and screen as well as Royalty and other VIP's.



Here on his way to Southampton Docks in 1935 is American singer and actor, professional football player, and activist Paul Robeson.



On the left of this group, pictured before boarding his boat train in 1932, is playwright, composer, director, actor, and singer, Noel Coward.



Heading home to the States in 1936 was American actor and producer, Douglas Fairbanks Jr. In the 1950s he would regularly be seen on British television screens introducing his Douglas Fairbanks Jr. Presents series of half hour dramas.



At the height of her fame, and mobbed by the Waterloo press corps and fans on her return to England in 1936, is English actress, singer and comedian Gracie Fields.





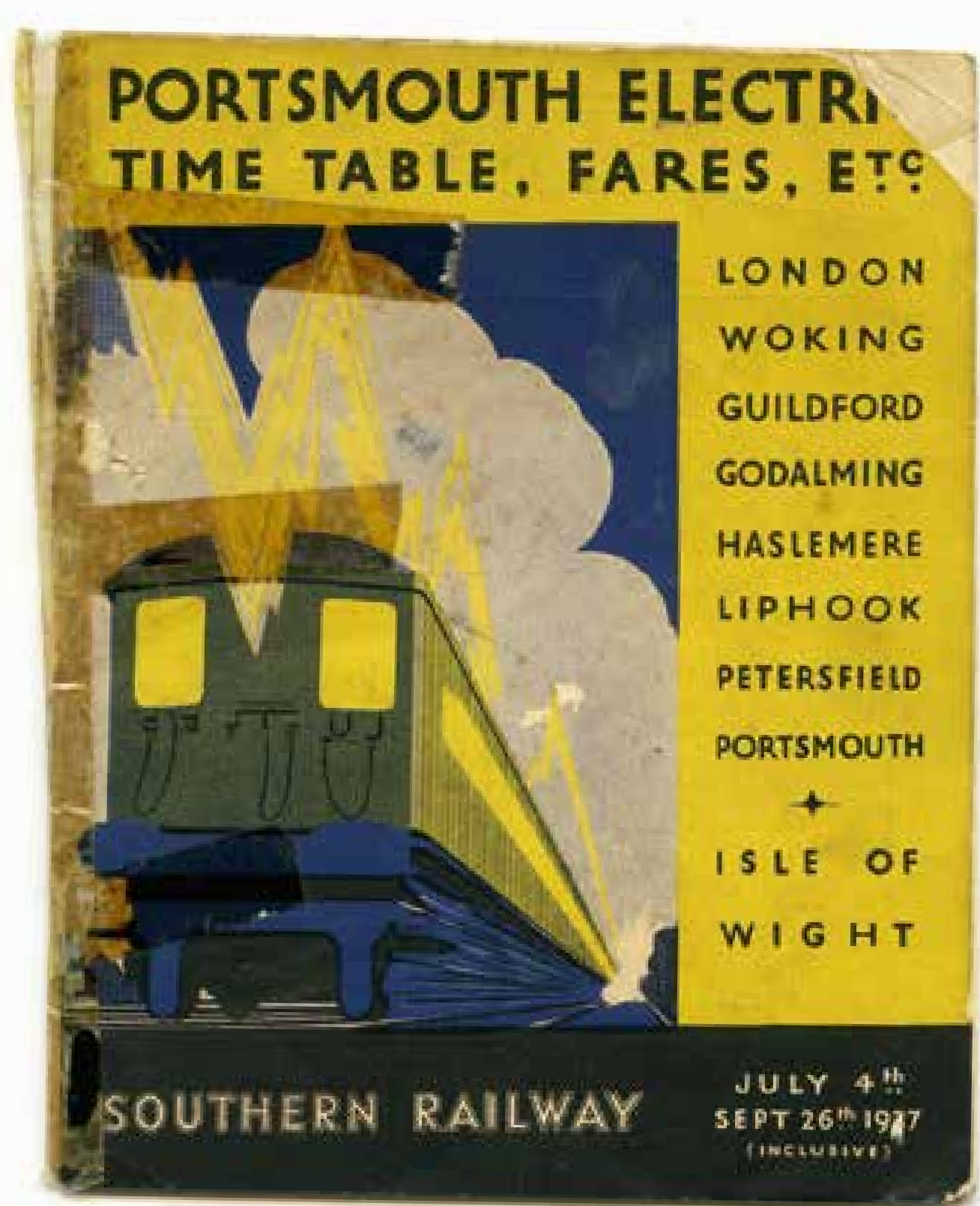
**Flying Boat trains too!**

From May 1937 and until the service transferred to Victoria station in June 1939, Imperial Airways Empire Service flying boat passengers were conveyed directly from Waterloo at 8.30 am to Southampton Docks in two Pullman cars. Unusually the weighing of baggage and the passengers, in order to calculate total airborne weight and potential displacement, was undertaken by the Imperial Airways flight clerk in the baggage car during the rail journey!

Until the service transferred to Victoria station in June 1939, Empire Service boat trains from Waterloo connected to both Imperial Airways and Qantas Empire Airways flying boats. These conveyed passengers, and post under the Empire Air Mail Scheme, to the Middle East, India, Australia and New Zealand, Durban, Hong Kong and New York via Bermuda, all operated by ‘C’ Class craft built by Short Brothers of Rochester.



At the pontoon in this picture is Qantas Empire Airways VH-ABF Short S23 craft named Cooee on the Sydney via Singapore run. The BOAC, the successor to Imperial Airways, flying boat service from Southampton ended in November 1950.



**Portsmouth Electrics begin**

In 1937 the main line electric trains replace steam traction on the Portsmouth Direct line to Guildford and Portsmouth Harbour connecting to the Isle of Wight.







### Waterloo faces War again

**Troops and child evacuees pass on the pedestrian crossing linking Waterloo and Waterloo East stations during WW2.**

In September 1939 12,700 child evacuees left Waterloo for the safety of the countryside in the first three days of the Evacuation. Many more would follow as the aerial bombing of the Capital intensified.



*Image: Science Museum Group*

### The Blitz Spirit

**It's December 1940 and a bomb crater blocks the cab road in front of the Victory Arch entrance. Three years later a VI 'Flying Bomb' destroyed the remains of the already evacuated Southern Railway Headquarters building on the right. Following the air raids of 1940/41 the arched undercroft of the station provided temporary homes for 500 Lambeth residents who had been bombed out of their homes.**

The Union flag was flown defiantly throughout the war years over the station and after the war was displayed in the window of the British Railways International office in New York City. It was returned to the UK in 1951 and is now safe in the Science Museum collection.





*Image: Science Museum Group*

## Recovery begins

**October 1946 and the revived Bournemouth Belle all Pullman train leaves the still blacked out and defenestrated Waterloo behind a brand new Merchant Navy locomotive exemplifying the beginning of the post war recovery in leisure travel by rail, something that is happily being mirrored today across Britain's rail network in these post Covid times.**

In 1931 the Pullman Car Company had introduced the first of a fleet of luxury Pullman cars for the daily Bournemouth Belle service and for the prestigious Ocean Liner Express trains that would, until the 1950s, convey stars of stage and screen as well as visiting Royalty and other dignitaries to and from Waterloo.



## Train Spotting takes off

**Train spotting became as a mainstream hobby and was born at Waterloo thanks to an initiative by Ian Allan then Southern Railway clerk at Waterloo. Ian went on to found a transport publishing empire first located close to Hampton Court, and later Shepperton, stations.**

This created a post war generation of train spotters which at one time saw 150,000 members of the Ian Allan Locospotters Club and peaking as the steam train era drew to a close in the early 1960s.





## Centenary celebrated

To celebrate the station's centenary in 1948 British Railways, the nationalised successor to the Southern Railway, mounted an exhibition on the station supported by a colourful, remembering that post war rationing was still being imposed, brochure, of which this is the cover.

It illustrates both the first type of train that had served the original Waterloo Bridge station along with the single disc type signal that controlled early operations contrasting with the latest in contemporary motive power, the air smoothed Merchant Navy Class locomotives. These locomotives were, in their rebuilt form, destined to be the mainstay of the Waterloo to Exeter line until 1964 and the Bournemouth and Weymouth line until the end of steam train operation at Waterloo in 1967.

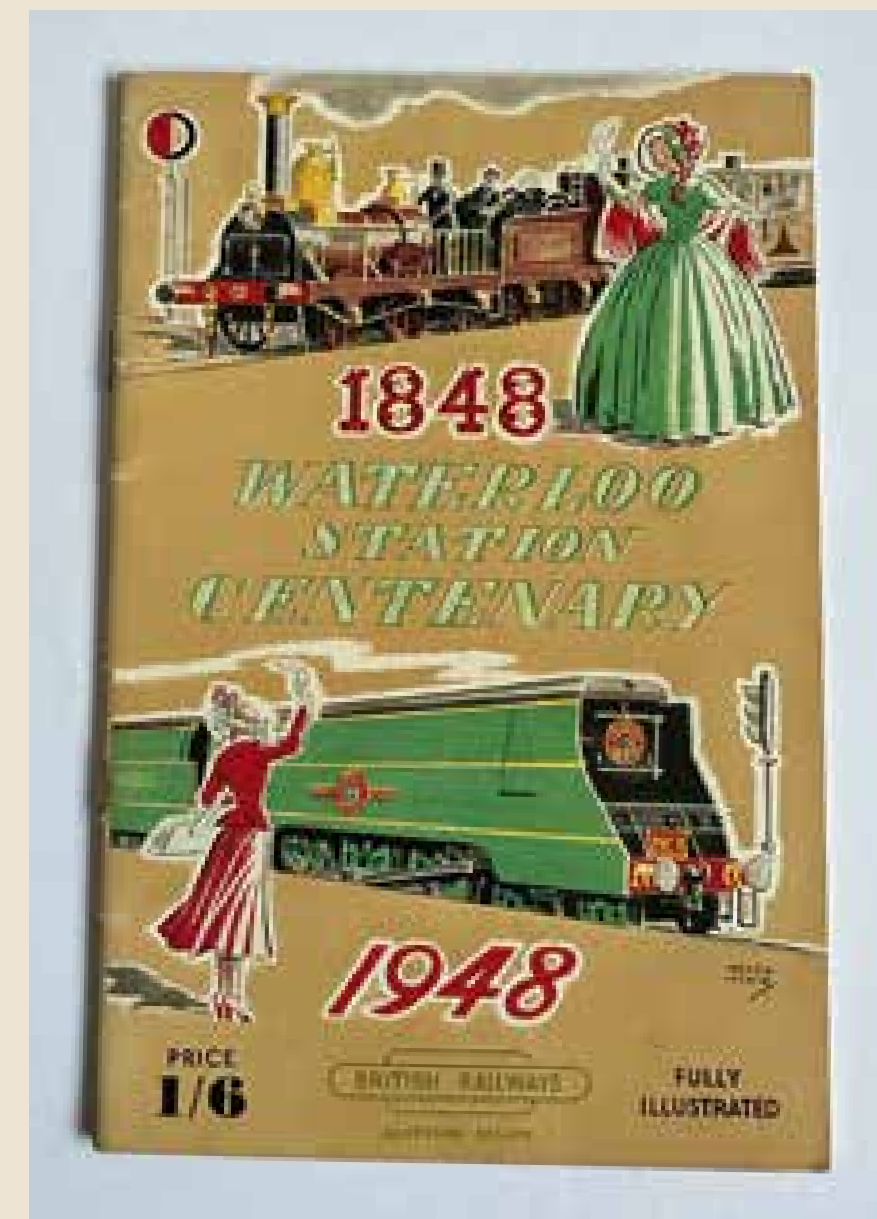


Image: Science Museum Group

The 1948 celebrations also featured this line up of locomotives. From the left is 1893 vintage ex LSWR No. 563 which, after a war service reprieve, was rescued from the scrap line by the Southern Railway and restored especially for her appearance in these centenary celebrations. The T3's were regular performers on the Waterloo to Exeter and Plymouth expresses at the turn of the 20th Century. She is now once again undergoing restoration at the Swanage Railway and due to re-enter service on that railway later this year.

The small tank engine is ex London Brighton & South Coast Railway 1880 built Terrier tank No.82 Boxhill. The inclusion of this locomotive representing as it did the LSWR's arch rival is something of a mystery.

Boxhill too is still with us today as part of the locomotive collection at the National Railway Museum at York. However the third locomotive, West Country Pacific No. 34017 Ilfracombe, would not be so fortunate. Although a regular visitor to Waterloo almost to the end of the steam era, she was withdrawn from service in October 1966 and scrapped.





Image: Science Museum Group



Image: Science Museum Group

## Waterloo in War and Peace

Helen Madeleine McKie (1889-1957) was a British artist and illustrator who illustrated books, created designs for murals and artwork for posters. Her most famous works are this pair of posters “Waterloo Station – War” and “Waterloo Station – Peace” which were published by the Southern Railway in 1948 to celebrate the centenary of Waterloo station.

One depicts the station concourse in peacetime full of passengers, with a platoon of guardsmen marching through. The other shows the same scene showing most of the people depicted in military service. In both versions, two nuns cross in front of the soldiers.

It has been rightly described as a charming demonstration of how the memory of Waterloo station still remains in our common culture and is widely available today in print and jigsaw form.





### Festival of Britain celebrated

The 1951 Festival of Britain was a national exhibition and fair that reached millions of visitors throughout the UK. The original plan was to celebrate the centennial of the Great Exhibition of 1851. The festival's centrepiece was the South Bank Exhibition next to Waterloo station. It demonstrated the contribution made by British advances in science, technology and industrial design, architecture and the arts.

Visitors flocked to the South Bank site, to wander around the Dome of Discovery, gaze at the Skylon, a futuristic-looking, slender, vertical, cigar-shaped steel structure that gave the illusion that it was 'floating' above the ground, and to generally enjoy a festival of national celebration.

It was an attempt to give Britons a feeling of recovery and progress and to promote better-quality design in the post war rebuilding of British towns and cities.

As part of the festival celebrations Waterloo gained a new named train 'The Royal Wessex' to and from Bournemouth and Weymouth.







### A Festival find

Thought to have been lost until rediscovered in a hotel garden in Blackheath in 2016 after a call by Historic England for lost public artwork, Peter Laszlo Peri's *The Sunbathers* was restored and returned to the South Bank, or more specifically the Balcony here at Waterloo station.

As such it is now just a stone's throw from where it had previously been displayed on the South Bank site in 1951.



### A Royal arrival

HM The Queen Mother arrives at Waterloo in 1954 to a welcome from Press photographers and her family including HM Queen Elizabeth 11, Princess Anne and six year old Prince, now King, Charles.

The Queen Mother as Duchess of York had travelled from Waterloo to Bookham with her husband the Duke, later King George VI, to begin their honeymoon at Polesden Lacy in April 1923 much as Prince Charles and Princess Diana did when they travelled from Waterloo to Romsey on 29 July 1981 and his mother, then Princess Elizabeth, and her new husband Philip had to Winchester in 1947.





### Gateway to the World reopens

On the arrival at Southampton Docks of Trans-Atlantic liners, like RMS Queen Elizabeth here, Ocean Liner Boat Trains, some first class only, carried stars of stage and screen direct from the dedicated Ocean Terminal station at Southampton Docks to press receptions on arrival at Waterloo station much as happened in later years at Heathrow Airport.



Image: Getty Images

US stars of stage and screen, and in this case Rock 'n Roll star Bill Hayley, waves from an Ocean Liner Express Pullman car on arrival at Waterloo in 1957.

1960s British stage and screen box office favourites Elizabeth Taylor and Richard Burton say goodbye from a Southampton Docks bound Ocean Liner Express at Waterloo on 14 August 1960. The famously volatile pair would get married twice, first in 1964 and again in 1975!



Image: Getty Images





## Windrush arrivals

This year sees the 75th anniversary of the docking of the Empire Windrush at Tilbury but for many other men, women and children from the Caribbean, Southampton, and the train journey to Waterloo, would have been their first glimpse of the country where they were to begin their new lives.



## Windrush remembered

**On 22 June 2022 members of the Windrush generation joined HRH Duke and Duchess of Cambridge at Waterloo station to witness the unveiling of the National Windrush Monument.**

Designed by renowned Jamaican artist Basil Watson, this monument symbolises the courage, commitment and resilience of the thousands of men, women and children who travelled to the UK to start new lives from 1948 to 1971.

The three figures – a man, woman, and child – dressed in their “Sunday best” are climbing a mountain of suitcases together, demonstrating the inseparable bond of the Windrush pioneers and their descendants, and the hopes and aspirations of their generation as they arrive to start new lives in the UK.





Image: Science Museum Group

### Holiday travel boom

With holidays with pay the norm, holidaying by rail reached a pre-War zenith. The celebrated Atlantic Coast Express made its first 10.50am, later 11.00am, departure from Waterloo on 19 July 1926 and was so successful that to meet increasing demand on Summer Saturdays it had to run as five separate trains, all usually of at least 10 to 12 carriages in length starting out from the Capital. These were 10.24am to Ilfracombe with a restaurant car, 10.35am also to Ilfracombe and also conveying a restaurant car, 10.40am and 10.54am to Padstow both with restaurant cars and lastly the famed 11.00am departure which conveyed through carriages to Lyme Regis, Seaton, Sidmouth, Exmouth, Torrington, Bude and Plymouth.

This multi destination flagship service continued to run as up to eight separate trains on Summer Saturdays in the 1950s. Indeed so heavy was the demand that it sometimes ran as a 16 or even 18 coach train making it too long to be accommodated in even the longest platforms at Waterloo leading it to be stopped at Clapham Junction for the train to be divided and despatched in two halves for the last three miles into Waterloo. Changing travel patterns, with more Britons taking holidays abroad, saw 'The ACE' make its last journey in 1964.

To this list of holiday destinations served directly from Waterloo we should also add the additional services that ran direct on Summer Saturdays to Portsmouth and Lymington Pier for the Isle of Wight and Bournemouth and Swanage and Weymouth Pier for the Channel Islands.







### Funeral specials recalled

After lying in state at Westminster Hall and following his State Funeral in St Paul's Cathedral on 30 January 1965, revered wartime statesman and former Prime Minister, Sir Winston Churchill's funeral cortège took to the River Thames as far as Waterloo Pier where his Union flag-draped coffin was transferred to a motor hearse for the short drive to the cab road adjacent to the then platform 11 at Waterloo station.

Here military pall bearers lifted and carried it in to a specially converted covered vehicle marshalled in the centre of an all Pullman funeral special train. It travelled via Staines, Reading and Oxford to the tiny Oxfordshire station at Handborough for Blenheim where his coffin was transferred by road to his final resting place at Blenheim Palace.



*Image: Alamy*

Following a Royal Ceremonial Funeral at Westminster Abbey on 5 September 1979 Admiral of the Fleet, The Earl Mountbatten of Burma's coffin was also conveyed by special train but this time to Romsey where he was laid to rest in the Abbey.





### Just after noon at Waterloo – 1960's

**Terence Cuneo's study of Waterloo, 1967. It's 12.21pm, one day in the early 1960s, and passengers pour off the 6.40am from Exeter Central, powered by a rebuilt Bullied Pacific, which has just arrived on time on platform 11.**

Over on platform 9 a Pullman car steward in his crisp white tunic looks out from the inward opening door of the Pullman car for late comers to join the daily 12.30pm Bournemouth Belle all Pullman train for Southampton and Bournemouth. The little M7 class tank engine which had brought the empty train in had been a regular sight at Waterloo since late Victorian times and had been the staple motive power for suburban trains until being usurped by electric trains.

Meanwhile on platform 6 a train of 2BIL type electric units are soon to depart at 12.27pm, first stop Surbiton and then all stations to Woking where the train will divide. The front portion heading off for all stations to Alton while the rear part of the train will be calling at all stations to Portsmouth & Southsea.

With the large numbers of forces movements after WW2 and during the time of National Service ticket barrier staff at Waterloo often used the phrase "Army in the front, Navy in the rear" to quickly direct service personnel to soon to depart trains. Behind it stands the 12.24pm to Guildford via Cobham formed of a 4EPB unit and behind that one of the ubiquitous 4SUB all compartment electric trains forming the 12.26pm to Hampton Court. However, the pigeons, like death and taxes, are, regrettably, still unwelcome visitors to the station today!

One of the former WH Smith bookstalls from the station and dating to the time of the completion of the station's reconstruction in 1922 is currently undergoing restoration before being put on display at the National Railway Museum in York.





### “Mind that door!”

Before the introduction of sliding door trains in the 1980s “Mind that door!” used to be the concerned cry of platform staff at Waterloo as arriving commuters, eager to get through the ticket barrier or down the stairways into the subway before the rush, would fling open the doors of trains before they had come to stop in the platform.

All looks reasonably ordered in this 1960s scene as commuters from Surrey make their way along platforms 1 and 2 and off to their workplaces.



Image: Getty Images

### “We are sorry to announce...”

Today you won’t hear of fog delaying trains at Waterloo or anywhere else on the National rail network thanks to advances in signalling.

Back in 1962, and most infamously during the Great Smog (smoke and fog combined) of 1952, long delays and cancellations would have been the order of the day for rail travellers on foggy days and nights.





Image: Getty Images

### Fun times too

Waterloo is a much sought after location for film shoots and advertising promotions and this eye catching shot of skiers descending a dry ski slope suspended from the former Classic Cinema balcony as part of a Scottish holiday promotion and more recently this concourse view of a Ghostbusters promotion in 2016 show that you can never know what to expect to see next on this station.



Image: Network Rail



40



## The way things were

**1967 saw the end of the steam train era along with the release of the Kinks Waterloo Sunset written by Ray Davies. On 9 July 1967 the honour fell to British Railways Merchant Navy Class 4-6-2 No. 35030 Elder Dempster Lines to bring the last steam hauled passenger train into the station and from the next morning, for the first time in 120 years, the sound of steam would no longer be part of the everyday backdrop to Waterloo station.**

A year earlier in this evocative image captured by the late Geoff Marsh, sister Merchant Navy Pacific No. 35022 Holland America Line rests after arriving with an express train. On the left a poster lists the upcoming attractions at the station's Classic cinema.



*Image: The late Geoff Marsh*

## Milk for the masses

The supply of milk to London from dairies in Somerset, Dorset, and Devon was an important time sensitive traffic for the railway and until the 1960s this vital cargo was conveyed in dedicated trains formed of specially designed tank wagons to and from Vauxhall station where milk was gravity fed directly into the creamery below. In Victorian and early Edwardian times milk was contained in heavy 17 gallon steel milk churns that required manhandling between the train and the horse drawn transport and the dedication of platform 10 at Waterloo solely for this purpose.

## Newspapers by the ton

Until the 1980s tons of newspapers were despatched nightly from Waterloo in five trains. The first departed at 01.40 to Yeovil followed by separate trains to Weymouth, Portsmouth, Bournemouth and Guildford. On Saturday nights this regular army of workers drawn from all of the national newspapers were assisted by extra staff brought in to handle the additional weight due to the number of extra sections and Sunday supplements!

## Mail by rail

Postal traffic both within the UK as well as transatlantic and that to the furthest reaches of the then British Empire formerly began its journey from Waterloo. Indeed until 1977 the 2.15am newspaper and mail train also included a travelling post office in its formation with post for Dorset, East Devon and the Channel Islands being sorted by Post Office staff en route.

## Bullion business

From time to time up to the 1960s a little known, but perhaps unique to Waterloo, traffic saw up to £1m of gold and silver bullion loaded into dedicated rail vehicles, vans with floors specially strengthened with asphalt, for transfer to ships at Southampton.

175  
YEARS





### Waterloo blues

**A half a century ago, Gillian Hughes, then a young student at Portsmouth College of Art and Design, was handed a camera and several rolls of film, sent to Waterloo Station and tasked with capturing the essence of the busy terminal and the people that she found there.**

Her trilogy of black and white images reflect the period when the long established green livery of trains serving Waterloo had been replaced by the universally drab all blue British Rail corporate colour scheme.

In Gill's evocative pictures, this time of three day weeks, electricity blackouts and terrorist bombings seems to have pervaded both the station and its users. This was at the time when the then British Rail chairman Sir Peter Parker warned that without sustained investment from government the BR network would experience a "crumbling edge of quality".

Gill Bingham is now married to Chris who designs and builds model railways. She continues to have a fascination with the history and development of this great station.







Image: Getty Images

### Waterloo? Which Waterloo?

When the Swedish pop group Abba won the Eurovision Song Contest in 1974 they were of course loosely referencing the 1815 Battle of Waterloo (which is of course where this station got its name from and the battle is commemorated by a plaque here on the station on the balcony) and not this railway station.



Nor indeed were they referring to that other Waterloo station, the one on the Southport to Liverpool Central line and part of the Merseyrail network. Coincidentally, it too first opened in July 1848 so also celebrates its 175th anniversary this year.



### You saw it here first!

1984 and the first Costa Coffee Boutique on any railway station opened on Waterloo station presaging a new era of coffee shops on railway stations, airports and high streets.





*Image: The late Brian Morrison courtesy of Richard Tuplin*

## Banishing the BR blues – the birth of Network SouthEast

The corporate blue gloom of the British Rail livery was lifted slightly with the arrival of new trains for the Portsmouth line in the brighter two tone blue and grey 'Inter City' colours in 1981. But it wouldn't be until the arrival of Network SouthEast in 1986 that colour, investment, and belief in the future of railways was restored.

It wasn't just the trains that took on this striking new look as seemingly overnight stations across the newly created network were transformed by the application of new coats of paint, in particular those red lamp posts!

New station furniture quickly followed along with terrazzo tiling which brightened station concourses especially here at Waterloo where the Pet Shop Boys chose to strut their stuff in the bright new environment in their video for West End Girls.



## A European gateway again

Waterloo became a European Gateway again with commencement of direct Eurostar services to Brussels and Paris via the Channel Tunnel on 14 November 1994. For a short time British Rail also operated a through rail services linking Waterloo with Cardiff and Fishguard connecting with shipping services to the Republic of Ireland.

The five platform Eurostar station designed by Grimshaw Architects with Sir Alexander Gibbs & Partners as consultant engineers won the European Union Prize for Contemporary Architecture as well as the 1994 Royal Institute of British Architects Building of the Year Award.

This Continental connection would be severed again from 13 November 2007 when all Eurostar services were transferred to St Pancras International station.





### A Privatisation first

On 4 February 1996, and emulating the first ever early morning train arrival in 1848, the first privatised British railway service Stagecoach South West Train's 5.10am from Twickenham arrived at Waterloo heralding another new era for Britain's railways.



### The Railway Children come to Waterloo

In 2011 the then mothballed Eurostar Terminal played host to the staging of theatrical productions of E Nesbitt's *The Railway Children*.

It featured the appearance of the National Railway Museum's former Great Northern Railway Stirling Single No.1. During the performances, and unseen by the audience, the veteran steam locomotive, wreathed in theatrical smoke, was moved backwards and forwards along the track by an unseen former BR diesel shunting locomotive.



Image: Getty Images



Image: Network Rail

### 2012 and all that

In 2012 the new Retail balcony opened in time to serve the needs of the thousands of travellers who passed through the station, both en route to the Olympic Park in Stratford, and to London 2012 tennis tournaments at Wimbledon and rowing events at Eton Dorney.







### Waterloo International reborn

After being closed since the ending of Eurostar service in 2007, the buildings and platforms of the former Waterloo International station were reopened for one month while platforms within the main station were rebuilt.

After a period of redevelopment, platforms 20–22 reopened as part of the main station in December 2018, followed by platforms 23 and 24 in May 2019.



Image: Gregory Beecroft



### Pandemic platforms

During one of the Covid-19 pandemic lockdown periods in 2020 trains stand waiting to carry key workers. Railwaymen and women worked throughout these difficult and dangerous times in spite of the personal risks to themselves and their families.

Tragically many of our railway colleagues here at Waterloo, and across the South Western Railway network, did not survive to celebrate this anniversary with us today.





### Shopping, sadness and celebration

In 2022, the long closed undercroft of the former International station began its rebirth as The Sidings, a shopping and leisure venue that emulates those Victorian and Edwardian times when Waterloo station was a destination in itself.

The death of Her Late Majesty Queen Elizabeth II on 8 September and the period of National Mourning that followed saw the station in muted mode.

Emulating those Victorian times when soldiers dressed in red tunics passed through the station this was the scene in the early hours of Saturday 6 May 2023 when some of the 4,000 service personnel marched off a series of special trains operated by South Western Railway bringing them from their barracks into the Capital for this great State Occasion.



Image: Network Rail





*Image: Network Rail*

## **A Brighter Future for Waterloo**

**As part of improvement works that will see the provision of new toilets and new shops, the glazed roof over the concourse is being replaced. When complete, it will further enhance the station experience and prepare Waterloo for its next big anniversary in 2048.**





*The Waterloo Story was curated by Mike Lamport MCIPR with grateful thanks to Network Rail and to its team here at Waterloo station [www.networkrail.co.uk/communities/passengers/our-stations/london-waterloo/](http://www.networkrail.co.uk/communities/passengers/our-stations/london-waterloo/)*

*Mike, a career railwayman and a former member of the National Railway Heritage Awards committee and a Member of the Railway Heritage Designation Advisory Board, can trace his family's Waterloo roots back to the 1850s when his great grandfather Matthew was a guard with the London & South Western Railway through to today where his son Andrew is a guard based here with today's South Western Railway.*

*This exhibition is dedicated to the memory of Colin Chivers 1949-2023 a former chair of the South Western Circle and an acknowledged expert on the history of this station. Special thanks to Nick Pomfret and fellow members of the South Western Circle [www.lswr.org](http://www.lswr.org) who kept me on the right track.*

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