HISTORY IN BEDFORDSHIRE

THE JOURNAL OF THE BEDFORDSHIRE LOCAL HISTORY ASSOCIATION
VOLUME 10, NO 12, Spring 2026

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A GUIDED TOUR OF RIPPINGTON MANOR

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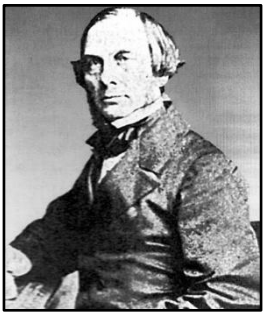

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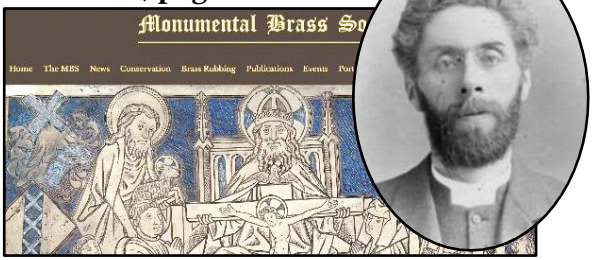

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BLHA Bedfordshire Local History Association

BEDFORDSHIRE LOCAL HISTORY ASSOCIATION

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VOLUME 10, NO 12, Spring 2026

The Association's 34th Year

www.bedfordshire-lha.org.uk

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For HIB: Editor: Ted Martin, 39 Chamomile Gardens, Cardamom Street, Biggleswade, Beds SG18 8YZ
Telephone: 01767 306103. E-mail: ed.martin39@btinternet.com
For BLHA: Secretary: Clive Makin, 32 Grange Road, Barton Le Clay, Bedford MK45 4RE: Telephone: 01582 655785
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BEDFORDSHIRE LOCAL HISTORY ASSOCIATION

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SPRING EVENT

A GUIDED TOUR OF RIPPINGTON MANOR WITH AFTERNOON TEA!

At 16 Church Street, Great Gransden SG19 3AF

ON THURSDAY, 14 MAY 2026

2.30 pm start

Image ©www.historic houses.org

We last visited Rippington Manor in 2016, and a return has been frequently requested.

This remarkably complete brick-built Tudor manor house sits on monastery remains recorded in the Domesday Book. The H-shaped house, which has an enormous stone chimney breast, was built by Robert Audley in 1565 of lath and plaster but encased in in brick in1645. It was home to Sir Charles Caesar and his son Julius, Master of the Rolls.

Originally called Repingdon (later Reppington), it was a cell of the Augustinian monastery at Repton and was on this site in 660 and referred to in a charter of 1159, recorded in

an inventory of the 1st Earl of Clare. Destroyed in the Danish Wars, it was rebuilt in 1172 by Maud, widow of Ranulph, Earl of Chester. The ponds were used by the monks for fishing.

There are many works of art to see (including portraits of Henry VIII), charming gardens, fine views, large ponds, and walled gardens. You will be able to see the gardens at your leisure.

There will be a guided tour of the house showing:

Ground floor: flagstone floors, beamed ceilings, a very early fireplace, an excellent collection of paintings, including a small art gallery, *objéts d'art*, and a collection of tea caddies.

Upper floor: tour of finely decorated bedrooms and study, with many silhouettes.

Images ©www.historic houses.org

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Cost and booking: £22.50 per person. This includes the tour and afternoon tea. The tea comprises tea or coffee, sandwiches and cakes. Please note that there are no disabled facilities and that photography is not allowed in the house.

To secure a place visit www.bedfordshire-lha.org.uk

This will be a popular visit with ***numbers limited to 25; booking will close on Wednesday, 6th May***.

BEDFORDSHIRE LOCAL HISTORY ASSOCIATION

ANNUAL CONFERENCE AND AGM 2026

Hosted by the BLHA at
ST MARY'S PARISH CHURCH, LUTON, ON
SATURDAY, 6 JUNE 2026

(image @ www.stmarysluton.org)

Luton's Heritage: Made and Shaped

Join us for a journey through the heart of Luton's heritage. From the grand estate of Luton Hoo to bustling George Street, the town's story is one of rapid change and enduring community. This conference explores the diverse forces that contributed to modern Luton: the arrival of the railways, the industrial might of Vauxhall, and the powerful influence of church patronage on our social history. Discover the stories that have shaped the Luton we know today.

08.00–09.15: Conference opens for delegates with displays to set up

09.00–9.30: Conference registration with tea and coffee

.30–10.00: Welcome followed by BLHA AGM

10.00–11.00: The History of George Street, Luton's Town Centre
Speaker: **Paul Hammond**

As Luton's high street, George Street has been the focus for much of its heritage for centuries. Prime Ministers have promenaded, hat factories located, riots started, regiments waved off and election results announced. The wealth of archive material available about just 400 yards of the public highway enables us to examine in detail aspects of the town's recreation, government and commerce.

11.00–11.30: Comfort Break with tea and coffee

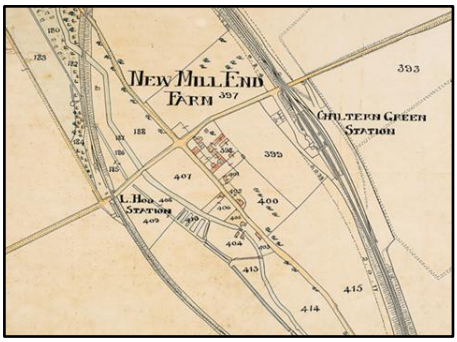
11.30–12.30: 'Luton Made: Vauxhall' is a heritage project funded by the National Lottery Heritage Fund, celebrating the history of Vauxhall, the car manufacturer, here in Luton
Speakers: **Toni Fielding & Aisha Hassan**

The project will culminate in an exhibition at Stockwood Discovery Centre in May and June 2026. Through a mix of oral histories, archival material, and personal objects, the exhibition will bring to life the everyday experiences of Vauxhall Motors' workers, from the factory floor to the design studio, from those who travelled here to be part of the journey to the families who watched generation after generation contribute to its legacy. Our aim is to celebrate Vauxhall's impact, not just on Luton, but on the wider community and beyond.

12.30–14.00: Buffet Lunch with tea and coffee, and browse archival displays

14.00–15.00: The Leigh Family at Luton Hoo and their involvement in the railways to Luton

Speaker: Felicity Brimblecombe



John Shaw Leigh, a wealthy Victorian entrepreneur, bought Luton Hoo in 1847. He was interested in railways and made money from railway transactions. Two new railway lines built through his estate in the 1850s and 1860s were important for Luton and were used by Luton Hoo to transport cattle raised on a new model farm. Later members of the Leigh family hosted the Prince of Wales who arrived by rail and visited Luton in 1878 and 1886.

15.00–15.15: Comfort Break

15.15–16.15: The Power of Church Patronage to Shape the Social History of a Town, 1763-1896

Speaker: Peter Adams

The sale of Luton Hoo to John Stuart, the 3rd Earl of Bute, on his resignation as Prime Minister in 1763, made him the patron of St Mary's Church. The vicars that he and his descendants appointed over the next century, and those that followed that period, had a significant impact on the social and religious life of Luton, and the fabric of the church.

16.15–16.30: Close & Summary

16.30–17.30: Optional Guided Tour of St Mary's Church

Following the close of the conference, there will be the opportunity to have a guided tour of St Mary's. This will be led by Peter Adams and should take around 40 minutes, with 15 minutes for questions. The tour is limited to a maximum of 40 people.

About one-third of the tour has restricted access due to two steps into the chancel and Wenlock Chapel. However, judicious placement of those unable to make it enables them to hear Peter's voice and see, albeit at a slight distance, the things referred to. There is no charge for this tour, but places are on a first come first served basis

Venue - St Mary's

The site of St Mary's has been the centre of worship for people in the area for over 1,000 years, and a church was built in about AD 930 by King Athelstan as an act of thanksgiving for victory over the Danes. The Church is one of the largest in Bedfordshire and is considered a fine example of medieval architecture. It is the only Grade 1 listed building in Luton.

Transport/Parking

The church is located just a five-minute walk from the Luton mainline station. For those travelling by bus, several stops are within a short walk of the church. Visitors by car are encouraged to use nearby parking facilities such as the Luton Point (The Mall) or the open-air Power Court car parks, or Vicarage Street, all just a 4-minute walk away.

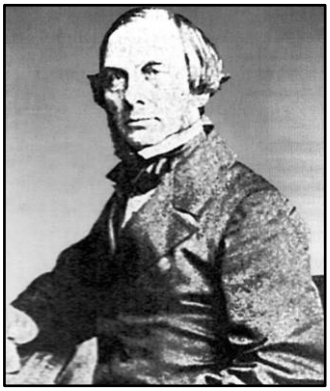
Booking

Conference Early Bird tickets, including buffet lunch, are available at £25 per person until 3 April. Conference tickets from 4 April until 30 May are £27.50 per person. Bookings close at the end of day on 30 May, refunds for cancellations may only be made prior to this date. Tables are available for society displays and floor space for free-standing displays.

For full booking details, visit: www.bedfordshire-lha.org.uk

Engineer or Profiteer?
John Viret Gooch (1812–1900)

John Viret Gooch (29 June 1812–8 June 1900) was an early locomotive and civil engineer and an entrepreneur who had a considerable impact on the railways of eastern England in their formative years.



John Viret Gooch

By virtue of his position as locomotive superintendent in charge of the Eastern Counties Railway's new works at Stratford, in East London, he had considerable power which, it seems, was turned to his own advantage, so that he had to depart from his position under a cloud.

J V Gooch was the second son of a family the three elder brothers of which became railway engineers in the pioneering age.

His two railway siblings were:

(1) Sir Daniel Gooch (1816–1889), the youngest of the three brothers, who became very famous. He was the first mechanical engineer of the Great Western Railway and saved Brunel's first ineffectual engines by redesigning them. Later Daniel saved the GWR itself by returning as chairman to consolidate the company's finances. In 1864 he took responsibility for laying the first transatlantic telegraph cable and for this he was made a baronet.

(2) Thomas Longridge Gooch (1808–1882) was the oldest of the three older Gooch boys and was a very competent railway engineer closely associated with George and Robert Stephenson in building early railways. He worked on the Liverpool and Manchester, Manchester and Leeds and London and Birmingham railways.

Bedlington

Bedlington, in Northumberland was the adopted hometown of the Gooch brothers.

Bedlington became an industrial town with an ironworks and several coalmines. Bedlington Ironworks operated between 1736 and 1867 and was the place where wrought iron rails were invented by John Birkinshaw in 1820. Before this, railways used either wooden rails, which could not support steam engines, or cast-iron rails, usually only 3ft long. Cast iron

rails, developed by William Jessop and others, only allowed very low speeds, were brittle and easily broken. John Birkinshaw's 1820 patent for rolling wrought-iron rails in 15ft lengths was a breakthrough for railways. Wrought iron withstood the moving load of a locomotive and train. Birkinshaw's rails were used by George Stephenson in 1821 for the Stockton and Darlington Railway, opened in 1825 – this helped to kick-start the railway age.

Bedlington was a perfect location alongside the River Blyth, because it had all that was needed for an ironworks: nodules of ironstone; coal; good wood for charcoal; water for driving the hammers, and the port of Blyth two miles away for shipping the products.

The Gooch family

The Gooch clan were not descended from mechanics or operatives of the ironworks and, though their family was impoverished, their ancestors on the Gooch side had been well-to-do Suffolk farmers from Beccles. However, their maternal grandfather, Thomas Longridge (1751–1803), was an ironworks entrepreneur.

Thomas's ancestors were also farmers, and his father was a merchant. His mother, a widow, was left well enough off to give Thomas a start as an ironmaster. He formed a partnership with his brother-in-law, William Hawks, as William Hawks (Snr) & Co. They acquired forges and smithing shops between 1779 and 1780, and slitting and rolling mills on the River Blyth in the 1790s. In 1782 they took over the Bedlington Ironworks and in 1792 Hawks and Longridge built a rolling mill at Bedlington.

Longridge was a very rich man at his death in 1803 but most of his wealth passed to his eldest son, George. There was only £200 each for the daughters. The eldest had married into the Hawks family so was well provided for, but for the youngest, Anna, it was a different story. After her father's death she went south in 1805 to stay with her cousin, Barbara. Barbara had married John Gooch, Snr, who was in trade and 'a truly upright and honest man' and they were living comfortably in Kensington. Anna got to know Barbara's son, John Gooch Jr, and they were married on 23 December 1805 at St George's, Hanover Square, and the first of their 10 children was born in 1807.

They lived first in Kensington, moved to Thorpe in Surrey, then Kidwelly in South Wales and then Bedlington. After Thomas Longridge's death, the ironworks was owned by Gordon and Biddulph but Michael Longridge, Anna's cousin, was the managing partner and he gave John

Gooch the post of bookkeeper. So now with five children, of whom John Viret was the fourth, they settled in Bedlington which helped to determine the careers of the three Gooch brothers in the dawning railway age. Five more Gooch children were to be born in Bedlington. (The Gooch children were: Barbara (1807), Thomas Longridge (1808), Anna (?1811), John Viret (1812), Jane Longridge (1814), Daniel (1816), Mary Ann (1818), George Henry (1820), Frances (1823), and William Frederick (1825).)

Both Wikipedia and Baker in the *Backtrack* article listed below in the References, give John Viret's place of birth as Bedlington, but a biography of his younger brother, Daniel, by Alan Platt, also referred to below, states that they did not arrive in Bedlington until late 1815 or early 1816 when John Viret would have been four.

John Viret's early career

In the 1830s there was a slump which hit the iron trade hard and in February 1831 John Gooch had to move the family again, this time to Tredegar Iron Works in Wales where he became the bookkeeper. John Viret had been a pupil of Joseph Locke since 1828, his 17th year, but, nevertheless, John Gooch needed him to help to move 300-miles from Northumberland to Wales, achieved in a wagon through storms and snowfalls. John's father died in 1833.

Joseph Locke (9 August 1805–18 September 1860) was a civil engineer and, with Robert Stephenson and Isambard Brunel, a pioneer in railway building. Locke worked with George Stephenson on the Liverpool and Manchester Railway and assisting Stephenson in 1829 surveyed the route for the Grand Junction Railway.

This railway was authorised in 1833. Designed by George Stephenson and Joseph Locke and running for 82 miles (132km) from Birmingham via the existing Warrington and Newton Railway to join the Liverpool and Manchester Railway at Newton Junction, it opened on 4 July 1837.

Newton Road Station on the Grand Junction Railway, one of the original stations, in 1839.

Locke worked on many other railway projects both in the UK and in Europe and was President of the Institution of Civil Engineers from December 1857 till December 1859 and MP for Honiton from 1847. He is thought to have recommended the establishment of Crewe works.

As Locke's pupil John Viret was involved in the building of the Grand Junction and became its resident engineer after the line opened on 4 July 1837.

The resident engineer's job on the Grand Junction lasted for less than three years, for in 1840 John joined his elder brother Thomas on the Manchester and Leeds Railway which was built to connect Manchester with Leeds via the North Midland Railway which it joined at Normanton.

This was the first line in the world built through difficult country and John Viret became their locomotive superintendent. But not for long, because he was recommended to the London and South-Western Railway by Locke and appointed locomotive superintendent on 1 January 1841, but, for official purposes, Locke remained in charge of the department.

The London and South-Western Railway (LSWR) began in 1838 as the London and Southampton Railway. At the grouping of railways in 1923 the LSWR joined the Southern Railway and then British Railways in 1948.

John Viret had chosen locomotive engineering in preference to civil engineering (building the railways) although he had experience of both. Daniel made the same choice in his early career, but Thomas continued building railways the stress of which led to his early retirement at the age of 44.

Disastrous marriage

In June 1840 John Viret (hereafter 'John') married, Hannah Frances Handcock, daughter of Captain Elias Robinson Handcock, who was much younger than him, but the marriage was a disaster. In May 1842 John's Mother wrote to his brother Daniel to say that she was distressed to find that there was 'no hope of poor John getting rid of that vile wife of his' without her consenting to the separation and recommending that if he occasionally gave her a 'good thrashing . . . she would be more careful of irritating him'. Eventually they agreed to part, but divorce was difficult to obtain in those times, so it was to be 36 years later, on 16 March 1876, and after his first wife's death in 1874, that John was able to marry Emily Mary Stonhouse, 28 years his junior, the daughter of the Reverend Charles Stonhouse, and, at the age of 64, to start a family.

The LSWR

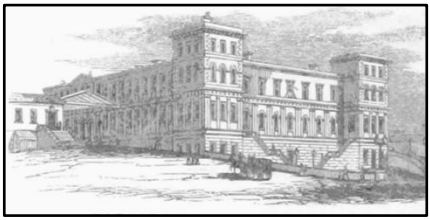
The LSWR was John's longest tenure in office. In the beginning, locomotives were purchased from a wide range of private manufacturers, but from January 1843 the LSWR's Nine Elms Locomotive Works in London started production with the 'Eagle' class 'singles'. A 'single' is an engine with a single driving wheel on each side connected to the cylinders. Single driving wheels could be as big as 8ft and this class of engine was mainly used for lightly loaded fast express services but, when trains became heavier and longer, was phased out.

John's designs included several 'single' engines and the 0-6-0 'Bison' class goods engines. In 1843 he designed some express passenger engines, partly based on engines then being built at Crewe works by the Grand Junction Railway, but his had unusually large driving wheels sometimes up to 7ft diameter. His express engines gave the LSWR a reputation for speed, taking 110 minutes between London and Southampton, at that time one of the fastest timings in the world. By 1846 he was a member of the Royal Society of Arts and in May 1852 had joined the Institute of Civil Engineers.

In 1850 John left the LSWR to go to the Eastern Counties Railway to become its locomotive superintendent.

The Eastern Counties Railway (ECR)

The ECR intended to control all railways in the eastern counties. Authorised on 4 July 1836, construction began in late March 1837, opening on 20 June 1839 from a temporary terminus at Devonshire Street, Mile End in London as far as Romford. On 1 July 1840 the ECR extended into a permanent terminus at Shoreditch (renamed Bishopsgate in 1846) and the line got as far as Brentwood.



West front of Bishopsgate Station in 1851

Bishopsgate was the forerunner of Liverpool Street station, which was not built till 1874, when Bishopsgate became a goods station. Located on the eastern side of Shoreditch High Street, on the western edge of the East End just outside the City, it was in use from 1840 to 1875 as a passenger

station and then a goods station until destroyed by fire in 1964 and derelict until demolished in the early 2000s for Shoreditch High Street railway station which is now on the site.

The line to Colchester, 51 miles from London, opened from 7 March 1843. From 30 July 1845, ECR trains reached Norwich, but used the Northern & Eastern Railway (N&ER) and the Norwich and Brandon Railway via Stratford, Cambridge, and Ely, to achieve this. The ECR's Colchester line was extended to Ipswich in 1846 and to Norwich in 1849 by means of the Eastern Union Railway (EUR), with which it made an end-on connection. After a period of poor relations, the ECR took over operation of the EUR on 1 January 1854, but this was not sanctioned by Act of Parliament until 7 August 1854.

The ECR gained a reputation for poor service. This was not surprising for it was a time of great change for the railway which they had to manage while still providing services. On 25 October 1843 the ECR amalgamated with the Northern & Eastern Railway (the Cambridge line, via Bishop's Stortford) and leased it for 999 years from 1 January 1844. This gave them their first route into East Anglia as well as the possibility of Suburban branches from Stratford.

The Northern and Eastern Railway was authorised in 1836 to run from London to Cambridge. Its planned approach to London was changed in 1839 to allow it to use the ECR terminus at Bishopsgate, joining the ECR at Stratford. It reached Bishop's Stortford and opened a branch to Hertford in 1843 but could go no further until leased by the ECR. The ECR completed the line to Cambridge from Bishop's Stortford and extended it on to meet the Norfolk Railway coming from Norwich at Brandon. Both the ECR and the Northern and Eastern were built to the 5ft gauge but were modified in 1844 to standard gauge (4ft 8½in).

In 1848 the ECR had moved the main locomotive, carriage and wagon works from Gidea Park in Essex to Stratford. The ECR would eventually have almost sole control of all railways in East Anglia.

Corruption was rife within the organisation and its allied suppliers. The chairman, George Hudson, the one-time 'Railway King', was sacked in 1849, when he was unmasked as a fraudster and insolvent. But it seems that dubious methods of doing business continued unabated. This account focuses mainly on John Gooch but there were many other linked frauds and peculations going on in the unregulated era of the first half of the 19th century (Swieszkowski, 2007).

In 1862 the ECR amalgamated with other East Anglian railways to form the Great Eastern Railway, in 1923 it joined the LNER and then British Railways in 1948.

Gooch's remuneration agreement

There might have been some collusion in the way Gooch was selected as locomotive superintendent as 30 other candidates applied for the post, some of them of great experience. Even stranger was his remuneration agreement entered into on 22 May 1850. Basic salary was to be £600pa to which was added a very complicated system of bonuses which were set to make him a very rich man. In 1851 they amounted to £3,604 11s 4d; in 1852 £4,238 13s 6d; in 1853 £4,937 10s 0d; in 1854 £6,614 6s 0d; up to 1855 the bonuses added £20,000 to his total basic salary for the period. Unsurprisingly, he was niggardly in rewarding his senior staff from this largesse (£3,764) and he also pocketed the premiums paid by apprentices. In present-day values this would amount to over £1 million pa.

One wonders why such a generous package was negotiated between David Waddington, the ECR chairman, and Gooch. According to a newspaper report, Waddington later denied to the 1855 Committee of Enquiry, that he had anything to do with it! The rest of the Board said later that they were not consulted in depth, but they might also have been economical with the truth. Baker, in the *Backtrack* article (see the References), thinks that they were

> so concerned with the parlous state of the Running Department at the time of Gooch's arrival at Stratford that a plan which, on the face of it, promised them 95% of the savings made by their experienced and well-regarded new locomotive superintendent, brother of the already famous Daniel, suffered no analysis, just grateful acceptance.

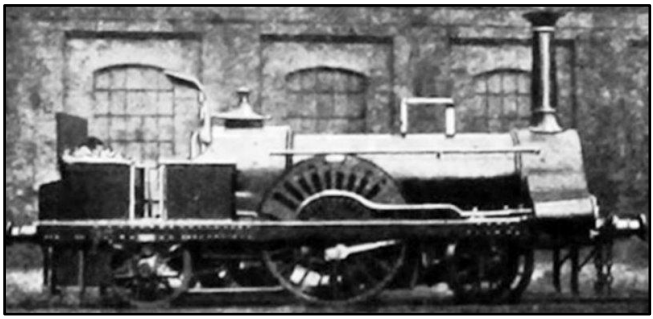
John Gooch as locomotive superintendent

Gooch, now in charge at the Stratford works, started on 22 July 1850, but soon came into dispute with his operating staff when he fined them a day's pay if any part of the engine broke during service, the fines going straight into his pocket. The men walked out but were sacked by him and evicted from company housing. However, he managed to get replacements from all over the country and blacklisted the strikers.

As a locomotive engineer he was very competent, producing his own designs and modifying those supplied by outside manufacturers. Gooch was responsible for three new classes of 2-2-2 locomotives with 6ft 6in

driving wheels among which were the first locomotives built at Stratford in 1851. He also rebuilt some 1848 Crampton locomotives and designed a 2-4-2 tank engine for a Danish railway.

By the end of his tenure the ECR had faster express trains than many other lines at the time, but they were not up to the speeds obtained by his brother Daniel on the Great Western. His results for freight were not so good, using some weak locomotives of his own design and those of John Hunter, who preceded him, which were thrashed and not well-maintained and so regularly broke down. He did produce five goods engines which, after being rebuilt later, lasted for about 30 years.



ECR tank engine 1861

Out to make his fortune

Whether his cupidity was driven by remembering his parents' struggles with boom and bust in the iron industry or was a result of his marital difficulties in keeping up another home for a separated wife (who did not seem to settle for anything less than maximum provision), or sheer greed on his part, we will never know.

In reference to his marital problems his mother implied that he was weak and should be harsher, but he was certainly harsh enough in business! He was also cautious at that time, only investing £500 into the London and York line when Daniel invested £12,500 and Thomas £5,500. There is also the possibility that he made a conscious decision to make as much as he could while the opportunity was there and then spend the rest of his life at leisure, having seen the effects of overwork on his older brother Thomas.

This acquisitiveness did not seem to afflict his older and younger brothers to the same extent, even though they worked in the same industry and, it will be remembered, that his grandfather (after whom he was

named) was known as 'a truly upright and honest man'. Nothing daunted, John Gooch became an expert in exploiting inadequate management and financial controls (in contrast to his brother Daniel who was meticulous in such matters) and he also went on to have several other business interests.

In association with Samuel Morton Peto, David Waddington (the ECR chairman) and the Prior Brothers, he established The Norfolk and Eastern Counties Coal Co (an East Anglian coal factors company) in 1853. Coal shipped to Lowestoft was to be carried onwards over the ECR and Norfolk railways to produce coke (early locomotives ran on coke rather than coal).

The coal was carried at reduced rates for which the ECR at first provided at no charge 200 wagons rising to 500 in 1855 and Gooch also allowed repairs to 600 wagons at Peterborough again at no charge. The coal company took over coke ovens at Lowestoft for the ECR and Gooch, while being a partner in that company, had influence on the rate paid for coke, the value of which charged to the ECR in 1853–55 amounted to just over £69,000. Starting in September 1854, 32 new coke ovens were built at Lowestoft on land owned by the Norfolk Railway. Not content with this, Gooch was also owner or part-owner of six steam collier vessels which delivered the coal!

The Committee of Enquiry

The first hints of theft and corruption at Stratford came to light in May 1855 when the Board minutes recorded that the storekeeper and his deputy had been suspended. A Board committee was set up but, after they reported, the Board decided to defer consideration to seek counsel's advice on prosecutions. Gooch and others were named in the report and the storekeepers concerned handed in their resignations. After this, on 13 September, a special Board meeting suspended all payments to Gooch. Then Gooch, unbelievably, sent a letter claiming interest for late payment!

A Committee of Enquiry was set up to find out just what the senior management of the ECR was up to. It took place from September to December 1855 and reported on 7 December. The committee was chaired by Horatio Nelson Love (c1803–1882), a shareholder. He was elected as a director at a special shareholders' meeting on 1 December 1856 but did not become ECR chairman until 27 February 1857.

Love is quite often referred to as a City solicitor but was a member of the Stock Exchange – disparagingly referred to as a 'stock-jobber'. He had pursued George Hudson to his downfall in 1849, but this was not through the ECR but by Hudson's connection with another railway. A Mr Love

appears in various newspaper reports of ECR shareholders' meetings asking financial questions in the period 1844–47.

The Committee examined inadequate methods of management and financial control and arrangements for the supply of coke in which Gooch was involved and, particularly, the operations at Lowestoft managed by Priors. Gooch's special arrangements and percentages were examined: that, after £10,000 pa was saved, he received 5% of any further savings.

Directors, staff past and present, and outsiders gave evidence. Gooch said:

That he was responsible for about 2,000 staff;
agreed he had scrapped engines at times without Board authority;
that he did work for other departments at cost, but the wages and materials contributed to his percentage;
agreed shunting dues from other railways had not been collected and he did not know why;
agreed books had not been audited;
he 'supposed' wagon repairs had been charged;
admitted his other business interests;
admitted rate-fixing of coal purchases but denied fixing low rates for coal;
admitted ownership of 330 coal wagons on ECR and other railways and hiring out wagons to Priors for £3–4,000 pa;
admitted he had a £3,000 share in the Norfolk Coal Company;
first denied then admitted he classed horse-shunting as engine mileage;
admitted that shunting at Peterborough for the Norfolk and Eastern Counties Coal Co was not charged;
admitted valuation of rolling stock was not done;
admitted some locomotive coal was not charged for;
admitted that eight new engines replacing scrapped engines were charged to revenue account as were replacements for condemned carriages and wagons (using the revenue account contributed to his bonus while charging to the capital account did not);
admitted he repaired his steamships using ECR facilities, etc, etc, etc.

Gooch had to resign but he got away scot-free!

Goodbye to the ECR: Gooch and others

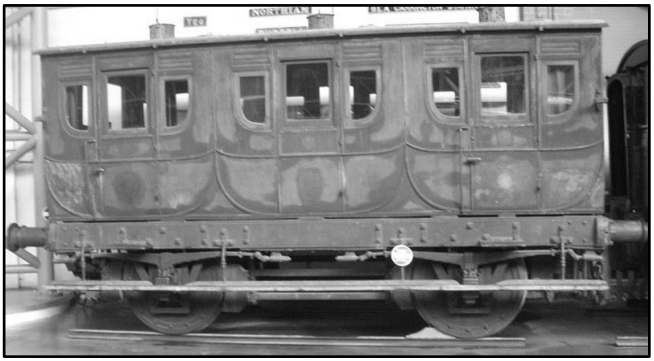
In January 1856 Gooch's bonuses ceased, and this put him into dispute with the ECR. His bonuses were stated to be £6,581 9s 8d in March but on 2 October he settled for £600! He did not attend the half-yearly meeting,

giving his address as Barrogill Castle, near Thurso, as guest of the Earl of Caithness!

Gooch's contract was terminated on 26 June 1856 with effect from the 30th. Waddington, who had aided Gooch in his money-making schemes also had to leave the company. So, by the end of 1856, the ECR chairman, David Waddington and Sir Morton Peto had given up their posts with the ECR. Robert Sinclair from the Caledonian Railway succeeded Gooch as locomotive superintendent in August 1856.

Gooch put up a tough defence and asked for arbitration of his case by Robert Stephenson, but, knowing of his and his family's connections with the Stephensons, the Board demurred. No charges were brought against Gooch, though Baker (see below) thinks that the business culture of the time had not developed enough to find his actions reprehensible and the 'freemasonry' of the Stephensons, Locke, brother Daniel, etc, 'threw barricades around him'.

Four months after his departure, Gooch was presented with an *épergne* and a sumptuous set of Victorian table silver. The donors were those who had profited from his schemes; those who did not contribute were the new directors of the company!



An unrestored Eastern Counties Railway first-class coach of 1851 in the National Railway Museum, York. Photo: Chris Pond.

George Hudson

George Hudson (c10 March 1800–14 December 1871) was a railway financier and MP who controlled a significant part of the railway network in the 1840s, and became known as the 'Railway King' in 1844. He helped link London and Edinburgh by rail, carrying out the first major merging of railway companies to form the Midland Railway and represented

Sunderland in Parliament. He used dubious financial methods and paid shareholders out of capital rather than revenue. In 1849, railways of which he was chairman launched enquiries which exposed him, although many in charge of the enquiries had approved of and benefited from his methods. Hudson became bankrupt and lost his Sunderland seat. He went abroad to avoid arrest for debt. His name is associated with financial malpractice.

David Waddington

David Waddington (c1810–12 October 1863) was a Conservative politician, born in Manchester, the son of an iron founder. By 1836 he was running his own steel mill. From 1845 to 1849 Waddington was vice-chairman of the Eastern Counties Railway and chairman from 1851–56. He negotiated agreements to work other East Anglian lines and created a network of 565 miles by 1854. His take-over of the Eastern Union Railway in 1854 by a very hard bargain caused the EUR chairman, J Cobbold, to remark: ' . . . you have done us'. He was MP for Maldon 1847–1852, for Harwich 1852–1856. His election for the Maldon constituency was controversial. Waddington died on 12 October 1863 from bowel cancer and was buried in Enfield (Wikipedia).

After Hudson fell, Waddington (vice-chairman under Hudson, although he claimed he had been approached to be chairman) said he had sold his ECR shares on 31 May 1849 and was thus no longer qualified to be a director. It appears he was again elected as a director on a shareholders' poll on 19 March 1851, though it is not clear when he re-acquired some shares. He was elected as chairman by the Board the next day and chaired the Traffic Committee on the 21st, so didn't waste any time.

Sir Samuel Morton Peto

Sir Samuel Morton Peto, 1st Baronet (4 August 1809–13 November 1889) was an entrepreneur, civil engineer and railway developer and, for more than 20 years, an MP. A partner in the firm of Grissell and Peto, he managed construction firms that built many major buildings and monuments in London, including The Reform Club, The Lyceum, Nelson's Column and the Hoses of Parliament, which made him a millionaire. As a partner in Peto and Betts, he became one of the major contractors in building the rapidly expanding railway network.

Gooch's later life

Not a lot is known about John Gooch's later life but with the wealth he had accumulated and his other business interests he probably lived very comfortably to his 88th year at his last residence, Cooper's Hill House, Easthampstead, Berkshire. Using the National Archive Converter of 2005, it seems that he had amassed in 1861 wealth of more than £863,000, in today's values.

In 1861, age 48, he was staying at the Great Western Railway Hotel, Paddington, probably because of his marital problems. It is feasible that this was organised by his brother Daniel through his GWR connections. It was also convenient for visiting Daniel who lived nearby in still rural Paddington. In 1862 John's address was Great George Street, Westminster. His formidable mother died on 24 November 1863, 30 years after her husband, at the age of 80 – an indication of from where John's longevity came.

In 1873 it seems that he visited South Africa with an address in Durban but for what purpose is not known. Durban was the site of the first short public railway in South Africa, but this was 13 years before John's visit.

His first wife died in 1874 and in 1876 he married Emily Mary Stonhouse. He would have been in his 64th year and his wife in her 36th. In 1881 they were living at Terrace Cottage, Richmond, Surrey, and John also gave an address at the Reform Club and his occupation as 'civil engineer'.

In 1881 his wife, aged 40, had given him a daughter, Mabel Barbara (age 4) and a son Edward Sinclair (age 2). Was Edward's middle name chosen to honour Robert Sinclair, his successor as locomotive superintendent of the ECR in August 1856? Both men were pupils of Locke and worked on the Grand Junction Railway and would surely have been known to one another, possibly friends, and both pioneered outside-cylinder engines.

Both of John's first two children were born in Richmond. At age 68 he was the father of two young children, with a wife 28 years his junior and they had five servants.

It seems that about 1882 the family moved to Coopers Hill House, Easthampstead, Berks, because in 1891 the census recorded John, now 78, civil engineer, living with his wife Emily Mary now 50, and daughters Mabel Barbara (age 16) and Ethel Mary (age 9) who was born at Easthampstead. Edward would probably have been at school – Winchester.

John's son, Major Edward Sinclair Gooch of the Berkshire Yeomanry (previously a lieutenant in the 7th Queen's Own Hussars in the South African War), was born on 26 February 1879 and died on 21 September 1915 of wounds received while 'gallantly leading his regiment in the Yeomanry charge [on Hill 70] at Suvla Bay' in the Gallipoli Campaign on 21 August 1916.

Major E S Gooch

Mentioned in despatches, he took command of the regiment when his colonel was invalided out the night before the attack and led the regiment skilfully over difficult country. With a revolver in his hand, he was first into the enemy's trenches but at that moment he received a bullet wound to the head and died a month later from his injuries.

Edward married Miss Eva Conway Everard Jones, of Torcastle, Banavie, Inverness-shire, and left one daughter. There is a plaque to his memory in St Andrew's Episcopal Church, High Street, Fort William, where he was buried with full military honours. Had he not been killed and had a similar lifespan as his father, father and son would have covered more than 150 years of British history.

John's elder daughter Mabel married Francis Bland in 1899 a year before John's death. Mrs Gooch was still living at Coopers Hill House in 1914, 102 years after her husband's birth. Easthampstead is now a southern suburb of Bracknell New Town.

Conclusion

In his lifetime John Gooch had seen the total development of our railways from their earliest days to a national rail system but had only contributed for the first part of his very long life. He kept in contact with his brothers and attended Daniel's funeral and that of Daniel's first wife.

One wonders if he sat at Coopers Hill thinking that, if he had not been so keen to profit, he might leave a reputation, similar to those of his grandfather, or younger brother, Daniel, or older brother, Thomas, as 'a truly upright and honest man'.

But the mists of time hid his peculations and his dismissal from the ECR, so much so that the Institute of Civil Engineers gave him a glowing obituary which reads in part as follows:

John Viret Gooch, who died on the 8th June, 1900 . . . was one of the last two or three remaining pioneers in railway locomotive engineering.

Mr Gooch had reached the ripe age of 88 and had retired from active business quite forty years ago, so that to all but a few of the present generation of engineers he was unknown, except for the excellent work he did and the influence he exerted in the evolution of the locomotive of to-day. In this connection, indeed, he deserves to be remembered with Trevithick, the Stephensons, his brother – Sir Daniel Gooch – Brunel, Locke, Sinclair, Ramsbottom, Allan, and others who need not be named. It was under Locke, when at his years of greatest energy and initiative, that Gooch served his pupillage . . .

In view of Mr Gooch's practice in later years, it is worth recalling that it was while he was with Locke that the latter reintroduced into favour the outside cylinder arrangement . . . so that by 1851 this type became the standard locomotive of the line. Gooch was occupied on this work and continued it during the three years he held the position of Resident Engineer on the Grand Junction Railway.

Early in the forties he became Resident Engineer on the London & South Western Railway, and for ten years had entire charge of the Locomotive Department. He resigned this position to serve in a similar capacity for the Eastern Counties . . . , retiring, as has been said, over forty years ago . . .

Mr Gooch afforded *another instance of commercial success* prematurely robbing engineering science of an able and experienced worker, for he did little practical work during the past forty years, enjoying country life in his Berkshire home.

While engaged in the work of railway locomotion he *applied himself diligently to his business*, and although he was elected a Member of this Institution on the 2nd May, 1854, he only spoke on two occasions . . . By those who knew him his *memory will be cherished*, and for his services to locomotive engineering he will always be respected. [*My italics*.]

(The full obituary goes into more locomotive engineering detail and is available online at:
http://www.gracesguide.co.uk/index.php?title=John_Viret_Gooch&oldid=711453)

At his death on 8 June 1900, John Viret Gooch left £84,000 (about £4 million today). Although Daniel Gooch was sometimes subject to some criticism for a few of his business dealings, they were not in the same league as John's and Daniel in fact wrote: 'I am sure few need fail to do well if they will win for themselves a character of strict honesty . . . that in their dealings with men they will act with honour.' A pity that his brother didn't appreciate this!

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Ted Martin

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Rev Herbert Walter Macklin (1866–1917) Founder and First President of the Monumental Brass Society

Rev Herbert Walter Macklin

Herbert Walter Macklin was born on 4 August 1866 in the London suburb of Tulse Hill. He was the only son of Horace Samuel Macklin and Helen Elizabeth Morphew who had married in early 1864. He had a sister, Helen, obviously named after her mother. Horace Macklin was a Commercial Clerk, nowadays perhaps known as a Company Secretary or Managing Clerk. He chose to emigrate to a new life in Australia in 1888 leaving the family behind in England. During the journey Horace died on board ship. Mrs Helen Macklin retired to Hastings where she died in 1891.

Herbert Macklin attended Manor House School, Hastings, and later Queen Elizabeth Grammar School, Cranbrook, Kent. He was admitted to St John's College, Cambridge in 1885 and gained a BA degree in 1888 with an MA following in 1892. It was

during his time at Cambridge that he became intensely interested in ancient and monumental brasses and, together with some friends from the University, formed a small club of people with similar interests which later became the Monumental Brass Society of which Macklin himself was President from 1903 to 1914.

On completing his studies at Cambridge in 1889 and at the suggestion of his College, Macklin moved to Cornwall where he was ordained a priest at Truro Cathedral in 1890. His first curacy was at St Ive near Liskeard and after two years there he moved to Princetown on Dartmoor one of the three largest parishes in England. Later in 1894 Macklin moved from Devon to the Diocese of Ely to be 'Curate in Charge' of the Parish of Somersham with Pidley cum Fenton and Colne, Huntingdonshire. This post must have been of some importance having previously been attached to the Chair of the Regius Professorship of Divinity at Cambridge University.

In January 1894, at Leusdon Church in Devon, Herbert married Marian Moore Bridgman, the eldest daughter of a local solicitor. They had five children. Their eldest son, Christopher, became a doctor at Ampthill, very close to his father in Houghton Conquest.

Second son, David (1897–1918), was a soldier in the First World War. Second Lieutenant David Macklin of the 4th Battalion, Bedfordshire Regiment, was killed in action on 27 March 1918.

During the intensive German offensive of spring 1918 his unit had been ordered to hold a particularly important machine gun post just outside the villages of Marcoing and Bouzincourt, 1 mile north of Albert. Lieutenant Macklin was one of the junior officers in the unit. The commanding officer, Lieutenant-Colonel John Collings-Wells, and second in command, Lieutenant C Keith-Johnston, repeatedly and personally led small parties of men against the attacking enemy for over two hours and until they actually ran out of ammunition, This was enough to cover the withdrawal to safety of the remainder of the Battalion and thus save them from slaughter.

Collings-Wells having been wounded in both arms and without ammunition withdrew with his officers to a bunker which was itself then shelled. Many of them including Collings-Wells and Macklin were killed. Collings-Wells was a month later posthumously awarded the Victoria Cross. Lieutenant David Macklin is buried in Ovillers Military Cemetery just north of the town of Albert but is commemorated on both the Gamlingay and Everton war memorials.

A sad family story tells that Mrs Macklin was sitting on the veranda at Whitewood Corner on the morning of 27 May 1918, when she saw her second son, Lieutenant David Macklin walking up the drive at the side of the house and towards the front door. She leaped up and excitedly exclaimed 'Oh David how lovely, some unexpected leave'. She went through the house to the front door, but when she opened it there was no one there. She later received the dreaded telegram confirming the date and time of her son's death as being the very time that she saw him on the drive.

The third son, Paul (1899–1976), was a distinguished soldier and regimental colonel. He was commissioned into the Queen's West Kent Regiment in 1918, served in France at the end of the First World War and then in India from 1919 to 1937. Further war service came with the onset of the Second World War, by the end of which he had been promoted to lieutenant-colonel and awarded the OBE. He subsequently served in Greece, Egypt and Austria finally retiring in 1949.

The fourth son, Laurence Hilary (always known as Hilary, 1902–1962), was a choral scholar, oarsman and later went up to St John's College, Cambridge, in 1921, gaining a BA in 1924 and an MA in 1928. For 10 years from 1925 to 1935 he worked for the Indian Civil Service in Calcutta and on his return to England he was appointed secretary to the Associated Board of the Royal Schools of Music in London where he remained until 1963.

Their last child, Austin (1905–1923), was unwell and was looked after by his mother throughout his short life.

Rector at Houghton Conquest and later life

In 1897 Macklin was presented by the Master and Fellows of St John's College to the living at Houghton Conquest near Bedford where he remained Rector for 17 years until ill-health obliged him to resign in October 1914, after which he retired to his new home at Whitewood Corner.

Throughout his life Macklin had been dogged by ill-health and he appears to have suffered from lengthy periods when he was unable to fulfil his priestly role. In the winter of 1900/1901, while he was at Houghton Conquest, and for the sake of his health, his Bishop recommended that he serve for six months as Assistant Chaplain in Nice.

He was accompanied by his wife, but the three sons were left at home in England. During this absence a temporary priest was brought into Houghton Conquest, and he also took responsibility for looking after the middle two sons David and Paul who continued to live at the Rectory. The

eldest son Christopher was boarded out with a clergy friend of Herbert's in Lancashire.

When he died in January 1917, Macklin had just finished proofreading the first draft of his *Short Guide to Bedfordshire and Huntingdonshire* for the Methuen Group, part of a series of early guidebooks covering the whole country. This was finally published later in the year and a good friend writing in the Preface refers to Macklin as 'a learned archaeologist' and says that the original *Monumental Brasses* had already been subject to six editions in 17 years and the later *Brasses of England,* three.

Macklin was survived by his wife Marian, sons Christopher, David, Paul, Hilary and Austin. He is buried in Houghton Conquest Churchyard.

Whitewood Corner

Whitewood Corner is a large, detached property on the boundary of the Parishes of Everton and Gamlingay (border of Bedfordshire and Cambridgeshire), and on the edge of the Woodbury Hall and Waresley Park estates. The land on which the bungalow is constructed was sold to the Rev Herbert Macklin in July 1914 by Colonel Walter Henry Octavius Duncombe. This puts the date of the building to late 1914.

Duncombe was the then owner of Waresley Park and a trustee of the Woodbury Hall estate on behalf of the widow of Mr John Harvey Astell. Duncombe, the grandson of the First Baron Feversham, had inherited Waresley Park in 1879. He was a captain in the Lifeguards, Honorary Colonel of the 4th Battalion Suffolk Regiment and the High Sheriff of Cambridgeshire and Huntingdonshire. By coincidence he and the Rev Macklin. who lived in such close proximity, died the day after each other in January 1917. Duncombe who was unmarried and had no issue left Waresley Park to his sister and it was eventually sold in 1932.

Whitewood Corner was a bungalow built in colonial style with a large veranda running the length of the front of the building. It had a private chapel although it is not known if this was fully consecrated. The veranda provided space in which the Rev Macklin could work, but still with some shelter from the elements.

It appears to have been fully glazed by a subsequent owner.

When the Rev Herbert Macklin died in January 1917 the property passed to his widow Mrs Marian Moore Macklin who lived there for a further 30 years until her own death in August 1953.

The bungalow was then inherited by the elder of the two surviving sons, Paul, who lived there with his own family for a few years before it was sold

in 1958. (Christopher the eldest son had predeceased his mother in 1943.) It still remains a family home.

It is not clear why Macklin chose to move to Gamlingay, but the suggestion is that he knew Duncombe, both had attended Cambridge University. Equally important, however, was that the land was among the highest points in the county, thereby providing fresh and unpolluted air and was also not too far distant from his last parish of Houghton Conquest.

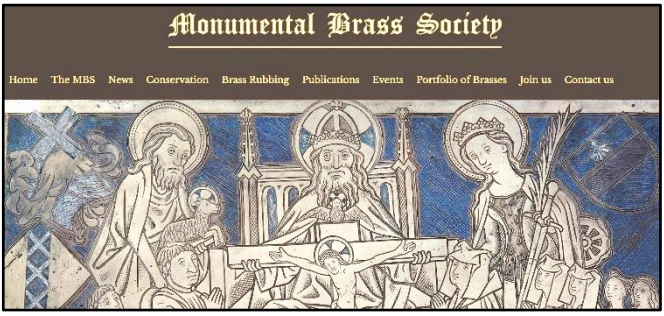
Monumental Brasses and other publications

The first *Monumental Brasses* was published in 1890 and the second, an even more important work, *The Monumental Brasses of England,* in 1907. This is still considered to be the definitive work on church brasses and is held by the British Museum and the British Library to be the most detailed inventory of brasses and the best reference book available.

The Monumental Brass Society

The Society, founded by Rev Macklin and his friends in 1887, still exists and is very important in the protection and restoration of rare and valuable early English and medieval monumental brasses and memorials. Its work now also includes incised stone slabs and has extended into Europe.

Many of our ancient churches and cathedrals have benefited from the expertise, knowledge and support of the Society.



See https://www.mbs-brasses.co.uk/

Acknowledgements

With grateful thanks to the Monumental Brass Society, Mr Mike Higgs and Dr Susan Macklin.

Trevor N Stewart

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The Bedford to Hitchin Railway

An article in the last issue (Winter 2026, Vol 10, No 11) related how, in January 1867, the celebrated author, Charles Dickens, made a fleeting visit to Bedford, and sparked a heated exchange in *The Times* about his uncomfortable and disconcerting journey on a Midland Railway express from Leicester. Because he made the journey in January 1867 before the Midland's through route to St Pancras was open, he would have completed it on the Bedford to Hitchin Railway to King's Cross, so we hope he had a more comfortable journey on that part of the route!

In 1845 the Midland Railway was thinking of further expansion and Leicester–Bedford–Hitchin seemed a good route. The then proposed Direct Northern or London and York (later Great Northern Railway, GNR) could provide access to London via Hitchin. It is said that pressure was put on the Midland Board by landowners at Market Harborough, Kettering and Bedford and that W H Whitbread was anxious to have the railway through his estate and offered land at £70 per acre.

So, the railway from Bedford to Hitchin was originally part of the main line of the Midland Railway to London and was built to give it access to the capital by running over the GNR from Hitchin into the GNR's King's Cross terminus. In 1852 the GNR and Midland reached agreement to accommodate Midland traffic at Hitchin, and the Midland obtained powers to build the line on 4 August 1853. Thomas Brassey began building it in 1855 and the total route was built for £1 million – a low figure for that time – and it opened throughout on 8 May 1857. At first, passengers had to change at Hitchin onto GNR trains, and this lasted until 1 February 1858 when Midland trains were allowed to run into King's Cross.

There were problems in building the railway because of the Greensand Ridge near Shefford, so it had to go through a tunnel at Old Warden and through a cutting to the north of Shefford. From this cutting it made a wide sweep to the north coming into Shefford and ran across the valley floor on an embankment which reached its widest part in the goods yard just south of Ampthill Road. The tunnel at Old Warden, which is half a mile long and approached through a mile-long cutting, was therefore not the only difficulty. At this point, the railway was single track.

The line did well from its opening, but it became clear in 1862 that the Midland must have its own direct route to London, mainly because the GNR gave priority to its own trains at Hitchin. When the new direct Midland line opened in 1868, the Bedford–Hitchin line became a secondary

cross-country route, though some expresses still ran to King's Cross until St Pancras station was completely ready. The original double track from Bedford was singled in 1912 and the service was provided by steam 'rail-motor' trains until diesel units were provided in 1960.

19th century 2–4–0 Midland engine designed by Matthew Kirtley

Intermediate stations on the Bedford–Hitchin line were at Cardington, Southill, Shefford and Henlow (renamed Henlow Camp from 1 March 1933). These conformed to a standard design with low platforms and small buildings of yellow brick with lattice windows in cast-iron frames. Shefford never had good station buildings: the platforms were of timber and so was the booking hall until one of brick with a parcels office was built in the station yard. All had full passenger facilities except Henlow Camp, which had no accommodation sidings for furniture vans, livestock, horseboxes or carriages brought by passenger train. Only Shefford and the separate Hitchin Midland goods station had cranes, both of 1 ton 10 cwt capacity.

Passenger services were a basic four trains each way (six in 1910) on weekdays, with extras on Tuesdays; by 1938 there were also three trains each way on Sundays, and weekday extras to the basic four-train pattern ran on Tuesdays, Wednesdays, Fridays and Saturdays.

What the railway lacked for its survival was industry. The only real industries in the area were the gas works and scrap yard at Shefford, and a quarry at Henlow where special sidings were constructed. Near Shefford station were the cattle and goods yards with associated sidings. Traffic figures for the railway in 1952 show 40 passengers per day from Shefford, 112 from Henlow Camp and 168 from Cardington. The Bedford–Hitchin Railway closed completely on 1 January 1962.

However, the route did have one more flourish in that it provided facilities for the railway chase in the film *Those Magnificent Men in their Flying Machines*. So, if you see the film, you can see the almost now vanished route and the tunnel. **Ted Martin**

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An earlier version of this article first appeared in HIB, issue 5,11, Spring 2012.

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Around Bedfordshire

Rusty bricks at Woburn

When the 11th Duke of Bedford had part of the immense brick wall round Woburn Park rebuilt in about 1900, he renewed the section which runs alongside the road between Ridgmont and Woburn, from the lodge gates at the edge of Ridgmont to the next lodge gates at Husborne Crawley. But the 'bricks' in some of the buttresses have gone rusty! The buttresses are made of cast iron moulded to look like brickwork. The story is that the Duke bought them to save a friend who owned an ironworks from bankruptcy.

Harrold: lockup and market house

From the architectural point of view, the best of the county's surviving lockups is that on the green at Harrold. Though looking primitive in form, it was built only in 1824. Its stout door and complete absence of windows must have made a night there very unpleasant indeed.

Harrold lock-up

Harrold market house is also to be found on the green and dates from the early 18th century. Its roof, which is supported by eight wooden posts and surmounted by a cupola provided shelter for stallholders, especially those selling dairy produce, so it is sometimes called the Butter Cross.

[Lock-up photo © Jeff Tomlinson, licensed for reuse under the Creative Commons Licence.]

Roxton thatched congregational chapel

Unlike most sober nonconformist chapels which usually have a classical façade, the mock rustic cottage style of the congregational chapel at Roxton is surprising. It seems that the local squire, Charles Metcalf, was a congregationalist and grew tired of travelling six miles to the nearest chapel, so decided to build a chapel on the edge of his estate at Roxton in 1808. As he was able to see it from his house, he decided that a picturesque design would be best. So, in addition to the thatched roof, it has ogee-pointed windows and a twisted tree trunk veranda. There is even a small summer house in the back corner, intended for the private use of the Metcalf family. [Photo © Martin Hatch.]

With thanks to **John Thurston**

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Restorative Justice?

The February 2026 issue of *History Extra Magazine* (formerly known as the *BBC History Magazine*), page 51, tells of some glass panels in Canterbury Cathedral which show the story of an unfortunate man named Eilward from Westoning. He was involved in a dispute with a neighbour which ended with terrible violence. The upshot was that Eilward was blinded and castrated. But then, St Thomas Becket appeared to him in a dream, followed by a miracle when his eyesight and testicles were restored. Eternally grateful he went on pilgrimage to Canterbury.

Local History Books

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(Contact the Editor if you wish your society's books to be included)

A History of Some Faith Groups in Bedford. A Special Issue of Bedford Local History Magazine, Edited by Bob Ricketts, CBE. Bedford Architectural, Archaeological and Local History Society. A4, 92pp, price £5 to non-BAALHS members, available from the Eagle Bookshop, 16–20 St Peter's Street, Bedford MK40 2NN.

At the Long Ford: A History of Langford, by Michael Rutt; Ed, Ted Martin. Paperback, 172pp incl indexes. Price £7 (£10 by post). Langford & District History Society, 2021. Contact John Shipman, j.m.shipman@ntlworld.com. Tel 01462 700650.

Beats, Boots and Thieves – A History of Policing in North Bedfordshire, By Des Hoar and Richard Handscomb. Sharnbrook Local History Group. 2013. Paperback, 146pp, £10 from 24 Loring Road, Sharnbrook, Bedford MK44 1JZ.

Bedford History Timeline, by Alan Crawley and Bob Ricketts. Bedford Architectural, Archaeological and Local History Society. 2019, Paperback, 94pp, 119 illustrations. Price £8, from the Eagle Bookshop, 16–20 St Peter's Street, Bedford MK40 2NN or £10 incl postage from Bob Ricketts, 68 Mendip Crescent, Bedford, MK41 9EP.

Bedford Town Centre Statues, by Stuart Antrobus, £5, on sale only at the John Bunyan Museum shop, Mill Street, Bedford, MK40 3EU**.** Tel 01234 270303. Tuesday to Saturday 11am to 4pm.

*Clophill in the Great War: Those who Died and those who Survived***,** by Colin Watt. Hardback, A5 landscape, 169pp, £12.50 + £2.50 p& p. For purchase details see: website bit.ly/307uLMM or phone 01525 860922.

Colmworth and Neighbours History: Volume 5, March 2023. Published by Colmworth and Neighbours History Society: www.colmworthhistory.org.uk.
44pp including cover, price £6, plus £1.60 p & p from secretary@colmworthhistory.org.uk or Dave Jarrett, 3 Collingwood Road, Eaton Socon, PE19 8JQ.

Colmworth and Neighbouring Villages: Then and Now, by Colmworth and Neighbours History Society. 2018. Paperback, 46pp, 100+ illustrations, £5 + £2 postage from Dave Jarrett, 3 Collingwood Road, Eaton Socon, PE19 8JQ.

Henry Clutton: Victorian Architect of Gothic Revival Churches and Country Houses, by Gordon Vowles: Clutton's life and work in Bedfordshire and elsewhere. 2022. Willington Local History Group. £10 + p&p, contact WHLG website: www.localhistory.me.uk or by email wlhg2022@gmail.com

Henry John Sylvester Stannard with notes on his daughter Theresa Sylvester Stannard, by Richard Morgan. Bedfordshire Local History Association, 2018. 48pp incl index., £5 + p&p. Available via the BLHA website: http: //www.bedfordshire-lha.org.uk

*Langford Then and Now 2006***.** Langford & District History Society, 2006. Paperback, 40pp, 80+ photos, £4, Contact John Shipman:
j.m.shipman@ntlworld.com. Tel 01462 700650.

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The Life and Times of Sir John Gostwick: Tudor Entrepreneur and Bureaucrat, by Gordon Vowles. The life and times of Willington's most famous son, a man who served Wolsey, Cromwell and Henry VIII. 2018. Willington Local History Group. 60pp, £6 + p&p, contact WHLG website: www.localhistory.me.uk or by email wlhg2022@gmail.com

The Parish of St Lawrence, Willington, its Church and Vicars, by Gordon Vowles, traces the history of the church and parish, setting this in the context of wider social and ecclesiastical developments. 2016. Willington Local History Group. 66pp, £5 + p&p, contact WHLG website:
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The Reverend Augustus Orlebar, by Gordon Vowles, covers the life of the long-serving vicar Augustus Orlebar, vicar of Willington for 54 years. 2010. Willington Local History Group. 62pp, £4 + p&p, contact WHLG website:
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Willington and the Danes, Myth and Reality, by Gordon Vowles, explores the period when Willington and Bedford stood on the borders between Saxon and Viking territories, covering what has been said and written about the physical traces of the Danish presence in the area. 2013. Willington Local History Group. 36pp, £4 + p&p, contact WHLG website:
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Willington in the Eighteenth Century, by Robert Bollington, covers the period, when Willington formed part of the estates of the Duke of Marlborough. The book provides an insight into village life at the time, when the village was a small farming community. 2014. Willington Local History Group. 42pp, £4 + p&p, contact WHLG website:
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Willington in the First World War, by Robert Bollington, sets out to paint a picture of what the war meant for local people, both those in the forces and those supporting the war effort at home. 2018. 96pp, 27 illustrations, £6 + p&p, contact WHLG website: www.localhistory.me.uk or by email wlhg2022@gmail.com

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