

# The Railway



Pinchbeck Station 1906



J.G. Fouldes - porter at Pinchbeck  
1938 - 1946.

## The Railway at Pinchbeck

As remembered by John G. Fouldes

Pinchbeck was on the Great Eastern and Great Northern joint line from March to Doncaster. The station was built and opened in 1882, along with workshops for the blacksmiths, painters, carpenters, bricklayers and a building for the platelayers. This resulted in a number of cottages being built in 1889 for the railway staff. Of those, only the ones in Rotten Row remain. The Station master's house, also in Rotten Row, now demolished, was believed to have been an old farmhouse, which was in existence when the station was built.

The main station buildings consisted of, on the 'up' side, the booking office and booking hall, a ladies waiting room, gents toilet, porters room and a lamp room where the signal lamps were cleaned, trimmed and filled, and the paraffin was stored. In the yard opposite there was a weighbridge. On the 'down' side of the track, there was a general waiting room and a ladies waiting room. There was also a goods shed with a goods office attached, which was later turned into a storage room for railway sacks hired out to farmers for loading corn. The station did not have a foot bridge, therefore passengers wishing to cross from one platform to the other, had to use a crossing at either end.

Before and during World War Two, Pinchbeck Station was very busy with the loading of potatoes, grain, baled hay and straw and sugar beet, also flower traffic by passenger train. Inward loaded traffic were wagons of coal, cattle cake, seed pots, and empty potato sacks. There were three shunt sidings, two on the 'down' side and one on the 'up' side. Three sidings for loading goods and one siding for unloading coal and goods and a cattle dock.

About ten passenger trains stopped at Pinchbeck a

day, from 7.30 a.m. to 9.00 p.m. Quite a lot of people used the trains, especially ladies with prams going to Spalding to do their shopping. In fact the guards van was full of prams, particularly on Market days.

There was a signal box on the 'down' side, opposite the goods shed, which pre-war was a two-man shift box and during the war was a three-man shift box. This box continued until it was closed. Shunting with goods was carried out in the morning for about 2 hours, placing wagons of coal at the coal drops for unloading, and empty the loaded wagons away. One train used to leave around 5 o'clock for the north, one with the Midland and London GN Section in the evening, and another to London GE Section later. These trains started from Donington Road and Gosberton. Pinchbeck was one of the stations for receiving pigeon racing traffic. 'Specials' used to arrive on a Saturday morning for 'liberation' at mid-day. They mostly came from the Essex area. The 'Specials' were comprised of 5 or 6 pigeon vans. The empty baskets were returned to the senders on the following day by ordinary goods service. During the 2nd World War, a train of empty sleeping coaches were sent from Holloway Carriage sidings to Pinchbeck for 'stabling' during the bombing of London, these were placed in one of the 'down' sidings. In the 'up' siding, sometimes a train load of bombs en route for the Norfolk Air Force Camps were stabled for the night if the train could not reach its destination that night. Potatoes were also loaded at Pinchbeck during the War for the Ministry of Food; when the wagons were loaded in the goods yard they were taken by the shunt engine across to the down siding and when forty or so wagons were ready, an engine was sent from Whitmoor to work these as a special train under Ministry of Foods orders.

After the cessation of hostilities, life on the railways returned to a more normal level of business, but unfortunately the general decline in useage resulted in Pinchbeck Station closing on the 11th September 1961. All the station buildings were demolished.



(Above) Railway Staff cottages in 1908, showing (L-R) 'Cis' Thurston, Mrs Tabiner, Mrs Ground with Ernest, Alf and Baby Frank, Mrs Worthington with Ena and Victoria Stratton.

(Left) James R. Knight

(Below) Stationmaster's House - James R. Knight was the last stationmaster (1956 until closure) working for British Railways all his life. The house was demolished around 1968.

