



## **The Uppingham Railway**

### **By Andrew David (C 69)**

**As a pupil at Uppingham from 1969 to 1974 I became interested in the former Uppingham railway station, with encouragement from my inspirational Art Master, Warwick Metcalfe (JPWM), and equally inspirational history teacher, Roy Ford – whose Friday evening Local history bicycle trips around Rutland, for new boys who chose to opt out of ‘Corps’ (CCF), made a lasting impression on me.**

My research led me to a number of people who had worked on the railway, from whom I gathered a collection of photographs and plans of the line, and in 1979 I contributed to a local history publication concerning the railways of Rutland.

The Uppingham railway line opened in 1894, as a branch off the former London and North Western Railway (LNWR) Rugby to Peterborough line (the ‘Nene Valley’ line) and provided a passenger service for sixty-six years, including School Specials calling at Rugby, Bletchley and London Euston.

In 1910 there were five scheduled trains daily to Seaton and four return journeys (five on Fridays), and in 1922 an extra return journey was added. Joining the line beyond the station at Uppingham was a mineral branch line serving Uppingham iron-stone quarry – located beyond what is now the A6003 road out of the town – and which survived into the 1930s.



*Uppingham Station, 1958*  
*Photo credit: Lamberhurst*

Ownership of the LNWR network passed to the London Midland and Scottish Railway (LMS) on the Grouping of the Railways in 1923, and to British Railways (London Midland Region) in 1947; the line closed to passengers in 1960, and to all traffic in 1964 – the site becoming a small industrial area, with the Station Master’s House remaining until 1970, and the Goods Shed until after 1974; the track-bed was clearly visible at the time when I was a pupil at the School, but today the only surviving infrastructure is the stable buildings, the weigh-bridge, and part of a retaining wall, at the top of Station Road.

My research also led me to the late John Marriott of Leicester Model Railway Group, who in the 1970s created a rather fine 1:76.2 scale model layout of Uppingham Station, in what is known in model railway circles as ‘EM Gauge’ – as there is an 18.2 millimetres width (the ‘gauge’) between the running rails. The rolling-stock for the layout was all made from either kits, or was hand-built (‘scratch-built’) – in stark contrast to the ‘Ready-To-Run’ plastic laser-cut stock that has flooded the model railway market in recent years.



*Scale model layout of Uppingham Station*

For many years the layout was in the care of Peter Simmerson, who exhibited it at various model railway exhibitions and, earlier this year, generously donated the model to the School, where it now resides, safely stored in the Archives, awaiting some TLC and attention, in particular to the wiring, so that it can again be put on show to the public at appropriate local model railway exhibitions.

**This October, to mark the 130<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the opening of Uppingham station, The Model Railway Club (1910) London – the world’s oldest model railway club – hosted a Lecture entitled ‘Uppingham (LNWR) – Rutland’s only passenger branch terminus: the first 130 years’.**



*Uppingham Station, around 1958*