

It continues to operate that far for the use of trains carrying metropolitan refuse to a disposal site. The Banbury-Woodford local service had been withdrawn two years earlier, in June 1964, and, as was the custom of the time, the last train was packed with passengers (not 'customers' in those days) including the present writer. The Rugby-Nottingham section lingered on for local services worked by Diesel Multiple Units until 1969 when that too ceased, and with it regular passenger trains north of Aylesbury on the 1899 London extension.



The last summer of the G.C.R.'s London extension. The 4.38 p.m. from Marylebone to Nottingham approaches Helmdon on 10th May 1966, although Woodford Halse will be the next stop. The generous dimensions of the cutting and the three-arch bridge of 1899, built to the continental loading gauge, are evident. The bridge still survives to carry the Greatworth to Syresham road, but trains and track have long gone.

Thereafter the track was lifted and most of the structures demolished. All trace of Nottingham Victoria station has gone save for its clock tower which stands isolated amidst a sea of shops. Brackley's long viaduct is now the site of a by-pass and housing, but its counterpart to the north at Helmdon stands yet, in the quiet Northamptonshire countryside, like Shelley's Ozymandias, as a memorial to what once was, and what might have been.

Although the station buildings have nearly all disappeared the distinctive station-masters' houses remain, now of course privately owned. The building of the Top Station at Brackley survives however, somewhat ironically, as a tyre depot for motor vehicles. Woodford Halse has reverted to its pre-railway peacefulness, no longer echoing to the sounds of passing trains and shunting throughout the day and night, but