

STOCKBRIDGE RAILWAY STATION

By R. WARMINGTON

A CANAL was opened between Redbridge and Andover, following the valleys of the Rivers Test and Anton in 1794. The financial results of this undertaking disappointed its proprietors and there were a number of proposals to replace it by a railway. These finally materialised in 1865, about $7\frac{3}{4}$ miles of line being on a new alignment and about $14\frac{1}{4}$ miles along the bed of the canal. The work was begun by the Andover and Redbridge Railway Company, who were the successors to the Andover Canal Company.

The canal was closed in 1859, but by 1861 the new Company ran out of money and the constructional work was suspended. After a prolonged conflict with the rival Great Western Company, who wished to incorporate the Andover and Redbridge into their broad gauge network, the London and South Western Railway acquired the line, resumed construction in 1864, and opened it for traffic with a single track of standard gauge on 6th March 1865. Stations were opened at Mottisfont, Horsebridge (for Kings Somborne), Stockbridge, Fullerton, Clatford and Andover Town. Miscellaneous buildings were added at various times, ranging from the corrugated iron of Andover Station to the architecture of Stockbridge.

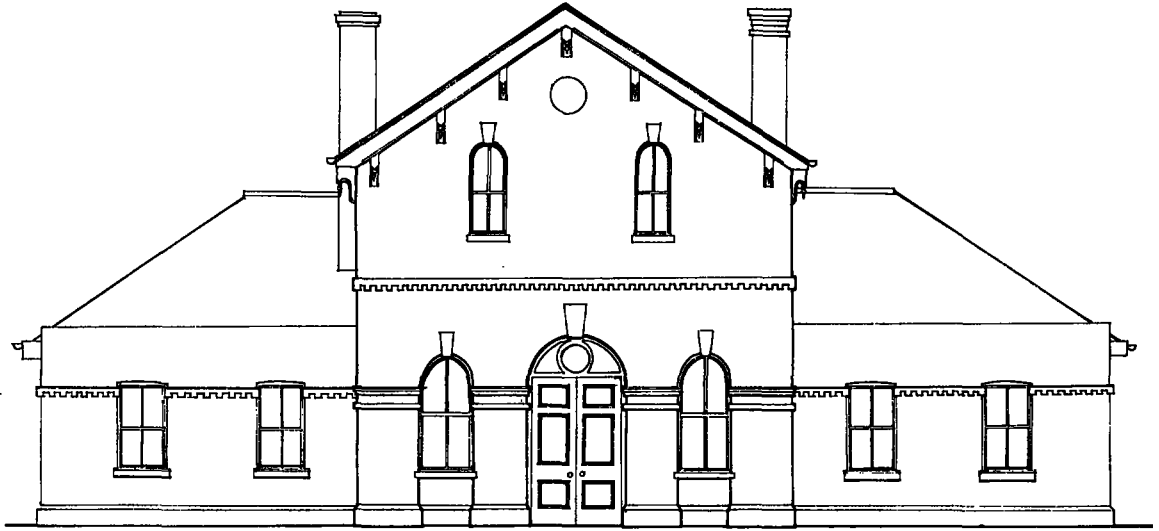
In 1885, when the branch line from Fullerton to Hurstbourne was opened, a new station was constructed at Fullerton, and in 1883 a station was opened at Nursling, between Redbridge and Romsey. The line was doubled by 1885. It acquired through traffic after the completion of the M. & S.W.J.R. from Andover to Cheltenham in 1891 and at one time carried through coaches from Southampton to Glasgow.

The branch from Fullerton to Hurstbourne was closed to passengers in 1931 and to all traffic in 1956. The section between Redbridge and Kimbridge Junction, north of Romsey, remains open but from here to Andover the line was closed to all traffic on 7th September 1964. After a stay of execution, the removal of the track was completed in 1969.

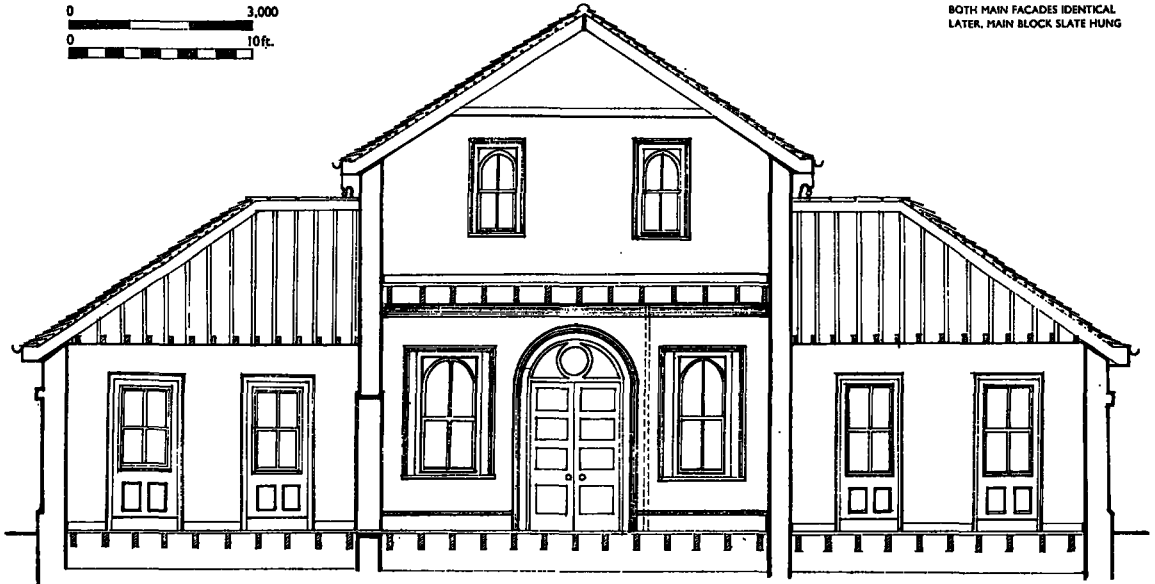
The station building at Stockbridge survives as the most sophisticated example of railway architecture on the line, and one of the best wayside stations in Hampshire. It has suffered little alteration beyond the addition of nondescript outbuildings on either side of the original station. It is highly probable that the design originates with the Andover & Redbridge Railway Company and that construction was begun and, perhaps even completed, before the L.S.W.R. acquisition. The name of the architect is unknown and, therefore, the source of inspiration is untraced (pl. XII).

The architecture is vaguely classical, with splashes of an Italianate tradition, applied to a very formal, symmetrical and robust composition. A final lighthearted finishing touch is provided by delicate timber pendants suspended from the barge boards of the gables in the best rustic revival tradition, the complete antithesis of the classical style. The plan is rectangular, consisting of a two storey central block with a single storey unit on either side. The central block contains a large booking hall, with limited accommodation for the station master on the upper floor. The roof is medium pitch, with gables presented to the track and station approach. Bold but simple stacks

STOCKBRIDGE RAILWAY STATION 1865
Andover & Redbridge Rly. L S W R



BOTH MAIN FACADES IDENTICAL
LATER, MAIN BLOCK SLATE HUNG



DESIGNED & DRAWN BY RONALD WARRINGTON 4/98

Fig. 44. Stockbridge Railway Station.

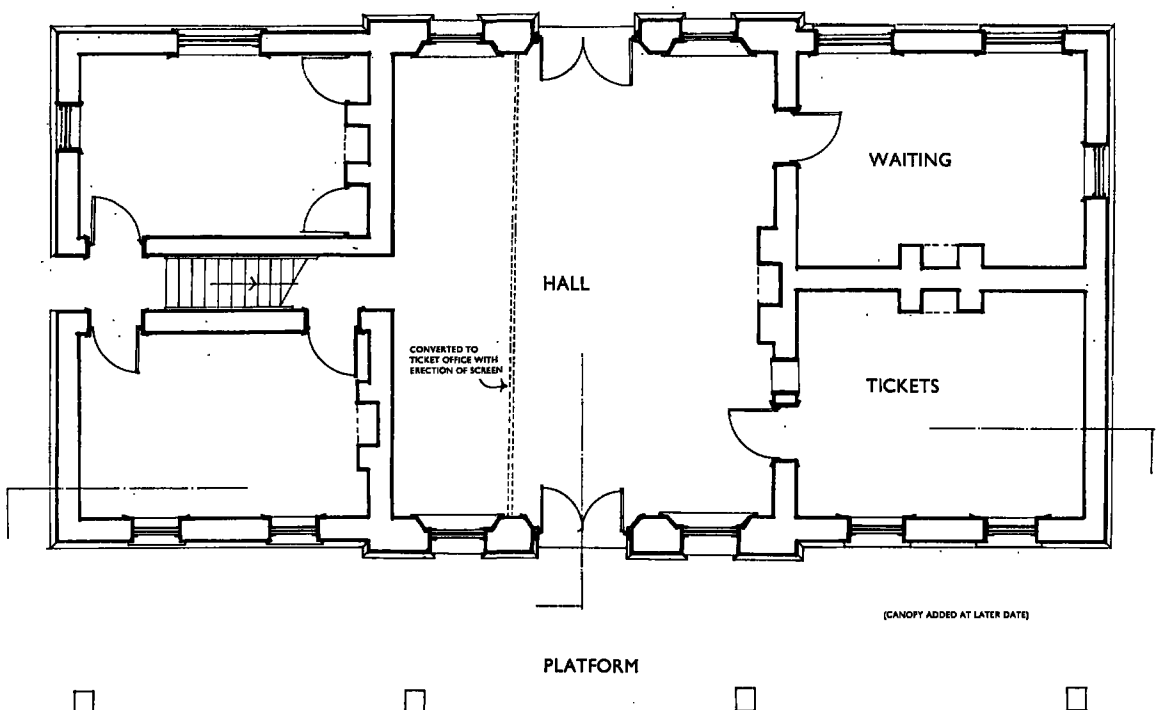
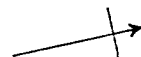
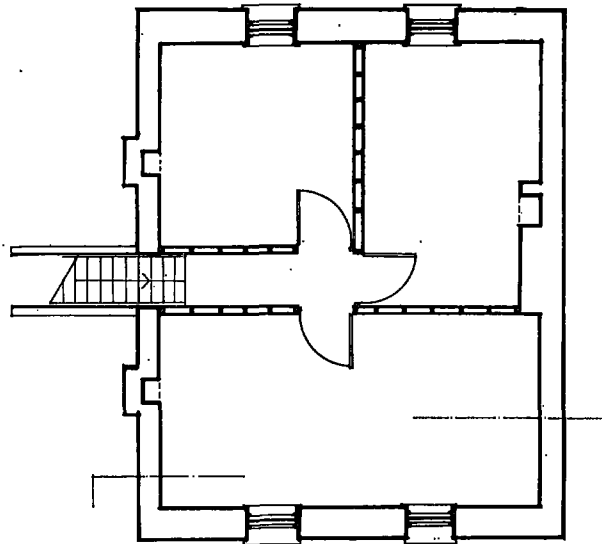
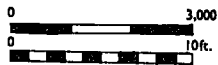
STOCKBRIDGE RAILWAY STATION

pass up the side walls, visually framing the gable, and produce a well-balanced design. The single storey units have hip roofs supported on the side walls of the central block, and complete a classically formal elevation. Each of these low units are divided into two large rooms. One was a ticket office, the others apparently waiting rooms. All have hearths, and there is a further hearth in the booking hall. Evidently the ticket office was found to be inadequate, so part of the booking hall was screened off to serve as a new ticket office at the end of the century. The former ticket office became a waiting room, and one of the waiting rooms was converted for staff use. The canopy along the front of the station was added c. 1900, the original design having made no provision for platform shelter. It is probable that these developments were associated with the success of the Stockbridge Race Course, situated at Danebury (*cf.* Relations between Singleton Station and Goodwood).

The station is constructed of red brick and is very well-built throughout. The roofs are slate and, at a later date, possibly the 1890s, the walls were slate hung. As first built, the station roofs could possibly have been tiled, but there is no evidence to prove this conclusively.

The station now faces demolition for road works, following the closure of the line under the Beeching Plan. It is an interesting building and a good example of a small country station which has survived complete, being the sole significant architectural contribution of the Andover & Redbridge Railway Company to railway architecture. It was surveyed by the present writer in April 1969.

Plans



MEASURED & DRAWN BY RICHARD WASHINGTON 4/1893

Fig. 45. Stockbridge Railway Station.

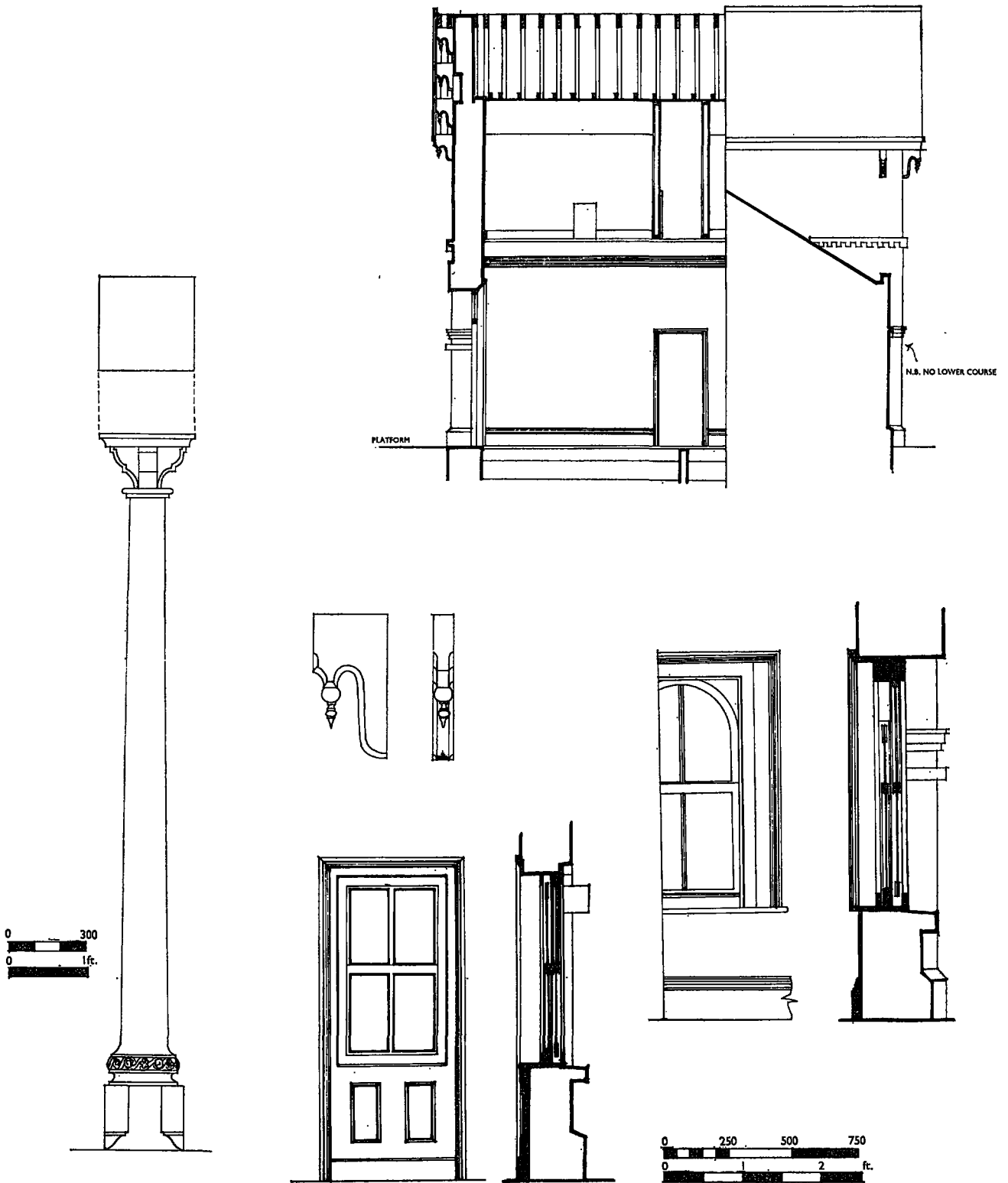


Fig. 46. Stockbridge Railway Station, details.

MEASURED & DRAWN BY ROBERT WHEATON 1/1953