

CRAVEN'S HISTORICAL COMMUNITY STATIONS

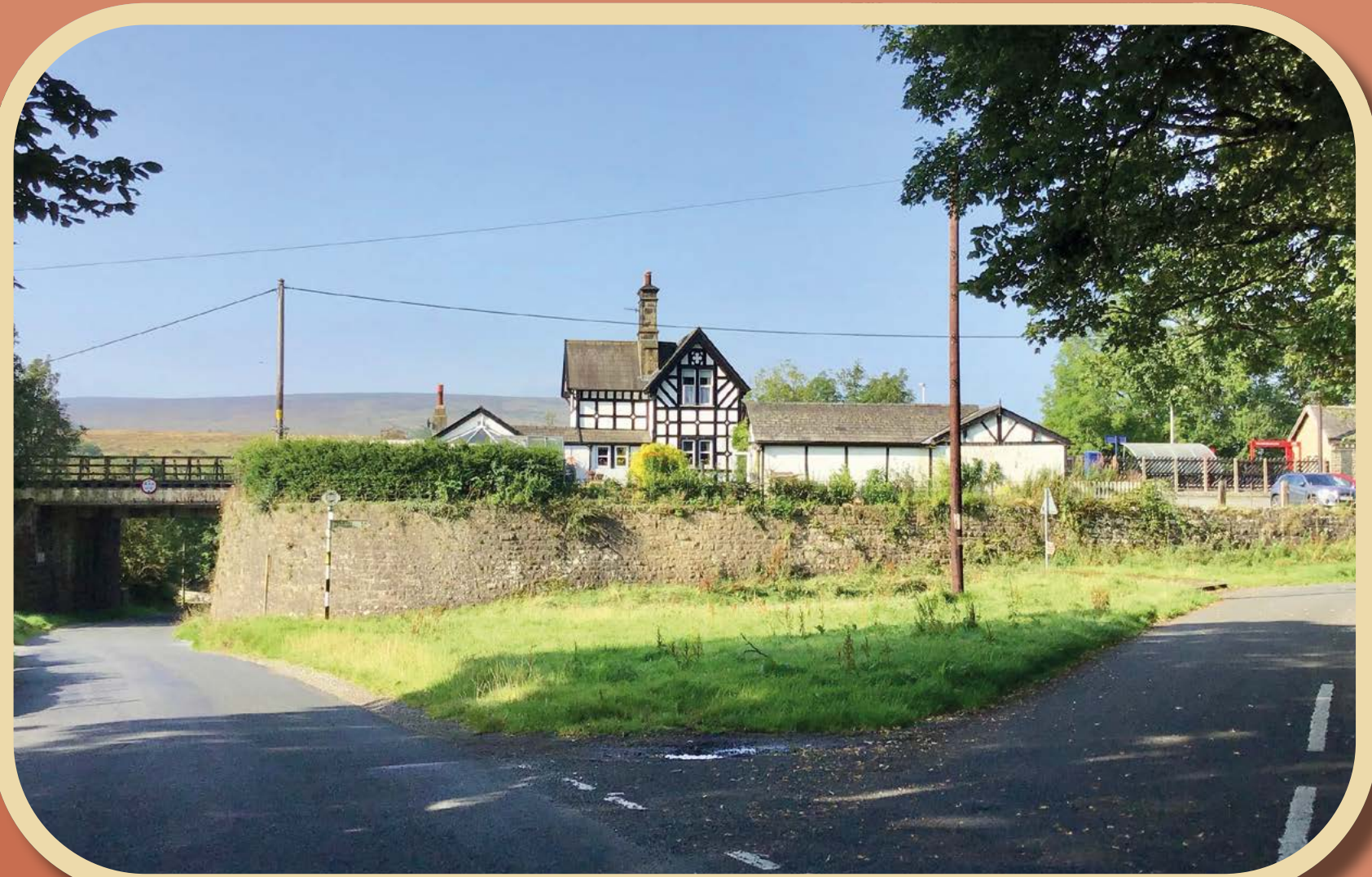
CLAPHAM



Clapham Station in the mid 1950s as a Clapham to Ingleton passenger service rolls into the station over the cross over. Photo: John Robinson Collection



A Morecambe-Leeds service crosses the junction with the Ingleton Line. Clapham signal box can be seen in the fork of the junction. Photo: John Robinson Collection



An August 2019 view of Clapham Station taken from the station approach road. Photo: Brian Haworth



The Leeds to Heysham Port 'boat train' crosses Clapham viaduct east of the station. Photo: Gerald Townson

A BRIEF HISTORY OF CLAPHAM STATION

Clapham's railway station, which sits about a mile from the village, has a history which makes interesting reading. The first railway to reach Clapham was built by the Little North Western Railway Company on its 25-mile route from Skipton to Ingleton. The station was opened on the 30th July 1849 and the first timetable showed four passenger services in each direction. Initially, the line was built as a single track but within three years it was doubled as far as Clapham and the section to Ingleton was closed. The closure of the branch stemmed from the failure of the railway companies to agree a strategy for the line north of Ingleton. Whilst closed an unofficial horse drawn service seems to have been run. The Ingleton branch remained closed from 1850 to 1861 then reopened until final closure in 1966.

The second line to reach Clapham, and form the junction, was the extension of the line from Wennington and Bentham which followed the picturesque Wenning valley, opening on 1st June 1850. This also marked the completion of the entire line from Leeds to Morecambe.

Clapham station was built in the Little North Western 'mock-Tudor' style and a substantial shelter was added on each platform, built in local stone, by the Midland Railway around 1870. The stone shelter which has survived is now a Grade-II listed building which should ensure its use for intending passengers for years to come. The attractive station house survives in private ownership. The original wooden footbridge was replaced with a steel structure in the 1950s. A signal box was sited in the fork of the junction with a cattle dock and pens opposite the box on the Ingleton side. On leaving the station eastbound a graceful five-tiered viaduct carries the line over the River Wenning.

The Railway Clearing House handbook of stations for 1904 lists Clapham as having facilities to deal with passengers, goods, furniture vans, livestock and horse boxes: it is not recorded as having a goods crane at this time.

Originally, the platforms faced each other but following subsidence the down platform was moved west of the footbridge and the footbridge modified to suit. The last station master at Clapham was Peter Colton who had previously worked at Bell Busk station. The station closed to goods traffic in 1965.

The station was often referred to as Clapham (Yorks) in national timetables to distinguish it from its rather busier southern cousin. The unusually named Flying Horseshoe public house used to trade opposite the station entrance but this closed and was converted into a private residences. In old English, the word Clapham means noisy-stream homestead; a very apt name for the village which is one of the gateways to Ingleborough, the Yorkshire Dales National Park and the Forest of Bowland Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty.

