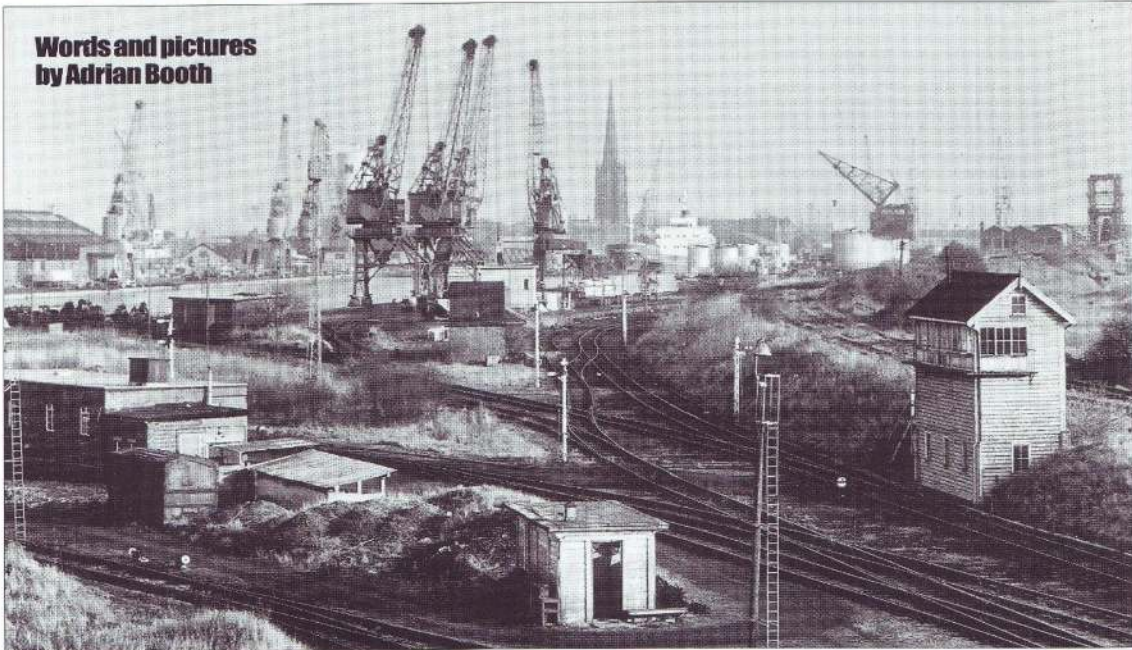
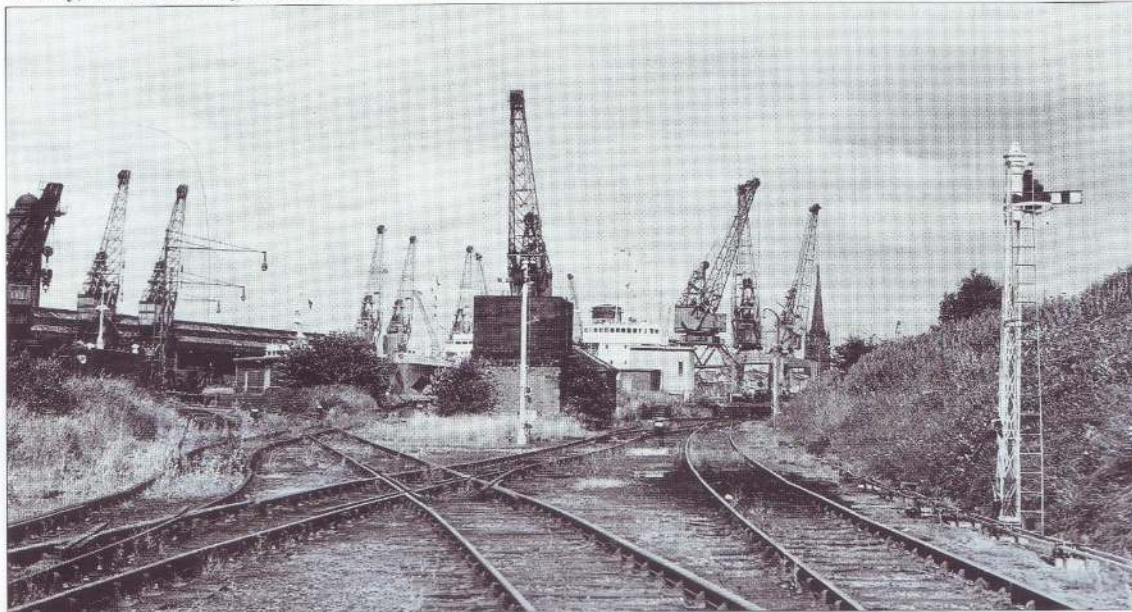


# THE PORT OF GOOLE

Words and pictures  
by Adrian Booth



The town of Goole, in the East Riding of Yorkshire, is situated on the west bank of the navigable River Ouse. The river forms a large horseshoe curve at the east end of the town before flowing out into the River Humber and on to the sea. Although Goole is the best part of fifty miles from the North Sea, it has been an important port for some 170 years. Its fortunes as a port were greatly enhanced during the railway age, with main line railways offering good communications to Pontefract (to the west), Doncaster (to the south-west) and Hull (to the east). Goole Docks are still operational today and, indeed, are still rail connected. Somewhat inevitably, though, the railway operations are not what they once were; many of the sidings which saw intensive use in busier times now have an air of abandonment and, in many cases, are rather herbaceous. But as these photographs show, an air of abandonment does not automatically imply a lack of interest value – in fact, views of railway sidings, yards and the like *without* too many trains allow us to have a closer look at the infrastructure. Here we are looking east from the bridge which carries the link road around the western end of the docks. The date is 15 January 1988. The tracks we see here originally belonged to the Lancashire & Yorkshire Railway; although Goole was also served by the North Eastern Railway, it was the Lanky which served the docks. There appears to be only one ship in port.

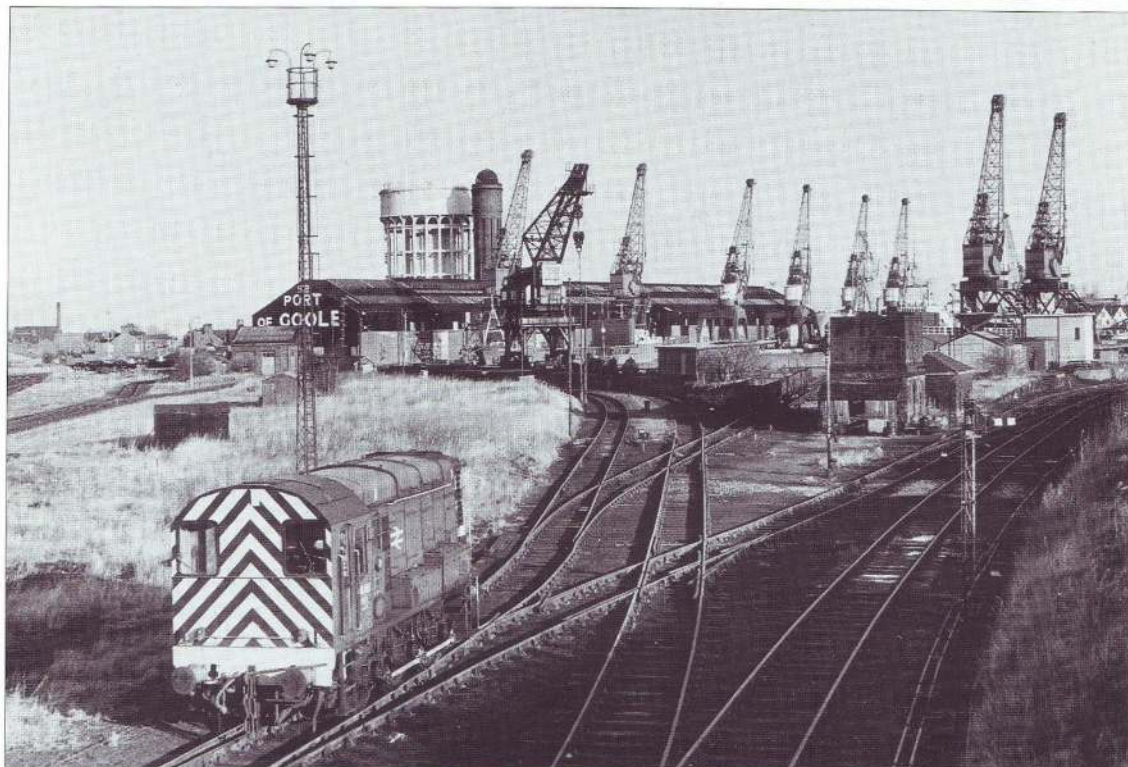


A ground-level view, 11 July 1987. The railway infrastructure includes three ancient-looking single-arm shunting signals and two diamond crossings.

February 2000 RAILWAY BYLINES

Scanned from Railway Bylines (Feb 2000)  
More info at [www.goole-on-the-web.org.uk](http://www.goole-on-the-web.org.uk)



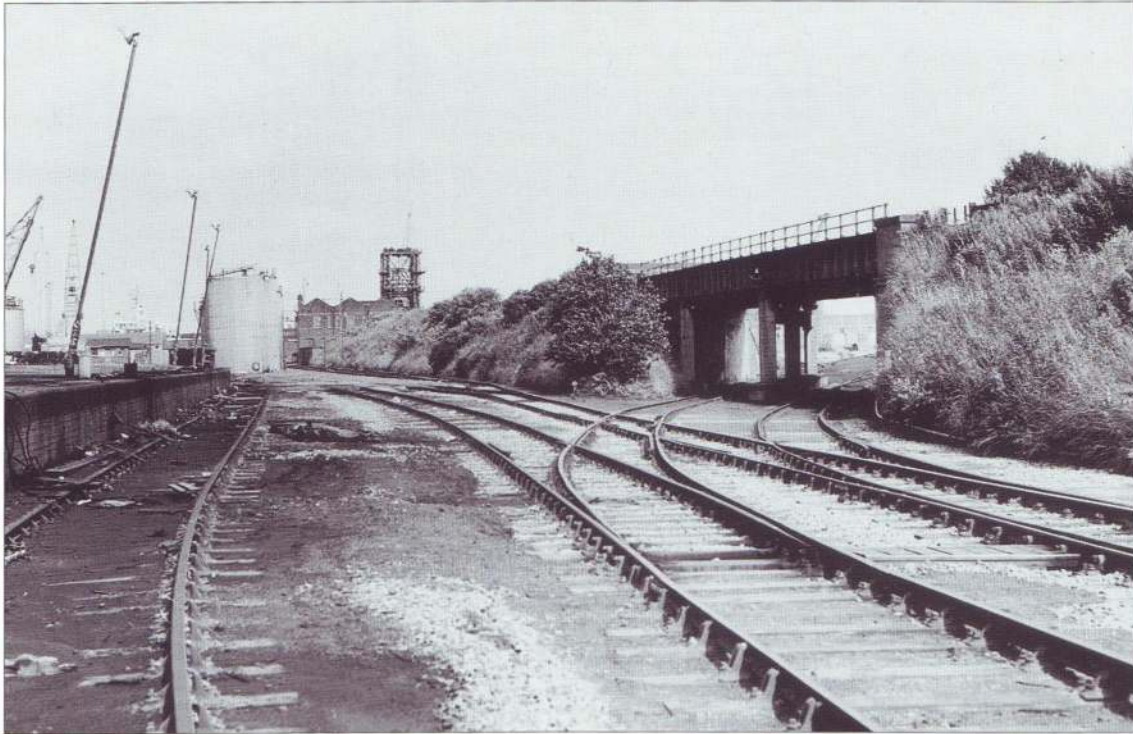


Class 08 No.08168 trundles through Goole Goods Junction on its way to the dock sidings on 30 December 1983. The large circular structure in the distance behind the 'Port of Goole' shed is a water tank; as the area is flat, water is pumped into the tank at the top in order to give adequate water pressure to the premises it serves. The small dark-coloured shed on the left (above the 08's cab) housed a Wickham railcar which was used to take engineering staff around the dock railway system. A forest - well, a modest plantation, perhaps - of dock cranes punctuate the skyline; many of them seem to be waiting for something to do, as there are only three ships in port. These are quiet times at Goole. Only twenty years earlier, the port was handling 1,000,000 tons of general goods and 1,500,000 tons of coal per annum - to put that in perspective, during the same period the much larger and deeper-water docks at Immingham dealt with around 4,000,000 tons annually (less than double the total trade at Goole).



Moving down into the yard, we turn round to look westwards. The date is 7 June 1986. The road bridge in the distance was the vantage point for our earlier photographs. The splendid signal box is Goole Goods Junction box which opened in 1891 as a replacement for Goole Goods Yard box. Its original 40-lever L&Y frame was replaced in November 1958 by a 55-lever McKenzie & Holland frame; the box was downgraded to a points box (non-block post) in July 1978 and closed completely on 20 March 1989. It was later demolished. Note the single-arm shunting signal near the 'box, the two-arm shunting signal on the right, and the mess cabin for the shunting staff on the extreme right. Virtually concealed behind the signal box are two elevated sidings, though the embankment on which they run is discernible.





The steel bridge on the right carries the elevated sidings to a hoist on the River Ouse. The sidings passing under the bridge lead to an area which is now occupied by a timber yard – today, timber and cars are two of the principal commodities handled at the port of Goole. The loading dock on the left has seen better days, and in its heyday was presumably kept slightly more litter-free. The date is 11 July 1987.



Isn't it handy when a road bridge is positioned at a good photographic vantage point? It is 15 January 1988, and we return to our original vantage point, this time taking in a little more of the view to the east. Class 08 shunters 08499 and 08777 stand in and around the sidings waiting for work but, given that the sidings are completely devoid of wagons, one might wonder where their work will come from. Class 37 No.37203 runs past on its way to the docks, presumably to pick up wagons which are lurking somewhere out of sight. (Thanks to Bryan L.Wilson and Trevor Sutcliffe for their assistance with these captions).