

Bat & Ball Station Timeline

Date	Event	Source
29/12/1858	Public meeting at Crown Hotel, Sevenoaks proposing construction of railway from East Kent Railway (later London, Chatham & Dover Railway) near Swanley to Sevenoaks. Among those present Lord Amherst (Chair), Marquis Camden, his son Earl of Brecknock, Sir P H Hart-Dyke, William Lambarde, Henry Hughes, J F Austen, W F Holcroft, J Rogers. Directors of the Sevenoaks Railway Co. were Lord Amherst (Chair), Sir Percival H Hart-Dyke, Henry Hughes, Charles Lushington, and Charles Hilton.	Dunlop (Papers with British Transport Historical Records) Devereux
1/8/1859	Sevenoaks Railway Bill passed by Parliament. Contract Thomas Crampton, Chief Engineer Fred Turner.	Devereux
1861	Name changed to "Sevenoaks, Maidstone and Tunbridge Railway Co." Subsequent agreed with SER to abandon branch to Tonbridge and not object to SER direct line to Tonbridge in exchange for SER not objecting to line to Maidstone from Otford	Devereux
2/6/1862	Line opens as single line. Directors travel in special train from Victoria to temporary station at B&B. Shoreham station opens.	Dunlop Devereux
30/8/1862	Parliamentary approval for SER London – Tonbridge direct line. Dunlop gives date of 30/6/64	Devereux
1/7/1863	Eynsford station opened, originally to be called Lullingstone. Swanley opened as Sevenoaks Junction.	Devereux
1/8/1863	Line to Sevenoaks had been doubled by this date	Mitchell Devereux
5/4/1864	Date of conveyance of land document with map showing location of temporary terminus.	Dunlop (Preserved in office of Knocker & Foskett)
1864	Thomas Russell Crampton purchases 81 acres "forming part of Greatness Farm and Lane's or St John's Farm"	Dunlop
30/6/1864	Parliamentary approval for SER London – Tonbridge direct line.	Dunlop
29/6/1866	Official visit to Knole by Prince and Princess of Wales (later Edward VII) accompanied by Duke of Edinburgh and the Duke and Duchess of Cambridge. Train to/from B&B.	Dunlop
16/1/1867	Works start to link Bat & Ball and Tubs Hill	Devereux
Nov 1867	Visit by Queen Victoria to Knole. Travelled from Windsor by GWR and LCDR to B&B.	Dunlop
23/11/1867	Specific date given	Devereux
2/3/1868	Direct line to Sevenoaks opens	Dunlop
3/3/1868	Passenger service by direct line starts	Devereux
1/5/1868	Opening of line to Tonbridge	Devereux

1/8/1869	"Sevenoaks" station becomes "Sevenoaks Bat & Ball"	Mitchell
1/8/1869	Link to Tubs Hill opens. Cost £14,000	Devereux
Jan 1871	Working Timetable published.	Mitchell
1871	Plan shows sidings north of B&B into St John's Brickworks (now Vestry Estate) to west of later junction to Maidstone	Devereux
1870s	Prior to Maidstone branch opening, notes timings from Sevenoaks Junction (Swanley) of Eynsford 7mins, Shoreham 13 mins, Bat & Ball 20 mins, (and when opened) Tubs Hill 24 mins. 13 trains per day, 2 through to Victoria.	Devereux
1871	Sevenoaks Junction station renamed Swanley Junction	Devereux
1872	Inter-family mortgage by Crampton for land bought in 1864 valued at £10750	Dunlop
1/6/1874	Branch to Maidstone opens	Devereux
1/6/1874	"Otford Junction" station opens at temporary site just north of junction. No public access - just for changing trains.	Mitchell
	Service from Sevenoaks reduced to 10 shuttle trains per day to Otford and some through trains to Victoria or Bickley.	Devereux
21/7/1879	Sevenoaks company absorbed into LCDR	Devereux
1880	Otford south spur opened. Otford Loop (north spur) was subsequently lifted. Three signal boxes – Otford Junction, Otford Loop Middle Junction Box "B", Otford Loop South Junction Box "A".	Mitchell
1/11/1880	Otford south spur opened. Exchange platforms closed.	Devereux
1/11/1880	All trains from Swanley to Maidstone reversed at B&B	Mitchell
1/11/1880	Otford station moves to present site	Mitchell
1/8/1882	Otford station buildings open	Mitchell
7/6/1884	Two goods trains collide at Sevenoaks station. One driver killed.	Devereux
1885	Service from Bat & Ball to Tubs Hill withdrawn after argument over payment of rent to use Tubs Hill. Only one pick up goods per day retained. Swanley - Maidstone trains reversed at Bat & Ball	Devereux
19/4/1888	Crampton Parliamentary approval for SER London – Tonbridge direct line. dies	Dunlop
1889	Crampton estate sells land to Sevenoaks Estate Co. They later sell part of this land to Sevenoaks Gas Co. Date not known.	Dunlop
1889	Eight Swanley – Maidstone trains per day reversing at Bat & Ball and one Sevenoaks – Bickley service.	Devereux
1889	Otford south box called Sevenoaks South Junct A Box	Devereux
1898	SER and LCDR form the SE&CR Joint Committee.	Devereux
1898	Railway Magazine reports closure of Bat & Ball station	Devereux
1898	Parliamentary Act to reinstate north spur	Devereux
1/1/1899	SE&CR Jt Comm reinstate the Otford-Tubs Hill shuttle	Devereux
1/1/1899	Otford Loop (north spur) re-instated. Just one Maidstone trains continues to reverse at B&B. Shuttle between Tubs Hill and Otford. Two signalboxes built Otford Junct "A" at the north, Otford Junct "B" at the east and south box renamed Sevenoaks Junction.	Mitchell
1899	Otford south box renamed Otford Junct Box. Typo with date in Devereux.	Devereux
1900	Work starts to quadruple St Johns to Orpington	Devereux

1902	Long private siding built to Sevenoaks Gas Co. Single wagons hauled by two horses later replaced by Fordson tractor along Crampton's Rd.	Mitchell
1907	Plan shows rubbish tip in place of St Johns Brickworks	Devereux
1909	Otford south box renamed Sevenoaks Junct Box	Devereux
1911	Otford station gas replaces oil lighting	Mitchell
1/7/1912	Regular trains cease using south spur.	Mitchell
1/8/1912	South spur use by one train per day ceases.	Mitchell
1914	9760 tons of coal conveyed over B&B line	Mitchell
1/1/1917	Tubs Hill – Otford shuttle suspended as WW1 economy measure	Devereux
1/2/1919	Tubs Hill – Otford shuttle reinstated	Devereux
1/3/1919	Tubs Hill – Otford shuttle reinstated	Mitchell
c.1920	SE&CR agree to electrify commuter lines including both routes to Sevenoaks using 1500v four rail system. No progress due to lack of funds.	Devereux
1921	South (twin track) spur converted to two sidings accessible from south.	Mitchell
1/1/1923	Southern railway formed from merger of SECR, LSWR, LBSCR	
1923	SR decide to use LSWR third rail electrification scheme for commuter routes.	Devereux
12/7/1925	Electric trains start between Victoria and Orpington	Devereux
28/2/1926	Electric trains start between Charing Cross/Cannon St and Orpington	Devereux
1927	Siding from east side of triangle built for Greatness Brickworks. Also siding to St John's Brickyard (no dates provided).	Mitchell
24/8/1927	Evening commuter service from CS to Deal derailed south of Dunton Green and coaches collide with Shoreham Lane overbridge at Riverhead. 38 killed.	Devereux
7/7/1929	"Otford Junct" becomes "Otford"	Mitchell
4/7/1932	South spur sidings closed.	Mitchell
1932	South Suburban Gas Co takes over gas works	Mitchell
1933	South spur sidings closed.	Devereux
1933	SR approves electrification to Sevenoaks by both routes	Devereux
1/5/1934	Bickley to St Mary Cray electrified	Devereux
1934	Siding built to Kent Sand & Ballast Co.	Mitchell
6/1/1935	Electric services introduced between Sevenoaks and London by both routes stopping most stations (3 tph via B&B to Holborn Viaduct and Blackfriars (62 mins), 1 tph to CX direct (54 mins), 1tph to CS direct (47 mins)) Shoreham station gets footbridge	Devereux
6/1/1935	Local shuttle service starts Otford and Maidstone East	Devereux
28/6/1937	Collision at Swanley between electric and steam hauled train. 4 killed.	Devereux
1937	SR plans to electrify to Hastings but not implemented	Devereux
16/4/1939	Swanley station moved westwards to current site from original site in the vee of the junction	Devereux
7/7/1939	Electrification to Maidstone East.	Devereux
1939	Victoria – Maidstone East hourly electric service. Hourly steam service to Ashford.	Mitchell
1939-1945	Electric services from Sevenoaks by both routes reduced to 1 tph	Devereux

Mid 1940s	St John's Brickworks siding by then rubbish tip now redundant	Devereux
1942	Siding at Bat & Ball built into Redlands Sand & Gravel	Devereux
5/6/1950	"Sevenoaks Bat & Ball" renamed "Bat & Ball" and "Sevenoaks Tubbs Hill" renamed "Sevenoaks"	Mitchell
28/5/1955	Greatness Brickworks siding closed	Mitchell
17/6/1957	10 coach scheme for longer electric trains starts	Devereux
17/6/1957	Introduction of "Hastings Diesels" begins. (5 coach units)	Devereux
7/6/1958	End of steam and Pullman services to Hastings	Devereux
9/9/1960	Gas production cease	Mitchell
	Sevenoaks turntable and north carriage sidings removed with electrification scheme	Devereux
12/6/1961	Kent Phase II electrification allows use of electric locomotives and trains running to steam timings	Devereux
28/10/1961	Westerham branch closed	Devereux
18/6/1962	Full Kent electric timetable introduced	Devereux
Early 1963	Last use of Gas works siding	Devereux
1964	Eynsford, Shoreham and Otford lose freight facilities. Sidings removed in 1965.	Devereux
18/4/1965	Yard closed for other goods and now only used for coal.	Mitchell
2/1/1966	Shoreham day time stops withdrawn	Devereux
1967	Shoreham day time stops reinstated	Devereux
1967	Noted that main hall still lit by gas	Mitchell
25/3/1968	B&B Goods yard closes	Mitchell
25/4/1968	B&B Goods yard closes. Track removed by 1971.	Devereux
2/8/1972	Freight facilities closed at Tubs Hill	Devereux
1976	Sevenoaks station opened following rebuilding	Devereux
22/11/1981	Bat & Ball signal box closes	Mitchell
5/8/1983	Otford Junction signal box closed	Mitchell
1/6/1992	Bat & Ball becomes unstaffed and building boarded up.	Mitchell
1994	Waterloo – Dover routes via Tonbridge (Boat Train Route 1 – BTR1) and via Maidstone East (BTR2) upgraded to handle Channel Tunnel Eurostar services	Mitchell
2015	Sevenoaks Town Council include the station as part of its Community Investment Plan and Regeneration of Northern Ward. Friends of Bat & Ball Station created	Sevenoaks Town Council
2017	Sevenoaks Town Council obtains lease for the station building and Heritage Lottery Funding for its refurbishment to a community facility.	Sevenoaks Town Council
2018	Sevenoaks Town Council starts work to refurbish the station building	Sevenoaks Town Council

SOURCES

Devereux, Charles M. Railways to Sevenoaks. Locomotion papers no. 102, Oakwood Press, 1977
(Devereux was a Sevenoaks resident)

Dunlop, Sir John. The Pleasant town of Sevenoaks, Caxton & Holmesdale Press, Sevenoaks, 1964.

Mitchell, Vic and Smith, Keith. Swanley to Ashford, Middleton Press, January 1995, ISBN 1 873973 45 6.

With thanks to Roger Johnson for compiling this timeline.