

THE OLD RUN

JOURNAL OF
THE 1758 MIDDLEDTON RAILWAY
LEEDS



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Many thanks indeed to the members who provided articles, reports and photos for this issue. ALL members are invited to contribute to their magazine articles, news items, letters, photographs or drawings on relevant subjects. Opinions expressed in the magazine do not necessarily reflect those of the Middleton Railway Trust Ltd., the Middleton Railway Association, or the Editor.

Material for the Summer Issue should reach the Editor by 1st June 1995.

A VERY WARM WELCOME to the following members, who have joined since Autumn 1994: Bill Smith; Brian, Elizabeth, Rebecca, Daniel and Benjamin Watson; Vincent, Sharon, Christian, Matthew and Sarah Canning; Ashley Clark; Keith Wear; Malcolm and Pat Thompson; Gerry Garland; Joe Wood; David and Timothy Johnson; Christopher, Lois, Leondra, Dennis and Saul Huck; and Jochen Schnieder.

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Cover picture: 1310 pictured at Park Halt on 19th November, 1994. Photo: Sheila Bye

OBITUARY

It is with great sadness that I have to inform members of the death of one of our long-standing members, Bill Parkin, on 9th February, aged 65.

Bill was an active member for many years and, along with wife Doris, was a regular shop worker during the operating season. Being local, Bill and Doris also frequently "called in" at the railway either just for a ride or to see son Graham, another long-standing member. Bill was also for a time our Sales Manager, only giving it up when ill-health forced him to slow down somewhat.

I have known Bill for many years, since I was a teenager in fact, and have had many a discussion about such subjects as Middleton Park and, obviously, the railway. Whatever Bill was involved in, he believed passionately in that cause and always worked quietly away to achieve the aims. He will be missed by his friends at the line, and our sympathies go to Doris, Graham and the family.

Ian Smith

The Editor was also very sorry to hear of the death of Bill Parkin - a thoroughly nice man. Sadly, Mr. Edward Hartley also died recently, a month before Bill. Though never a working member - he was well into his eighties when he died, he had supported our Railway with his membership for over twenty years, and was the father of M.R.T. guard (and *Old Run* photographer) Keith Hartley, to whom our sympathies also go.

FROM THE CHAIRMAN

Ian Smith

Once again, the Railway enters another operating season, our 26th since passenger services started in 1969. As always, we are going to require more volunteers to spread the load a little and it's a fair bet that we ain't going to get them. Last year's season was traumatic to say the least, with some services only being run at great personal inconvenience to the regular few who had to postpone other plans they had. Clearly, this situation cannot be allowed to continue and your Council are going to have to take some very crucial decisions if the society is to survive as an operating railway for very much longer.

"Scaremongering!", I hear some people cry. Not so. It is an unfortunate fact that none of us is getting any younger and, furthermore, that we are not getting many younger volunteers coming through the ranks. Neither are we recruiting sufficiently large numbers of other volunteers. Inevitably, at some stage in the future, Anno Domini is going to catch up on us with the obvious result for the Railway - it just is not going to operate.

That's the worst case scenario. One thing that we can do to assist ourselves is to look at ways of increasing our income in order to **pay** someone to do all those jobs we cannot always do for ourselves at present. One way of doing that is to look at the possibility of becoming a registered museum which, by being open for most of the year, can attract revenue from admission and shop charges. Becoming a museum also attracts rather more grant aid than we can at present.

Of course, it isn't quite that easy to become a museum. That takes a rather different way of thinking than we do at present, and it also involves identifying a museum collection, cataloguing it, and ensuring its preservation, both **"In perpetuity"** and **"As original as possible"**.

Some investigations are being undertaken at present, by Tony Cowling, Martin Plumb and myself, and a full report will be presented both to Council and to the membership as a whole at a forthcoming A.G.M. I raise the issue now, in order to provoke some thought amongst the membership as to how best to achieve our aims of preserving the Railway in the future.

Do you **want** the Railway to become a registered museum? Am I completely out of tune with **your** thoughts? Please do not hesitate to let me know what you think.

[Ian's address is on Page 23. Whilst obviously endorsing Ian's ideas personally, the Editor would like *The Old Run* to contain the views of both sides in any controversy, so if you write to Ian and would be willing to have parts of your letter published - whatever your opinions might be, please add a note to that effect.]

Our new shed building is now almost ready for use, and has to be seen to be believed. It really is the finest workshop for a railway of our size, anywhere in the U.K. I would even argue that its facilities put many of the larger railways to shame. I do not know of any other workshop with waist-high lights to allow workers to see under the footplate better, pit lighting, emergency lighting, and power points every

few feet to allow hand-tools to be plugged in. The heavy machinery has been provided for too, and the building has been fully alarmed with the alarm going to a central control. It is also fire-alarmed, something we have needed for years. If you think I'm excited at these facilities, then you're right! All we need now is the folk to use them, which is where I came in!!

We really do owe our sponsors a great deal. They responded magnificently to our appeals, and we owe it to them to see that these magnificent facilities are put to good use to help preserve the World's Oldest Railway.

[See also Notes and News - page 10, and With Grateful Thanks - page 16.]

EDITORIAL

Sheila Bye

It's not often that members see the above word in *The Old Run* these days: apart from apologies for typing mistakes and the lateness of publication, there rarely seems to be anything which warrants Editorial comment. However, as the Editor is also the society's Historian, I would like to record my firm endorsement of the ideas put forward in the Chairman's report, for the Middleton Railway's possible future development.

As was the case with quite a few of our early members I think, though I later became involved in both 'black-handed' and 'white-collared' work on its behalf, the sole reason why I originally became a member of the Middleton Railway Preservation Society - as I think it then still was, three decades ago, was that I believed that the Middleton Railway was of great historical interest and importance, and therefore must be preserved for future generations to see. After all, it had been of paramount importance to the development of Leeds as an industrial city, as well as to the development of railways and steam locomotion throughout the world. It was also of great importance to me personally, having been a well-loved part of my own immediate environment for as long as I could remember.

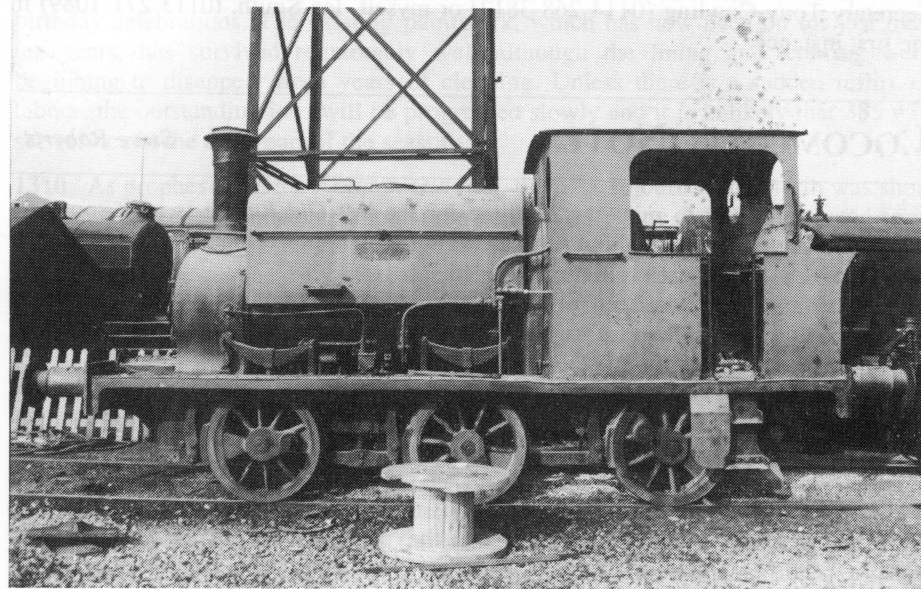
I feel strongly that future generations should be able to see and enjoy what we 'older' Middleton members have seen and enjoyed, but there will be inevitable changes in membership attitudes and aims as people join the Trust who never knew the Middleton Railway as it was and who, therefore, may feel no great loyalty or sympathy towards its historical aspects.

Quite apart from what might be viewed as a typical historian's opinion, however, the importance of our history is stressed in all our modern publicity. Our advertising claim of being the World's Oldest Railway is what catches the potential visitor's attention amongst the posters and leaflets of an ever-increasing number of competitive tourist railways often with - let's face it - rather better *visitor* facilities than we presently have: to a large extent, our history has been our 'bread and butter' ('coal and oil?') and it may be so even more in the future, as competition increases. Leisure spending has its limits, and for a long time we have competed locally with Armley Mills, Thwaite Mill, and the Embsay and Worth Valley railways as venues for an interesting half-day visit. Recently, however, Brewery Wharf has joined the list and, in a few months, the huge new West Yorkshire Transport centre at Low Moor, Bradford will be spreading visitor numbers and visitor money even thinner. Our own unique historical claims will be vital in keeping some of that trade coming to Middleton but, when the visitors arrive, they must be able to see something which *substantiates* our claims.

In an inevitably changing world, I sincerely believe that Ian's ideas would be the most sensible and certain way of safe-guarding our Railway in the longterm, both as an important historical landmark *and* as a working railway.



Two nice archive photos of Manning Wardle 1601 *Arthur*. Above: *Arthur* at Kent Cement Works, Stone, near Dartford, which was shunted by *Arthur* and *Apex*, a pair of identical Manning Wardle 0-6-0 saddle tanks. *Apex* was scrapped in 1960, and *Arthur* went in to preservation in 1967, initially at the Kent and East Sussex Railway, finally arriving at Middleton in 1989. Photo: A. Neale Below: *Arthur* at Buxton, shortly after arrival there and before restoration work began. Photo: M. Ashworth



MEDICAL EXAMINATIONS FOR OPERATING STAFF

Ian Smith

One of the unfortunate consequences of new legislation associated with railway privatisation, is the need for some form of fitness assessment to be undertaken for all operating staff on the Middleton Railway.

This has involved the Council in some considerable thought as to the best way to go about this task, and we have come up with the idea of "Self-certification and Assessment", in which it is proposed to send some form of Questionnaire to all operating staff and to ask them to fill this in to the best of their knowledge and then to sign it. The form would then be sent to an "Assessor" who, from his experience of the type of operation we undertake, would be able to certify that "Joe Bloggs" is fit for the duties he is to undertake. If our assessor felt he needed more information, he would ask for Mr. Bloggs to be given a Medical by his own G.P., and would then make a decision from the result.

We feel that this method is the most cost-effective way of meeting our obligations, given that we only operate steam locomotives at a maximum of 10m.p.h. This method has the advantage of not requiring everyone to undergo a medical, which is time-consuming and obviously could be costly.

Do we have a G.P. within the membership who is willing to act as our Medical Assessor in order to inaugurate this scheme? The railway, of course, is willing to pay reasonable expenses, and we are happy to show our potential Assessor exactly how we operate, to give a good idea of what is required for our operating staff in terms of medical fitness.

If there is anyone willing to assist us with this, please contact either Company Secretary Tony Cowling (0114 268 3812) or myself, Ian Smith, (0113 271 1089) in the first instance.

LOCOMOTIVE NOTES

Steve Roberts

As I managed to miss the deadline for the last *Old Run*, it is now some six months since you last read about the state of our motive power fleet. In that time, you could have expected much to have happened.

In truth, there has been little change in the overall position, due mainly to pressure of work on other fronts. Unfortunately, the same willing band of workers cannot do everything, although they try to!

That we have been able to defer much of our loco maintenance, other than that considered necessary, has been due to the relatively good condition of our operational fleet. However, although there is no urgency to put additional locos into traffic, we must endeavour to catch up in 1995. With the end of work on the shed in sight, this will happen if we get the support of you, the members. Soon, we will have a workshop that will be the envy of most of the 'preserved' railways. Let's make the most of it.

The detailed locomotive situation is as follows:

1882 Mirvale returned at the beginning of January from its visit on hire to the Swindon & Cricklade Railway. *Mirvale* is understood to have been well received there and, apart from blowing a regulator valve packing, seems to have performed faultlessly and has produced a worthwhile income. On its return, it was immediately prepared for winter storage. (This involves removing safety valves, pipes, etc., that are likely to fill with water and freeze, with disastrous results!) Other than a steam test nearer the start of the running season, no work is planned, and the loco should be available for the beginning of the season.

385 came out of traffic after the 7th November for its 5-yearly hydraulic test, annual boiler inspection, and various minor repairs. The hydraulic test has been successfully concluded and some of the repair work has been carried out. The connecting and coupling rods have been taken down to enable the bearings to be checked and refitted, as necessary, but these are in generally good condition. The whistle valve has been leaking by for some time and this has been overhauled. Attention will also be necessary to the drain cocks. These have long been a problem in keeping steam tight and require overhauling.

Close examination of the chimney has revealed that the base is getting rather thin. Although the chimney was renewed just after **385's** arrival in Britain, the new chimney was, in fact, welded to an old base as this part is rather a complex shape. It is the latter part that is now in need of repair. The chimney has been removed to enable this to be patched, but this is considered to be no more than a holding repair and a new chimney base will have to be made - somehow! Work has also commenced on rubbing down the paintwork and general preparation for a repaint. 1995 is the loco's centenary year and it is intended that it will be smartened up for its birthday celebrations. The existing paintwork, which has now been on for just over ten years, has survived remarkably well although the lining and lettering were beginning to disappear from years of cleaning. Unless there is a sudden influx of labour, the outstanding jobs will be progressed slowly and it is unlikely that **385** will see service in the early part of the season.

1310 As prophesied in the Autumn *Old Run*, the Y7's sojourn facing north was short lived and it is again 'smokebox first at the bank'. The Y7, as would be expected from a 'new' locomotive, was the most used loco in 1994, being steamed on no less than 46 occasions. It ran satisfactorily other than for a tendency to blow gland packings and a leaky regulator. The regulator valve casting is known to be cracked, but the position of the crack is such that it should not be exposed to steam when the regulator is shut. Further investigation is necessary to find the fault and effect a cure. We have obtained copies of the L.N.E.R. diagram for the Y7 locomotives (and the Y1 for that matter) and one interesting fact forthcoming is that the driving wheel springs should be ½" wider and have one more leaf than the coupled (front) wheel springs. As all four springs fitted to our loco are the same size (the small version) this will probably account for **1310's** tendency to appear to be lower at the back!

1310 was used satisfactorily throughout the Santa and Thomas events and has now been 'winterised' to prevent frost damage. The 'Furness' lubricators on the side of

the smokebox which supply oil to the valve chests require some attention to prevent steam leaking by. Some attention is also necessary to the handbrake linkage to cure a tendency for it to stick when the brakes are in need of adjustment, but otherwise the loco is in good order and should be available for the start of the season.

54 The Sentinel has seen quite a bit of service in the last couple of months, and those crews that are volunteering for it seem to be becoming its master. It now goes up the line without a stop on most occasions! The Sentinel has performed relatively faultlessly these last few months, and in the hands of the right crew steams well and can easily maintain the timetable. It was used, together with the **Y7**, over the Santa and Thomas events. It, too, has been 'winterised' and also partially stripped for repairs to the chimney base and blastpipes. The existing chimney base, which is of cast steel, has, over the years, corroded away in places and has required patching to keep it usable. However, it has now reached the point where patching is no longer viable and a new one is being made. Having looked at various options, including fabrication to a new design, it was decided that a pattern would be made to enable a new base to be cast. Budget prices for having a pattern made were prohibitively expensive, and it was decided to have a go and make one ourselves. Whilst we have made patterns for castings before, this pattern will be far more complex than anything that we have attempted previously. We are fortunate in having copies of the original drawings to aid manufacture and, with some simplification of the design to suit our techniques, a satisfactory result should be achievable. Other Sentinels in preservation are known to have chimney bases in a similar condition to ours, and it is likely that the new pattern will be borrowed by other owners. At the time of writing the basic pattern is well on the way to completion, but the core boxes are yet to be started. This work is expected to take some time and, as it is not intended to reassemble the Sentinel with the old chimney base unless there is a desperate need for the loco, it will probably not see service until mid-season. With a view to a planned changeover in the next year or so, consideration is being given to overhauling the spare firebox, if funds and manpower are forthcoming.

1601 Arthur It would be pleasing to report substantial progress with the overhaul of this Manning Wardle but, alas, this is not the case. **Arthur** has been the main sufferer in the need to divert precious man-power to other work, and very little has been done on the loco in the last few months. Completion of a set of bending rolls has enabled some work to be done on the cladding, otherwise, pressure of other work keeps **Arthur**'s return on the back burner. We are also still having great difficulty in getting our insurance company to formally agree to the method of repair to the boiler, despite verbal assurances. Each time we request agreement, they seem to come back with requests for more information or drawings!

91 The Brush diesel was a regular performer during 1994 and will be available for use in 1995. Over the winter various repairs have been carried out. Problems with loose and rotating side rod bushes have been overcome by re-pinning and 'loctiting'. A leak on the oil cooling circuit has been traced to an old repair to the oil cooler, and this has been rectified. The loco did blot its copy-book towards the end of last year by running out of fuel whilst the gauge was still showing 60 gallons in the tank!

Investigation found that the fuel tank was well sludged up, effectively seizing the level gauge. The tank has now been cleaned out and the gauge reading is now more reliable!

7401 John Alcock The search for a replacement engine continues. Whilst we have looked at various engines, including a rather complex multi-engine swap involving two other locos, no satisfactory replacement has yet been located. We do know of the whereabouts of an engine in a scrapyard, in a non-operational Fowler loco. However, the owner will not sell the engine separately and wants a high price for the complete loco. Virtually all the options explored have involved the later 'M' series engine which should be dimensionally interchangeable with the present 'MR' engine.

138C does not get much mention in these pages but continues to perform satisfactorily. It has, unfortunately, suffered slightly from vandalism during school half term week when one of the cab windows was removed by cutting round the rubber sealing strip. Fortunately, although the glass was thrown to the ground, it did not break and the glass has been replaced complete with new sealing strip - at a cost, unfortunately.

Brookes No.1 The owner is presently formulating a plan which may enable the overhaul of this 'Hunslet' loco to commence this year, if sponsorship deals presently being negotiated can be confirmed.

D577, 1786 and Rowntree No.3 are available for traffic and used as required. All other locos are stored awaiting repair.

THOMAS'S NEW YEAR PARTY

Sheila Bye

The New Year's weekend saw the return of Thomas the Tank Engine (alias the East Lancashire Railway's **MSC32 Gothenburg** (HC680/03)) for a four day Thomas's New Year Party event. It was probably our busiest weekend ever, an even greater success than **Thomas**'s appearance for New Year 1994.

I arrived fairly early on the Monday afternoon, to take some photos for *The Old Run*. As we drove along the motorway, over the tunnel, I looked round towards the Station and saw a great seething mass of humanity swarming around the platform and the Ticket Office. In consequence of which, only a few photos were actually taken, and I then fought my way into the beleaguered station building and spent the rest of the afternoon brewing tea and coffee, and washing up, to help the shop staff: hot drinks being in great demand from the chilled but cheerful public as well as the hard-worked train and station staff. **Thomas** and **1310 (Geordie?)** worked as hard as everyone else, pulling their coaches up and down the line, whilst **Sammy Sentinel** gave brakevan rides on the side road. A bouncing-castle, a model railway and various other entertainments were housed in the Fred Youell Building, and took some pressure away from the platform area, where Fat Controller Ian was quite red in the face (not to mention hoarse) from his efforts to keep the public safely in order.

All the members working that weekend deserve congratulations for the way in which they coped with record crowds, keeping them all safe and happy. As a result of their efforts, the ticket and sales takings also reached record proportions, though of course there were plenty of expenses to offset against the takings.

However, a lot of children, their parents, and a good many unencumbered gricers too, were made very happy, and our bank balance looks rather healthier again.



Though, in my haste, I forget to compensate for the winter's afternoon sunlight, the above snap does give some impression of one of the weekend's quieter moments! Photo: Sheila Bye

NOTES AND NEWS

Steve Roberts

SHED EXTENSION This continues to make progress and, since its official opening, has been in increasing use despite being incomplete. With the completion of the external doors, which are all of steel construction, it is now suitably secure. It was used as an indoor area for the 'Thomas' event and provided dry, heated accommodation for a bouncy castle, miniature railway and various stalls. We have recently been very fortunate in obtaining much sponsorship towards the completion of the building. This started to show at the beginning of February, when a team of painters from Messrs. Bagnall's spent a week painting most of the building, including steelwork, walls and doors. The painters were closely followed by a team of electrical contractors who have so far spent some ten days installing the electrical equipment. Obviously, work of this nature can only be carried out when the sponsors have men available, and we will have to wait a few more weeks for completion of the electrical

installation. In a similar situation, a team of men spent a recent Saturday installing a modern security system to cover the new and existing shed buildings. The work will be completed once the electrical contractors have finished their installation. Imminently, we are expecting work to be carried out by Messrs. Haden Young who have offered to install the toilets, washroom and shower for us, and install the necessary pipework for an elaborate compressed air system throughout the workshop. They are also installing the pipework for the oil fired heating system which we have obtained to heat the building.

Much of the concrete floor has been sealed with suitable floor sealant donated by Shipley Paints. A strip adjacent to the west wall has had to be left for the present as we are having problems with water ingress along this wall. The ground level along this side is some 12-18" above shed floor level and, although suitable damp-proofing was fitted, it appears not to have been 100% successful. The situation is not helped by the fact that there is at present no guttering down this side and the run-off from the shed roof here is quite considerable when it is raining.

The layout of the various machine tools has finally been agreed and the first of these, the Colchester lathe, was moved into position during February. This was more of a token effort as this machine, which was obtained in 1990, has remained in store in the old shed and was always an inconvenience where it was kept. The other machine tools, at least those which are regularly in use, will be moved in one by one, once the electrical installation is complete and they can be rapidly recommissioned in their new location.

Whilst much of the attention has been focused at ground floor level, we have, also through sponsorship, acquired a suspended ceiling for the upstairs rooms. These rooms are, as yet, not in use as there are no stairs! However, work has started on making these and they should be in place by the time you read this.

Although work on the shed is still not complete, it is already creating a very good impression and those that see it can only agree that our facilities will be second to none when it is complete. There is adequate illumination everywhere, including each of the pits and below footplate height, power points and compressed air supplies no more than a few feet from anywhere and we have sufficient workshop equipment to carry out almost any task that we would wish to do. The only thing that we lack is a heavy lifting facility. Provision has been made for this in the design of the foundations, but this facility must await a suitable acquisition of equipment in the future.

MIDDLETON MOLES - AGAIN! We're getting quite used to digging trenches under the track at Moor Road. In the past we have done it for the water supply, electricity supply and a telephone cable. When it became necessary to dig another trench to connect the new toilets to the foul drain some forward planning was suggested. These trenches can only be dug out of season as they involve ripping up the entrance path and undermining the track. In the near future (but not yet) we will be wanting to uprate the power supply to the shed, install another telephone cable and a security alarm cable. Why not hire a machine for a weekend and dig all the required trenches and install sufficient pipes so that future cables could be installed without the resultant trench digging and chaos?

A pleading phone call to Jones Cablevision (who are installing cable TV in Leeds) and, yes, we could have sufficient 4" plastic pipes to do the job. These were duly collected and transported to site. (Ever tried loading lightweight plastic pipe single handed onto a roof rack with no sides in pouring rain and a strong wind on a sloping site? It makes the Keystone Cops look serious!) Came the weekend and the mini-digger arrived from Moat Plant. A start was made on digging the drainage trench. We knew that this had to follow the path of the existing water pipe and power cable for part of the way, so test holes were duly dug by hand to ascertain their position and depth. No problem, as they were found to be sufficiently deep as to not be uncovered in digging the trench.

Just why we had put a loop in the water pipe and brought it nearer the surface at one point must be lost in the annals of history - and, yes, the digger managed to find it! At least the trench sloped so the water ran away! Not to worry. The water was soon turned off and the break was actually conveniently placed so that we could put a connection in for the new toilets where the pipe had been severed, instead of using an existing connection further away. Suitable fittings were quickly obtained for this. At least, we thought they were suitable until we came to fit them! Why the Community Programme scheme that built the original shed used a non-standard pipe for the water supply we don't know, but they did. After some modification, the fittings were persuaded to fit and the new connection to the toilets was laid in. Then came further tragedy! The stop-cock handle sheared off with the valve closed. Yorkshire Water, could you please come and help us!? Fortunately they did, but not until the next day. You don't realise how much you need water until you haven't got it - mixing concrete, washing, cups of tea, etc.

By comparison, the rest of the dig went relatively smoothly. We did curse the person who put so much concrete around an existing drain inspection pit which had to be chiselled away to get the plastic pipe into position, but this was about the only other problem. At least we shouldn't have to dig any more trenches for a while! Or should we?

ON THE LINE After a week's rest following our successful Thomas's New Year Party, a fairly large gang assembled and quite quickly pulled up six panels of track at G.N. bridge. (It's still known by this name even though the Great Northern branch and the bridge disappeared many years ago!) This section of track had been chosen for replacement with concrete sleepers as a continuation of the length with concrete sleepers put in several years ago. The following day, a similarly large gang levelled the ballast and generally prepared the trackbed for relaying with the concrete sleepers.

The previous sections of concrete sleepered track had been put in by a community service team and had been manhandled into position, a method which was felt to be in need of improvement if we were doing it, especially as each sleeper weighs a quarter of a ton! After considering various possibilities, the following method was evolved and proved to be satisfactory in its implementation:

- 1 Twenty four concrete sleepers (i.e. a 60 foot panel) were laid out on the headshunt at Moor Road at the correct spacing and alignment. The use of the track to lay them out

ensured a level base and moving the sleepers into position along the rail was relatively easy.

- 2 Six 20 foot rails were keyed into the chairs to create three 20 foot panels, each with eight concrete sleepers.
- 3 These short panels were then craned onto the lowmac for transporting to site. The length of 20 foot had been carefully chosen as giving the maximum weight that our crane could lift at the required radius.
- 4 The crane, lowmac, tool van and brake van were then propelled to head of steel, and the first 20 foot panel craned into position. The panel was roughly aligned, levelled and suitably packed, and then fishplated to the existing track. The crane then ran onto the first temporary panel and the second and third 20 foot panels were likewise craned into position and coupled up.
- 5 Once the third panel had been placed and aligned, the temporary rails were de-keyed and removed from the chairs. The original 60 foot rails, which had been left on site adjacent to the line, were then craned into place and keyed up and fishplated.
- 6 The whole process was then repeated with subsequent panels. Using this technique a gang of eight could lay two 60 foot panels in a day, weather permitting!

One slight problem, which required a modification to the technique, was where a power line crosses the track and the crane could not be used for fear of touching the live wires. For this panel, we placed a series of old boiler tubes on the track under the wires and, using rails for runners, rolled the panels into position. These were then jacked up and the runner rails slid out. A simple solution that worked safely and efficiently.

The six panels were laid in by the third week of February, despite some bad weather, and only require final alignment and packing - a few words that cover a lot of effort and ballast shovelling! It is intended to do this over the w/e 4-5th March when we are hiring some Kangol tamping machines to make the work somewhat easier.

PLANT & MACHINERY The diesel rail crane successfully passed its annual Insurance Co. inspection during November and, hopefully, will be available for the next twelve months. It is, however, very much in need of an overhaul and this cannot be put off for much longer.

There have been several acquisitions of plant and equipment recently. As briefly mentioned elsewhere, we have obtained a 300,000 BTU oil fired space heater to provide heating within the new shed. This awaits installation and commissioning in the near future, once the oil tank spillage bund has been built and the tank positioned. A 60 cu ft/min electrically driven air compressor has also been obtained as a replacement for the existing 25 cu ft/min compressor which presently provides the workshop compressed air supply. This will be installed adjacent to the oil tank in an annexe to the shed.

The tractor has also warranted attention. The boom lift rams had a nasty and all too regular habit of blowing seals just when the tractor was needed for moving ballast or coal. It was initially decided to replace the rams, but suitable standard 'off the shelf' ones could not be obtained. The local hydraulic suppliers offered to hone out the

cylinders and have the pistons re-chromed for us, but this promising avenue became a dead end when we found out the cost. Ever helpful, our suppliers located some suitable chromed bar at a much more realistic cost and we have duly machined up two replacement pistons. The cylinders are being honed, and we should see an end to the recurrent seal failures once the rams are reassembled and refitted.

Whilst not exactly plant and machinery, we have been fortunate in acquiring further sets of micrometers and measuring equipment, along with some steel cupboards, filing cabinets and a meeting table, following the closure of British Coal's Northern Group Headquarters. We have also recently obtained two large 4-wheel luggage trolleys and some notice boards from British Rail (Railtrack?).

CARRIAGE NOTES The L.N.E.R. riding van, having spent the last twelve months in a pseudo 'Mr Blobby' livery, came into the new shed in December for some holding repairs and a repaint in light grey livery. It has subsequently been used for brake van rides over the New Year and as a mess van during the track laying.

As soon as the New Year train services were over, the passenger guards van was brought into the new shed for an overhaul and repaint. It is hard to realise that it is now ten years since we built this vehicle. Generally it is in reasonable condition, but some of the wooden framework was known to have started to rot in various places. Removal of panels uncovered more small areas of rot, and these have had to be replaced as well, before they get worse. The exterior plywood panelling, whilst not suffering from rot, has tended to split and has required much sanding down and application of filler to try and restore a suitable surface for painting. At present, it is covered in brushing filler, and this is being finally sanded preparatory to the application of the undercoat and top coat of paint. This vehicle has to be ready for the beginning of April, but it will be a last minute finish.

VANDALISM Vandalism on a small scale has been a problem for as long as we can remember, but we suffered our worst attack for many years during January. Persons, unknown, broke into the Ruston Diesel, **Rowntree No.3**, and smashed four of the windows and all the gauges.

Not content with that, they threw half bricks at the Sentinel and Brush **No.91**, breaking a window on each loco but fortunately failing with the other windows that they targeted. Cab windows were also smashed on the Bagnall and Fowler locos, and the Whickam trolley was derailed. Replacement of these windows, which have to be of safety glass, is not cheap and also increases the amount of work that has to be done at a time when we are under great pressure to complete all the necessary jobs before the season starts.

BENTLEY - THE LAST GREAT COLLIERY RAID? Those members who have been with us for many years now will perhaps have realised that much of our equipment has been acquired from British Coal. Not unconnected with this has been the fact that I am employed by them! It all started in about 1980, when we obtained permission to acquire redundant equipment from the closed Walton Colliery and took away several van loads of miscellaneous bits and pieces for the princely sum of £5. (We weren't allowed to take **Blue Peter**, though!) A year or so later, a similar exercise was carried out at Lofthouse Colliery where, because of inflation, we had to

pay £10!! Over the last fourteen years we have acquired other items far too numerous to mention in detail but briefly:

Peckfield	-	Machine saw
Rothwell	-	Generator
Glasshoughton	-	Crane
Parkhill	-	Smokebox door and turnouts
Ackton Hall	-	Lathe, tools and equipment
Wheldale	-	Track and equipment
Savile	-	Stores racking
South Kirkby	-	Machine tools and equipment
Testing Centre	-	Machine tools
Allerton Bywater	-	'Locomotive maintenance equipment' (which covered a multitude of things!)
Grimethorpe	-	Machine tools

The latest colliery to provide equipment for Middleton has been Bentley, near Doncaster. A spate of car break-ins in our car park last summer caused us concern and it was decided that this should be fenced. To be truthful, this has been planned for some time as part of the global scheme for Moor Road, but these events had made it more of an urgency. Initial costings soon dampened our enthusiasm, as it was going to be some £6,000 just in materials to buy new. Earlier enquiries with British Coal for palisade fencing had come to nothing, as it had always been required for use elsewhere. However, there was a large amount of this type of fencing at Bentley which was not galvanised (as was usual), and enquiries revealed that we could have this, if we were quick, as the demolition contractors were already on site. A bargain price of £50 was negotiated for as much as we wanted of what was there! Whilst our original intention was just to fence the car park, it became obvious that there would be sufficient material to completely fence the site and it was decided to obtain sufficient materials to enable this to be done.

The fencing was of two heights - 1.8 m and 2.4 m. Much of the 1.8 m high fencing had been damaged but investigation showed that there would be sufficient of this to fence the car park with some minor repairs and judicious straightening. The 2.4 m fencing would be used for the rest of the site.

Accordingly, a 7.5 tonne flat bed was hired, and a gang of us duly arrived at Bentley on the 15th October to start the task of dismantling. We had planned to do the task in one weekend. In the event, we went back for a third day the week after, but this also allowed us to get sufficient spare materials to cater for the future.

Dismantling the fence panels was somewhat slow at first, but as we got into the swing of it we developed some quite efficient, if unorthodox, techniques. Much of the 2.4 m fencing had its base encased in concrete, and we were sceptical about being able to recover this. In the end, it came out remarkably easily. The fence posts were all bedded in concrete and we had to make do with cutting these off at ground level. We can therefore use the ones from the 2.4 m fencing for posts with the 1.8 m high panels but we will have to manufacture new posts for the taller panels.

Having non-galvanised panels does mean that some have rusted but they are still substantially sound. It will be necessary to paint them before they are erected so there's still much work to do before we have our new fence.

The run down of the coal mining industry has benefitted Middleton, if no one else. However, with the impending privatisation of the remaining mines and my own impending redundancy, it seems likely that we will no longer be able to benefit from the benevolence of British Coal. Bentley is almost certain to be the last time.

WITH GRATEFUL THANKS

Stan Holdsworth

So there I was, sitting in David Monkton's office with a piece of paper bearing British Steel's Newton Aycliffe telephone number in front of me and David handing me his telephone.

I think that all of us at various times have been in a meeting when you have found yourself saying "Why don't we do this?" or "Why don't we do that?" and then, when all eyes focus on you and there is deadly silence, you say "Well, I'll do it". That is exactly what happened to me. Council had been discussing details of the proposed new shed, in anticipation of the imminent planning permission approval, and we got round to discussing further fund raising. I found myself suggesting the possibility of sponsorship in whatever form, and within a few minutes I had 'volunteered' to see what I could do.

Now before I go on, let me say that whilst at times people have made remarks about me being 'brass-necked' etc., I had never before been in a position where I was asking firms to do something for nothing or for cost price. So, as I said before, "there I was".

I rang British Steel fully expecting expletives from Newton Aycliffe and the 'phone being banged down. Imagine my surprise when I was offered advice and the possibility of perhaps some help. Well, I had broken the ice, so what did we need next? - the foundations digging. Here goes, try again - look in the Yellow Pages and start ringing. Once again, 'phones were **not** quickly put down, and meetings were arranged. And so on: Bricks, Concrete, Sheet Cladding, Lighting, Heating, Security, etc., etc.

I have been rendered absolutely speechless (which my wife and many at the Railway would say is a miracle in itself) by the way my calls have been received and help has been offered, ranging from work being done either at no cost to the Railway or at cost price. For example, Steve Roberts, one night, was up a ladder in the new shed, painting one of the steel stanchions with a half-inch brush (he is very meticulous), when he looked down and said "Can't you find someone to paint this lot?". The following day, again, out came the Yellow Pages and I rang a large Yorkshire painting contractor. Their Managing Director met us the next day and offered to help, and at the time of writing this epistle, his painters have commenced the complete painting of the new shed.

To date, eighteen firms have been in and undertaken work for us either at no charge or at greatly reduced cost, whilst another seven firms are due to undertake more fitting out in the next few weeks and, hopefully, by the time you read this article the new shed will be up and running.

As I said earlier, I have been absolutely amazed by the offers of help we have received from firms both large and small. We are eternally grateful for their help, advice and interest, and say a big, big thank you to all of them.

But, we haven't finished yet. So if your Managing Director or friend or both comes to you tomorrow and says "Do you know an idiot called Stan Holdsworth who is trying to get me to do some work for the Middleton Railway?" please tell him I am an idiot, but that we really do need his help for whatever he can do, and we look forward to his return call.

To date, the following firms have helped or are about to help us:-

Vaughan Monkton
Bertram Done & Partners
J.M. Crowther & Son Ltd.
Henry Brook & Co. Ltd.
Pioneer Concrete (U.K.) Ltd.
Tarmac Construction Ltd.
British Steel Profiles
R.M.S. Construction
Marshall Clay Products
Moat Plant Hire
Johnson Bros. Ltd.
Leeds Timber Company
J. Pullan & Son Ltd.

William Steward & Co. Ltd.
Thorn Lighting Ltd.
Brian G. Fearnley
Menvier Amberlec Ltd.
Securi-Plex Ltd.
Alfred Bagnell & Sons Ltd.
Shipley Paint Ltd.
Haden Young Ltd.
Rockfon Ltd.
Neville Long Ltd.
Heatrite (Industrial Heating)
Graham Group p.l.c.

A LIGHTED READING LAMP & EGYPTIAN BRANDY

Fire on the Pullman Car 'Enterprise' at Hunslet, October 1882

Part 2, continued from the Autumn 1994 issue

Henry Gunston

The story so far: As the overnight down Scotch express from St. Pancras approached Hunslet early in the morning of Sunday, 29th October 1882, a serious fire was discovered in the Pullman Car 'Enterprise'. After gallant efforts by staff of both the Midland Railway and Nicholson's chemical works by Hunslet Station, the car was detached and the fire brought under control. Whilst the remainder of the express sped on its way, however, a search of the damaged car revealed the dead body of one of the passengers, Dr. Arthur. **Now read on**

Coroners' Inquests into the causes of death of those killed in railway accidents provide lasting glimpses of passengers' lives at the time they travelled. In his book on the Tay Bridge Disaster, *The High Girders*, John Prebble adds drama to his tale by dwelling at some length on the reasons why each passenger had bought a ticket for the doomed train.

At the Inquest on Dr. John Finlay Arthur, the victim of the 'Enterprise' fire, covered in detail by *The Yorkshire Post and Leeds Intelligencer*, we are drawn into the tragedy of the doctor's recent life which was to contribute to his tragic death. Mr.

Middleton, the representative of the deceased's relatives, told the Inquest at Leeds Town Hall:

When Dr. Arthur was out in Ceylon an accident happened to him by falling from a horse, and his head was injured. This was followed by a severe attack of dysentery, and in consequence he took a trip to Bombay for the good of his health. On returning to Ceylon he had a slight sunstroke, and this being accompanied by depression and sleeplessness he made a journey to England in the hope that he might be restored. Early this year he again went back to Ceylon, but finding himself no better he made a second journey to England. In this condition he relieved himself by taking narcotics and opiates . . .

Robert Donaldson, described at the Board of Trade Inquiry as "a porter travelling in charge of Pullman cars between London and Scotland" (in simple terms, a Pullman Car Conductor), saw the doctor differently:

Before leaving St. Pancras I saw deceased walking down the platform towards the front part of the train. I noticed him because he was a remarkably tall man and was staggering, apparently under the influence of drink.

As a conscientious Company Servant in charge of the 'Enterprise' that night, Donaldson had a professional interest in the doctor's height. Later in his testimony he reported:

He lay down in his berth without taking off his boots, and I took them off, more especially with a view of preventing damage being done to the headboards of the car, as he was a very tall man, and his boots would be liable to scratch the wood-work.

At the Inquest, evidence came from hotel staff and a cab driver who had contact with the doctor in London before he set off from St. Pancras for his ultimate destination of Aberdeen. Was he suffering from drink, or a stupor brought on by drugs? "He was then very much intoxicated" said one witness. But another witness "could not say Dr. Arthur was drunk, but he was stupid [i.e. in a stupor] . . . He had not had much to drink at the hotel." Herbert Sewell, the cab driver, had been asked to stop outside pubs four times between the hotel and St. Pancras; each time the doctor went in for a drink. Whether through drink or drugs, Dr. Arthur was not a fit man when he joined the Scotch express.

Leaving the victim of the fire for the moment, we need to explore the cause of it. At Sheffield, a Mr. Cranston had joined the train, where he had later gone to bed in a lower berth in the 'Enterprise', near to the centre of the car. After the express left Normanton, Robert Donaldson, the conductor, noticed that Mr. Cranston . . .

. . . had a reading lamp burning fixed to the narrow window curtain. I called his attention to the lamp being burning, and he said it would be all right, he always had a light to read by before going to sleep, but he would blow it out before going to sleep . . . I wished him to be careful, and he promised me that there was no need to fear . . .

Other possible sources of fire in the 'Enterprise' were the heating stove and the oil lamps in the roof, but Donaldson told the Board of Trade Inquiry that he had detected no problems with these:

On approaching Leicester station . . . I thoroughly examined the stove, and found it in perfect condition; the dampers were all down, and everything fitted well and close. I examined the stove twice afterwards . . . in each case everything in connection with the stove was in perfect order . . .

The roof lamps were placed in the car by one of the lampmen in the usual way at St. Pancras; ten lamps, all lighted, the usual number, were placed in the car . . . The

lamps are supplied with mineral sperm oil, and are trimmed before the commencement of the journey. No oil is carried in the car for the purpose of trimming or replenishing any of the lamps . . . I am perfectly satisfied that the four lamps which were burning after leaving Normanton were burning correctly, and that the chimney-glasses must have been in the proper positions and in good condition.

The Manager of the Pullman Palace Car Company had written to Mr. Eyre M. Shaw, Chief Officer of the London Metropolitan Fire Brigade, over the safety of heating apparatus used in the cars. Shaw's reply, added to the text of Colonel Yolland's accident report, included the following:

. . . I should be the first to recommend additional precautions if I knew of any which you could take with advantage; but my distinct opinion is that you have now got the best and safest heating apparatus that you can have, and I strongly recommend you not to make any changes at present.

We must now return to the Scotch express whilst it paused at Leicester. Donaldson was taking a cup of coffee in the station refreshment room when he heard from a porter that a passenger in the 'Enterprise' needed attention. It was Dr. Arthur in search of a berth; he had travelled up from St. Pancras elsewhere on the train. The doctor asked Donaldson for a brandy and soda, but the conductor could only supply a bottle of soda water and a large glass. Dr. Arthur then "poured into the glass about two inches of liquid which deceased said was Egyptian brandy. The soda water was then put to the brandy, and deceased drank it off" noted Donaldson. The doctor then lay down directly on his berth, the conductor carefully taking off his boots to prevent damage to the woodwork, as mentioned earlier. Having discreetly removed a cigar which Dr. Arthur planned to smoke, Donaldson buttoned up the curtains which enclosed the berth. Later, some 20 minutes after the express left Trent, he glanced in to find the doctor "apparently heavy asleep; I saw nothing further of him until I saw his body in the car after the flames had been subdued."

What caused the fire? Both the Inquest Jury and Colonel Yolland considered Cranston's reading lamp to be to blame. Donaldson thought so, and referred to it at the Inquest as "a candle lamp". The Pullman Palace Car Company had Rule 33 in their regulations for guidance for conductors which stated: "Uncovered lamps or candles will not be used in cars at any time." However, although he warned Cranston to be careful with the reading lamp attached to the window blind, Donaldson did not actually ban him from using it.

Could Dr. Arthur's life have been saved? It was felt that had more action been taken before the fire got a major hold, the doctor might have been located and dragged from the car. Attention focussed on how quickly the train was stopped after the fire was first detected. The train was fitted with the Harrison communication cord, which sounded an alarm whistle in the locomotive cab when pulled. Driver Frank Carlisle heard this whistle just before he reached the Hunslet South Junction distant signal, and brought the train to a stand a short distance on the Leeds side of the South Junction signal box. A crucial point was made by Colonel Yolland in his report. The rule which the majority of railway companies used gave the driver discretion not to stop the train immediately the alarm whistle sounded, but to take the train on to "the first station or junction where it can be properly protected by fixed signals." This was, as the colonel pointed out, a hangover from the days before absolute block working and

efficient continuous brakes. However, it was the rule currently in force on the Midland, and he therefore commented:

I do not think that the engine driver or fireman are to be blamed for not having at once put on the Westinghouse continuous breaks [sic] and stopped the train immediately they heard the alarm system sounded.

He was critical of the Harrison's cord communication system, as installed on the train. The Board of Trade provisional sanction for companies to rely on this system had been withdrawn in 1873 . . .

. . . and no subsequent sanction has since been given by the BoT for any other cord communication, so the system in use on the Midland down night Scotch express on the 28th and 29th October was not approved by the Board of Trade . . .

. . . I must point out that [the cord] could not have been pulled by either of the conductors of the Pullman cars without opening a window of the car or passing through a door out on to the platforms at the end of the cars, thus causing a draft through the car, - the thing of all others most calculated to encourage the burning of the car. It was not in fact such a means of communication as the Board of Trade could properly sanction.

The colonel's final conclusions, echoed by the Inquest Jury, were:

If the train had stopped as soon as the alarm whistle was sounded, I think it was highly probable that Dr. Arthur's life would have been saved.

In all cases of murder or outrages in trains, or of carriages taking fire, seconds of time saved are invaluable, and I trust that no long time will elapse before this rule [giving the driver discretion not to stop the train immediately the alarm was sounded] will be altogether changed.

I also think that lighted reading lamps should not be permitted in sleeping berths occupied by passengers.

Acknowledgements: I have previously thanked Sheila Bye, Niall Melles and Peter Rose for their help with the first part of this article, and the library of the National Railway Museum for providing a copy of Colonel Yolland's Board of Trade accident inquiry report. My thanks again here to Sheila for searching out the pages of *The Yorkshire Post and Leeds Intelligencer* which covered the Coroner's Inquest at Leeds Town Hall, and to Bradford Local History Library for providing prints from the microfilm records.

My original introduction to the fire on the 'Enterprise' at Hunslet was through Brian Haresnape's book *Pullman* and *The American Pullman Cars of the Midland Railway* by J.B. Radford.

TIMES PAST - SPRING 1975

Sheila Bye

From an M.R.T. newsletter, dated March 1975:

The Santa Special The weather was fine, but an icy cold wind blew most of the time, which perhaps was why we did not get as many customers as in 1973. Those who helped deserve congratulations for their stamina, especially Santa Joe [Lee] whose practically see-through robe was not exactly designed for North Pole weather.

Takings were: Saturday - £7.40p (27 Adults, 20 Children)
 Sunday - £20.69½p (82 Adults, 52 Children)

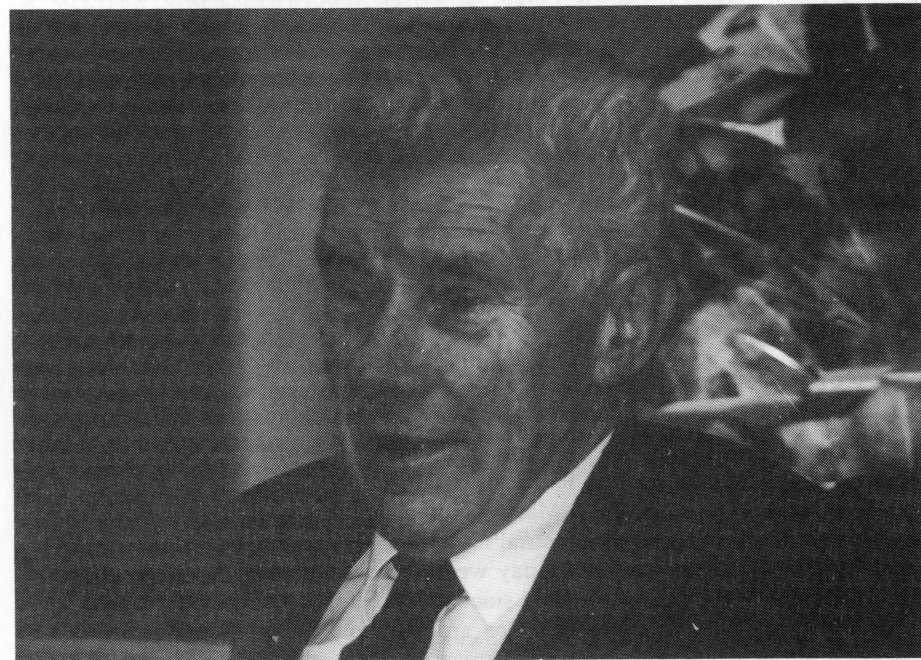
VISITORS The new season started with a good weekend, despite the cold weather - or more likely because of it (we find that nothing brings the visitors so much as a dull, cold morning with the sun coming out at lunchtime when it's too late for them to set off for the dales or the seaside). Total takings for Easter weekend were just over £130 and consisted of £78.09p tickets, £45.68p shop sales, £6.44p secondhand sales and donations for information sheets. The Peckett was kept very busy, and worked well apart from a recurrence of her hot axle-box ailment after the rather wet winter. At the beginning of the season at least, only two locos - the Peckett and the Bagnall - will be in use.

It is amazing to work out that, twenty years ago, we were only charging 20p Adult and 10p Child fares for the Santa Special. I don't think we can have made much profit that Christmas, even considering the fact that the 'pound in one's pocket' was still worth something then. Of course, fuel costs have rocketed since that time and we provide a much better class of present for the children these days. It is also now possible to put on a much better supporting show for our special events - in 1974/5 we could not even make our freezing cold visitors a cup of tea!

A MESSAGE FROM VICE-PRESIDENT FRED

Thanks to all Middleton members for the glorious treatment I had at the Shed Opening. It has made the last 35 years worth while!

R.F.Youell



Fred pictured at the shed opening ceremony on 19th November 1994. Photo: Keith Hartley

THE OTHER EDITORIAL

Sheila Bye

... and now for the usual Editorial of errors-to-put-right!

Vice-President Fred might not be physically active these days, but his brain is still working overtime, and shortly after the Winter Issue of *The Old Run* appeared, he was on the 'phone to the Editor with a whole list of comments and queries, as follows:

Page 4 Obviously the most important point was that I'd mis-spelt Claud (Hamilton that is) as 'Claude' (no doubt due to having spent too much time in France last summer). Apologies to all Great Eastern enthusiasts.

Page 12 The pubs perhaps tend to survive because of the complicated rules governing transference of licences.

Page 15 Regarding the proposed Kidacre Street plaque, this site was far from the centre of the budding preservation project, and was also vulnerable to theft or vandalism. Also, the R.C.T.S. and the Middleton Railway Preservation Society decided about this time not to "tread on each other's toes" as the latter society showed signs of being successful in keeping at least part of the colliery line operational.

Page 20 Dr. Youell thought perhaps the designation 'Tram Route No.6' for the Balm Road route might be an error, as this was traditionally the Hyde Park route number. However, he was right in the first place. Andrew D. Young's *One Hundred Years Of Leeds Tramways*, published in 1970, implies that during the mid to late 1920's at least, the route to Balm Road was part of a cross-town route from Cardigan Road to Balm Road, the Cardigan Road to town centre portion of which carried No.6 trams. The route plan mentioned by Dr. Youell in his article may have envisaged the Balm Road route as an extension of the No.6 route, though after it was built the Balm Road portion actually carried the No.19 service. Unfortunately, the book does not give a full list of the earliest route numbers, all of which were revised in October 1929, the Balm Road route becoming No.26.

STOP PRESS NEWS!

A replacement engine has been found for **7401 John Alcock**, after a great deal of searching around by Graham Parkin and Ian Smith. Their efforts were finally rewarded last weekend (25th/26th March), when they travelled to Pluckley, Kent. Built in July 1956 for a Fowler industrial motor, the new engine was removed in the mid-1970's during the days of the 3-day week power shortages, in order to have it work a generator. It has been little used since then - before Graham and Ian's visit on Saturday it had not been started up for around three years. After Graham had inspected it and they had seen it running, it was pronounced 'O.K.', and has now been acquired for use in our vintage Hunslet diesel locomotive.

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