

# MIDDLETON RAILWAY TRUST, LEEDS

## PROSPECTUS

Railway preservation schemes in Britain at the moment run into bewildering dozens, all of them competing for your interest and support.

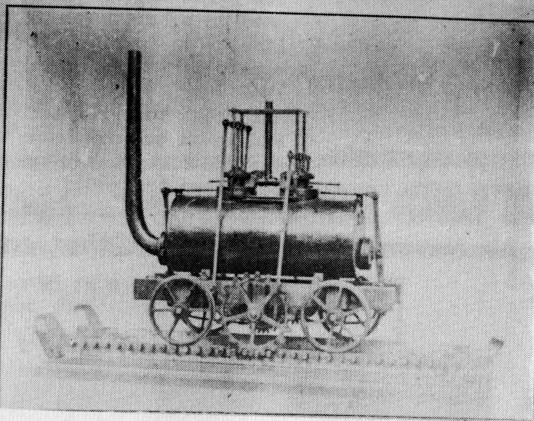
We of the Middleton Railway consider we have these strong claims to your attention:

1. Middleton is the OLDEST SURVIVING RAILWAY IN THE WORLD, dating back to 1758. It was also the first railway to put steam locomotives into regular commercial use.

2. Middleton is a GOING CONCERN, not a mere pipe-dream. It was the first standard-gauge railway to be taken over by amateurs and has been operating an all-year-round service since 1960.

## BLENKINSOP'S LEEDS LOCOMOTIVE.

(AS CONSTRUCTED FOR CHARLES BRANDLING, ESQ., MIDDLETON, NEAR LEEDS.)



3. Middleton STILL DOES THE JOB IT WAS BUILT FOR -giving a goods service to the industry of Leeds. It keeps over 10,000 tons of freight a year off the overcrowded roads.

4. All of Middleton's traffic CONTINUES ITS JOURNEY BY RAIL, thus helping the railway system as a whole.

Middleton has, as you see, indisputable claims to fame. The following pages show you this historic line in greater detail.

# THE OLDEST RAILWAY IN THE WORLD



*An ACT for Establishing Agreements made between Charles Brandling, Esquire, and other Persons, Proprietors of Lands, for laying down a Waggon-way, in order for the better supplying the Town and Neighbourhood of Leeds, in the County of York, with Coals.*

**Whereas** Charles Brandling, Esquire, Lord of the Manor of Middleton, in the County of York, is Owner and Proprietor of divers Coal-works, Mines, Veins, and Seams of Coals, lying and being within the said Manor of Middleton, and Places adjacent; and hath proposed, and is willing to engage and undertake, to furnish and supply the Inhabitants of the Town of Leeds with Coals for their necessary Life and Conformation, at the Rate or Price of Four Pence Three-Farthings a Coal, containing in Weight about Six hundred and Ten Pounds, and in Measure about One Bushel Six hundred and Eighty cubical Inches, for the Term of Sixty Years, to commence from the Second Day of January One thousand

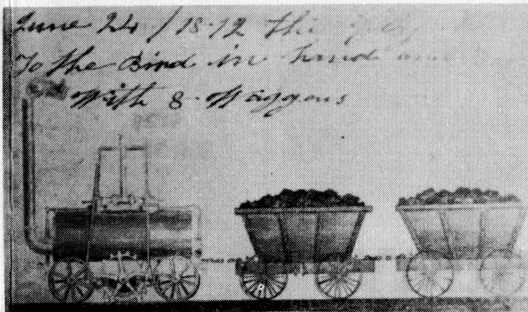
**The original 1758 Railway Act**

It was on June 9, 1758, that the Rev. Charles Brandling obtained an Act of Parliament for the construction of a horse worked waggon way from his coal mines at Middleton to staithes on the River Aire at Leeds. This, the first railway Act, authorised nearly 3 miles of 4ft gauge track, including an incline of about 1 in 20.

On August 12, 1812, Middleton put into service Salamanca and Prince Regent, a pair of steam locomotives designed and built by Matthew Murray of Leeds. They used the Blenkinsop rack-rail system, although not on the incline. Top speed was an impressive 10mph.

These engines, together with two others which appeared in the following years, were the first steam engines ever to be put into regular commercial operation, and remained in daily use until 1835.

From this date the railway declined. Horses replaced the worn out steam engines and the northern terminus was moved back to make way for new buildings. The decline finished in 1862 when the



Brandling estates were sold, and steam traction re-introduced - though still on the 4ft gauge.

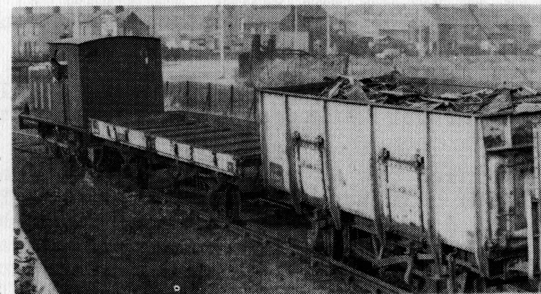
The change to standard gauge came in 1881, when a deviation was also made to avoid the incline - today known as Old Run Road - and make the whole line suitable for locomotive operation. At the same time connections were put in to the neighbouring main lines.

And so Middleton passed in to the 20th century as (apparently) just another mineral railway. As industry grew in the area, so sidings were laid into the factories, and coal lost its monopoly.

In 1946 the mines at

Middleton were nationalised, and the railway was worked by the Coal Board. The northern end of the line was pulled up in 1948 and the site sold to the Gas Board. The rest closed in 1958, when Parkside Jct. to the colliery was relaid, and is now operated jointly by BR and the Coal Board.

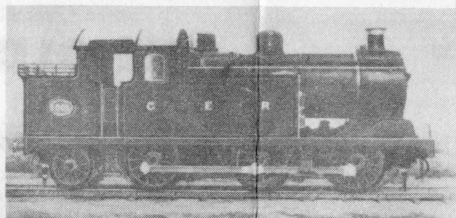
To save the rest of the line, local enthusiasts formed the Middleton Railway Trust in December 1959. This aimed to restore the line and operate a goods service. One of the firms served by the line bought it and handed over operation to the Trust, since when a daily goods train has been operated.





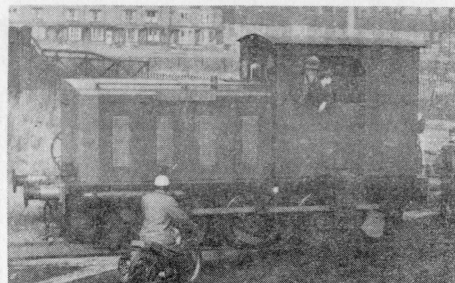
No. 69621

The last of the famous GER N7 0-6-2 ts, now owned by Dr. R. F. Youell, MRT chairman, and kept at Neville Hill. Will be used on excursions when in working order.



John Alcock

The first diesel ever used on a British main line, this Hunslet 132 bhp loco was built in 1932 for the LMS. It has been the regular Middleton engine since the goods service commenced in 1960.

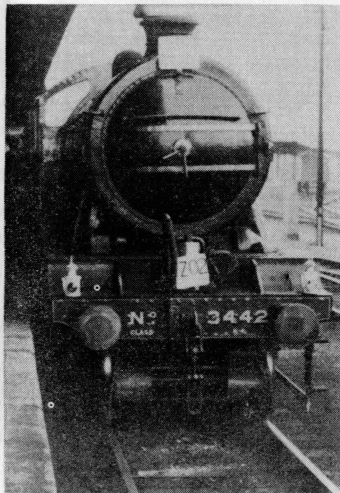


## THE MIDDLETON STUD

### Other engines at Middleton

No. 54

Once a shunter at BR's Darlington works, No. 54 was built for the LNER in 1933 by Sentinel. Now the MRT spare engine.

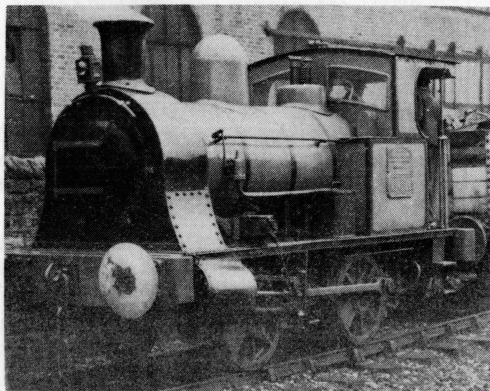


### The Great Marquess

The last Gresley K4 2-6-0, now owned by Lord Garnock, the MRT president. Housed at Neville Hill (BR) and often used on special excursions.

### Windle

Built 1909, Windle is 1 of the last Borrow's well tanks. Presented to the MRT by Pilkingtons Glass, St Helens, in 1963.



### Swansea

Built 1909 by the Avonside Engine Co., this loco worked on the Swansea & Mumbles until 1928, when it was bought by the Bynea Steelworks in South Wales until being given to Middleton in 1961. It is now being overhauled.

### Steam crane

The MRT also owns the last working ex-broad gauge vehicle in its 1880 steam crane. This historic crane used to work on the GWR at Gloster and now helps in track maintenance.