

FAREWELL TO STEAM.

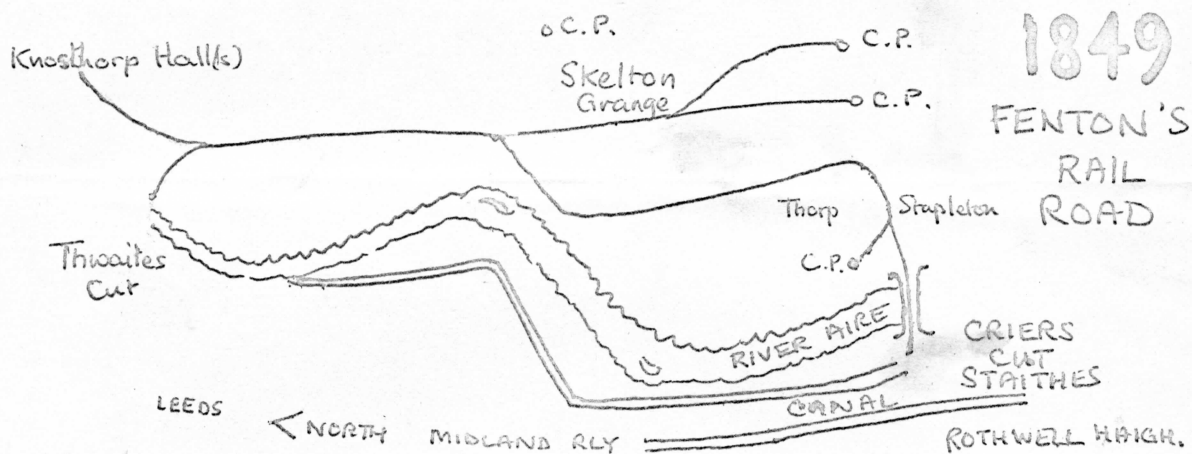


23rd
NOVEMBER
1968

HUNSLET NO 2

CLOSING OF WATERLOO MAIN COLLIERY.

FIG. 1.

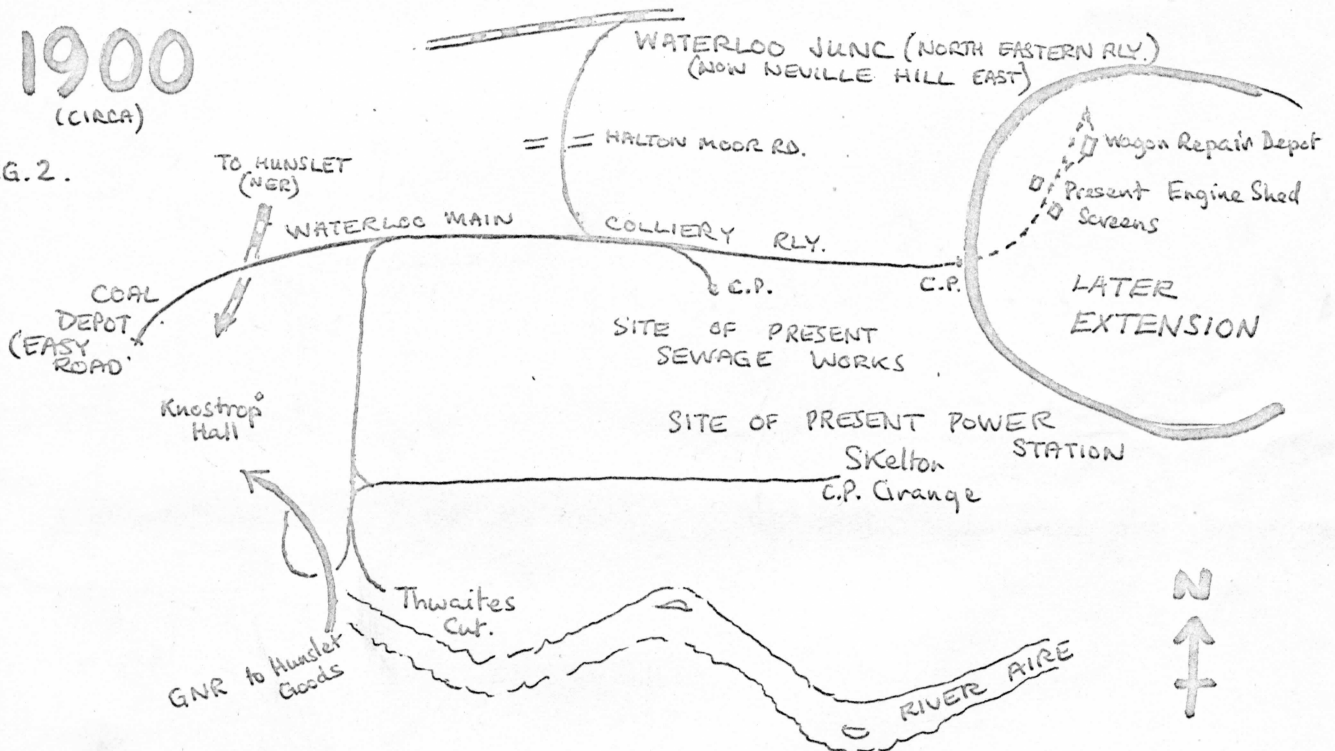


1849

FENTON'S
RAIL
ROAD

1900
(CIRCA)

FIG. 2.



NOT TO
SCALE

ROADS HAVE BEEN OMITTED FOR SIMPLICITY
C.P. = Coal Pit.

NOTES, MAPS, DRAWINGS BY JBUSHELL
11/68.

THE END OF NATIONALISED STEAM TRACTION IN LEEDS

FAREWELL TO THE WATERLOO MAIN COLLIERY RAILWAY

SATURDAY 23rd. NOVEMBER 1968

This tour has been arranged by the 1758 Middleton Railway Trust to mark the ending of daily steam hauled Coal Trains in the City of Leeds. It was 156 years ago, on the 24th June 1812, that crowds gathered to watch the first Murray - Blenkinsop locomotive haul a 94 ton train of coal at $3\frac{1}{2}$ m.p.h. on the Middleton Colliery Railway. With the closing of Waterloo Main, the last mine in the City, the age old link with the coal industry has finally come to its end. The only remaining active steam locomotives are those at work on the Middleton Railway. After the payment of the expenses of running this tour, any surplus will be devoted to the purchase of the railway to Middleton Colliery (See separate note). We are most grateful for your help.

We are asked to make it clear that neither the National Coal Board nor any of those concerned in organising the tour can take responsibility for any loss or injury to visitors, however caused, and that passengers travel at their own risk.

This tour has been arranged with the kind cooperation of the Allerton Bywater offices and the Waterloo Colliery officers of the N.C.B. to whom our thanks are due.

ANOTHER COLLIERY RAILWAY VISIT TODAY.

You are invited to travel over the Middleton Railway in a brake van this afternoon. Meet at the Garnet Road works of Clayton Son and Company, reached by either the 74 & 76 'buses or any of the Dewsbury Road 'buses to Burton Road, from which Garnet Road is about half way along. Further details will be announced.

HISTORICAL NOTES

The area between Temple Newsam and the River Aire has been of mining importance since the 18th. Century. By 1849 a system of mineral tramways, known as "Fenton's Rail Road" served several small coal pits, linking them to the canal at Cryers Cut, Rothwell Haigh and Thwaite Cut (near Thwaite Gate, Stourton). A branch ran to Knosthorpe Hall. (See FIG 1). Though the line terminated within a few yards of the North Midland, within a stone's throw of the main Leeds-Derby railway, there was no connection to this system. In 1864, a Civil Engineer, J.W. Leather, produced plans for rationalising railway stations and lines in central Leeds. (This would have involved a new Grand Central Station, and a line from the Leeds & Selby railway at Richmond Road, tunnelling through Richmond Hill to join the North Midland close to Hudswell Clarke's works). His plan also envisaged tunnelling beneath Waterloo Main Colliery Railway, and Cross Green Coal Railway (possibly this was Fenton's Rail Road). At this time, they were apparently independent concerns. The W M C R is not marked on some maps of this period.

A map of 1877 shows the development of an iron works at Thorp Stapleton and the pattern of the railway linking large users as well as producers of coal had been established. The opening of new coal pits and the closing of others resulted in the adaption of the line to meet new needs, but there were still no main line connections.

1890. The NER Coalfield Map shows a link at Neville Hill East Signal Box in use, (at that time the Box was called Waterloo Junction). This we assume reduced the importance of the Canal links which were soon to disappear. By the turn of the Century the W M C R was much as today, linking Easy Road Coal Depot to a mine about half a mile short of the present Eastern terminus. A new link was established to the G.N.R.'s new Hunslet Goods (later known as Hunslet East), using largely the former proposed C.G.C.Rly. route. Their former Thwaite Cut Canal Staithe was also still in use.

1920. Minor routes alterations continued to take place. A new Coal Depot at Halton Moor Road was distributing domestic coals, a sign of a growing city. More recently the construction of Skelton Grange Power Station in the 1950's provided a useful industrial outlet, the C.E.G.B. having only received substantial quantities of coal from the main lines only in the last two years. Many of the earlier alignments of the W M C R will continue to be served by C.E.G.B. Fowler 0-4-0 Diesel Shunters. These were among the last orders for railway locomotives from this renowned Leeds Builder, production having ceased within the last 12 months. Another interesting feature of the W.M.C.R. was the service using two old Midland Railway compartment coaches. This continued until replaced by a 'bus in the early 1960's. The W M C R could well be dismissed therefore as unimportant, but for its historical links with Hunslet Engine Company. John Towlerton Leather (son of James Leather, owner of Beeston Colliery), was born in 1804, and like the rest of the family became an engineer. He lived at Leventhorpe Hall, and W.M. Colliery and the railway were part of one of his large estates. He died in 1885. Hunslet Engine Co. was opened as he believed it would eventually become a good commercial proposition for his son, Arthur. Through his contacts as Civil Engineer, and Mine Owner, he believed he could secure many orders. It is hence highly appropriate that Hunslet's No. 2 was purchased by the colliery in October 1865. This 0-6-0 Saddle Tank had compensated springs to the driving and leading coupled axles, an early Gifford injector, wooden brake blocks, and Salter Safety valves in the dome. Cylinders 16" x 15" and 2'9" wheels differed slightly from No.1 and became a "standard" design. John Leather sold the business in 1871, as his son, Arthur, didn't appear interested. Nevertheless the link between Colliery, Railway, and Locomotive Builder remained. Thus whilst even in recent years the 1758 Middleton Railway was the test bed for John Fowlers, and Hudswell Clarkes locomotives, Hunslet turned to Waterloo. No 1697 was exhibited at the British Industries Fair, at Birmingham in Feb. 1932, untried and untested. This was Hunslet's latest invention, a diesel mechanical 0-6-0 shunter aimed at doing the work of its steam counterpart. As soon as the exhibition was over, the locomotive went to Waterloo Main Colliery, where tests took place. One involved hauling a 400 ton train of coal around a sharp curve and over a weighbridge, stopping for each wagon to be weighed. This was a great success, and so the L.M. & S.R. arranged for tests. They were so impressed that they purchased the loco. and ordered 3 more. As 7401, later 7051, she was the first diesel to operate on a main line railway. Now named "John Alcock" after its designer, it has performed sterling service on the 1758 Middleton Railway. The W M C R however remained steam worked.

The N.C.B. lines seem likely to remain the last stronghold of steam, and with this in mind Hunslet in the 1960's has sought to make the steam loco more acceptable by reducing smoke emission. The famous "Austerity" Tanks built during the last war (L. & N.E.R. J 94) have been returned to Hunslet for overhaul. Hunslet engineers devised an automatic underfeed stoker and gas producer system. This burns small coal, allowing larger grades to be sold. A hopper at the bottom of the coal bunker delivers the coal on to a chute. A single steam cylinder mounted horizontally at the rear of the locomotive

propels coal along troughs which ascend through the ashpan into the firebox, where it is spilled out to form an even fire. The driver can operate this, thus saving the labour of a fireman. The gas producer system admits steam to the ashpan, creating a cooler firebed, but intense heat in the firebox where combustion takes place. Together with other improvements, this is said to increase efficiency and reduce smoke. In September 1961, the first locomotive of this kind went to W M C R. Such was its success that with a load of 18 loaded wagons it could climb the 1 in 60 bank, with all the noise of a steam engine hard at work, but just a wisp of steam from its squat conical chimney.

Thus the first of the latest design of steam locomotive works on this line, so we may remember the other pioneer locomotives which have used this as a test line, and sadly we salute the passing of an era.

Farewell to our City Coal Mine

Farewell to Steam

Final Allocation of Steam Locomotives.

O-6-0 Saddle Tanks.

Introduced 1943 Riddles Ministry of Supply design (J 94).

Weight 48 tons 5 cwt.

Driving Wheel Diameter 4' 3".

Boiler Pressure 180 lbs. p.s.i.

Tractive Effort 23,870 lbs.

Inside cylinders 18" x 26"

Valve Gear Stephenson.

Built by Hunslet Engine Co.

"Jess" 2876 of 1943 - to Newmarket Colliery, Methley.

"Diana" 2879 of 1943 - Probably for scrap?

S.115 3180 of 1944.

- 3891 of 1965 - to Peckfield Colliery, Micklefield.