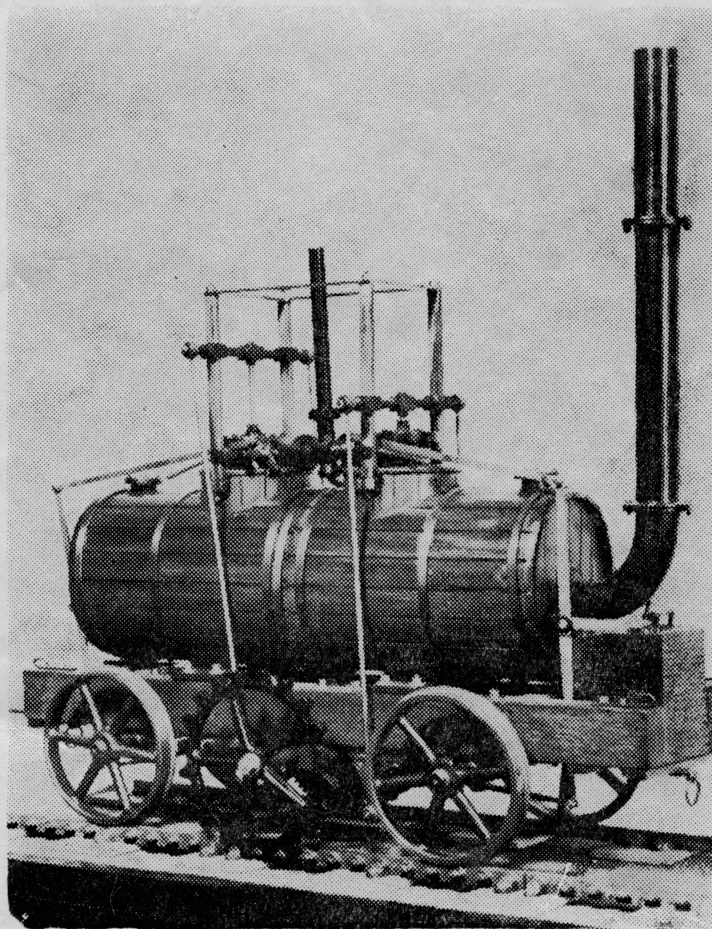


The Old Run

VOL 4 NO 34

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1758 Middleton Railway, Leeds



First Steam Locomotive

SALAMANCA 1812

The Old Run

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An old familiar friend

How do we feel now, as we pick our way through the debris? We have lost that which was economically worthless - but our children will never experience the

joy of civilised transport, or wonder at the local station's "supportless" awning, and soft gas light.

The reverberations caused by Dr. Beeching's report will cease, but they will echo in our hearts like ghosts in an empty house.

We cannot help our feelings as we remember the past, but must we be despondent about the future? Middleton has survived more changes than any other railway, and teaches us the lesson that a railway is not a track, buildings, trains, company or workers. It is a continued series of operations, a stage set for movement.

WE, WHO HAVE INHERITED THE WORLD'S OLDEST RAILWAY, MUST RECOGNISE THIS FACT MOST OF ALL.

SERIOUS BLOW HITS M.R.T. FINANCES

Repairs by the Hunslet Engine Company to the main revenue earner of the Middleton Railway - the diesel locomotive "John Alcock" - will cost the Railway nearly £500.

This was announced on Saturday, March 30, by the chairman of the M R T, Dr. Fred Youell. The repairs were effected last summer, when the locomotive was out of commission from early July to early September.

Remedy

Steps were already being taken to meet this bill by finding immediate means to increase revenue. The most important job in hand was the completion of the new branch line into Messrs. Clayton's Moor End works, which it was hoped to accomplish by early April.

All Leeds members are urgently requested to help in this

vital work.

Another step is taken with the publication of this Old Run.

Short and long term loans are a dire necessity if the railway is to remain solvent. A loan now will ensure that revenue can be increased and all outstanding debts paid off.

Loans, and donations, should be sent to the treasurer of the Middleton Railway Trust (Philip Worsfold, 10 Petersway, Clifton, York.)

The case of the precious diamond

A problem of Ellery Queen complexity has been solved by the careful research of the Leeds City Solicitor, aided and abetted by the MRT chairman, Dr. Fred Youell. The "precious diamond" in question is that delightful piece of ironmongery carrying the railway over two tramlines, known at Middleton as "Clayton's crossing".

To cope with the then new works on Garnet Road, the Middleton Colliery Company obtained the right to build the present line in 1919. A few months later Leeds City Tramways planned the route to Middleton.

This created the problem of crossing the spur to Clayton's works, which resulted in the present crossing with non-standard check clearance, non-standard flange depth, non-standard curvature, and non-standard check rails !

Perpetual bondage

Leeds Corporation bought the tramline site from the colliery and in exchange were legally bound to maintain in perpetuity a railway crossing of up to double track to give access between the two sections of the railway.

When the tram route to Middleton was abandoned, the tramline right of way was given to Leeds Parks Department, as most of it was in Middleton Park. There is, in consequence, the interesting situation of a parks department being legally obliged to maintain a complex rail/tramline diamond crossing !

As in this case ownership is less important than sound maintenance, the MRT is receiving the crossing and rails on the site in exchange for taking over maintenance from the Parks Department. The completion date of the transaction is expected in the near future - and the M R T committee is rumoured to be looking for an official park keeper as well as a permanent way engineer !



1. British Railway Drewry 0-6-0 diesel on hire to Middleton last July while the "John Alcock" was undergoing major repairs. It is believed that this was the first time a "main line" engine has worked over this section of the M.R.



2. Hudswell-Clarke 0-4-0 diesel on trial on the Middleton Railway last July. The locomotive was on exhibition several days and as a result of the demonstrations several sales were made.

SAN FRANCISCO VOTES FOR RAPID TRANSIT

Conclusive case for by-passing new roads convinces electorate

What seems to a down-trodden Leeds resident a visionary concept is the San Francisco Bay Area Rapid Transit District, which received the necessary approval of 60% of the electorate of the districts concerned on November 6, 1962.

This scheme, which provides for 76 miles of high-speed electric railway, is the most comprehensive transport scheme in the world today, and integrates social needs with economic and technical possibilities. Some of the many advantages of the scheme are clearly beyond the imaginative capacity of a Beeching or a Marples:

Many benefits

Reduced traffic congestion; improved property values; reduced travel times; smog reduction; lower commuting costs; greater residential availability; greater cultural accessibility; new leisure opportunities; expanded sales markets; accident reduction; preservation of scenic beauty; lower freight costs; wider choice of schools; better city planning - to mention a few.

The reason for the scheme is simply put - the number of private cars in the Area will double by 1980, an increase of 240 vehicles a day. The rapid transit system will be the most modern in the world, and the first ever designed to compete with the private car.

Utmost comfort

Passenger facilities will provide the utmost in comfort and convenience, including spacious seats and aisles, pleasing interior colours, and temperature controls. The lightweight electric trains will be completely automatic, their operating controls governed entirely by electronic computer, giving greater safety, operating efficiency and economy.

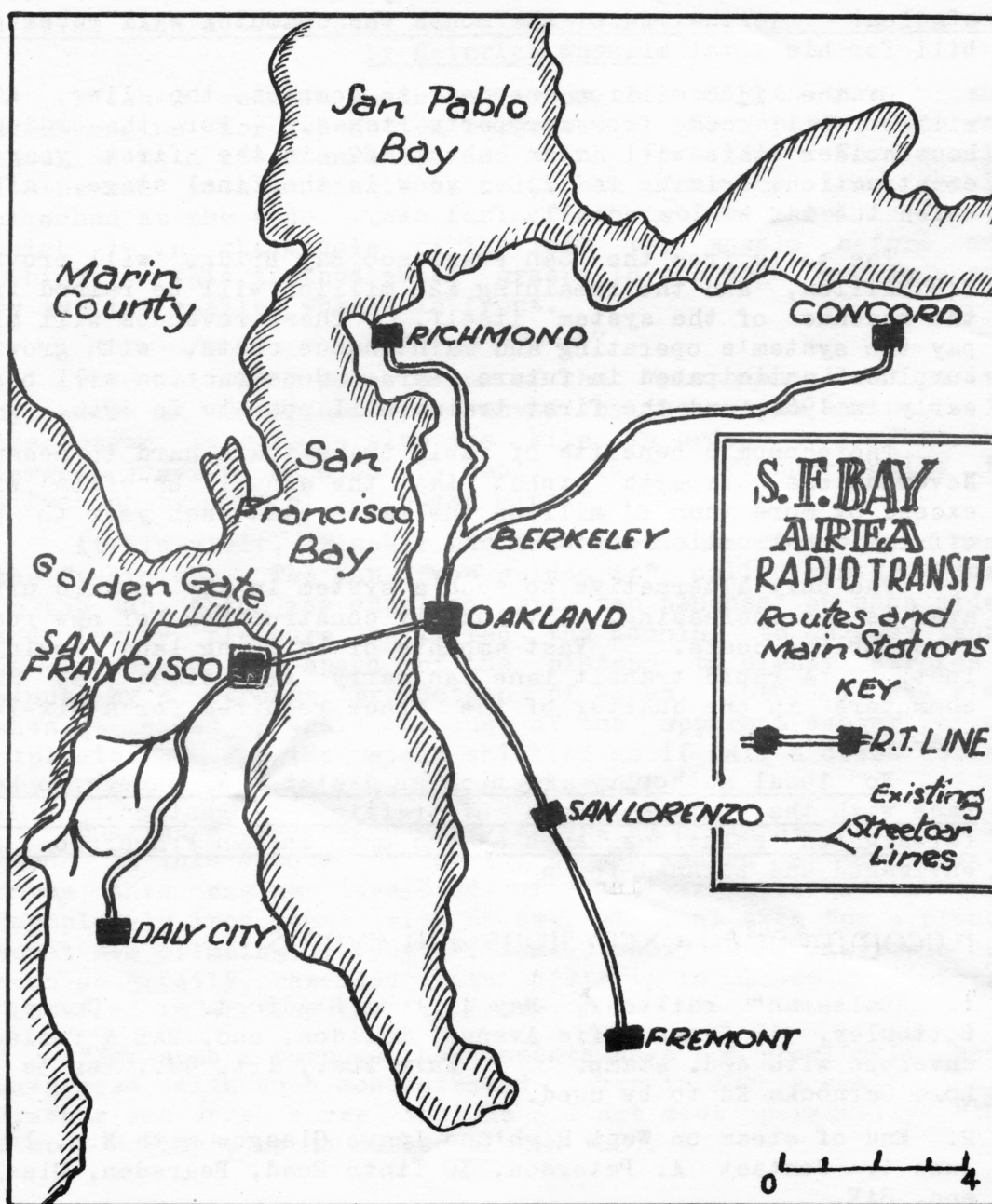
Average speeds, including stops, will be about 50mph. A 90 second interval service will be operated during peak hours, and not less than a 15 minute service at other times.

The system is illustrated on the map. The lines follow the most heavily used traffic corridors. Sixteen miles of subway and tunnels, 31 miles of gracefully designed overhead

lines, 24 miles of new surface lines and the 4-mile trans-Bay tunnel will make up the network.

Stations will have parking facilities for thousands of cars, be close together enough to provide convenient access, yet far enough apart for high speeds to be maintained.

The San Francisco Market Street subway will have two levels - the upper one will accomodate the present streetcar



system. At other points the railway will use the centre reservations of new six-lane roads. The earthquake-proof trans-bay tube will be constructed in prefabricated concrete and steel sections, which will be sunk into position on the Bay floor.

It is likely that regular travellers on the railway will be issued with coded credit cards, which will be inserted into an automatic recording machine to operate a turnstile at the station. At the end of the month the commuter will receive a bill for his total mileage.

Of the £360 million needed to complete the line, £284 million will come from property taxes. For the ordinary householder this will mean about £2 in the first year of construction, rising to £10 a year in the final stage, after which the tax will gradually fall away.

The tolls from the San Francisco Bay Bridge will provide £48 million, and the remaining £28 million will be raised from the revenue of the system itself. These revenues will also pay the system's operating and maintenance costs, with growing surpluses anticipated in future years. Construction will begin early in 1964, and the first trains will operate in 1966.

The economic benefits of rapid transit are hard to measure. Nevertheless, experts expect that the annual benefits will exceed by more than £4 million the taxes paid each year to pay off the construction costs.

The only alternative to such a system in any modern urban area is the increasing, involuntary construction of new roads at crippling costs. Vast amounts of building land would be lost. A rapid transit lane can carry five times as many commuters in one quarter of the space required for a six-lane highway.

No local authority is rich or dictatorial enough to keep pace with the future growth of traffic congestion, unless far-sighted solutions such as the one in San Francisco are envisaged and planned for now.

Recommended excursions and events

1. "Dalesman" railtour, May 4 from Bradford. Contact W. Bottomley, 18 Greencliffe Avenue, Baildon, enc. SAE & foolscap envelope with 4½d. stamp. Fare 26s., lit. 3s., tea 3s 6d Lord Garnocks K4 to be used.
2. End of steam on West Highland Leave Glasgow with N.B. loco; June 1. Contact A. Peterson, 30 Tinto Road, Bearsden, Glasgow enc. SAE.

Middleton engines were well-known in 1814

This account of their power impresses even to-day !

The following notes, adapted from the British Journal of Industrial Medicine for January 1962, have been sent by C. H. Betts, and should be of interest to members:

A Swiss manufacturer sees the industrial revolution in England by Heinrich Buess.

Fischer went to Leeds in order to study the use of the steam engine for locomotion purposes. He reports, "The van on which is a steam engine, and which in size and form equals a wine-van with a single barrel, has four low iron wheels attached at the ends. It has a fifth toothed wheel in front, which is in the middle of the left two wheels before and behind. This toothed wheel grasps in the cogs and is moved by the two smaller wheels in front.

"Van of triumph"

Then follows a description of the "piston-handles" in two cylinders of 12 inches size moved by the steam engine. In the boiler itself is also the kiln in order to produce the largest quantity of steam by small fire." Fischer calls it a "van of triumph of the human mind."

At his visit, Fischer had travelled some distance to meet the "vehicle". The man "who guided it" called him to "jump on the van, which was supplied with two benches on each side, and for my pleasure he lifted the machine to an easy trot. He increased the speed of the pistons to eighty strokes a minute by a stronger production of steam. But I was glad when he eased up again because of the apparent danger of an explosion. For the steam whistled as if half a dozen horses driven out of breath were being relayed."

But the story had a happy ending and Fischer arrived in Leeds in this unique manner. He was amazed at the immense force this engine developed, for it was able to move 23 "completely iron vans" with 60 cwt. of coal each "on a plane, sometimes climbing.....by the same speed." Fischer, who had been so greatly rewarded with his trip to Leeds, was fully justified in writing the following:

"For such a purpose the elements have not previously been harnessed with such concentrated power in such a small room." Fischer was very sorry that he did not meet personally "the famous Murray", as he called him in 1825.

Middleton's trams are for sale

The three Leeds tramcars at present owned by the Middleton Railway Trust are to be put up for sale to defray costs.

The decision to do this was taken at the railway's annual general meeting in February, and the trams are now being offered to all interested societies or individuals. The offer will remain open until June 30, 1963, after which those trams not already paid for by bodies wishing to preserve them will be sold for scrap.

The trams concerned are ex-Leeds City Transport Nos. 202 ("Horsfield" type), 517 (ex-London "Feltham" type) and 601 (Leeds railcar - damaged). Offers for parts of the trams will also be considered if no offer for the whole is forthcoming.

The necessity for this action is much regretted, but the many considerations which led to its being taken all point the fact that the MRT cannot afford to diversify. Nothing must be allowed to obstruct the main business of providing a decent modern service on the world's oldest railway.

All interested in purchasing the cars should contact the MRT treasurer for further details.

You can help your railway grow

Many members who cannot afford large loans or donations, or cannot get to Leeds because of distance, can nevertheless be of great help to the railway in the matter of publicity.

This would entail the sale and distribution of MRT publications, many of which are very popular and sell well and easily. Publications ordered in bulk may be offered to members at a discount if there is sufficient response to this appeal.

The publications sell well in model shops, bookshops which carry railway books, and especially, at exhibitions. Many potential markets need exploring, of which schools and scout troops are two examples.

Any member of MRT willing to take part in this effort should contact the publicity officer (Stephanie Ashurst, 18 Inglewood Drive, Otley, Yorkshire, or 'phone Leeds 23424). Further details of the scheme will be worked out when the likely response is known.