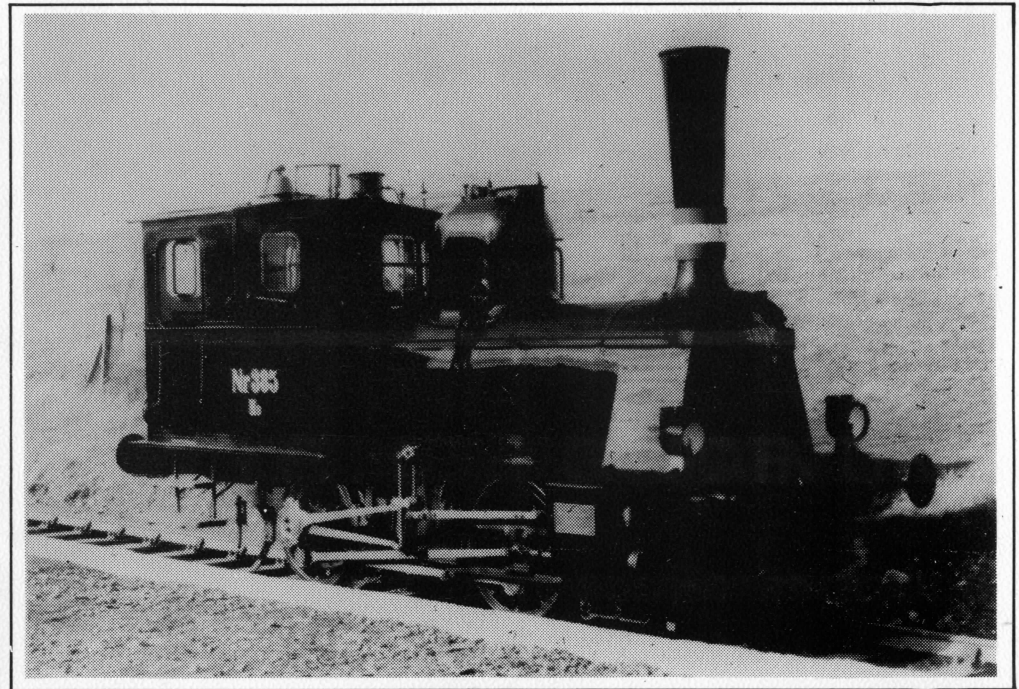


THE OLD RUN



**JOURNAL OF
THE 1758 MIDDLETON RAILWAY
LEEDS**

SUMMER 1986

No. 116

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DSB385 poses at the top platform on Sunday 20th April, her official entry into service day.
Photo: G. PARKIN

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The Editor invites all readers to contribute articles, news items, letters, photographs and drawings on subjects of interest! All contributions should include the reader's name and address. Opinions expressed in the magazine do not necessarily reflect those of the Middleton Railway Trust Ltd, The Middleton Railway Association, or the Editor.

All articles for the next issue should reach the Editor by 1st September 1986.

Details of rates and conditions for advertisements in The Old Run may be obtained from the Editor.

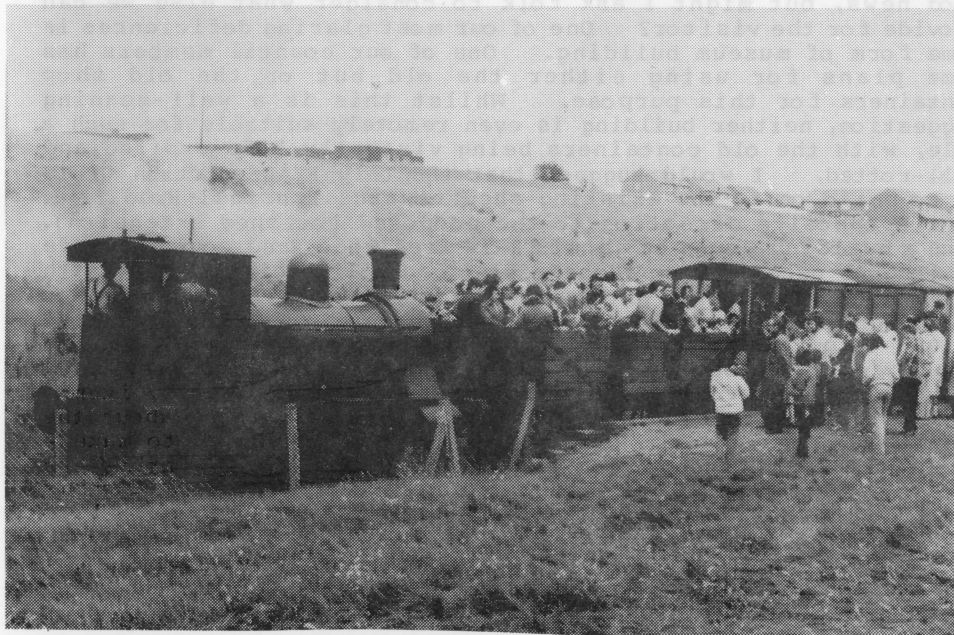
EDITORIAL

At long last, the weather has broken. As I type this editorial, the sun is shining brightly and has been for several days. The weather can also match the mood of our working members, as our takings have taken a dramatic leap upwards again following the 'Danish' and 'Little Engines' events recently held. I am informed that takings, as at 1st May this year, have already equalled those for JUNE last year, so we are, in effect, a month in front so far. Obviously, things can alter, but so far we seem to be on a winning streak after some years in the doldrums.

One thing which does spring to mind, however, is a comment made in conversation with another council member recently. Talking about the way in which the railway has been progressing, he made the comment that 'The general public pay us to enjoy our hobby'. This is not a bad attitude to adopt when dealing with the general public. Courteous and efficient service goes a long way these days. On the same theme, one comment noticed a few times was that the Railway is a great place to go, but once the passenger has had his train ride, there is nothing to keep him there for more than a few minutes, so he goes elsewhere. There are a couple of things being planned to alleviate this problem, mainly concerned with the laying in of a new platform road to house the playcoach and a static loco - possibly 'Henry de Lacy II' - for visitors to look at and leave their kids to play. This is very good news, but might I ask folk to consider what else we can provide for the visitor? One of our most glaring deficiencies is some form of museum building. One of our council members has some plans for using either the old hut or the old shop containers for this purpose. Whilst this is a well-meaning suggestion, neither building is even remotely suitable for such a role, with the old containers being virtually life-expired and well-rotted. I would suggest that the only REAL solution would be to build on to the existing shed towards Tunstall Road (i.e. in the opposite direction to the proposed locoshed extension). Such a building would be about 12-14 feet wide, and could be made as long as necessary to accommodate our small exhibits. As with all things, the major problem is one of finance. The sort of building talked about here would cost something in the region of £2,000 to put up, money which many working members could easily argue would be better used on trackwork, locomotives, shed extensions for our existing locos, and many other worthy items. Which brings me back to the opening of this paragraph, about the visitor paying for our hobby. It's a difficult choice to make - do we cater for the visitor who directly pays for our hobby, or do we indirectly cater for the same visitor by improving facilities he may not actually gain benefit from until a new loco is seen steaming up the branch? I throw the question open to the membership. What do YOU think?



1. "Peter Peckett" alias P2003 at the top of the line in April this year.
Photo: S.J. ROBERTS



2. "Fred Windle" is seen at Middleton Park on 4th July 1982 pushing the old passenger train, in contrast to the 'new look' train seen in the upper photograph.
Photo: JOHN H MEREDITH

PETER AND FRED!

Meet the Railway's new double act! Unlike the last double act of this name (Nettleton & Youell to the more junior members reading this article) our latest duo are, in fact, railway engines, Peckett & 'Windle'.

The names were bestowed, along with suitable faces, for our 'Little Engines Day', held on Sunday 27th April. Peckett had a wooden face, complete with pipe made from a Pot Noodle pot and a piece of dowelling, whilst the Beast had the face painted directly on to the smokebox door since, being the awkward loco that she is, 'Windle' has no dart to shut the door.

The day started at 11.00, with Peter Peckett (driven, coincidentally, by Peter Nettleton) doing the honours and Fred Windle standing on the Balm Road branch festering away with what was supposed to be a fire in the firebox. Now, it is well known that your Editor just loves the Beast, and I was most impressed at the length of time taken to raise steam - 4 hours! To be fair, the loco WAS on test, and raising steam was not high on the priority list at first; our worthy CME was far more concerned with finishing off the vacuum system, which was the major reason for the test steaming in the first place. Trains were running at half hourly intervals from the start, despite our hourly timetable until 2.00p.m., and the crowds of parents and excited children all enjoyed themselves greatly from what I saw of them.

By about 2.30p.m., Fred was about ready to move, and a quick shunt was organised to get the loco from the Balm Road Branch into the loop where he was to spend the rest of the day running up and down. The shunt done, and water taken, the loco was shunted to and fro in front of many delighted children. Following various adjustments, 'Windle' was tried out on a passenger train, and acquitted herself quite well before being put back into the loop for a few more adjustments to be made. Peter Peckett, meanwhile, had had a well-earned rest, which was even more welcomed by his by now rather tired crew, who had set to work to get him ready for the last couple of trips.

The last official trip ran at 16.30 but, on arrival back at the platform, a small number of intending passengers had gathered. It was decided to run a final trip for these people, since the loco would have had to return to the top of the line anyway, in order to return the locking bars from the loop turnout back to Moor Road. The few passengers really appreciated this gesture, and I think we made some more friends there!

The whole event was a great success, and certainly the folk I spoke to, both at and after the event, said they had thoroughly enjoyed themselves and wanted to know when the next one was. For the record, ticket sales were £213 and shop takings £156. Once again, the Trust is showing what can be done with a little effort, good marketing, and good presentation on the day. Those directly involved can be proud of the contribution they made to the Railway, and let's look forward to the next event.

Incidentally, you may have wondered why I was impressed at the length of time taken to steam 'Windle'. The answer's quite simple; she is booked to run a special for Liverpool University on 3rd May, and yours truly has, by default of her rostered fireman, drawn the short straw for the job of firing her that day - for an 11.00a.m. start! "Will the Beast make it?" we ask with bated breath. Don't miss the next issue of Old Run, and find out whether I conquered the Beast or (more likely) it conquered me!

I.B. Smith

HAPPY EASTER

The season got off to a very good start this year, which has turned out to be the best Easter since the Railway started passenger services in 1969. Despite the awful weather, the line was swamped with visitors all wanting a ride on the train. Ticket sales for the three days totalled £470, whilst the shop sales totalled £302.

Once again, our major problem was the awful car-parking facilities available, and the proposed opening of the other side of the car park before much longer will only be a partial solution. That apart, however, everyone who came enjoyed themselves, and we hope that the Railway will now build upon this success and go from strength to strength.

THANKS A LOT

Member Philip Lodge has been asking local firms for sponsorship towards restoring our historic Middleton Wagon, and three firms have so far assisted in this way. They are Miller's Oils Ltd. of Brighouse, who in fact have assisted the Trust by donating lubricating oil before, Barr & Wallace Arnold PLC, and the Howson-Algraphy group, to all of whom we extend our grateful thanks for their assistance.

SAY CHEESE!

The title of this article is most appropriate, as more photographs were taken of our latest addition to the working fleet than at any other time in its career! The locomotive in question is DSB385 and the event was the official entry into service of said beast, attended by her owners, the Steam Power Trust '65.

It had been decided as long ago as 1980 that once 385 was ready for traffic, she would have an official 'launching' as soon as possible after entering traffic. So it was that, when the Steam Power Trust were told of the loco's successful steaming last Easter, plans were laid. It had been decided that 385 would only see occasional service in 1985 in order to 'run in' before being withdrawn for rectification of any defects plus full repaint during the winter months. That was the plan devised by Steve Roberts before the lousy winter! In the event, the top loop was the priority job, closely followed by bunker repairs and hydraulic test for P2003. Our Peckett didn't help matters by presenting the loco maintenance team with two burst tubes at the first hydraulic - no doubt she was sulking because of all the attention she knew was to be bestowed upon the little black engine! Once 2003 was sorted out, attention could be turned to DSB385.

The loco was shunted into the shed just before Easter, and work began on rubbing down the paintwork prior to the repaint. Fortunately for us, the loco had performed very well in service, and no major problems had occurred. Although this meant that no mechanical work was needed, other than fitting vacuum pipes to the back of the loco, there was still plenty for Steve to do on the paint side. Bill Holliday gave Steve a hand with the painting, and slowly the loco began to look very good indeed. Before long, work started on the lining, which was a single red line to all the cab windows, cab sides and back, also the footplate. The boiler bands had a line on each side to do, and Steve was kept hard at it, virtually until the last possible moment. The loco's motion was thoroughly cleaned and polished, cab window surrounds were also polished as were all fittings in the cab and the safety valves themselves, and the loco was moved outside on Friday 18th April, two days prior to her big day.

We had invited the TV and radio folk, in addition to the local papers, to a press day, and 385 was specially steamed for this. We had a certain amount of coverage from Radio Leeds and Yorkshire Post, but the rest of the press unfortunately gave us a miss, which was rather sad. Your Editor gave an interview for Radio Aire on the Saturday, which hopefully helped matters, but overall the press attention wasn't exactly overenthusiastic!

And so we come to the big day. I arrived at the line fairly early to find Vernon polishing the old lady and several Steam Power Trust folk in attendance polishing her, firing her, and taking photos left, right and centre. Some of the Trust lads had been in Leeds since Friday and had spent Saturday working on her, too. One amusing tale from the weekend visit was the saga of the coupling hook that changed colour - twice! On Friday it was black. On Saturday morning it was red, and by that same night it was black again! Must be some form of Viking initiation ceremony!

By 10.15 the loco had steam and was moved around for more Kodak to be expended before retiring with the Norwegian coach to the water tower, partly for the receipt of coal and water, and partly to be ready for the handing over ceremony planned for 13.45. In the meantime, 'Carroll' was galvanised into action to do some shunting. This involved moving all diesels out of the loop and into the middle road so they would be out of the way. Vernon did the honours and also started up his own locomotive, JF4220038 in order to give the engine a run. This puzzled more than a few folk who wondered why on earth such a little loco as 'Carroll' was doing all the work whilst that great big brown engine (it's been repainted since the last Old Run) was being pulled round with its engine revving away. The answer is quite simple - the Fowler was missing a vital bit which prevented it from actually hauling itself, never mind trains - although the engine itself was not affected. That done, 'Carroll' then attached herself to the passenger train and hauled it clear of the loop points, to stand on the main line.

The plan was that 385, after being handed over, would haul the Norwegian coach through the platform and then back down the loop, leave it in Whittaker's and then run right back up the loop and couple up to the passenger train, which 'Carroll' had in the meantime deposited in the platform. At 13.45, Trust Chairman Joe Lee gave a speech to mark the handing over to the Steam Power Trust of locomotive Nr385, and invited SPT member Bill Hampson to respond. This Bill did, before handing over to the SPT Chairman, Ken Cockerill. After Ken's few words and a few blasts from the loco, 385 hauled her small train through the platform after a bottle of lager had been smashed over the front buffer beam. Our thanks go to Mick from the Engine pub for providing the lager free of charge.

Having divested herself of the coach, 385 began her day's work, admired by many folk. In the meantime, Steam Power Trust member Alan Bowman and his wife were busily setting out the coach for a buffet meal of Danish food to celebrate the occasion. Also included was a good supply of THAT lager - yes, the one that's probably the best in the world!

The spread was enjoyed by all members of both societies, and Joe gave a vote of thanks to all who had made the day go so well, which was echoed by us all. The food was particularly well appreciated too.

After the service finished, it had already been decided to take 385 and the coach up the line for photographs. As I was the only one present with colour slides in his camera, I was designated official photographer for the occasion, and told to get a good shot for reproduction as a postcard. This took a little doing, as we had to position loco and coach together and also separately for the job, which wasn't made any easier by the cloudy sky preventing the sun from shining. This was despite having a Bishop and Pontiff in the party! (For further details on the identities of these two characters, please refer to a forthcoming article in this magazine).

Once back in the yard, it was time for a quick shunt before putting 385 to bed after a memorable day. The loco looked magnificent in her new livery, complete with worksplates and plate on smokebox, and has already been booked for an evening special in June, for which occasion at least one of the SPT lads is likely to be down. The event was the culmination of a great deal of hard work, and marks a milestone in the line's history.

We now look forward to next year's big do - the re-entry into service of Sentinel 54.

Finally, back to the title - another reason for this title is that 385 was initially nicknamed Cheese. Why? Simply because it was Danish, and came out of the blue!

I.B. Smith

NEW DISGUISE REQUIRED

Our worthy Chairman was seen walking up the platform on 23rd March, feeling at peace with the world, when his thoughts were shattered by a loud cry of "Look, Mum, there's Santa!" from one of the small children stood watching the train. Joe looked quite stunned, and hurried away muttering something about getting a better disguise! You can't win with kids these days!

TRAINS RUST STOP!

On his first visit to the Railway, back in 1976, Major Olver of the Railway Inspectorate made a polite but firm request that we provide a continuous brake on our passenger trains that would bring any breakaway of vehicles to a halt. Our Mechanical Engineer at that time considered alternative schemes for a continuous brake, and evolved a unique system of air brake. The system consisted basically of a train pipe which fed both sides of an air brake cylinder, one side being via a non-return valve. Thus, if the train pipe was full of air pressure both sides of the piston would be acted on by the air pressure, and the brake would be off. If the train pipe was exhausted, the air would be retained on the one side of the piston and the brake applied, the system being similar to the Westinghouse single pipe system in use in many countries. However, unlike the other systems, the air supply was obtained from an axle driven compressor on the brake van and not on the locos. Thus the train had to move in order to charge the system. This inherent problem was overcome by having several air reservoirs on the van, and giving them an initial pre-charge from an electrically driven compressor. In normal service, the brake remained fully charged, and the axle driven compressor was only required to make up for leakage.

The system worked and proved to be generally reliable. However, the Railway Inspectorate also made polite noises about run round loops and not propelling trains. This would mean that the air pipe would have to be broken and re-charged every time a loco was coupled/uncoupled, which the system could not really cope with. The decision to convert a P.M.V. to a coach (which was vacuum brake fitted) led to a major rethink on the question of continuous brakes, and it was decided that a vacuum brake perhaps would be more suitable for our needs.

The first question therefore, was how to vacuum brake the locos. It is possible to obtain a custom built vacuum braking system eminently suitable for our locos, but at over £1,000 each this was ruled out on economic grounds. Our trains are short, consisting of only two or three vehicles, and it was thought that an industrial ejector of the 'Penberthy' type could be employed and would be a fraction of the cost of the alternatives. Tests conducted with one of these ejectors proved that a system would be viable, and a prototype was fitted to HsNo.385 in time for Christmas 1985. A Penberthy No.3 ejector is used to create the 21 inches of vacuum required, the brake application valve being nothing more than a 1 inch ball valve. A visit to Marple & Gillott's scrapyard in Sheffield produced large quantities of miscellaneous components such as brake hoses, couplings, vacuum gauges, release valves, etc. It has not been found necessary to fit a vacuum relief valve as the ejectors will not create much in excess of the standard 21 inches. An early problem that has created difficulties is the tendency for water to condense in the train pipe. This has been overcome by fitting a collection point at the lowest part, and fitting a drain plug.

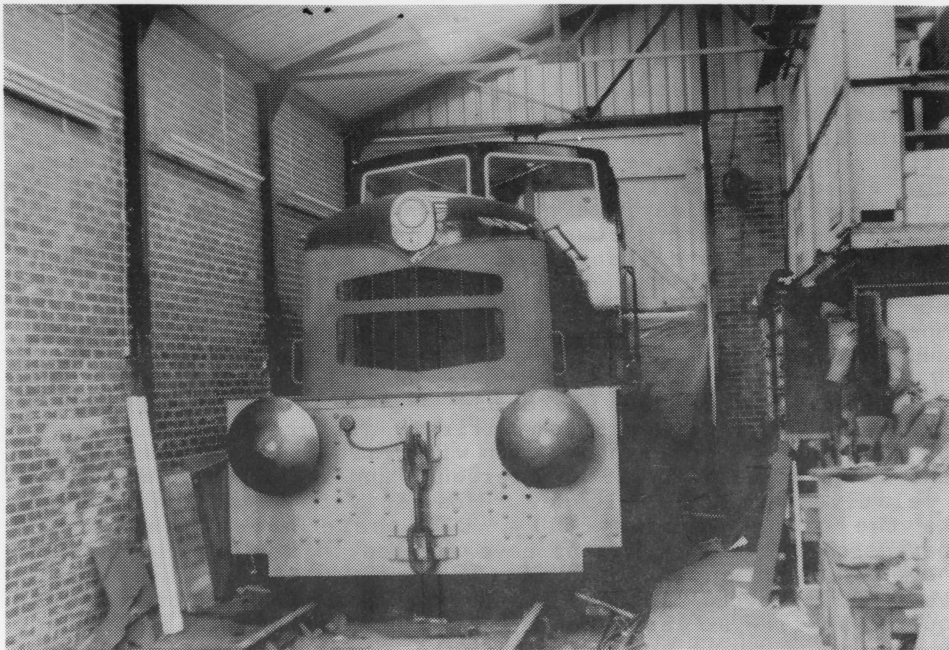
Having proved the system, fitting the steam locomotives has been a simple matter. However, the simple ejector that is so suitable for a steam locomotive cannot be employed on a diesel. Initial thoughts that we should retain the air brake for diesel locos, and dual brake the coach, were dispelled when, on a visit to the Tanfield Railway, we noticed that they had vacuum fitted their diesel by using a compressor running back to front (so to speak!). We had a suitable compressor, and it was decided to try the system on the Hudswell diesel No.D631. After a few minor problems, the system has been successful, and additional compressors are being obtained to enable the other locos to be vacuum fitted.

In service, the vacuum brake has proved itself to be quite controllable, but requiring an entirely different technique to that used when controlling a train with just a steam brake. The brake is quick to apply if an emergency application is made, but is relatively slow to release. Most drivers have been able to make the change successfully, but there have been a few embarrassed faces when trains have stopped in strange places due to over-zealous application of the brake! Our firemen, too, have found that coupling and uncoupling vacuum brake hoses is an acquired skill - so easy when you know how, so frustrating when you don't and there are a lot of interested visitors watching your every move!

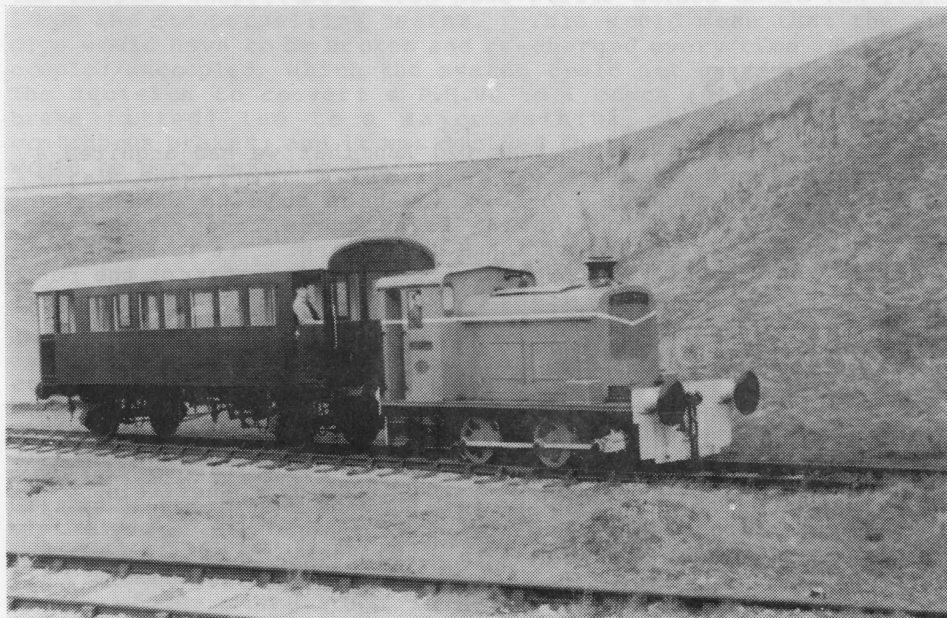
S. & T. NEWS

A brief note appeared in the last Old Run that we had acquired a four lever ground frame from Wakefield. Following major resignalling at Cambridge, we have now been able to obtain two further ground frames, one having five levers, the other two. All three frames are standard L.N.E.R. pattern. It is intended to install the 2 lever frame at Middleton Park to control the run round loop. The remaining frames will probably be dismantled to provide a 7 lever frame to control the Moor Road site, once our S. & T. experts have decided on what is needed and received approval from the Railway Inspectorate.

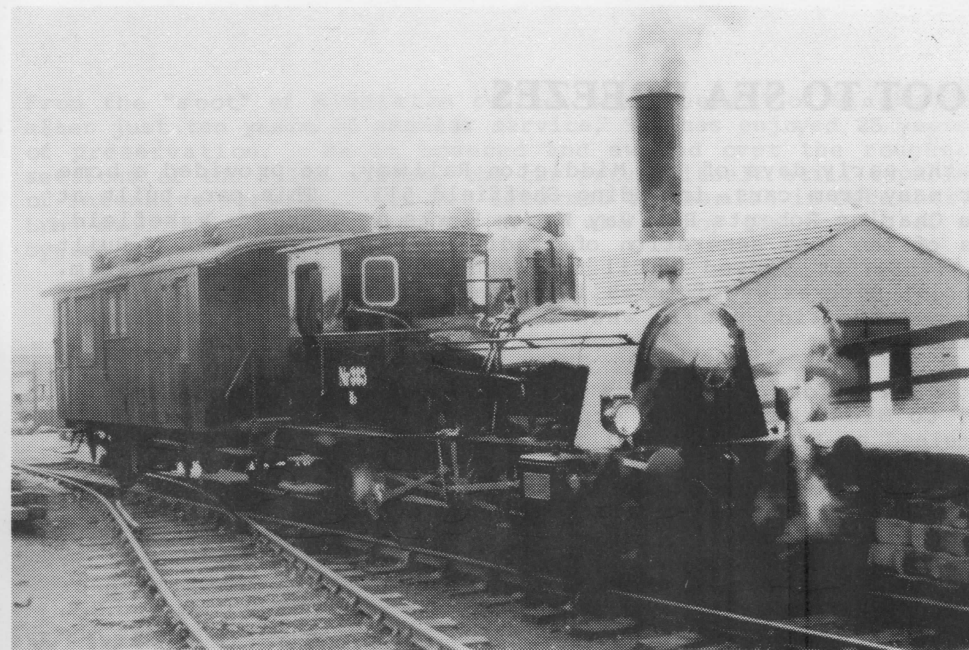
We are still in need of more point rodding and associated fittings in order to have sufficient for the full installation and spares, but it is hoped that these can be obtained from a rationalisation scheme currently taking place near Sheffield.



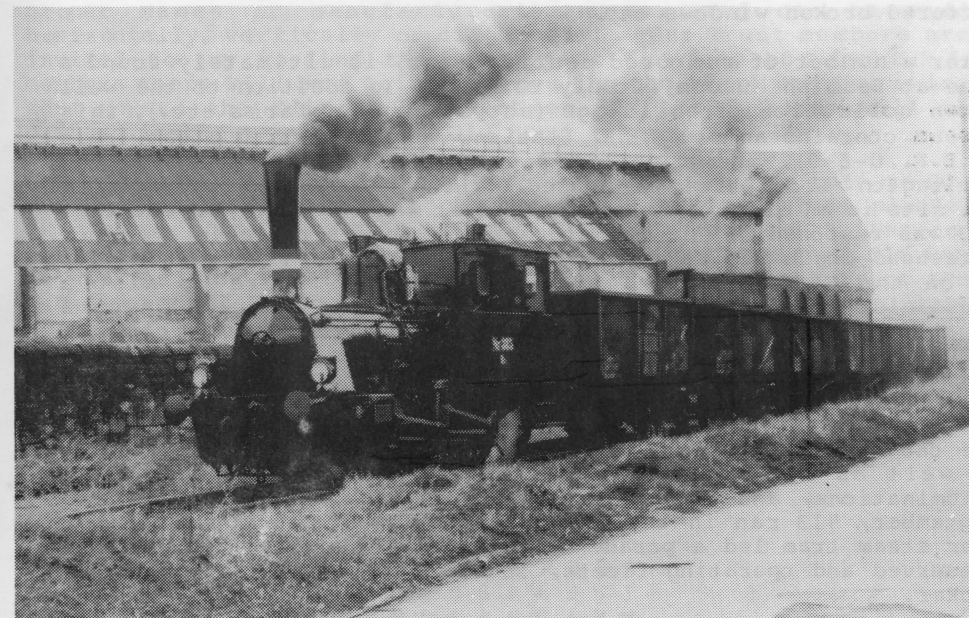
Fowler Diesel 4220038/66 is seen inside the shed during her recent repaint from Maroon to Brown in March this year.
Photo: S.J. ROBERTS



The new look Saturday service is shown here. "Carroll" is in charge of the CCT conversion during driver training trips on April 19th.
Photo: S.J. ROBERTS



DSB 385 poses at Moor Road during the press day, 18th April whilst (below) she is seen later in the day hauling 6 ballast wagons from BR to Moor Road.
Both photos: S.J. ROBERTS



One of the original 5ft 6" Kelani Valley Railway 4-6-4Ts built by the Hunslet Engine Co. (Wks. No. 1082/12) as completed at Jack Lane. This was the saturated version of the locomotive, later versions being superheated.
Photo courtesy of Hunslet Engine Co. Ltd.

SOOT TO SEA BREEZES

In the early days of the Middleton Railway, we provided a home for many tram cars, including Sheffield 513. This car, built at the Charles Roberts Railway Wagon Works at Horbury, Wakefield, was of the last generation of traditional four wheelers. Built in 1950, it served until the end of the Sheffield system. Special decorative pictures illustrating earlier Sheffield trams adorned the side panels when it ran in the final procession in October 1960.

Two similar decorated cars were saved, 510 going to Crich, and 513 to Middleton at the expense of member John Rothera. It remained at Middleton until it became obvious that the future of the tramway side of the project was in jeopardy. The trams were the victims of acute vandalism. The pressure of a heavy freight traffic diverted members' attention to "money raising activities" - running trains.

So 513 left the back road of Clayton's for Cullingworth near Bradford, where it resided in the goods shed at the former G.N.R. Station. Here it was safe from vandals, but inaccessible to the public. When the goods shed was no longer available, 513 moved a short distance to the next stop, the Keighley and Worth Valley Railway. Here it proved to be accessible to admirers - but also to vandals, for it was, as at Middleton, in open store and suffered broken windows etc.

After a number of rumoured destinations, it ultimately found a home at Beamish Museum, County Durham. In addition to the well known collection of buildings (shops, houses, farms etc.), this museum contains an old N.E.R. Station, with a working steam train (N.E.R. 0-6-0), and a colliery, where a replica Stockton and Darlington 'Locomotion' is housed. Linking the various parts of the site is an electric tramway, and it was for this purpose that 513 was restored. The mainstay of the tram service is a former Gateshead bogie single decker (which spent some time working for BR on the Grimsby and Immingham line). There is also a Sheffield double deck car, converted to open top and given a local livery. As the whole "scene" at Beamish depicts the 1920's, 513 is really too modern for regular use. Thus, when the opportunity to join the 'Centenary of the Electric Tram' celebrations at Blackpool, 513 was available.

The car ran in regular Promenade service during the 1985 season, as well as serving Fleetwood on Market Days, touring the illuminations, and entertaining enthusiasts. On Sunday 29th September, 513 ran in the Grand Parade, when Blackpool's first ever steam tram led a parade of cars from the nation's remaining preserved and operating fleets, including a new Blackpool single decker.

From the "soot" of Middleton to the "sea breezes" of Blackpool after just ten years of regular service, 513 has enjoyed 25 years of preservation. As it bounced and swayed over the rougher sections of the Fylde system, the car proved itself still capable of intensive service. It was returned to Beamish in December. Long may 513 give pleasure to those who enjoy the travel of a bygone age.

J. Bushell

WORD SQUARE

Hidden in this word square, sent in by 13 year old Philip Snowden, are the names of 10 of our locos. The names are either proper names or manufacturer's names, and can be read horizontally, vertically or diagonally. Our Trust members are invited to try to find the names just for fun, but for M.R.A. members there will be a prize awarded for the first correct entry sent in to the Editor. The names of the 10 locos will be printed in the next issue of Old Run.

Word Squares are one way for junior members to contribute to Old Run. You can also send in photographs, Black and white please, or perhaps a small article about either the Middleton Railway or another steam railway you have visited. Remember that Old Run is not just the Trust's magazine, it is also the magazine of the M.R.A., and if M.R.A. members want to contribute they are more than welcome to do so.

E B M O C S N A W S
T R R A S P W V T L
T C X C A R R O L L
E G A R U O C I E I
K A T E A U H U N J
C G N W N S L L I E
E Y E D A C R M T L
P H S M A R Y W N D
H F O W L E R B E N
E H A S S P A T S I
T O L L A N G A B W

LOCO NEWS

With the running season now in full swing, the routine jobs needed to keep the working locomotives in traffic become of prime importance. The year has started confidently, with two steam locos and one diesel being equipped with the vacuum brake and available for use.

On a somewhat sadder note, and one that will probably be noted elsewhere, the first locomotive to leave the Railway for many a year was Peckett No.2103, which has left for pastures new. The locomotive had arrived on the Railway in 1982 but, in all this time, we have been unable to reach a satisfactory agreement with the owner. Without this agreement, the council would not allow time and money to be committed to the loco and the owner, for his own reasons, did little work on it. Final talks to resolve the situation broke down, and 2103 departed on a low loader on Saturday 15th April. A sad end to an unfortunate saga.

P2003 passed its hydraulic and steam tests in time for the start of the season, but not without problems. Two boiler tubes failed under hydraulic test and, on withdrawal, were found to be badly grooved at the firebox end. This was rather worrying, as the tubes are only five years old, and tube trouble was the last thing that we expected! However, removal of other sample tubes and an examination of adjacent ones, confirmed that these were isolated cases and not indicative of the general condition of the remaining tubes.

The fitting of the vacuum brake was completed and, after some problems with swarf in the ejector cones, the system has performed satisfactorily.

As mentioned in the last issue, a repaint has been carried out, and the locomotive is now resplendent in a darker shade of green to that previously carried - BS4800, 14C39 for the purists!. (Note from Old Run typist/P2003 half owner: thanks lads, she looks great!)

The brake blocks on the loco are life-expired and, following the manufacture of a suitable pattern, a set of new blocks has been obtained.

EB53 Has been fitted with vacuum brake, and was successfully steamtested on 25th April, complete with face, for 'Little Engines Day'! Some minor repairs are necessary, along with completion of the fitting of vacuum brakes.

Hs385 Re-entered service amid much pomp and ceremony on 20th April, as planned. All the outstanding jobs have been completed, and even the elusive handrail knobs have been tracked down (although it was an eleventh hour find!).

S8837 New plate has been ordered for the bunker and, crises permitting(!) work will start on its rebuild shortly, in the hope of having it in steam by 1987. Besides the bunker, the cab roof requires attention, the firebox requires re-tubing and the barrel requires welding to build up local wastage. Other mechanical work necessary will include the re-fitting of a feed pump and vacuum brakes.

D631 Has been fitted with vacuum brakes, and is currently the sole performer on the Saturday diesel service.

4220038 Entered the repair shed during April for a complete repaint, and is now resplendent in a chocolate brown livery, picked out in red. Despite initial doubts by the sceptics, the finished colour scheme is a pleasant change from the more usual reds, greens and blues! Vacuum brakes will be fitted as soon as the necessary equipment is obtained.

D577 Work continues on 'Mary', and the locomotive has been used for shunting, though it is not yet available for regular use.

ENGINEERING NOTES

The shed wiring was sufficiently complete to enable the Y.E.B. to connect up the three-phase supply on 26th March. Following this the lathe, radial drill and 300 Amp welder have all been brought into use.

Thanks to the N.C.B., a large quantity of industrial racking has been obtained from the closed Savile Colliery at reasonable cost. Dismantling and transport proved to be an interesting diversion from the normal routine, but it is perhaps better to draw a discreet veil over the techniques employed! This shelving has been used to kit out the stores in the loco shed/workshops. The remainder will probably be used in one of the P.M.V.'s.

The crane, which is so essential to our operations these days, was subject to the annual exam of the insurance company inspectors, and has been certified for a further twelve months.

Appeals appear fairly regularly in these pages, and here is another one! Does anybody have, or know of, a steam cleaner that the Railway could beg or buy at reasonable cost?

WEATHER PROBLEMS

Having got the Easter success out of the way, the Railway settled down to its usual loss-making self for the next few weekends. Despite all the hard work by our boiler suited members, and the publicity sent out by the white collar brigade, the one thing no-one can control is the weather and that, as has been the case for the last three years, has been atrocious. As can be imagined, people have stayed away from the line because of the awful weather, and our traffic receipts have suffered as a result. We are not downhearted though, because those who did brave the weather expressed their satisfaction at the service received, and probably will come again. And, as our illustrious CME pointed out to your Editor on the 20th April, despite the awful weather we have still carried more passengers this year than we did at the same time last year!

PECKETT 2103

Despite the optimistic report in the last Old Run, the owner of P2103 has seen fit to remove his locomotive from the Middleton Railway, and she left for the Great Yorkshire Railways site at Harrogate on Saturday 12th April.

MORE FREIGHT

The last few weekends have seen a revival of freight traffic on the line, albeit ballast for the loop and car park. The first train was diesel hauled, but the second batch of 6 wagons was worked up the Balm Road branch by DSB385, in what might be its only freight-working in this country. Fuller details of 385's train can be gleaned from the accompanying article.

MORE SPECIALS

In addition to the two specials mentioned in the last Old Run, we now have the possibility of two more. On Wednesday 25th June, the RCTS have provisionally booked an evening special using DSB385 for an all line tour, commencing at 7p.m., whilst negotiations are in progress with a local Lions Club for another train to run in the Summer. Member John Cundall has persuaded his local model railway society to book a special with us in June, too. Remember what was said in last issue's editorial - these trains are a cheap way of enjoying an evening out with a difference, so come on folks, persuade YOUR local club to hire a train for an evening/day trip!

WELL WELL!

On finding out that Leeds has a Railway Preservation society after listening to Radio Leeds last June, I went down one Sunday morning to take a few snaps with my Box Brownie. Once there, I got talking to a few of the members and after looking round the site and shed, I took the plunge and joined the Trust, not knowing then what I had let myself in for!

When the regulars found out I was a chippy by trade, I was programmed to construct the shuttering for the making of the water tank supports, and I set about the task with glee. The first job was to measure the brick towers and work out the actual size of the supports. These proved to be 56" long, 27" wide, and 24" high at the lowest point, which was then curved to fit the tank being erected (the old Laporte acid tank). A shutter of this size has to be very strong, because of the volume of concrete being held whilst setting takes place, and it took a fair amount of work to construct.

After two weekends, the shutter was ready for the first pouring. On the big day, the reinforcing bars were put in place and we began pouring. Barrow load after barrow load of concrete was poured in, but the thing just wasn't filling up (like the Wizard's sandwich box, it didn't matter how much you put in it, it wanted more!). Finally, after 4 solid hours of mixing, shifting and filling, the thing was full and we could relax at the easy bit - waiting for the concrete to set. The following Saturday, we lifted the now solid lump of concrete from its mould, using the crane and the help of a 3lb sledge hammer. The completed support looked very good, and we were all very pleased with the outcome, although this was tempered with the knowledge that we had a second support to make (Sigh!). That meant another four hours cursing and sweating before the second base was completed.

When both tank supports were done, Chris and Graham lifted them on top of the tower supports, using the crane, to be followed some time later by the tank itself. The tank was "christened" at the Santa event, and went into full operation at Easter, bringing down the filling time for Peckett's tank from about 90 minutes to 15 - a big difference!

I was very pleased that my first big job for the Railway was so successfully completed. What next, you may ask? Well, there's some steps to make for the CCT, some fittings for the shed, the Norwegian Coach to restore Sigh!

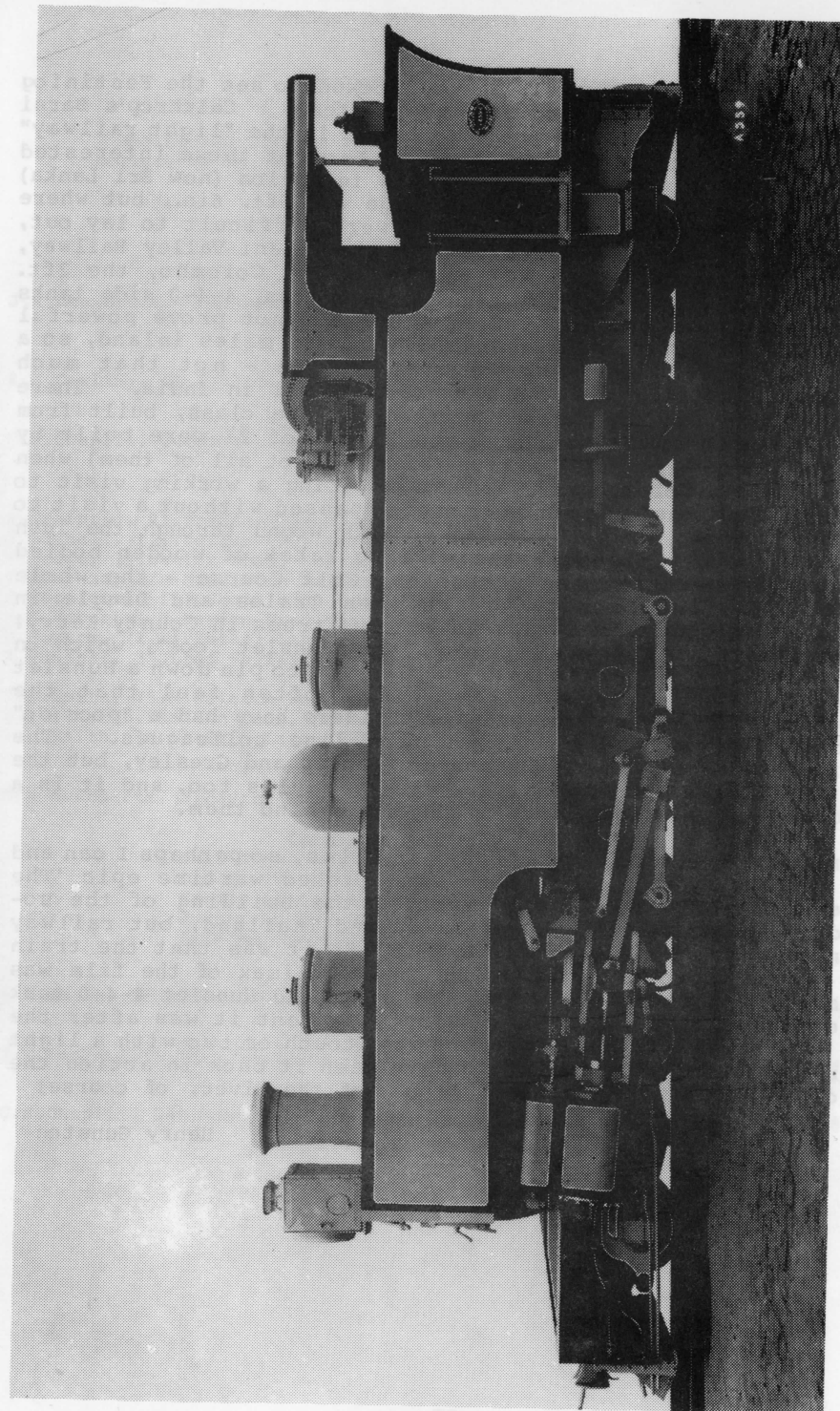
G. Dinsdale

NEW STOCKBOOK

At long last, the Railway has a new stockbook, which was available from Easter. Priced at 75p, the Stockbook contains photos of all our locomotives and a brief description of them. In some cases, the descriptions are rather too brief, and there is also a bias towards 'Matthew Murray' where the photos are concerned, there being three separate photos of this loco compared to the more usual one or two of the others - I do believe our CME likes the Bagnall! The major fault with the Stockbook lies in the total absence of details of any of our cranes and rolling stock, although to be fair the book is actually sold as a 'Locomotive Stockbook'. Sales at the line have been steady, and it is well received by the purchasers. I can recommend it to all members who are interested in the history of our locos, and at 75p a copy it's not going to break the bank if you buy it. The booklet can be obtained from the Shop or by post from Shop Manager John Chaplin, whose address is at the back of the Old Run (please remember to add 20p for postage and packing).

MADE IN LEEDS - 2

Some of you may have recently seen the film 'Out of Africa', including the fascinating railway sequence which introduces it. The dreadful secret - which of course you must not pass on to anyone - is that the Beyer Peacock 4-8-0 is not running under its own steam, but is being pushed by an Andrew Barclay diesel, disguised within the first wagon of the train.... Nevertheless, it makes a superb photographic introduction to the film. Leaving aside such parochial gossip of those of us who live in Kenya, my interest in Leeds-built locomotives abroad in the present article is in locomotives for the 2ft. 6in. gauge. I appreciate that "narrow gauge" may not cut much ice at Middleton, but narrow gauge locomotives filled a fair-sized corner of any Leeds builder's order book. In Britain, the 2ft. 6in. gauge was not very widespread, but in the late 1890's in India a man called E.R. Calthrop started work on the Barsi Light Railway, with a "philosophy" of light railway design linked to low axle loads, bogie wagons and well engineered track. In Britain, he is well known for the Leek and Manifold Light Railway in Derbyshire, where his Indian thinking was put into practice, with the addition of the use of "transporter" wagons to carry standard gauge stock. For locomotives, Calthrop turned to Kitson - firstly in India there were 0-8-4 side tanks, then 4-8-4s of a similar design. On the Leek and Manifold he used 2-6-4 tanks of a design closely linked to his Indian Barsi locomotives, and Kitson produced 4-8-4 tanks of the same "family" for the 2ft. 6in. gauge Cyprus Government Railway after the First World War.



You may have read of how engineers flocked to see the Festiniog Railway in the early days of 2ft. gauge steam. Calthrop's Barsi line in India attracted similar interest in the "light railway" period early in the present century. Amongst those interested were engineers from the railway system in Ceylon (now Sri Lanka) where, like India, the "main line" gauge was 5ft. 6in., but where lines to that gauge in hilly country were difficult to lay out, and very expensive to construct. For the Kelani Valley Railway, built inland from the capital on the coast, Colombo, the 2ft. 6in. gauge was chosen and the first locomotives, 4-4-0 side tanks from Hunslet, arrived in 1900. These did not prove powerful enough for the line, which eventually ran 86 miles inland, so a design of 4-6-4 side tank was settled on - not that much different from Calthrop's 4-8-4 tanks at Barsi in India. There were saturated and superheated versions of the class, built from 1908 to 1929 in small batches, and 17 out of 21 were built by Hunslet. They were still active (although not all of them) when I first visited Colombo in 1978, and, during a working visit to Sri Lanka after that, no Sunday morning passed without a visit to the steam running shed. The 4-6-4 tanks wound through the lush green suburbs of Colombo, pulling long rakes of wooden bodied bogie compartment coaches across the Golf Course - the whole train looking like something from the Tralee and Dingle in Ireland, except that there are no coconut trees in County Kerry! The locomotive link was, of course, the "Hunslet look", which on the narrow gauge in particular, enables you to pin down a Hunslet locomotive from a fair distance. I often feel that the locomotive designers of the private builders have had a "poor do" in comparison to their British main line colleagues. The fanatics ramble on about Churchward, Stanier and Gresley, but the private builders had distinctive design styles too, and it is a pity that we do not know more of the men behind them.

I started by a mention of railways in films, so perhaps I can end on a similar note. That long-established wartime epic 'The Bridge Over the River Kwai' depicted the building of the so-called "Death Railway" linking Burma and Thailand, but railway sequences were filmed in Sri Lanka. So it was that the train which crashed down with the bridge in the climax of the film was not hauled by a Thai locomotive, but by an old Hunslet 4-4-0 tank of the Kelani Valley Railway. Just how bent it was after the fall, I do not know, but I guess that a touch or two with a light hammer and a lick of paint would have seen it back in action the next day - providing you pulled it out of the river, of course!

Henry Gunston

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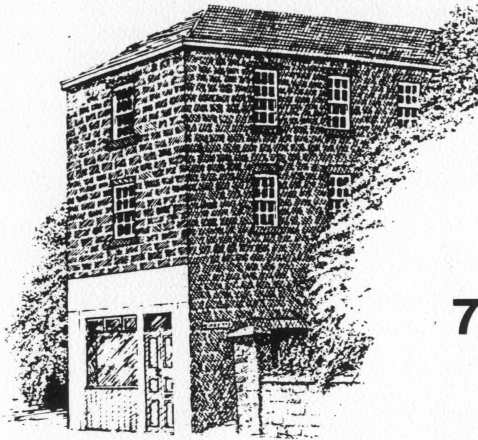
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