



The Old Run

Journal of the Middleton Railway Preservation Society

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The Society has been able to reprint the potted history of the Middleton Colliery Railway which was compiled by Mr. D Garnett, assisted by Mr J Goodchild and others. The notes have been added to by means of information from York Railway Museum and this Society, and whereas the original history (prepared for the Bicentenary celebrations in 1958) ends "the Middleton Railway may not long survive its bicentenary", we have been able to end the new edition on a note of hope. The booklet is bound in an art paper cover which carries a line drawing of the Blenkinsop and Murray rack locomotive. It is available to members and non-members at 1/- post free from B. Ashurst Esq, 48 Estcourt Terrace Leeds 6 (until 25th June). Postal orders should be crossed and payable to the Society. We hope that all members will become familiar with the contents of the booklet. Mr Ashurst will also be glad to receive notes and news for inclusion in this Journal.

Our over-worked Acting Chairman, Dr. R.F. Youell, has recently visited Kimmerley on the Shropshire and Montgomeryshire Railway, which is now being dismantled by the military authorities who have saved it from extinction for so long. The Officer in Charge, Major Calder, has indicated that much surplus equipment is likely to be available at bargain prices. We have been invited to tender for a lot of signalling equipment (some of it new) including an S and M lever frame, facing point locks and signal arms. There are miles (yes, miles) of concrete sleepers going at 8d apiece—unfortunately suitable for flat-bottom rails and not bull-head, so that we cannot use them without altering our type of track. We have however dropped a word to the Tramway Museum Society for whose f-b tram-type rails they should be ideal. There may later be available from the S and M (no, not the Swansea and Mumbles) many tools for track laying and maintenance, and other items including a really wonderful G.W.R. type water tower of the cylindrical pull-the-chain variety. All these (if acquired) must be removed and transported by ourselves, and, we regret, PAID for.

THE SWANSEA STORY

Dr. Youell has also been to Swansea to investigate the situation regarding Mumbles Railway car no. 2. His inspection revealed that it was, on the whole, in good condition. Only 3 windows had been broken, and the South Wales Transport had put pressure gauges and whistles in a safe place for us. The underside needs a thorough clean-up, and many bolts inside the car were rusted up, especially those on the sea side of the car. S and M cars (no, not Shropshire and Montgomery) had both entrances on the landward side, as, like the Tallylyn, all stations were on one side of the line. The interior, though a trifle dusty, is in good condition.

The South Wales Transport Company, who owned the line and now run the 'bus services which have replaced it, have been extremely helpful. They sent their electrician down to the old Rutland St depot to explain the control gear and advise on dismantling for transport.

South Wales Transport have given us every possible facility and assistance. They are giving us spare parts, circuit diagrams and advice on maintenance. Since the depot is to become a 'bus depot, which involves concreting all the pits to ground level, they naturally want no. 2 moved as soon as possible, but are being most obliging in giving us ample time to make transport arrangements.

Pickfords, the B.T.C. heavy road hauliers quoted us a minimum price of £320 for bringing no. 2 to Leeds. Wynn's of Newport said that they could certainly quote us a lower price by road, although we have not since heard from them. British Railways (G) W.R. were at first not interested in carrying no. 2, but a letter from the Acting Chairman suggesting that we didn't want the disgrace of taking a rail vehicle by road turned their attitude into one of enthusiastic cooperation. On our Acting Chairman's second visit, one of the District Commercial Superintendent's staff from Swansea Victoria, and an awkward loads specialist from Swindon spent most of an afternoon discussing how to take it by rail. It was found that if the top deck is removed, the projecting boltheads polished, and the tunnels swept of soot, no. 2 will just about fit the loading gauge with a few thousandths clearance all round! B.R. have quoted us an almost embarrassingly cheap price, less than half that by road, provided we can send labour down to load and unload under their expert supervision.

We are going down to Swansea on the weekend of 13/16 May to complete the dismantling started by the Acting Chairman, and we expect to move no. 2 to Middleton on the weekend of 10th/14th. June. All volunteers who can get to Swansea for either occasion should contact the Secretary in advance. If by the time of arrival in Leeds the negotiations for the acquisition or use of the Middleton Railway have been completed there is a real prospect of getting no. 2 reassembled in time for University Rag Week celebrations. Two of our members are hoping to have a ride back with no. 2 in the brake van of the goods train carrying it if it can be arranged. If no. 2 is running during Rag Week to raise money for charity, the Society will get much valuable publicity thereby. All members are asked to be available if possible to help reassemble the Mumbles train as soon as it arrives in Leeds.

Money to help purchase the Mumbles train (the BIGGEST tramcar-type vehicle in the world) is to be raised by Mrs. V. Barrington of Mumbles, who organised the last special train on the line at 11.30 p.m. on the day of closure. She is now organising a gigantic coffee-party for this purpose. An ardent Welsh Nationalist, she was nevertheless impressed by our Chairman's argument that it took an English Society to make the move to keep a Mumbles train running, albeit outside Wales. Whatever the National considerations, this Society owes her a debt of gratitude for her encouragement and active help.

Data Film Productions, makers of specialised films, have written to us asking if they could film our activities as they were specially interested in anything connected with the Coal Industry. We replied that as soon as something photogenic looked like occurring, we would let them know. Naturally, such a film would be very useful to us, both as a record of our activities and as publicity.

Leeds City Transport have accepted our offer, reported last month for railcar No 601, which will cost us 150 pounds. Of the two remaining cars, No 602 has been sold at the same price to the 602 Preservation Society, and will be sent to join the Tramway Museum Society's colourful assortment of tramcars at Crich, near Matlock, Derbyshire. The other one, No 600, has been bought by the 600 Preservation Society, organised by Mr M J O'Connor, for 100 pounds, and its destination is still uncertain.

At the opening ceremony of the "Salute to Steam" exhibition at Leeds City Museum on 25th April, it was announced that the new Comprehensive School to be opened here this September will be named the "Matthew Murray Comprehensive School", after the famous Leeds

locomotive pioneer. Matthew Murray built "Salamanaca", the rack-and-pinion locomotive which is our crest. We shall certainly make contact with the School when it opens and discuss establishing ties between the Society and the School which has been so well named, and hope that both may grow prosperously together.

Among the more strenuous activities this month, one was certainly the sawing in half of a sixty foot tram line for the TMS, who asked us to cut it as it would then be much cheaper to transport. It was a hard job, accomplished with hardened hacksaw blades, but we believe that such inter-society cooperation is very valuable.

Sheffield Tram Tour

The Society is to hold a tram tour of Sheffield, where much unused electrified track still exists, although there is now only one regular route, on Sunday June 26th. Members and friends will be invited to book, and inquiries should be sent to Peter Dean (address below).

The Editor is always pleased to receive any interesting information or articles for this Journal. Please send them to: Mr B. Ashurst, 48 Estcourt Terrace, Leeds 6.

All inquiries about the Society should be sent to: Mr P. Dean, 24 Allerton Grange Drive, Leeds 7.

Society's Constitution.

The following draft constitution is put forward for consideration by members of the Society.

1. The Society shall be called the Middleton Railway Preservation Society.
2. Its aims shall be: to purchase, lease, or otherwise acquire the use of such parts of the Middleton Colliery Railway, Leeds as may be available; to preserve, restore to good condition, and operate the Railway with any suitable form of motive power; to establish a Museum on the Railway devoted to rail transport with special emphasis on rail transport in Leeds, and Yorkshire; to acquire and preserve for exhibition such articles or relics as may become available; to publicise the Middleton Colliery Railway, Leeds, as one of the world's earliest railways, and the world's first commercial steam operated railway; and to undertake such other activities as are necessary for the promotion of the above specified aims.
3. Membership shall be open to all who are in sympathy with the above aims. Ordinary membership shall be at the rate of £1 per annum. Life membership shall be at the rate of £20. Junior membership at 5/- per annum shall be open to students and those between 16 and 18. Honorary membership shall be by election at a General Meeting of the Society. Subscriptions shall be paid by the calendar year. Members shall receive an annual membership card which shall act as receipt for subscription, and shall receive the monthly Journal.
4. The Society shall be controlled by a Committee elected at an Annual General Meeting. The Committee shall comprise: President, Chairman, Secretary, Treasurer, and not more than 4 Vice-Presidents, and not more than 10 ordinary members. The Committee may call for the appointment of assistants to the Secretary and Treasurer if their work makes this seem desirable. The Society may also appoint Technical Advisors having experience in specific fields of Railway activity to advise the Committee when necessary.
5. The Committee may appoint sub-committees at its discretion to deal with certain aspects of the Society's work.

- 6 The Society's property shall be vested in 4 trustees, to be appointed initially by a General Meeting. Any vacancies shall be filled by the remaining Trustees, who shall do so in consultation with the Society's Committee. The Trustees shall at all times maintain close touch with the activities of the Society.
- 7 The funds of the Society shall be held at a Bank or on deposit at interest at the discretion of the Committee. The signatures of at least two officers or members of the committee shall be required to withdraw funds.
- 8 The Society shall hold an Annual General Meeting in Leeds, notice of which shall be given in the Society's monthly journal.
9. The quorum for a General Meeting or the Committee shall be one third of the membership.
- 10 The Business of the Society at General Meetings and Committee shall be by Parliamentary Procedure.
11. A special General Meeting may be called by the Committee or by a written request of at least 20 members of the Society, such meeting to be held within 6 weeks of receipt of the request by the Secretary.
- 12 Elections shall be by simple majority vote.
- 13 In the event of dissolution of the Society, the Trustees shall distribute or realise the Society's assets as they think fit, but having regard to the persons or bodies which have provided donations to the Society.
- 14 A written report by the Secretary and Treasurer shall be circulated to members before each Annual General Meeting.
- 15 The Constitution shall be revised by a two thirds majority of the members at a General Meeting.
- 16 The Society shall keep in touch with those firms having private sidings on the Middleton Railway, with British Railways, and the Corporation of the City of Leeds, all of which shall receive the Annual Report on the Society's activities.
- 17 The Society shall be charitable and non-profit making. Any Surplus shall be devoted to furthering the aims of the Society, or to such Charities as the Committee may think fit.
- 18 The Committee may appoint operating officers as it thinks fit to conduct the maintenance and operation of the Middleton Railway.
- 19 Operation of the railway shall be in accordance with the best established practice, as set out by the Ministry of Transport. Printed rules for operating and safety shall be devised and issued to all persons responsible for the operation of the railway.