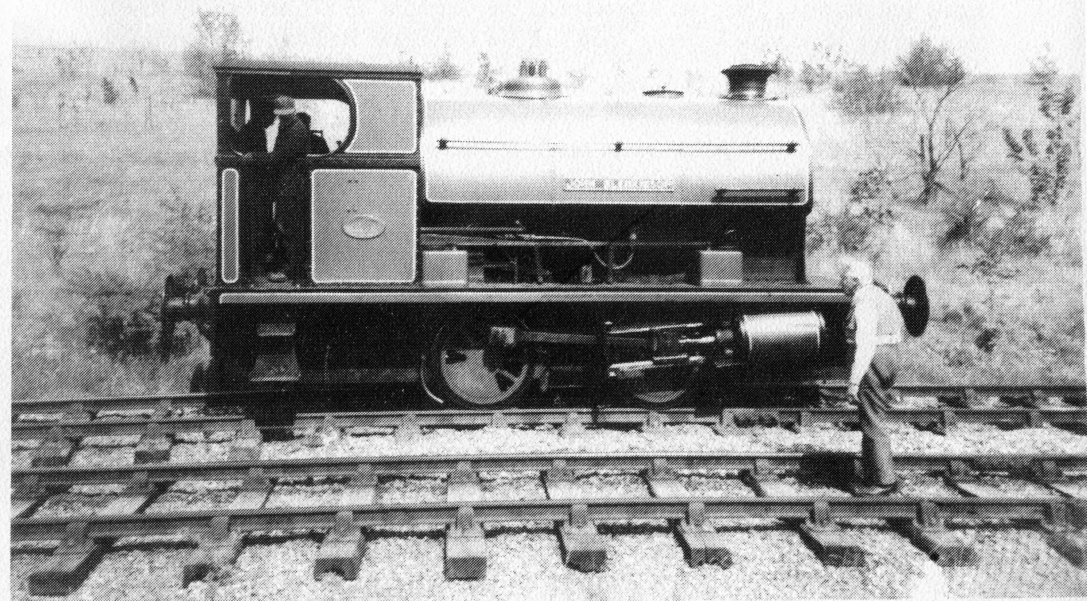


THE OLD RUN



**JOURNAL OF
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LEEDS**

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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 22nd September 1989.

Frontispiece:- 'John Blenkinsop' on Middleton Park Halt run-round, May 1989.
Vice President/resident P.W. expert Fred Youell approaches for a word with driver Ian Smith. Photo: Chris Smythe

EDITORIAL

The last article which our late Archivist/Historian, John Bushell, wrote for this magazine appeared in Issue 125, and told how he was contacted by Herr Wilhelm Wunderlich and, as a result, became involved in the 150th anniversary celebrations of the first German state railway. This issue, we are fortunate to have an article by Wilhelm Wunderlich, about his side of the story, and of the many problems he had to overcome when he tried to find both John and our Railway.

It is interesting to find in his article the fact which has been remarked on more than once in the past year or two, that Germany gives the Murray/Blenkinsop locomotives a more honoured place in the history of steam locomotion than their native country often has done. Many "experts" have tended to dismiss the Middleton locomotives as being largely irrelevant to the real development of the steam locomotive. However, when several facts are considered together, they perhaps imply something different. We know of visitors who came to observe the locomotives and took away details of them: some to the Royal Iron Foundry at Berlin, where copies were made but for various reasons not used, others to France where details were published in a newspaper, Grand Duke Nicholas presumably spoke of them in Russia, and of course George Stephenson made practical use of his own visit. Letters still exist which John Blenkinsop wrote, enthusing about the locomotives and the remarkable saving of money to be made by using them. He appears to have had more than a few enquiries from the owners of other coal mines or works. His son, John Stanley Blenkinsop, who must have grown up with the Middleton locomotives as a familiar sight, was inspired to become an engineer himself and, as we now know, was an important figure in the early development of the German State Railways. Similarly, a son of Matthew Murray is said to have travelled to Russia in connection with contracts in 1820, taking with him a model locomotive to present to the Czar. It is said that he married and settled in Moscow, where he died in 1835, and presumably in the years he was there he spread word about his father's locomotives. Several engineers who trained at Murray's Round Foundry became important in the locomotive building industry and as locomotive designers or locomotive superintendents in the fast-growing railway companies.

By these means was news of the advantages of steam locomotion, and the technology of locomotive building, spread to other parts of the British Isles and across Europe. Could even we Middleton members have underestimated just how important our Railway and its first locomotives perhaps were to the early growth of steam locomotion?

SHEILA BYE

THE GERMAN CONNECTION

(How it developed and how it looked from the other side.)

It all started in 1985, when in commemoration of the first (private!) railway in Germany an anniversary exhibition was instigated by German Federal Railways (DB) and the successor of the Brunswick State Bank (founded 1754), which now uses the old station building from 1845 as their headquarters. Somebody said: "Too much fuss on the side of DB! We are the real ancestors of them, and in 1988, when we shall have the 150th anniversary of our State Railway, we'll give them a lesson in history." Therefore, an investigation had to be started in that history and to have a proper "document" a book was to be issued on that subject. Nobody was willing to do the work, and in 1986 I was asked to do the job. First I hesitated, but when talking to various people, including to the director of the Brunswick State Museum (having an M.A. degree of Oxford University!), I found it more and more interesting. Although the initially envisaged publishing date (1st August 1987, the 150th anniversary of turning the first sod), was by far not met, plenty of people thought it a good proposition to bring the issue to the public a year before the anniversary, so that they could get acquainted with the idea.

In the course of the investigations, it was revealed that an Englishman had a decisive influence on the technical development of the Brunswick State Railways: his name was John Stanley Blenkinsop. As there was not very much information found in the town archives, my idea was to find something in Great Britain's archives. Being a fellow of the Institution of Railway Signal Engineers (incorporated 1912 in London), I arranged a visit at the National Railway Museum at York. There the answer was given: "Oh, the name of Blenkinsop is more common in Yorkshire than it would sound to German ears, therefore you cannot be sure that John Stanley is the son of the famous John O., the inventor of the first rack railway!" Other investigations were completely without result, so in my book it says: "The identity of names has therefore sometimes led to the wrong conclusion, that the first locomotive driver of Brunswick would be a relative of the famous owner of the above mentioned patent." Big was the surprise, when shortly after Christmas 1987, somebody was on the 'phone: "Are you the author of the book?" "Yes." "I am Mr. G. Wermser from Hannover and a great grandchild of Mr. John Stanley Blenkinsop; where did you get the information that John S. is no relative to John the inventor, married to Elizabeth Oswald?" "From the National Railway Museum in York!" "Oh gosh that is funny, my cousin was there a few years ago, saw the original cogged wheel and gave all the information to them. I can prove that John S. is the son of John O. I have the complete family tree here. Are you interested in it?" "Oh yes, naturally, when can we meet and where?"

And he came with all his papers, from which I learned that Professor J. Körting from the technical university Karlsruhe had written a detailed history of "the Blenkinsops in England and Germany". In this booklet, he quoted that he had used a booklet "The World's Oldest Railway" by John Bushell. The only available relic of it was a copy of front and back page, where it said "1758 Middleton Railway Trust Limited, 42 Garnet Road, Leeds 11 to whom all enquiries should be addressed."

So off went a letter to the author c/o above address, asking whether it would be possible to meet him in Leeds "or somewhere around" in week 2 1988, preferably on 14th or 15th January. No reply came before 10th January, when I had to leave. So I went to a station bookshop at Euston Station: "I have to get in touch with the manager." "Can you come again in half an hour's time please?" "No because my train to Birmingham leaves in 15 minutes." "Oh, much better go there to such-and-such a shop and you will be taken care of!" In Birmingham, in the particular shop, nobody knew anything about it. "You must know the publishers" was the standard answer until somebody in the station bookshop told me: "You must go to a shop with a proper railway department; when you go out that entrance, turn left, the second street to the right and on the second corner at the lefthand side you will find one." On I went, it was not the second but the third corner, and not on the lefthand but on the righthand side, but I was very well attended to: "You should contact the publishers, but I know Mr. Bushell is a schoolteacher somewhere near Leeds, you should find him in the telephone directory quite easily." So when I had finished my business at Birmingham, I was off to Leeds - but as a not so well informed traveller in that district I took the shortest route which turned out to be a long-cut in time.

After arrival at the hotel, I looked at the telephone directory which I had to dig out from somewhere. There were 3 Bushells, but none under the initial J., so I tried one after the other. The second one was not at home, and the others did not have any idea whatsoever. Meanwhile, I had missed my dinner. I asked the receptionist where Garnet Road was. "You can't go there now!" was his answer. So next morning the taxi took me to Middleton, and we looked for Garnet Road No. 42. We found Garnet Road eventually, but no number above 30, and none of the two inhabitants we asked was in a position to help us. On the way back, when we tried to turn from Garnet Road left to the main street, a policeman made us turn right, and we finished up in a circle and there was the sign "Middleton Railway". So he dropped me there, and after a little walk around, I found my way through the fence to a lot of people who tried to heave a diesel motor out of an engine. The response to my question was reluctant. So I watched them some time and then came somebody who looked like he was some sort of supervisor. He said he did not

know any Mr. Bushell; it was right, here was the Middleton Railway, but would I please wait a bit until they were more advanced with their work. After that, we went into a little building and he gave me 3 names where I could enquire about Mr. Bushell. (I have no recollection at all of the names, but I think one was Mr. Roberts.) When I asked him whether I could use their telephone: "Sorry, we have none, but up the road beyond the bridge there in the police station there is a public 'phone." So I went there, but after the third call my change was used up. So I went over the road to a shop to get some change: "Sorry, we do not change money, you have to go to the bank." After half an hour, I was back with a bag of 10p pieces from Yorkshire Bank Ltd., and was able to make my series of calls. One was on leave, the other on work, but the business had several numbers and more than one employee with the same name. So I called back at the private number to get the initials. Then he knew Mr. Bushell, but not his telephone number. Finally, I had the right person who knew Mr. Bushell and could also give me his private number and the number of the school. So the detective work had come to an end, and the rest was mentioned in Mr. Bushell's last contribution in The Old Run.

In 1988, he was very keen to come to Braunschweig to the 150th year celebrations. There was considerable discussion on when, where and how long these celebrations should take place. German Federal Railways - according to their new-look image to be created - did not want to refer to the history too much, rather they wanted to show off with their "twice as fast as the motorcar, half as fast as the aeroplane" slogan. The museum wanted to go a little more into history, but only on a limited time. So I proposed that he should come to the official opening of the museum activities on the 1st December 1988 until the 6th - the actual dates of the inauguration 150 years ago. It would have been favourable as the members of the Blenkinsop family from South Africa were also to come within that time. We were all the more surprised when information came: "I shall be visiting Braunschweig from 7th to 17th August". So the visit took place at that time and in that way, as John Bushell mentioned in his last contribution in The Old Run No. 125. At that time nobody knew that the end of the celebrations in December was the actual date of his death. Did he have any presentiment of this?

W.M. WUNDERLICH

EXHIBITION NOTES

A small publicity display was put on at the 'Great Central Model Railway Exhibition' held in the Central Methodist building, Horsforth, on Saturday 10th June. Future events at which we hope to be represented by either a publicity or a sales stand are as follows:

Sunday 6th August - Yorkshire Evening Post Fun Day at Batley Sports Centre

Saturday 12th August - Hunslet Lake Gala

Friday 27th October 1p.m. to 9p.m., Saturday 28th October 10a.m. to 8.30p.m. & Sunday 29th October 10a.m. to 5.30p.m. - Leeds Model Railway Exhibition at Armley Leisure Centre, Carr Crofts, Leeds 12.

Friday 24th, Saturday 25th & Sunday 26th November (dates subject to confirmation) - Wakefield Model Railway Exhibition.

If you are able to help at any of the above events, please either write to me at 44 South Broadgate Lane, Horsforth, Leeds LS18 4AG, or 'phone (0532)581851.

DEREK T. PLUMMER

SORRY!

Ian B. Smith wins the prize for being first to spot (or at least the only one to ring me up about) the last issue's inadvertent mistake. At first, I didn't believe him - it definitely did look like the end of Dartmouth Yard into which 385 was venturing (photo, Page 12) - but Ian maintained that it was the B.R. end of the Balm Road Branch. It was some time later that I realised: 385 faces south, and when she ventures into Dartmouth Yard at all these days it will be stern first, not as in the picture. Well done the ex-Editor, it's good to see you've stayed alert in your retirement!

SHEILA BYE

IAN B. SMITH

PUBLICITY NEWS

As we move into Summer, our publicity becomes more important than ever. I am happy to say that traffic levels appear at least to be holding their own against last year's phenomenal rise - it was too much to hope to maintain the progress. That said, our biggest headache so far this year has been the absolutely atrocious weather. Yes, I said atrocious weather! It is a sad fact of life that, whilst exceptionally sunny weather might make people go to the Moors, Dales or Bronteland, it will not attract people to Darkest Hunslet! This, of course, is reflected in our ticket sales. Our best days are always the ones which start off overcast and then brighten up in the afternoon - THEN the visitors turn up in droves (well, almost droves!).

We have posters available at the line for anyone wishing to display them, and I've included a 'Visitor's Guide' with this issue of the magazine, so that everyone knows what's happening and can help publicise the World's Oldest Railway.

Much effort has been expended in the 30th Anniversary Celebrations for next year. 1990 promises to be the most exciting year for the Middleton Railway since our opening in 1960. The following things have been confirmed at the time of writing:-

1. Saturday 31st March 1990 Footplate Competition

We are to host the first of the series of heats for this competition. The heat involves loco crews operating both freight and passenger trains under test conditions, to assess their knowledge and skills. The competition is sponsored by 'Steam Railway' magazine and also British Coal, who are providing two tons of steam coal for the event. The competition will be used as a publicity event to advertise our 1990 services.

Also planned for 31st March is the official renaming/entry into service of 'Mirvale', which will be performed by Nick Pigott, editor of 'Steam Railway', and our own Ron Redman, author of 'The Railway Foundry', the history of Hudswell Clarke & Company. The loco's previous owner, Ray Dixon, will be one of our guests on that occasion.

There will be no scheduled visitors' service on this day, though the site and shop will be open.

2. Monday 16th April 1990 Visit of Lord Mayor of Leeds

This is a Civic visit to help celebrate our historic achievement of being the first standard gauge preserved railway. The Lord Mayor, Councillor Carter, will unveil a 'Country Park' board to forge links with Middleton Park, in addition to meeting our members. Chairman Vernon Smith will officiate for the Trust.

3. 16th & 17th June 1990 30th Anniversary Weekend

This is the big one! We have a Yorkshire Evening Post Funday planned for Saturday 16th June, with various events still to be decided. On the evening of that day, we are holding an Anniversary Dinner, which we hope members will be able to attend.

On Sunday 17th June, we will repeat our Saturday activities, but with more of an "enthusiast" basis, to include such things as vintage freight trains and the like. We hope to steam four of our own locos, plus one visiting loco, and also to run some of our vintage diesel locos, in particular 'John Alcock', which will be returning from York some time in early 1990. At the time of writing, it is unclear as to whether or not the loco is suitable for passenger use, but a full assessment will be made on arrival and we will make a decision then - watch this space!

In November, we are hosting an A.R.P.S. Seminar on Civil Engineering/Permanent Way Engineering, which will be of great interest to the preservation movement as a whole.

In addition to these purely Middleton-based events, we are also involved with a number of A.R.P.S. events to celebrate the 40th Anniversary of Railway Preservation in Britain, Talylyn R.P.S. being formed in 1950. These include meetings at Birmingham and London, and also the publication of a number of newspaper supplements, which are going nationwide and must obviously enhance our publicity profile for the year.

It must be clear from all this that 1990 really will be a watershed for us - if we can't do really well next year, then I think I'll emigrate to Timbuktoo!

IAN B. SMITH

SCHOOL SPECIALS

On Thursday 11th May, School Specials were well patronised. The maximum service possible with one loco - every 30 minutes - ran, packed to capacity. Full marks to Station staff who ran sales and catering, also to footplate staff who started firing at 6a.m. Rain held off until after the last coachload had left. Visitors arrived on time (sometimes with only 30 seconds to spare), except for one party from Knottingley who had put their trust in British Railways!

It was refreshing to find the large number of children who came up to us to say thank you, and to find an absence of hooliganism.

R.F. YOUELL

PRAISE INDEED

It is always nice to receive letters of appreciation from visitors, but when the visitors were from another preservation society, the praise is extra special. The following letter was sent by Mrs. Christian, on behalf of the Social Club of the Motive Power Department of the Great Central Railway, whose visit we enjoyed on 18th June before the Cops and Robbers events began.

"On behalf of the members of the Social Club of the Motive Power Department of the Great Central Railway, I should like to express our thanks and great appreciation of the way we were looked after at your railway yesterday.

From the putting on of an extra train to accommodate us and the excellent tour of your depot, your organisation did us a great service.

As one of your members said, you are only a small railway, but if all the larger ones were run with such helpful staff, all preserved railways would be a joy to visit.

Again, many thanks to all your staff and in particular the gentleman who organised the extra train and the tour."

Well done, everyone.

COPS AND ROBBERS DAY

As mentioned in the last issue, the 18th June Little Engines Day was turned into Cops and Robbers Day. 'John Blenkinsop' and the Sentinel were in steam, running alternate trains. Sentinel was the Cop, with a policeman's helmet perched on top of its painted 'face'. The Peckett's 'face' wore a mask, and a sack marked 'SWAG' hung out of one back window. Grown-up visitors as well as their children seemed to find it all very amusing, and some of the children entered into the spirit of the event by coming dressed up themselves as cops or robbers - most of them very impressive! Unfortunately, the event was not nearly as well attended as it deserved to be, although it equalled last year's Little Engines Day. It was very hot, for one thing: on our Bradford hilltop the temperature was 29.3, and I've often heard it said that Bradford is always at least one overcoat colder than Leeds! So, many people probably were just roasting in the sunshine in their gardens. In addition, the city had chosen the same day to hold the annual gala at Roundhay Park (this also was under-attended). Still, those who came seemed to be enjoying themselves, even when the departure of the train was 'arrested' by the Peckett's injector becoming over-heated. After a few minutes coughing and spluttering (perhaps it should not be allowed to smoke so heavily!) all was well, and the train left.

Also in attendance were a fire engine, the police Crime Prevention 'bus with their Stranger Danger video showing on the top deck, and British Transport Police with displays and videos about east coast electrification and the dangers of playing on railway tracks.

SHEILA BYE

OUR GROWING EMPIRE

Our longest distance member (antipodean in fact) is Mrs. Bunty Roi, of Christchurch, New Zealand, who visited us on 29th April. Her cousin is a member, living in Manchester. Short of any Martians, I think she holds the record of being the person to visit Middleton from the greatest distance.

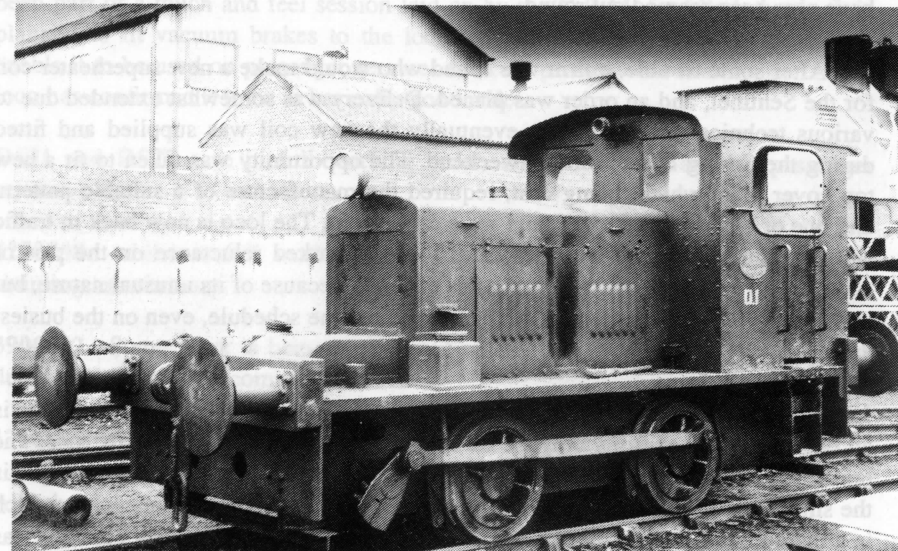
R.F. YOUELL



No. 54 and 'John Blenkinsop' all dressed up for Cops and Robbers Day. Sharing a "shot" with the Robber is the new coach conversion, No. 1867, now nearing completion. (That lighting post is a gricer's nightmare!) Photos: Sheila Bye



Our President Lord Lindsay's locomotive 'Great Marquess' on a Whitby Moors Rail Tour in the 1960's. She is again in fine fettle after her latest restoration. Photo: John K. Morton



Fowler 3900002 in Dartmouth Yard c.1968. Photo: M.R.T. Collection

TRAFFIC REPORT

With the season just a little under half way through, it is now possible to assess the season's traffic figures more positively than in the last report. "Satisfactory" is probably the best word to describe the passenger loading, for although this is up on last season the increase is nothing like that achieved over the last two seasons. Generally, the bank holiday weekends have fared better than in 1988, but the ordinary weekends have not shown a consistent improvement to match. Special trains have been run for various organisations, and are generally well received. School days are no longer as well patronised as they were ten years ago, but are still worth running.

S.J. ROBERTS

TRACK IMPROVEMENT

The first Community Service week's work cleared all the mud and dirt out of the Middleton Park platform track. The rails were so close to the platform edge that the Danish loco's cylinders had only a bare inch clearance. In a mere five days, we made this clearance uniform and text book, the track was levelled, and the dropped rail joints on the run round loop were remedied. To our surprise, even the loco people were remarking how much better their vehicle was riding. This was done by two to four untrained men, one supervisor and one invalid merely telling them what to do.

We have now started on the main running line, and an increasing pile of rotten and broken sleepers is stacked up in the station yard. Track drainage is improving, nasty bumpy joints are getting better, and one does not have to look beneath a pile of dirt and stones to see the track - we do in fact sweep up after ourselves! The best record to date is two men replacing four sleepers an hour.

R.F. YOUELL

CARRIAGE AND WAGON NEWS

Progress continues on coach conversion No.1867. All the major structural work is now complete, save for the installation of seating, and much work is being carried out on the smaller details such as fitting of door locks, etc.

Coach No.2084 has had an overhauled vacuum cylinder fitted, and various other minor bits of attention.

S.J. ROBERTS

ANNIVERSARY DINNER

As mentioned in the Publicity News, an Anniversary Dinner will be held at the Cambrian Restaurant on the evening of Saturday 16th June 1990. We hope as many members as possible will be able to attend - and that it will be an ideal opportunity to meet old friends, swap news, reminisce, and all the other things people do at such reunions.

Full details appear on a separate handbill which is enclosed with this issue.

OLD RUN, NEW DISCOVERY

It seems obvious that the road after which the Middleton journal is named, Old Run Road, refers to the Railway's route from 1758 to 1881, or the direction before the "New Run" with easier gradients was opened. The obvious, however, is not always correct. As I pointed out many years ago, the name of the road was "Odd Run Road" and ran to a place called Odd Run Farm, somewhere near the west end of the G.N.R. viaduct. To confuse the historian, Odd Run Farm is no longer traceable.

In a map of 1787 by Jonathen Seal, we find another variation, Tood Run, which could be To Od Run or T'Ood Run. It was a trackway parallel to the 1758 Railway, going presumably to the farm. This surely would not have become The Old Run in 1787, when the Railway was NOT "Old".

R.F. YOUELL

OUR FAMOUS PAST!

Preservation societies tend, understandably, to blow their own trumpets. Who can blame them? They have to attract customers by telling a good story. As Middleton's bread and butter were from goods traffic, it was of little use telling a wagon load of scrap how good we were, or handing a leaflet to a wagon of tubes and plates! So for our first ten years, our name being little known outside Leeds was understandable. Nowadays, however, things have changed. We are the oldest firm in the business, so why is it that a high proportion of visitors stare blankly in our faces as we tell them we are 67 years older than the Stockton and Darlington, were steam-operated 17 years before the Rocket, and re-opened months before the Bluebell?

In doing permanent way repairs recently, I found two more suspected 1812 stone sleepers, and that gave me an idea. For thirty years, a quarter mile of Middleton's 1758 route has remained untouched except for grass, weeds and the odd bit of rubbish. It runs from Parkfield Street bridge (near Jack Lane) to Hillidge Place crossroads. There is a level section more than wide enough for a single track and a shed at one end. It is protected by stone walls and steel fences. What is wrong with setting up an 1812 version here, and saying to all other preservation societies "Follow that!"?

If the Trust has kept plenty of the 1812 stone sleepers, it is feasible to build stone sleepered track (or even concrete made to look like it). Worn track and some bolts stuck on will make a replica of the rack track. A full sized wooden replica of the 1812 locomotive can be made (the wooden frames were, by sheer luck, the size of modern sleepers and timbers ex permanent way department. An exact replica of every nut and bolt would be too expensive, but a good lookalike is not impossible. Why not a wooden boiler, and the working parts made out of light alloy, driven by a small petrol or electric motor hidden away in the boiler? A wagon or chaldron coupled to the loco, with a door to let passengers inside - and off we go.

I know most things about permanent way and practically nothing about anything else. If I guarantee to build a quarter mile of 4'1" track, could readers please prod the Committee into making a replica 1812 loco to run on it?

R.F. YUELL

Editor's comment: this might be dismissed by many as a mere pipe-dream, but just under thirty years ago the man was having some outlandish thoughts about amateurs running a standard gauge railway.....

WRITING THE RULES - V

Part four of this article took us up to the point where work had started on the new version of the rule book, which was to be organised as a series of sections dealing with different topics, and it left us with the problem of trying to decide which topics should go in which sections. The technique that was adopted was to try to get the easy bits right first and then sort out the more difficult bits later, and the starting point for all of this was the production of a master list showing which rules in the current rule book applied to which topics. Working from this list it was possible to decide how the rules for each topic should be grouped together, and in very many cases it was then discovered that bits of several rules could be amalgamated into just one or two rules which contained all the necessary information.

For the first couple of sections, the new draft was typed out once it seemed to be right, but once a few sheets had been typed in this way alterations started to be needed, and it soon became obvious that there had to be a better way of doing things. At this time (about 1981) word processors were very much in their infancy, but even so it was obvious that they could assist greatly with this sort of job. While I did not actually have access to a proper word processor, I did have access to a mainframe computer, and this did have on it some programs for word processing. These were crude by today's standards, but they were a considerable improvement on manual typing. I therefore acquired a copy of the manual describing how to use them, and started transcribing what had already been drafted. Once this had been done, the remaining sections could be typed directly into the machine as they were drafted, and then bits could be rearranged as necessary thereafter.

This capacity for rearrangement proved to be extremely fortunate, because it became obvious that a rethink of the basic format was going to be needed even before the first draft was finished. Up until this time, all versions of the rule book had been written on the assumption that all members had a copy. In the early days, when nearly all members had played some part in the running of the railway, this approach was perfectly reasonable, but as time progressed so the proportion of members who were not involved in operation had increased steadily. This raised the question of whether it was really sensible to continue to require all members to have copies of all the rules, and a look at the practices of some other preserved railways soon made it clear that it was not. Therefore, it was decided (somewhere early in 1983) that the rules would be split into two groups, which would then be known respectively as the rules and the regulations. The rules would, as before, apply to all members, while the different sets of regulations would each govern particular activities, so that only members engaged in those activities would need

to have copies of the relevant sets of regulations. For some of the sections (such as Passenger Trains and Goods Trains) this new structure did not require much change, but for others it meant fairly major rearrangement of what had already been done.

This all took time, and it was not until the end of 1985 that all the bits started to come together. A complete draft was produced early in 1986 and circulated around the officers who were most involved with the operation of trains, principally Vernon Smith as traffic manager and Steve Roberts as mechanical engineer. The hope was that, if this draft was reasonably satisfactory, then any minor details could be tidied up and the new rules issued ready for the new operating season. This would have been ideal, since the 1986 season was to see the introduction of the new pattern of operation using the newly-converted passenger coach with its vacuum brakes, and the new run-round loops.

The new rules had been drafted to cover this new style of operation, but the hope that they were now in almost their final form proved to be excessively optimistic. By the time the draft returned, it had been liberally decorated with highlighter pen to indicate sections that were thought to be unsatisfactory, and these were generously annotated with suggestions for amendments, together with all sorts of other comments by way of explanation. It was quite clear that fairly drastic revision was going to be needed, and this was certainly not going to be complete in time for the new operating season. A set of temporary instructions was therefore issued to cover the new features of train operation, and it was back to the word processor for the rule book.

Devising and making all the necessary alterations took more time, and so it was not until early in 1987 that the next complete draft appeared. This also attracted a fair number of suggestions for further alterations, and the council decided that the most efficient way of dealing with these was to hold a meeting of those involved, so as to sort out precisely what changes should be made. The fact that this meeting was never referred to anywhere as a meeting of the R&DSC served to confirm that this sub-committee was effectively defunct, even though it had never formally been wound up. The meeting took place in June 1987, and settled all the outstanding points, which just left one more hurdle to cross. This arose from the decision that we ought this time to make sure that the Railway Inspectorate were happy with our new rules before we issued them, rather than waiting until afterwards and then finding that alterations were required. So, having got what we hoped would be a final draft, we sent them a copy and asked for their comments.

What we actually got back from the Inspectorate was rather more than just comments, for their reaction was that, as they hadn't been near us since 1980, they ought to start by making another inspection before they could comment on how we ought to be operating. This inspection duly happened in February 1988, and was reported in the Summer 1988 Old Run. It was followed quickly by a draft of their report, and by their comments on our proposed rules and regulations. For the rule book they suggested very little by way of alteration, and so the council were able to approve this for issue in March 1988. This was reported in the same edition of The Old Run, and it was this event that prompted me to start writing this article, little realising just how long a story it was going to turn out to be.

Unfortunately, the train operating regulations were not dealt with so easily. Our rules had always been written on the basis that the driver was completely in charge of the operation of a train, and any other activities related to it, and the new revision had simply continued this idea. From the Inspector's comments, however, it was clear that he felt that this was not sufficient, and that we needed to make explicit provision, not only for all train operations to be supervised, but also other work as well. Thus, while it was quite possible that the driver of a train could act as supervisor for its operation, the regulations had to be rewritten to make the two roles of driver and supervisor separate, so that if they were to be two different people then it would be clear what responsibilities each one had.

Even though this did not actually affect very many of the regulations, it proved to be far from easy, since it could not be done simply by looking at how we already operated and asking whether that was adequate. Rather, we had to decide how we ought to be operating, and then make sure that what we decided was going to be workable, but without having any real opportunity to test the new ideas out in practice. In trying to do this, several possible revisions of the relevant bits of the regulations were produced, but none of them appeared to be completely satisfactory. Finally, a separate document was produced, that simply discussed the various features that were likely to be needed in any arrangement for supervising train operations (and others), without actually trying to encode any of them as rules or regulations.

Once the ideas in this document had been agreed by those who were going to have to make them work, and we had a clear statement of what we were trying to achieve, it was possible to have yet another go at revising the regulations. At the time of writing this version of them was being considered by the council for approval, and hopefully the next Old Run will carry the news that we finally, sixteen years after the last set, have a proper new set of train operating regulations to go with the latest revision of the rule book. Of course, that will not be the end of

the process, because the old rule book also had some rules that covered permanent way work and various other aspects of engineering, and we haven't got proper replacements for those yet. Some bits of what will become the engineering regulations have been drafted already, as they could be taken directly from the old rule book. Most of the rest will have to be written from new, because they relate to things that simply did not exist back in 1973, such as the engine shed. Thus, it may be some time before the fifth revision of the rules and regulations is finally complete, and by then we shall probably have to start thinking about a sixth revision: but how that may come to get written will have to be another story, for this one finishes here.

A. J. COWLING

GET WELL SOON, FRED!

Just as we prepare to go to press, we have heard that our Vice President, Fred Youell, has been ordered "into the workshop" for mechanical attention. We all wish you a very speedy recovery, Fred.

Geoff Saunders, retired railwayman and Middleton stalwart, was also taken ill early in July, but we are pleased to report that he is now much better.

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