

# THE DARTMOUTH DAWDLER



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### Historical Notes

The policy of the Middleton Railway has always been one of adapting itself to the transport needs of the area. In the early years, the traffic conveyed was entirely coal, iron ore, and fireclay from the mines, and fireclay products from the adjoining works.

When in 1881 the line was converted from 4'1" to standard gauge, it opened a completely new field of operation. Not only could Middleton 'private owner' wagons travel direct to the customer, but there was a potential in this industrialised area for the provision of a link between the main line companies and local industry.

The first link with a main line company was in before 1893, via the Leeds Gas Companies lines and the Kidacre St. level crossing. By 1895 the Balm Rd. link was at last completed, having been commenced 20 years earlier. Both of these were with the Midland Railway, and then the Great Northern Railway was linked via the Parkside spur in 1899.

Thus Middleton developed from being just an industrial railway conveying the products of its owner to almost 'branch' status, and in succeeding years many firms were served by the railway. The traffics carried, in addition to coal, clay and fireclay products, included roadstone for the Highways Dept, Sand, Manure (for farms), Steel and steel manufactures (for Hathorn Davey, Claytons and Kings), and Scrap Metal (from Robinson and Birdsell) - including the ex-G.W.R. Steam Railcar from the Nidd Valley Light Railway, which came for scrap, and yet moulders to this day beneath a giant pile of metal in their yard (Interesting trains these would have been - how we wish we had photos of them).

These traffics were obviously remunerative, for as new industry developed in the area, new lines were built to serve it. In 1913 the sidings to Wagon Repairs Ltd. (to the south of the Balm Rd. branch) was opened. In 1920 the largest project of all, the Dartmouth branch, was opened, the first train running on 6th August to Claytons Gas Engineers. The sidings to their neighbours, Kings (Foundry) and Robinson and Birdsell, were opened in the next few months, and this expansion era ended with the opening of Denisons sidings (on the opposite side of the Main Line) on the 5th March, 1921. This was the last branch to be opened by the old company, as Road Transport stifled further development.

When the construction of the Middleton Light Railway (as part of Leeds City Tramways) was authorised, it was planned to build a link to allow the transfer of coal wagons, which could then be delivered to other parts of the tram system. This never materialised, but the rail/tram crossing was delivered by the Middleton Railway, and laid in position on the Dartmouth branch. It remains to this day, and is probably the last section of this tram track in situ, let alone in use in 1971, although it will be lifted with the motorway realignment.

Eventually it was to be the Dartmouth branch that provided Middleton with its reason for survival, for when in 1959 coal traffic to Hunslet Moor (Whittakers Staithes) ceased, it was the local industries served by this branch that were left without a service, as N.C.B. locos had worked all the trains. So it came about that, on the 1st September 1960, the familiar clanking of a loose-coupled freight train resounded across the Moor once again - the preservationists were continuing the two hundred year old tradition. They were - and still are - "serving the needs of industrial Leeds", and since then the Trust has conveyed over sixty-six thousand tons of freight.

The enclosed notes from the M.R.T. Guide, of which some details, particularly those referring to the possibility of using the old buildings at Middleton Broom Colliery for museum purposes, are now regrettably out of date, describes points of interest in the vicinity of the railway, and connected with it. Also please note that the Subscription Rates have been amended, and are now £1.25 (Full), and 65p (Junior and O.A.P.).

The photographs on the front cover show (i) the locomotive 'Blenkinsop' by the tram crossing, with a Leeds 'Feltham' tram in the background - this was when the line was still N.C.B. worked (Copyright - A. K. Terry), and (ii) the M.R.T. Diesel 'John Alcock', on the 5th May 1961, working a regular freight train, which on this occasion also includes the Trust's ex-Midland Railway hand crane, which had been delivered that day (Copyright - C. C. Thornburn).



## 1758 MIDDLETON RAILWAY LEEDS

### THE OLDEST RAILWAY IN THE WORLD

#### GUIDE TO THE LINE

*By John Bushell*

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	2. Detailed account of a ride on the railway
	3. Two walks from the line and other points of interest
	4. Locomotive list
	5. Map

We welcome you to the railway. This guide will provide you with background information to points of interest all along the line. Should you desire detailed information, our History and Stock Book will provide it. These are obtainable from our Sales Stand or Sales Officer, Mr. T. White, 66 Weetwood Lane, Leeds LS16 5NH.

#### GENERAL INFORMATION

##### **TIMETABLE** March to October Inclusive.

Hunslet Moor	dep	14.00	and about every	16.30
Middleton Park Gates	arr	14.10	30 mins. until	16.40
Middleton Park Gates	dep	14.15		16.45
Hunslet Moor	arr	14.25		16.55

These trains run Saturdays, Sundays and Bank Holidays and are usually steam hauled. Goods traffic is usually operated on weekday afternoons but its time depends on the requirements of customers and British Railways. Large visiting parties at other times are asked to contact Visits Organisers, Railway Society, University, Leeds 2, giving as much notice as possible.

#### How to get to the Railway

Leeds City Transport routes 74 and 76 'buses run every 10 mins. (Sundays 15 mins) from Park Row opposite City Station to Beza Street. At the alighting point our trains start from about 100 yards ahead and on the right hand side. Look out for the signs.

Any Dewsbury Road 'bus from Leeds Corn Exchange will take visitors to Burton Road stop where alight and turn left down Burton Road, where our halt is situated on the right hand side of the road at the far end.

Passengers on trains approaching Leeds from the Wakefield Kirkgate or Castleford directions pass our junction with British Railways on the left hand side about two miles before the train arrives at City Station.



## HISTORY ON RAILS

Part of our route is along the original route from Leeds Bridge to Middleton served by us for well over 200 years, and by steam trains for well over 150 years.

We were the first railway authorised by Act of Parliament. We were the first to change over completely to steam locomotives. These were built by Matthew Murray running on rack rails designed by John Blenkinsop, and were in full charge from 1812, well before the Stephenson era. We were also the first 4'8½" gauge railway successfully to be reopened by a volunteer society, even preceding the well-known 'Bluebell' Railway, our first train running in June 1960.

The Railway has no permanent paid staff and relies entirely on its members. They carry out maintenance of track and rolling stock, locomotives, operation of traffic, publicity and so forth. Not all our country wide and world wide membership can work on the line, but we welcome all who wish to maintain a railway which is in its third century of service. When you have seen us at work, or read our unique story, we hope you will want to join our ranks. There is room for YOU at Middleton even though you have no specialised railway knowledge.

### A RIDE ON THE 1758 RAILWAY

Your journey on this historic line commences at Hunslet Moor Halt, sited on the old 'Main Line' which from 1758 to 1948 conveyed coals to the City of Leeds (near Leeds Bridge). From 1948 to 1950 coal trains finished at Whitakers Coal Staith on Hunslet Moor. The principle remaining features of this closed section are described in Walk A. At the Halt you will see:—

- a) The Saxby and Farmer level crossing gates, with revolving spikes at the top, installed at the turn of the century, possibly as a result of the legal action of William Emsley in 1877.
- b) The line on your left (East) which leads to Clayton's Moor End Works and the interchange sidings with British Railways at Balm Road, used by our regular goods traffic.
- c) From 1758 to 1875, the line to the Colliery ran to the left of the present route along the open space next to Moor Road known as 'Hunslet Lake' and past 'The Engine' inn, at the foot of the 'Old Run Road'. At this point the 'Old Run' incline starts. Locomotives hauled trains to this point from 1812, and a stationery engine wound them up to the higher level for another locomotive haul to the colliery. You can still walk this route. The drivers patronised 'The Engine' inn and according to George Stephenson liquor consumed here was responsible for a fatal accident in 1818. The engine driver was killed and a number of children scalded when a boiler exploded.

As your train starts from the Halt, you will notice that for safety reasons, the locomotive is kept on the downhill end of the train, in accordance with custom. The gradient to Middleton Park en route to the Colliery averages 1 in 50 and is 1 in 27 at the steepest point.

We run parallel to the trackbed of the Middleton Light Railway (a Tram Route to Middleton), and you will see the remaining tram tracks crossing our Dartmouth Works branch just after it leaves our main line. From 1925 to 1959 Leeds City Transport had to give priority to our goods trains at this point, and to maintain 1 or 2 of our tracks over it to our satisfaction.

The Dartmouth Works Branch leads to a headshunt where trains reverse up a steep and sharply curved connection to the works of Messrs Clayton Son and Co Ltd. Many of the Middleton Locomotives are stored here, and it is usually possible to arrange for a guide to conduct interested visitors to see them. Ask a Trust Official as prior permission is essential. Many heavy Middleton goods trains start or finish their journey here, the biggest being a 21 wagon train of Gasworks equipment for export to New Zealand. Today, however, more traffic is worked for the neighbouring scrap metal firm of Robinson and Birdsell Ltd. Our tracks here run between the mammoth piles of scrap awaiting transport.

## WALK A — — — HUNSLET MOOR AREA

From Hunslet Moor Halt walk northwards on the left of the former railway track-bed. This is the remaining portion of Hunslet Moor (Common Land) and it was here that the railway's first Murray-Blenkinsop Steam locomotives were demonstrated on 24th June 1812. Between the footpath and the railway fencing was the Middleton Light Railway, tracks being visible at the Staiths level crossing.

The remains of the Coal Staith may be visible on the right though much has recently been demolished. Note the stone sleepers and the crossing gate posts. (Gates were similar to those at Burton Road).

Continue crossing Moor Road alongside a line of garages built on the double track bed, towards the 'Craven Gate'. It was suggested in the 1950's that the L.C.T. trams from Middleton should use this route to the City thus avoiding the congested Dewsbury Road. One of the drawbacks to this abortive scheme was the single track bridge that the Middleton Railway uses to cross the Midland Railway.

Walk over this bridge, crossing the former Hampton-in-Arden — Leeds main line of the North Midland Railway, to Jack Lane level crossing. The bridge track remains, a gas main having been laid alongside. Just across the road was the junction for two branches — the track bed can still be seen.

Turn right, crossing the original line to the first North Midland terminus at Hunslet Lane. Kitsons and Fowlers were behind the works on your left. You are now in the loco-building area of Leeds.

At the Boyne Engine works (1858) Manning Wardle built the Middleton loco of 1868 named 'Matthew Murray' to the 4'1" gauge, and it is said placed it on the tracks at the crossing.

The works are now part of the Hunslet Engine Company, their neighbours, having built many steam and diesel engines for service throughout the world, including some latter day Middleton engines. It is one of the few works prepared to overhaul steam locomotives. Their Chairman is the Trust's Vice-President, Mr. John Alcock.

The view from their gates is often a loco under test on the multigauge track. The level crossings link the works to the Midland Railway, and the Railway Foundry of Hudswell Badger, formerly Hudswell Clarke (right). When the loco production ceased at Manning Wardle's, Hudswells became responsible for Middleton's heavy repair work, and new construction, their last Middleton engine being Blenkinsop of 1953.

A right turn alongside the grey Flats will bring you to the site of Hunslet station, cross the bridge and turn sharp left alongside the Midland Railway across the Moor. Crossing the road, follow the footpath between the factories and the railway to the Balm Road exchange sidings, our junction with B.R. Turn right and follow the Middleton tracks, noting the 1964 Moor End branch built by the Trust for Claytons. Passing Acme's (Formerly Wagon Repairs Limited's works) follow the line to your starting point, Moor Road Level Crossing.

(45 Minutes approx).

## WALK B — — — MIDDLETON

From Middleton Park Gates Halt, follow the path to the West. Little remains of the narrow gauge rope worked clay railway which the cart track bridged.

On entering the woods bear left. It is probable that this like many of the pleasant woodland paths, was originally a waggonway. The remains of 'Bell Pits' (an early form of Coal Mine) may be seen in several places as shallow round depressions, sometimes containing small ponds. The best examples are to be found in the lower 'Beeston Woods' where a coal outcrop occurs (close to the G.N.R.).

Continue along the path until in  $\frac{1}{2}$  mile you will reach a clearing. A cottage serves refreshments and a boating lake, children's playground and sporting facilities make this an ideal venue for a family outing.

Follow the main drive up to Middleton Town Street. Turn left passing the Church (paid for in part by the Colliery agents) to the school.

You are now at the top of Rope Hill, the highest of the three levels of the Middleton Railway. Numerous horse Tramways originally linked the many pits in the area now occupied by the Housing Estate to this point. Only one wall remains of the old winding house for the inclined way (left).

Turning left, the steps and footpath follow the route of the line through the new housing, on a clear day affording a good view of the City. The route of our line can be seen running northwards from the Museum. Continue straight downhill towards the old colliery area. The Fireclay Works on the left are now used by a motor car Scrap Merchant, a Wire Works and a Concrete Depot.

The last few yards of the route give some indication of the earlier character of a line bordered by bushes and fields. Entering the level area of the Broom Colliery, note:—

- (i) Right. Conyers Spring and Day Hole End.
- (ii) Left. Piers which supported a gravitational unloading point for fireclay.
- (iii) Ahead the remaining buildings:
  - (a) The large two story blocks, which contained offices, baths, medical rooms and workshops now being converted to M.R.T. Headquarters.
  - (b) Small modern Weighbridge office.
  - (c) A former house, later converted to offices, but originally the Managers. Regrettably a large building suitable for locomotive and rolling stock depot was recently demolished by the Coal Board on the grounds that it was unsafe.

## OTHER POINTS OF INTEREST

Matthew Murray Obelisk and Memorial.

The Round Foundry Plaque.

Board a 46 'bus bound for Bramley, anywhere on Moor Road between the Hunslet Station and the Dewsbury Road Traffic Lights, and travel to St. Matthew's Church on Holbeck Moor (10 minutes). At the Northern end of the Churchyard is the obelisk, cast in iron by men at the Round Foundry in memory of the renowned engineer.

Walk ahead to the road, continuing straight ahead at the wash-house. Holbeck Engine Shed is on your right, continue ahead beneath the former L.N.W.R. viaduct, turning right at the end into Water Lane. The plaque is 150 yards ahead on the right. To reach Leeds City station continue ahead to the end of Water Lane and turn left into Neville Street.



Returning to the main line, we can see the traces of the branch into Samuel Denison's Hunslet Foundry which cast the first rack rails in 1811 for our Murray-Blenkinsop locomotives.

At this point you will see work on the new Leeds South East Motorway, which will bridge the railway here with a 100 yard long tunnel with ornamental stone entrances. We regret that the construction of this tunnel may interrupt our traffic for obvious reasons, and apologise for the inconvenience to patrons and visitors.

Passing the Parkside ground of Hunslet Rugby League Club on the right, we bear left just as the Light Railway earthworks bear right towards Middleton Woods. Just before the bridge carrying the Great Northern Beeston-Hunslet East branch over us, one of the many short branches to the spoil heaps joined in from our left, but it is now almost invisible.

Beyond the viaduct on the right the Belle Isle Beck running in the valley is now piped and covered in waste, while on the left is the site of the exchange sidings between our line and the G.N.R. In 1959 the link (which dated from 1899) between Parkside Junction and Middleton Broom Colliery was relaid, and from then until 1967, British Railways locomotives ran over this new section, hitherto used only by the Middleton Railway motive power. Really heavy locomotives, even W D 2-8-0's worked these trains.

On the left are the remains of the New Pit, closed after the 1926 strike but served by a branch until much more recently. About a ½ mile beyond the G.N.R. bridge we rejoin the 1758 route which comes in on the left behind a retaining wall made from original stone sleepers. The blind left-hand turn here was the scene of a head-on collision in company days.

On the right, covered in waste, is the old Belle Isle village. The roofs of the colliers' houses were at rail level. It is said that naughty boys jumped from track to roof to place a slate on the chimney pot and smoke the inhabitants out!

With a lane and pit tips on the left we arrive at 'Park Gates Crossing' starting point of Walk B and alighting point for Middleton Broom.

**APPLICATION FOR MEMBERSHIP**

NAME .....	Age (if under 21) .....
ADDRESS .....	Telephone No. ....
.....	Particular Interest/Skill .....
.....	.....

I enclose subscription for a year's membership, 1 guinea full, 10/- Junior under 18, Student, OAP, £15 Life. (Delete those which do not apply).

Post to Middleton Railway Trust Membership Section, 18 Inglewood Drive, Otley, or hand in to our Sales Stand.

## LOCOMOTIVE STOCK LIST

NAME/NUMBER	TYPE	BUILDER AND NO.	DATE
1. John Alcock	0-6-0 DM	Hunslet Engine Co. 1697	1932
2. 54	4wVBTG	Sentinel 8839	1933
3. Windle	0-4-0 WT	E Borrows 53	1909
4. Swansea	0-6-0 ST	Avonside Engine Co. 1569	1909
5. 3442 The Great Marquess	2-6-0	LNER Darlington	1938
6. 999	0-6-2 T	LNER Stratford	1924
7. Matthew Murray	0-4-0 ST	W. G. Bagnall 2702	1943
8. 1310	0-4-0 T	N.E.R. 38 Gateshead	1891
9. 21	0-6-0 ST	Avonside 1671	1913
10. Lord Mayor	0-4-0 ST	Hudswell Clarke 402	1893
11. D1	0-4-0 DM	John Fowler 3900002	1945
12. Henry de Lacy II	0-4-0 ST	Hudswell Clarke 1309	1917
13. John Courage	4wDM	Hudson Hunslet 1786	1935
14. Chairman	0-4-0 ST	Hudswell Clarke 1717	1940
15. Carroll	0-4-0 DM	Hudswell Clarke D361	1946
16. —	4wE (500v DC)	Metropolitan Vickers	1912

### Notes

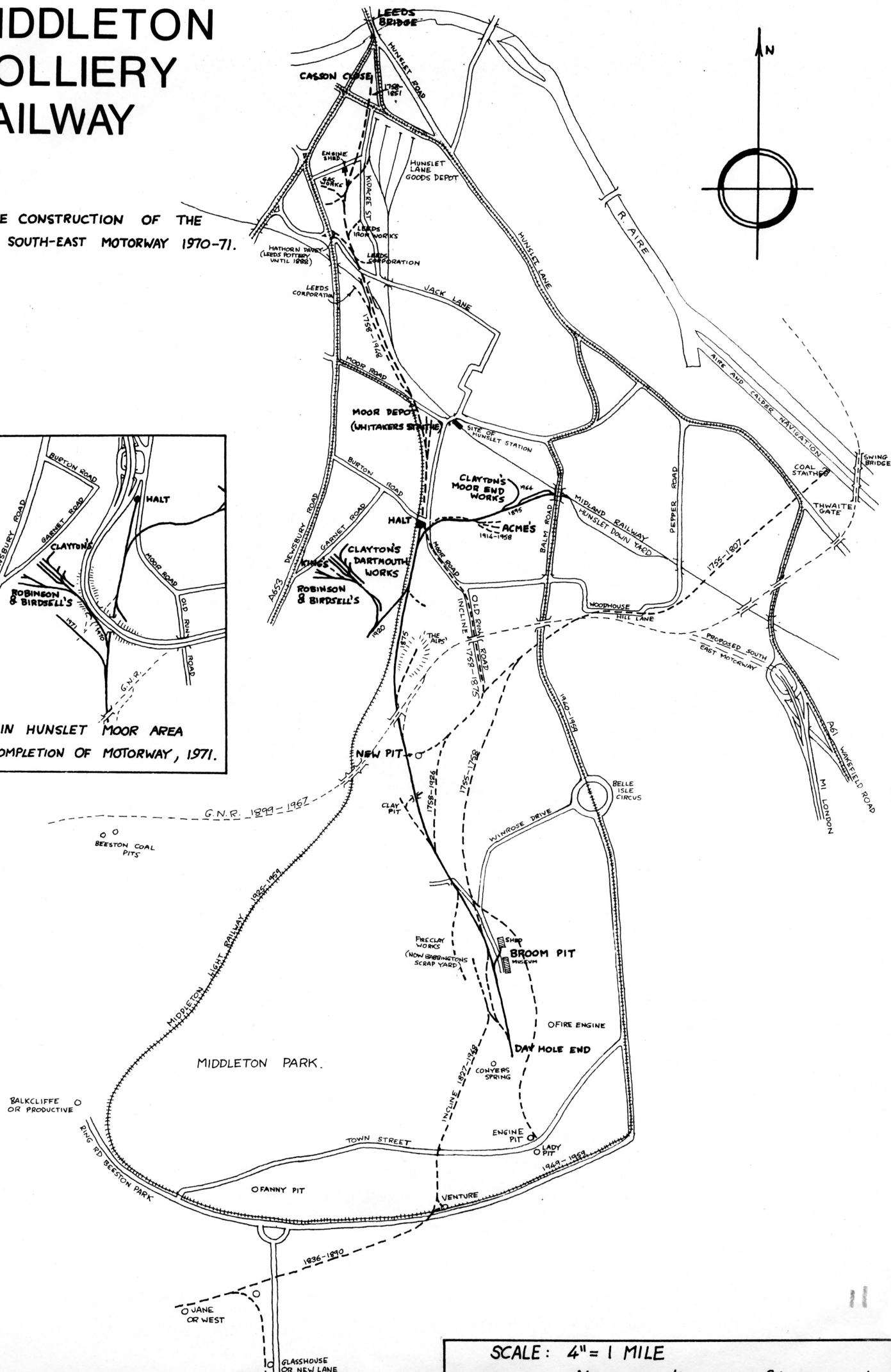
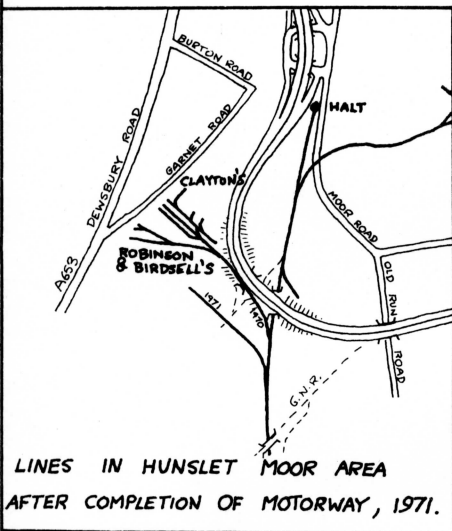
1. LMSR (7401, 7051) Bought 1960.
2. LNER (59, 8153) Bought from Darlington Geneva Yard.
3. Presented by Pilkington Brothers St Helens 1961.
4. Presented by Bynea Steel Limited, near Llanelli 1962. Was on loan to the Swansea and Mumbles railway before electrification.
5. LNER (3442, 1994) Bought 1963 by Viscount Garnock for the West Highland Trust, not on public view.
6. GER (999, later LNER 7999 and 9621, BR 69621) GER type L77, later LNER N7/1, bought 1963 as the last GER loco built at Stratford works. Not on public view.
7. Bought from Cohens (Stanningley) 1966 after working for several industrial users.
8. N.E.R. later N.C.B. Watergate Colliery Gateshead. Bought 1963 by the Steam Power Trust.
9. Bought 1966 from Mersey Docks and Harbour Board. Dismantled for Spares.
10. Donated 1967, contractors locomotive temporarily stored at Haworth.
11. Bought from Keighley Gas Works 1967.
12. Presented by Kirkstall Forge 1966.
13. Bought from Courage Brewery Alton 1968.
14. Presented by Yorkshire Tar Distillers 1969.
15. Bought from Laisterdyke Gas Works Bradford 1960.
16. Bought from C.E.G.B. Foss Power Station, York. To arrive shortly.

### Key to symbols for type of locomotive.

The Whyte notation is used for locomotives with driving wheels coupled by side rods: e.g. 2-6-0 indicates an engine with two leading wheels, six coupled driving wheels, and no trailing wheels. 4w means a locomotive with 4 driving wheels not coupled by side rods. T — loco with side tanks. WT — loco with well tank. ST — loco with Saddle Tank. VB — Vertical Boiler. G — geared drive. DM — diesel engine with mechanical drive. E — Electric Locomotive.

# MIDDLETON COLLIERY RAILWAY

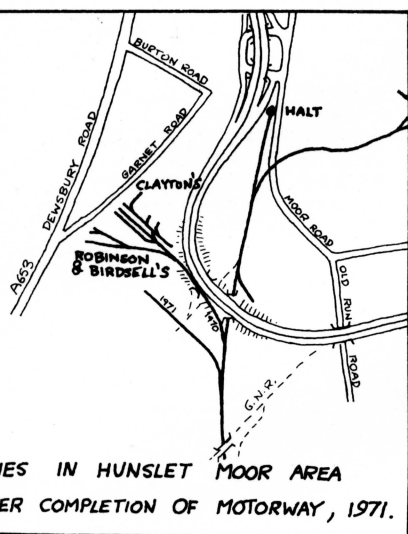
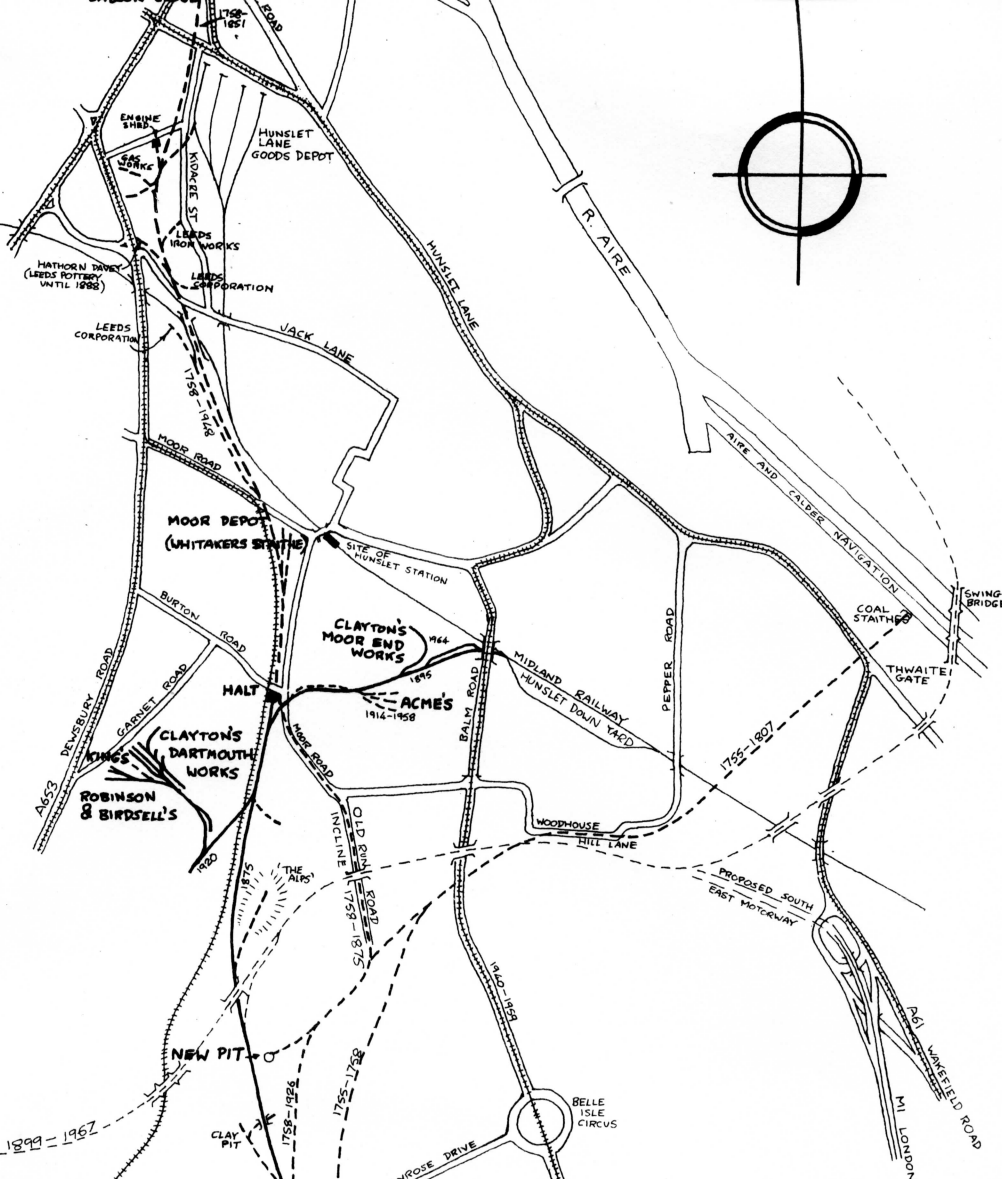
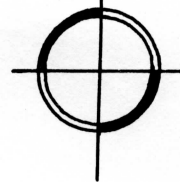
BEFORE CONSTRUCTION OF THE  
LEEDS SOUTH-EAST MOTORWAY 1970-71.



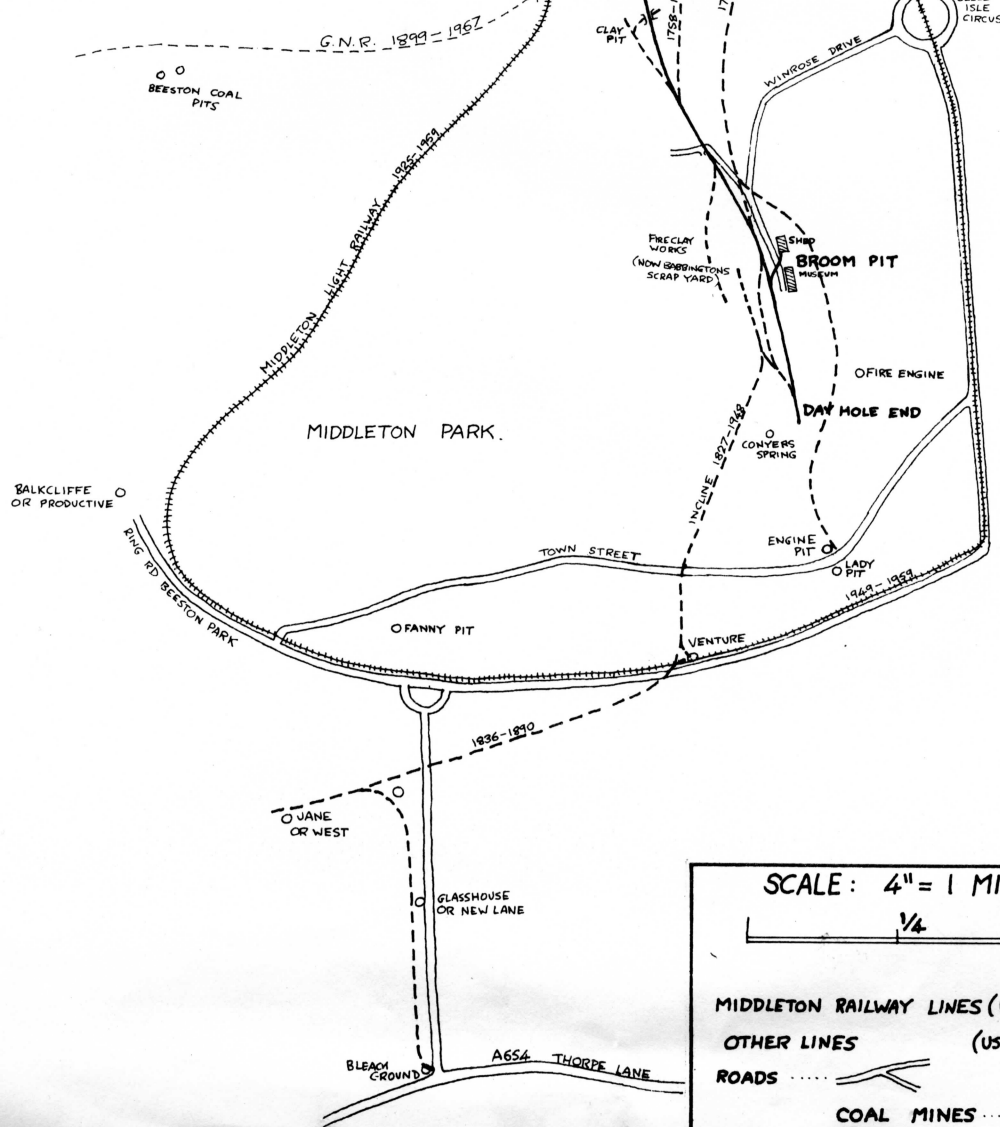


# RAILWAY

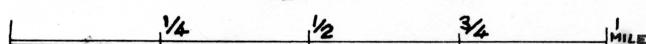
BEFORE CONSTRUCTION OF THE  
LEEDS SOUTH-EAST MOTORWAY 1970-71.



LINES IN HUNSLET MOOR AREA  
AFTER COMPLETION OF MOTORWAY, 1971.



SCALE: 4" = 1 MILE



MIDDLETON RAILWAY LINES (USED) ——— (DISUSED) -----

OTHER LINES (USED) \_\_\_\_\_ (DISUSED) - - - - -

**ROADS** .....  **ELECTRIC TRAMWAY** ++++++ 

COAL MINES . . . . O

1758 Middleton Railway Trust

**BUS TOUR**

Saturday March 6th 1971

1758 Middleton Railway Trust

**'THE DARTMOUTH DAWDLER'**

(Hunslet Moor to Dartmouth Works)

via

Middleton Broom – Balm Road  
Moor End – Rob & B Sidings

Saturday March 6th 1971

1758 Middleton Railway Trust

**'STEAM '71'**

at

Y.M.C.A., Albion Place,  
Leeds 1.

Saturday March 6th 1971, 6 p.m.