

# THE OLD RUN

JOURNAL OF  
THE 1758 MIDDLETON RAILWAY  
LEEDS



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# THE OLD RUN

NUMBER 143

SUMMER 1993

Editorial Address: 15 Leylands Lane, Bradford, Yorkshire, BD9 5PX. Tel.(0274)543574

Many thanks indeed to the members who provided articles, reports and photos for this issue. **ALL** members are invited to contribute to their magazine articles, news items, letters, photographs or drawings on relevant subjects. Opinions expressed in the magazine do not necessarily reflect those of the Middleton Railway Trust Ltd., the Middleton Railway Association, or the Editor.

**Material for the Autumn Issue should reach the Editor by 1st September 1993, at the latest.**

**The regular deadlines for contributions are as follows:**

1st of March  
1st of June  
1st of September  
1st of December

**The Editor would be grateful if contributing members could work to these dates, as some issues are timed to be accompanied by important things like A.G.M. notices or membership renewal forms, which need to go out by certain fixed dates.**

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Cover picture: with looks like her's, surely no-one could object to a second cover featuring No.1310? Another photo taken south of the tunnel, this time from the remains of the New Pit spoil heap, again on 27th March. Photo: Robin Stewart-Smith.

## FROM THE CHAIRMAN

*Ian Smith*

What a difference a few weeks make! So much has happened since the last issue that it's almost impossible to decide what to highlight first.

Perhaps the most important event in the Middleton's preserved history occurred on Friday 14th May, when we were visited by Mr. Roger Freeman, M.P., the Minister for Public Transport. In addition to his aides, Mr. Freeman was accompanied by our local M.P., John Gunnell, to whom the railway owes thanks for arranging the visit. Whilst the Minister was essentially visiting us at the end of a long day in the area, we took the opportunity of letting both himself and John Gunnell know of our plans for the future, letting Vernon Smith loose once we reached the Middleton Park end of the line. That Vernon was in good form was confirmed when the Minister, after a particularly harrowing "sob story" was heard to lament that he didn't have his cheque book on him!

Our other "big occasion" occurred a little earlier, on 18th April, when at long last **No.1310** was recommissioned. The ceremony was performed by the Lord Mayor of Leeds, Councillor Denise Atkinson who, having waved the engine away, was promptly covered in hot, sooty water from the loco! Ken Cockerill presented the railway with a cheque towards restoration, on behalf of Steam Power Trust, whilst the two organisations also agreed new terms for all three of the S.P.T.'s vehicles to stay at Middleton. The day was a great success, with much valuable publicity being gained and friendships being formed and renewed.

The Y7 did, in fact, appear just a week or so before the "official" launch, in the much heralded "Photographer's Day". This was a private charter involving no less than three locos, **1310**, **54** and **Mirvale**. The event earned over £500 for the railway and produced many good photographs, one of which now adorns our new poster and another the front cover of *Railway World*, [not to mention several in this magazine!]. Handel Kardas was so impressed with the loco's restoration that he commissioned an article on the subject, which appears in the July edition of *Railway World*, thus proving beyond all doubt that enthusiast events such as the photographer's special ARE more than worth the effort! As an added bonus, the railway was paid for the article too!

Another bit of good news is that our new Publicity Officer, Alan Gillchrist, has been able to report increased passenger numbers this season. Dave Monckton has been increasingly involved with the new shed, of which more anon, and both he and Council are grateful to Alan for being able to take on this aspect of the railway's administration. Another event organised by Alan the other week was a night out at "Buffers", the old Scholes station, for working members. This was so successful that it is likely to become a regular event, and we may well hold a full Society Dinner, perhaps next year.

As mentioned earlier, Dave Monckton has been heavily involved with the new shed, and I can now report that the Trust has Planning Permission for the project.



David has overseen much of the work required for planning permission, with Steve Roberts helping where required.

Finally, a reminder of our Health & Safety responsibilities. Like many other railways, Middleton is increasingly affected by current legislation. One very important thing is that Council as a body can now be held responsible for the actions of any individual breaking the railway's rules, if negligent management can be proved. Effectively, if any member commits a stupid or irresponsible act whilst on the premises, and a Council Member is present, then it is quite likely that negligence would be proven. This would mean that our insurance would then be null and void and any claims against the railway, for whatever purpose, would not be met. In short, we could be bankrupted. Therefore the message to be put over is - **please think before deciding on that practical joke - if it backfires, you just might be instrumental in closing the railway down.**

## LOCO NOTES

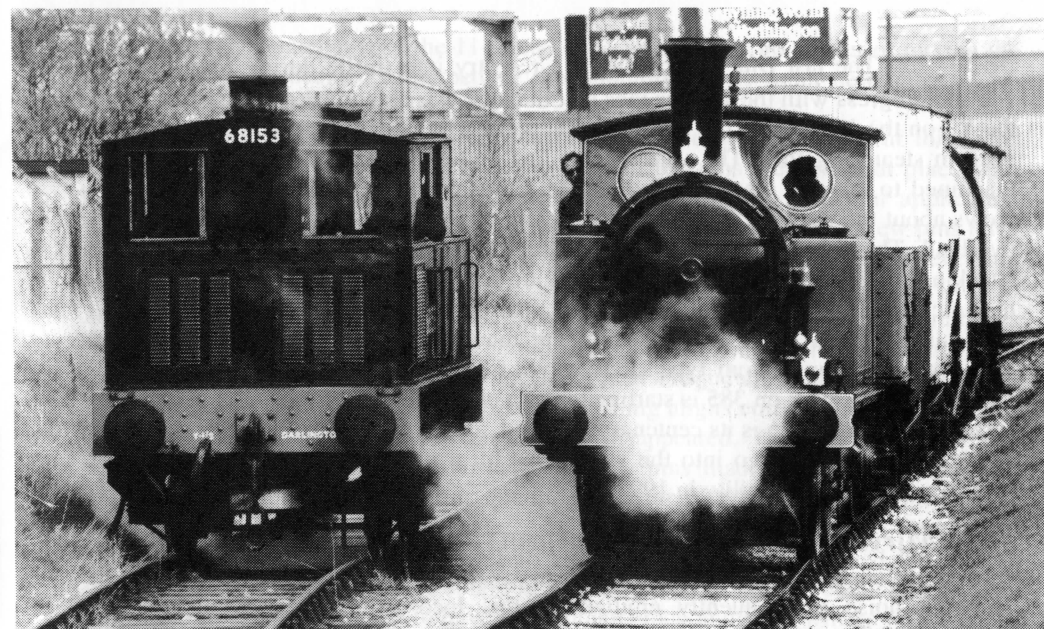
*Steve Roberts*

We are well into the 1993 operating season and, touch wood, things are running smoothly. With the entry into regular traffic of the Y7, we have the undeniable luxury of having four steam locos to choose from. The Y7 is undoubtedly the star turn of the moment as few of our present day crews can remember it in service and everybody is keen to give it a try.

In detail, the current loco situation is as follows:

**1310** As predicted in the last *Old Run*, the 'midnight oil' was burnt in large quantities during March, but the Y7 did make it for the photographic day on the 27th of that month. True, one or two finishing off jobs were still required, but only the super critical eye would notice such things as lining missing from the tank fronts, sanders still to couple up and a cab spectacle glass missing! I think that the loco has amazed us all by running so satisfactorily after such a prolonged and complicated overhaul. Apart from a warm coupling rod bush on its first day out it has performed perfectly. The locos non-appearance over the Easter weekend caused much consternation for quite a few visitors but this was a deliberate decision and its official re-entry into traffic was reserved for the Lord Mayor's visit on April 18th.

A few jobs are still outstanding and these are being tackled as manpower and inclination permit. A slacking pipe has been fitted to the fireman's side injector. This enables the cab and coal to be hosed down as necessary and is an invaluable aid to keeping the coal dust at bay! One problem that has manifested itself since the loco went into service is the tendency to set up a harmonic motion between the loco and coach coupling and so give a rough ride. Modifications to the springing of the rear drawhook on the loco appear to have effected a cure. There is also a need to cure a leaking regulator valve.



Above: Sentinel and 1310 at the 'Midland' end of Balm Road Branch, 27th March. Whatever their favourite tipple might be, those responsible for the immaculate turnout of both engines had certainly done something worth a very large glassful. *Photo: Robin Stewart-Smith.*

Below: A pensive moment during the official recommissioning of 1310. Leeds' Lord Mayor, Councillor Denise Atkinson (right), inspects the engine's resplendent paintwork, a little of which can be seen behind Ken Cockerill of Steam Power Trust '65 (left) and Ian Smith of the M.R.T. (centre). *Photo: Keith Hartley.*



**385** The last *Old Run* predicted a re-entry into traffic during May but such was the progress with the various jobs that the loco was able to take its place alongside the Y7 on the 18th April, the first time that both of the Steam Power Trust's locos had been in steam together. The various coupling and connecting rod bushes have been machined to take up wear, as have the eccentric straps. Following complaints from crews about the safety valves not seating properly, these have been stripped down for overhaul. The valve seats have been ground in and the springs have been away for checking. Following this work, the valves are somewhat better, but they still have a tendency to stay open as the pressure falls. This is usually a problem with the 'Salter' type safety valves fitted to **385**, which are much more primitive in operation than 'Ross' or even 'Ramsbottom' type safety valves fitted to the majority of locomotives.

The paintwork on **385** is starting to get a bit shabby and a repaint is likely in the foreseeable future. 1995 is its centenary year and, as a hydraulic test is due at the end of 1994, it will probably go into the workshops for a minor overhaul and repaint next year to ensure its availability in 1995.

**1882 Mirvale** is available for traffic and is used as required. The work carried out on the slide-bars and crossheads seems to have paid dividends, and the groaning noise so frequently emitted by this loco in the past seems to have disappeared. The work on the regulator valve has not, alas, been as successful and it still leaks to some extent, although nothing like as badly as it was. It is possible that both *Mirvale's* & **1310's** valves will be sent away for re-machining in an effort to finally cure the leakage problem.

**1309 Henry de Lacy II** As briefly mentioned in a previous *Old Run*, work progresses slowly on the repainting of this loco and it has now been moved into the workshop. Some replating of the cab bunker has been carried out as it was so badly corroded even copious amounts of filler would have been of little use! The work is, of course, of a cosmetic nature, aimed at eliminating what was becoming a rather shabby exhibit.

**1601 Arthur** With the effective completion of the Y7, work on *Arthur* has gathered pace. The saddletank has been removed, enabling the boiler barrel to be cleaned down and painted with aluminium paint. Our Boiler Inspector has examined the boiler and is reasonably satisfied with its condition, subject to minor work. Our main cause for concern had been the firebox throat-plate, which was rather wasted. However, the Inspector's opinion is that it still has some life left in it and, as it can be repaired without removing the boiler from the frames, it has been decided to defer this repair until it becomes necessary. Whilst the boiler was being lifted from the frames at Buxton, the firebox wrapper received some damage in the area of the blowdown valve on the left hand side of the firebox wrapper plate, just above the foundation ring, and a repair will be necessary here. Likewise, a poor attempt at welding up a washout plug hole will require some rectification. The remaining washout plug holes have had the screw threads re-cut, and we were somewhat alarmed to find that some of the plug holes were tapped at 12 threads per inch and others at 11 threads per inch, but all had been fitted with 11-thread plugs; a potentially dangerous situation. As the 12-thread

holes were much smaller than the 11-thread ones, and there is no danger of mixing the plugs, it has been decided to perpetuate this anomaly, but to order new plugs of the correct number of threads per inch.

The valve gear has all been stripped down and new pins made for this. This work had already been done whilst at Buxton, but the pins were held in place with circlips. These were not considered to be satisfactory for this particular application and, as the pins could not be modified to take a more traditional fixing, new pins have been made. Whilst this was being done, it was discovered that the right hand reversing shaft arm was considerably mis-aligned, causing the expansion link and lifting links to not hang vertically. As this was due to the hole in the arm being incorrectly bored, it is likely that the loco has run in this condition since new. The arm hole has now been brought into the correct alignment by means of heat and judicious application of brute force and, although it looks a bit peculiar, everything aligns correctly and the stiffness of movement that was previously present has disappeared. The reversing lever and reversing rod have also been re-bushed, and new pins made to eliminate wear and play. It was found that the reversing quadrant was some 3/8" misaligned from front to rear, and this too has been corrected.

The brake adjusters were seized up and these have now been freed off. The tie rods on the right hand side were found to have been put on upside down and this too has been rectified. We appear to have lost a brake block and, as it will be necessary to have another one cast, it is likely that all the brake blocks will be renewed.

The cab has been sanded down internally preparatory to painting. Some re-rivetting of the cab and bunker has been necessary to close up gaps in the plating, and part of the left hand side of the cab side has had to be replaced due to corrosion.

The strengthening bracket for the rear buffer beam has been removed to enable a misaligned hole to be corrected, and also to permit machining of it and the buffer beam, to take a new drawhook. This work has been completed and the bracket and drawhook fitted.

Some consideration has been given to the arrangement of the steam feeds to the various auxiliaries, such as injectors, steam brake, vacuum system, etc. The loco was originally supplied with just one injector and a mechanically driven feed pump. At some time, this latter fitment has been replaced by a second injector and the method of supply of steam to this, the brake and vacuum system, which are all additions, is far from satisfactory. Another frightening discovery is that much of this extra pipework consisted of copper central heating pipe which is totally unsuitable for the duty and potentially lethal.

The saddletank appears to be re-usable but some replating will be necessary mainly on the bottom where earlier repairs have reached the end of their lives. The tank has been cleaned internally and some needle-gunning has been carried out on corroded areas, but repairs have yet to commence.

Work is presently being concentrated on the lubrication system. Oil cups have been fitted to the various parts of the motion requiring them and trimmings made, as necessary. Amongst the various bits supplied with *Arthur* was a mechanical lubricator, and this will be used to supply the oil to the axleboxes. The method of lubrication of the cylinders is still to be decided, but it is likely that the mechanical lubricator will be adapted for this purpose. This lubricator is presently only a six-feed



but it was originally an eight-feed one. Two new feed pumps will have to be made in order to do this, but it is considered to be within our capability.

**54** The Sentinel is available for traffic and has seen quite a bit of service so far this season. It appears to be steaming satisfactorily and the only problems have been with the injectors, which are now starting to become somewhat temperamental in operation after some thirty years of reliability. It is likely that they will require an overhaul



Our Sentinel of many numbers, pictured negotiating the loop at Park Halt on 23rd May 1993.  
Photo: Keith Hartley.

**1786 Courage** Work continues on the repaint and repairs to this diminutive machine, somewhat spurred on by a request from the Mid-Hants Railway for its loan in September. (The loco spent all its working life at the Alton Brewery, adjacent to that line.) The somewhat battered side panels have been straightened quite successfully and repaired where necessary. The majority of the superstructure has been needle-gunned and primed ready for painting.

**7401 John Alcock** Our pioneer Hunslet diesel has been giving problems with the gear change mechanism for some while, and this was recently stripped out for overhaul. The gear change mechanism has, in fact, been an unsatisfactory aspect of the loco ever since its arrival on the Railway in 1960, and has frequently been a source of complaint. The actual gear change mechanism is a fairly complex affair and relies on hydraulic pressure to operate it. This hydraulic pressure is provided by means of an air/oil intensifier which, in layman's terms, consists of two cylinders, one for air and one for oil. The piston in the air cylinder is connected to a somewhat smaller piston in the hydraulic cylinder. Thus, the relatively low pressure of the air is converted to a

somewhat higher hydraulic pressure. The basic problem with the gear change mechanism has been its sluggishness of operation and, although we have investigated it on several occasions, no obvious fault has been found. Again we have been unable to find a fault but, on reassembly, it was decided, as an experiment, to couple the air supply directly into the operating cylinder and bypass the hydraulic system. Somewhat suprisingly, it appears that this experiment has been successful, and the gear change is at long last working satisfactorily with a much faster and more positive action.

**91** All has not been well with the National Gas engine on this Brush diesel. One of the five cylinders stopped firing, and this has had to be stripped out for repairs. The valve rod guides were found to be damaged, and new ones have been machined up and fitted. The piston was found to have worn ring grooves, and these have been machined out. New piston rings are on order to suit the remachined grooves and delivery is expected shortly.

**D577, D631, 138C, Rowntree No.3 and 4220038** are all available for traffic and used as required. All other locos remain stored awaiting repairs.

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## NOTES AND NEWS

*Steve Roberts*

**STEAM CRANE** Work has now started on overhauling the Booth steam crane, obtained last year from the Keighley & Worth Valley Railway. The boiler has been lifted from the chassis and, after removal of its lagging, the outer shell has been needle-gunned all over and a coat of aluminium paint has been applied. The boiler, which is not original, but a B.R. standard crane boiler, appears to be in satisfactory condition and unlikely to require much in the way of repairs. In order to remove the boiler it was necessary to dismantle the cab. The cab was another modification carried out on the Worth Valley, and in fact, was never completed. It is likely to be further modified before it is reassembled.

The jib has been cleaned down and any rusty patches needle-gunned prior to painting. It at present sports a coat of red undercoat and application of the top coat is imminent. The crane is presently roped up as double fall. In other words the lifting rope passes over a pulley on the jib, down and round a second pulley on the lifting hook and then back up and is anchored on the jib. The pulley on the hook was broken but, amazingly, we just happened to have a spare pulley that, although not an exact replacement, could be machined up to fit. This has been done using the 'Swift' lathe, and could only just be accommodated in the gap bed. When we acquired this lathe in 1985 we thought that it would be amply large enough for anything that we would wish to machine. How times have changed!

Although the two ropes are not very worn, it is unfortunate that they have not been well lubricated whilst the crane has been stored and they are quite corroded

where they have been bent around the pulleys. It is probable that we shall have to fit new ropes before putting it into service.



The 'new' steam crane and its boiler, May 1993. Photo: Keith Hartley.

**WORKSHOPS** Our portable electric tools have been assessed in the last few months. For some time we have bought only 110 volt equipment but we still had several items of 230 volt supply in use. It has been decided that these should be eliminated and, thanks to a benevolent donation, we have recently purchased large and small hand drills and a large angle grinder as replacements for our existing 230 volt equipment which has now been disposed of. We now only have two items of equipment at 'mains' voltage but, as these are only infrequently used, it is not planned to replace them.

Elsewhere in the workshops the Sentinel lathe has been the subject of a minor overhaul. The leadscrew and nut on the cross-slide were well worn, and these have been replaced by new components manufactured 'in house'. Various other minor jobs have also been carried out on this machine, generally to improve its accuracy and operation.

The 'Wolf' bench grinder failed some while ago and following replacement of the capacitor, this is now working satisfactorily again. We have also acquired a small drill sharpener for use with the grinder and, utilising this as a basis, we have manufactured a larger version capable of sharpening all but our largest drills.

**TRAFFIC REPORT** With two months of the season now passed by, it is possible to make some sort of assessment of trends. Happily we seem to have reversed last year's drop in regular traffic and we are presently doing slightly better than budget (which was based on a nil growth in visitors). This, coupled with the increase in fares, means that we have already achieved over 66% of last year's income with 2/3rds of the

season left to run. This year, for the first time, we have a Family Ticket, valid for up to two adults and four children and representing a saving on any party larger than two adults and one child. However, sales of these have not been as great as expected. This is coupled with another interesting statistic that, up to mid-May at least, the ratio of adult ticket sales to child ticket sales was nearly four to one! In 1978 the ratio was much nearer one to one and in the mid 1980's it had crept up to two to one. Does this indicate a shift in our visitor stereotype?

**SHOP REPORT** The increased visitor numbers has meant a marginal increase in shop takings and this, too, is slightly ahead of budget. It is pleasing to report that volunteers for shop duty have been satisfactory and there has been little necessity to ring round in panic! It would be even more pleasing if this was to be the case throughout the remainder of the year, but the roster for late July/august is a bit thin at present and, although it is perhaps a bit early, it would be reassuring to see the blank spaces being filled in, especially as several of the regular helpers are on holiday or otherwise unavailable. Any volunteers?

The plea for assistance in the last *Old Run* was answered even before it was published, as Vicky Hirst has kindly offered her services, initially as Deputy Sales Manager.

There is little new in the way of stock additions this year as our level of existing stock was relatively high. (We are only insured to carry so much stock.) This is being run down steadily and it will, hopefully, enable us to carry some new lines later in the season. The present history is virtually out of print (it will be by the time you read this) and a new, much revised, version is almost ready for the printer. [Some interesting new discoveries have needed further checking and rewriting, which unfortunately has delayed this but will ultimately make the 7th Edition that much more accurate and - hopefully - interesting: Editor/Historian.] New postcards are urgently required of the Sentinel and the Y7 for which very good colour transparencies are being sought. (Note for aspiring suppliers of transparencies - these should be of the loco, front threequarters, in pleasant, uncluttered surroundings and WITHOUT lots of black smoke!) Sweatshirts are in regular demand, and a new design is probable before long.

**MOOR ROAD SITE** The tidiness campaign being relentlessly pursued by our Yard Manager, Brian Hall, is succeeding and we have oft been paid compliments by visitors at the lack of 'junk' lying around. The many bits and pieces uncovered when the old containers were removed have been dispersed, much of it for scrap. This presently allows us to park a few more cars inside the gates, but this luxury is likely to be short lived as, once the new building works are under way, space will once more be at a premium. The entrance to the car park has received minor attention and it has been slightly widened to improve access. Work is currently in progress to fill in the length of track in the car park so that cars can park across it. This, in turn, should make parking easier and increase the number of cars that we can accommodate.

**SHOP IMPROVEMENTS** Over the last few months, various improvements have been carried out to the shop building. The 'back' toilet has been fully repainted and fitted out, and is now available for use by the public for such things as baby changing,



disabled access, etc. The ladies' and gents' toilets have also benefitted from a coat of paint, and the addition of tiled splashbacks and mirrors to the sinks. An additional sink has been installed in the shop, behind the counter, for the sole purpose of washing hands. This is necessary in order for us to comply with present hygiene requirements. We have to thank Norman Fearnley and his team from Doncaster for most of this work.

**SHED EXTENSION** After a bit of a mix up, we have finally received planning approval for our shed extension. Detailed drawings are presently being prepared for Building Regulations approval, and it is likely that work will commence shortly. The basic plan has now been considerably refined and much detail decided upon, although minor changes continue to be made. The existing 'pit' road is to be slightly re-aligned and will become a small running shed, capable of holding two locos (just!). Incorporated into this part of the building will be an oil store and washing and toilet facilities. Following suggestions from several people it is proposed to include a shower facility. The western half of the shed (i.e. that nearest the footpath) will become the new workshops with over twice the available floor space of the existing workshop. This will accommodate three locomotives with adequate space around them to enable work to progress in a less cluttered environment. Eventually, it is intended to install a heavy lifting beam, to enable boilers to be removed and worked on under cover, but this facility, although allowed for in the design, is not included in the present budget. The new building is to incorporate a mezzanine floor over part of the workshop area which will have a small general meeting room suitable for Council meetings, entertaining visitors, etc., a small office and a store room for 'clean' items such as shop stock, archive records, etc. The office and store room are desperately needed, and will enable several people to reclaim space in their own homes! Once the new building is complete, it is intended to transfer the equipment in the existing shed, (except the stores which will be retained) into the new part. The existing shed will then be turned into a small museum housing two locos and some small exhibits. This latter is something that we desperately need in an effort to cater more effectively for our visitors, especially when the weather is bad. If and when the building is extended southwards to form the final phase, it is possible that the existing part could become a dedicated paint shop, but this phase of the development is several years hence. [It is hoped to have a sketch plan of the whole development in the next issue of *The Old Run*.]

Tenders have been received for the steelwork and it is probable that a contract will be let by the time that you read this. The foundations and floor are being designed as a slab, as this is considered to be the most cost effective way. This work will necessitate the removal of an estimated four hundred tons of spoil, and the installation of some eight thousand individual items of reinforcing preparatory to the pouring of any concrete! The disposal of the spoil presents a logistical problem. The original intention was to pay to have it removed, but it has been pointed out that we will need an estimated two hundred tons for the proposed platform extension. This latter we cannot practically do for some time, but storing spoil is a problem in our cramped site. The savings, however, in not removing two hundred tons are considerable and the problem needs to be solved.

A problem also exists with our loco water supply. It has been proposed that we have a 'parachute' tank between the platform road and the loop and this idea has found great favour but, unless we can acquire a suitable one, it will be necessary to build it from scratch. This will take time, and we urgently need to demolish the existing water tower to enable the foundations for the shed to be dug. The existing water column also incorporates the present oil store, and alternative accommodation will have to be found for this in the short term.

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## SOME A.G.M. NOTES

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*Sheila Bye*

The 1993 A.G.M., on Thursday 17th June, must surely rank as one of the shortest in our society's records. The official minutes, of course, will be sent to all members before the 1994 A.G.M., but here are a few strictly unofficial notes. Mr. Stan Holdsworth was elected to become the Company's (i.e. the Trust's) Treasurer, after having assisted Steve Roberts in this post for a few months. Ian Smith and Tony Cowling stay on as, respectively, Chairman and Secretary. Steve Roberts, Vernon Smith, Alan Gilchrist and Rupert Lodge became council members (for the new list of officers and council members, see Page 23). It was agreed to raise the Company's membership limit to 500 members.

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## A.R.P.S. SIDELINES

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*from John Crane*

The intermittent appearance of Sidelines is due to the fact that very often the points which need to be raised are raised in one or other of the officers' Reports. However, this time just a few notes to relay:

**A.R.P.S. Autumn Meeting** will be held at the Ulster Folk and Transport Museum, Cultra, Northern Ireland, from Saturday 16th to Monday 18th October. Whilst the programme has not yet been finalised, there will be the opportunity to visit several preservation sites, including Shanes Castle and Downpatrick & Ardglass. Further details will be available later from the A.R.P.S.

**The Sittingbourne & Kemsley Light Railway** will be running from Milton, the second station on its line, until 17th October.

**Fedecrail** is the title adopted by the European association of railway preservation bodies. Fedecrail will be incorporated as an international association under Belgian law, and is expected to be launched at a conference in Belgium in April 1994.



Mirvale hauls a demonstration goods train from the Midland/B.R. end of the Balm Road Branch - yet another of the multitude of beautiful shots which resulted from the 27th March photographers' special day. Photo: Robin Stewart-Smith.

## TIMES PAST SUMMERS OF DISCONTENT - 1769 AND 1822

Sheila Bye

From *The Leeds Mercury*, Tuesday 4th July 1769:

MIDDLETON, June 27, 1769

WHEREAS the COLLIERS of MIDDLETON COLLIERY, refuse to work at the Task they hired and agreed to, and for which Agreement each collier received 10s. 6d. Entrance-Money on the 19th Instant: - These are therefore to caution all Persons against employing any of the said Middleton Colliers under Contract, for whoever does will be prosecuted, as the Law in that Case directs.

Any Colliers wanting Employ, and not under Contract to other Gentlemen, may meet with good Encouragement by applying to the Stewards of the said Colliery. The Work, by good Judges, is allowed to be as good, safe, and easy as any in the County; Colliers of Sixty Years of Age earning Two Shillings per Day and upwards, in about Nine Hours.

Four of the above Offenders are now in the House of Correction; one of which acknowledged before the Magistrate that he was sixty-one Years of Age, and sufficient Proof can be given, that he can earn more than Two Shillings in Nine Hours at the said new Task: Many Others about that Age can do the same.

A little over fifty years later, as might be expected, wage rates had risen, but the bosses' rates of benevolence had not. The following appeared in *The Leeds Mercury* of Saturday, 17th August 1822:

### COLLIERS.

WANTED, a NUMBER of COLLIERS and HURRIERS at Middleton Colliery.- Good Workmen will meet with liberal Encouragement.

For further Particulars apply to Mr. Blenkinsop, at the said Colliery.

The following is a *faithful* Statement of Earnings:-

#### COLLIERS GETTING COALS.

Days			R. A.			Days			W. R.			Days			W. A.		
			£.	s.	d.				£.	s.	d.				£.	s.	d.
June 14th,	12		2	11	2½	12			2	4	6						
28th,	12		2	12	10	10			2	0	9	3			0	9	0
July 12th,	12		2	18	6	12			3	6	4	11			1	17	0
26th,	12		2	7	11	12			2	12	5	12			2	8	3
	48		10	10	5½	46			10	4	0	26			4	14	3
4s. 4d. per Day.-						4s. 5d. per Day.-						3s. 7½d. per Day.					

#### HURRIERS GETTING COALS.

Days			W. A.			Days			T. H.			Days			J. L.		
			£.	s.	d.				£.	s.	d.				£.	s.	d.
June 14th,	12		1	18	11	12			1	4	0	12			1	4	0
28th,	12		1	17	4	12			1	8	1	12			1	8	1
July 12th,	12		1	15	0	11			1	3	6	12			1	6	8
26th,	12		1	15	3	12			1	7	9	12			1	7	6
	48		7	6	6	47			5	3	4	48			5	6	3
3s. per Day.-						2s. 2½d. per Day.-						2s. 2½d. per Day.					



The Colliers in Middleton have houses, gardens, and coals, for twenty shillings a year each man, besides rates of every description paid for them, which I consider is full four shillings per week over and above their earnings.

J. BLENKINSOP.

Middleton-Colliery, 14th August, 1822.

I know the result of neither conflict for certain, but the colliers were not infrequently in dispute with their bosses and did not generally win, however much they might have occasionally deserved to do. Following the latter strike, however, Middleton Colliery had a long period of peaceful labour relations. When the Brandlings' Tyneside miners were involved in the general unrest in pits of that area, in the early 1830's, their Middleton miners did not join in, and in November 1844, the Reverend Ralph Henry Brandling visited Middleton to thank his employees in person for their many years of loyalty. Each employee was presented with two shillings and sixpence, employees were treated to a dinner and their wives to a tea party, but November is not a summer month, so perhaps in a couple more issues . . . .

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## THE ODD RUN

G.W. Bushell

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I wonder, are there any readers of *The Old Run* with memories of Leeds Central and Holbeck (High Level) stations in LNER days? Both were 'friendly' stations, as I found out in 1935 when I joined the electrical staff at 'Central', later succeeding Inspector Dove as supervisor in the early war years. During those years, I witnessed one of the most amusing incidents of my railway career.

On a Saturday afternoon I was seated in the rear compartment of a Bradford train at No.6 platform, due to leave at 1.05p.m. (now of course 13.05!). At No.4 platform stood the LMS express to Liverpool (locally known as 'Lancy'), due to leave at 1.02p.m. The station was relatively quiet, and I heard the guard's whistle for the departure of the latter train, when two young soldiers raced along the platform to try and board the train as it slowly accelerated. I thought they would just 'make it', but the guard looked back at them through his open door, making no effort to stop, and after a last look the door was closed and the soldiers left behind.

Two minutes later, to my surprise, the soldiers hurriedly entered my compartment, having been told that they would reach Manchester earlier on a Bradford train. The adjectives they used to describe the guard would be unprintable in *The Old Run*! The 1.05 left on time, but as it approached Holbeck, was halted due to the earlier train being stationary at the platform. One of the lads, looking out of the window, enquired "Is that the one we just missed?". My reply of "Yes" was followed by "Come on, let's have another go", and down on to the track they jumped, then off to the platform end!

The guard, who had just finished loading luggage, was about to wave the train off when they raced past him and into a rear carriage. I shall never forget his look as he knocked his peaked cap on to the back of his head; I am sure he thought that his train had been followed all the way from Leeds to Holbeck!



Above: our Sentinel pictured at Geneva Yard M.P.D., Darlington, on 1st May 1960. Just over a year later, on 29th June 1961, the loco was withdrawn from service there and was purchased by the Middleton Railway Preservation Society, arriving at our Railway on 23rd September. Below: in rather smarter condition, pictured with a demonstration goods train on the Balm Road Branch, 27th March 1993. Both photos: Paul Barrett.



## JOHN SMEATON, ENGINEER & MECHANIC

1724-1792

Henry Gunston

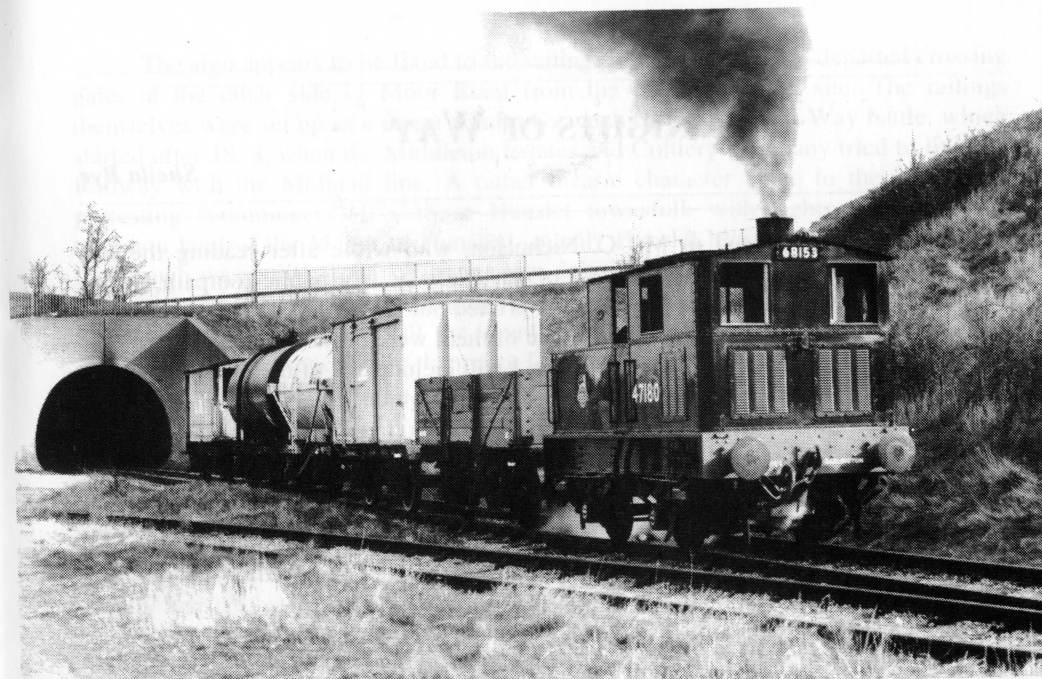
A contribution to Middleton history by the great engineer John Smeaton, the bicentenary of whose death was in October 1992, was that he designed a steam pumping engine for the Middleton colliery in 1779. He was born and spent most of his life at Austhorpe Lodge in Whitkirk, and attended Leeds Grammar School from the age of 10. He left at 16, with a strong mechanical interest and a workshop at home. Although his father, a Leeds attorney, wished John to study law, he set up business in London in 1748, as an instrument maker. He made great advances in the scientific world, and became a Fellow of The Royal Society in 1753, at the early age of 31.

He carried out a number of engineering works around Leeds. These included a windmill at Austhorpe and a water-powered "pressure engine" to supply water to Temple Newsam. Foundry Lane, near Killingbeck Hospital, indicates the site of the Seacroft Furnace; details of Smeaton's work there appear in the excellent compendium volume *John Smeaton, F.R.S.*, edited by Professor A.W. Skempton (from which much of my material is drawn), and a paper by C.A. Lupton to the Thoresby Society. Although a Newcomen-type steam engine was good for pumping, it was difficult to obtain rotary motion. Smeaton's installation at Seacroft therefore comprised waterwheels driving furnace blowing engines and a boring mill, with a steam "returning engine" pumping water back up to the mill pond. A 30 foot wooden waterwheel linked to Smeaton's name survived at Foundry Mill Farm, Seacroft, until 1938 or 1939.

The Middleton entry in *John Smeaton, F.R.S.* is a brief one: "Middleton colliery, pumping engine, 72" diameter cylinder, designed 1779-80." No further details are given, but close to the Middleton Railway route Smeaton designed a 5-sail wind flint mill for the Leeds Pottery Works in Jack Lane, as noted by Michael Lee in a *Yorkshire Evening Post* piece, 'The man who built windmills'. Also nearby, on the Aire and Calder Navigation, plans by Smeaton led to new cuts at Knostrop and Hunslet in 1779. A 200yd. cut by Thwaite Mill led to the discovery of coal, which was exploited by the Navigation sinking its own mine - a rival to the Brandling empire!

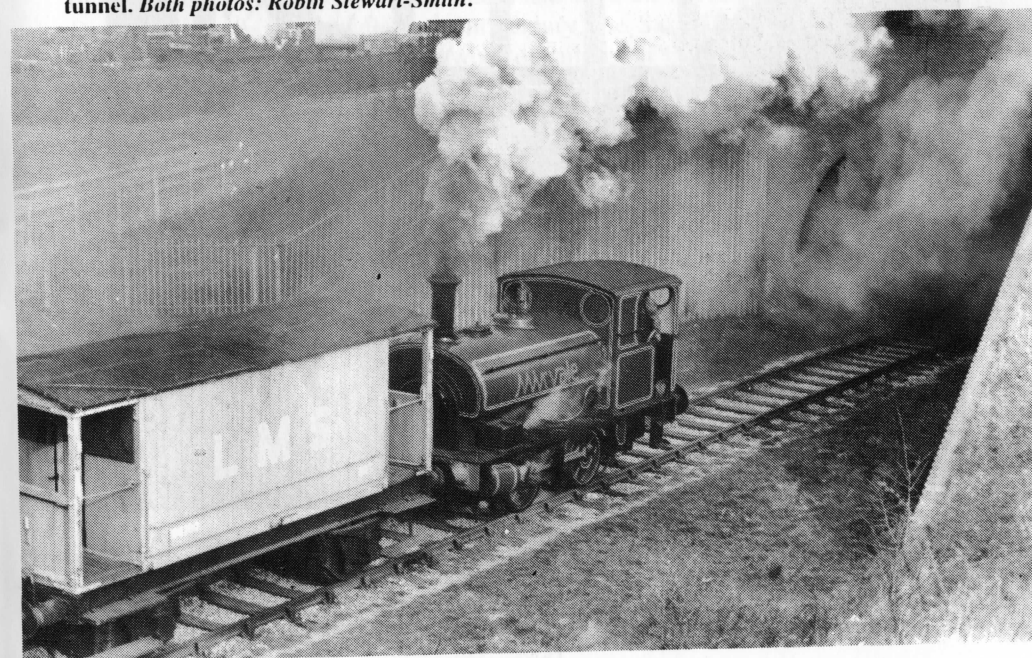
All this, and the Eddystone Lighthouse too. Austhorpe Lodge was finally demolished in 1935/6, but a memorial in Whitkirk Church survives, which reads in part: "Sacred to the memory of John Smeaton, F.R.S., a man whom God had endowed with the most extraordinary abilities, which he indefatigably exerted for the benefit of mankind, in works of science and philosophical research; more especially as an engineer and a mechanic."

My grateful thanks go to Mrs. J.H. Horne of the Central Library, Leeds, and to Sheila Bye, for historical material. Apart from the sources already mentioned, I have also used *The Aire & Calder Navigation* by Peter I. Smith, and *John Smeaton, Civil Engineer, 1724-1792*, a 1992 exhibition catalogue by the Institution of Civil Engineers.



Two more fine examples of the plethora of photos which resulted from the photographers' special day on 27th March.

The Sentinel (above) yet again, and *Mirvale* (below), both pictured leaving the south end of the tunnel. Both photos: Robin Stewart-Smith.





## RIGHTS OF WAY

Sheila Bye

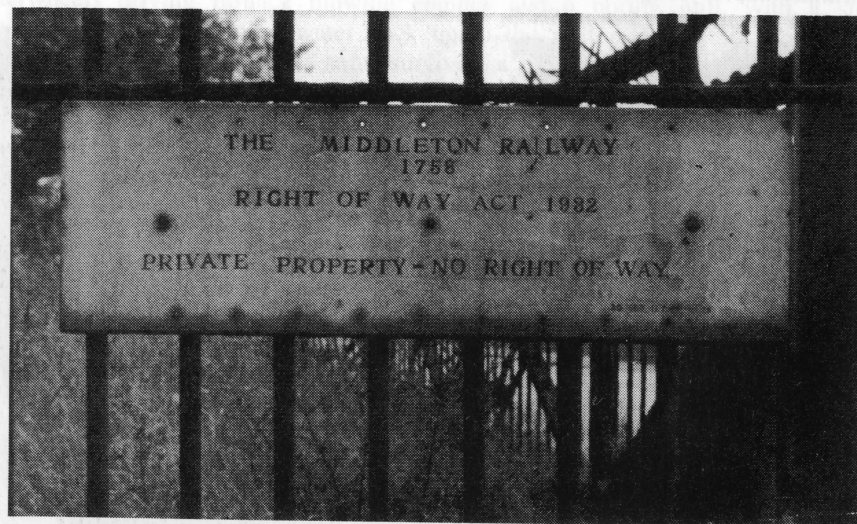
Many thanks indeed to Mr. C. Nicholson, who wrote after reading the last issue's 'Times Past' - concerning the use of our Railway as a public footpath, not to mention bridle path. About a decade ago, he printed out some railway photo negatives which he had borrowed, and found that some of them were of the Middleton Railway. As there is plenty of spare room in this issue, I will include one of these, though it is a little dark for our type of printing process. The sign which it depicts was obviously placed as a result of some bitter dispute between the Colliery Company and the local citizenry, hitherto unknown by the M.R.T.! In case the photo does not reproduce clearly, it reads as follows:

THE MIDDLETON RAILWAY  
1758

RIGHT OF WAY ACT 1932

PRIVATE PROPERTY - NO RIGHT OF WAY.

30 GEO. II CAP xxii 1758



The sign appears to be fixed to the railings adjoining the long-departed crossing gates at the other side of Moor Road from the present Station site. The railings themselves were set up as a direct result of a much earlier Right of Way battle, which started after 1875, when the Middleton Estates and Colliery Company tried to link the Railway with the Midland line. A rather bizarre character came to the aid of the protesting "commoners" (i.e. those Hunslet townsfolk with rights to use of the common land of the Manor of Hunslet - mainly Hunslet Moor, across part of which the branch was built). Their champion was John De Morgan, editor of the *Woolwich Gazette* and son of a major contractor in the building of the Morley Tunnel. He led several battles in other parts of the country against encroachment on common land, and had been imprisoned more than once for his over-zealous pursuit of justice against the Lords of various Manors. At one trial he related how he had recently received a letter from the governor of Holloway Gaol, threatening to put him in solitary confinement if he ever appeared there again. Eventually, he emigrated to the U.S.A., where he again became a newspaper editor.

On Saturday 8th December 1877, over 30,000 people assembled beside the as yet uncompleted Balm Road Branchline to hear De Morgan speak, and to see him carry out his widely publicised threat to pull up part of the line (with which he was greatly assisted by "a working man" named Jukes).

Court cases were instigated by both sides in the controversy and, after an elderly lady was badly injured by one of the Colliery Company's locomotives, questions were asked in Parliament concerning the legality of locomotives running on an unfenced track across common land.

When Leeds Corporation purchased Hunslet Moor, in 1879, their enabling Act of Parliament stipulated that all the tracks laid upon the Moor must be securely fenced. During the early years of the present century, the Saxby and Farmer gateposts and mechanisms were added to the network of railings at Burton Road near the southern edge of the Moor, near Chesney Bridge at the north-east edge of the Moor, and at the two points where Moor Road was crossed by the Railway, beside our modern Station and north of there, beside the old Hunslet Moor Coal Staith (Whitakers'). The impressive level-crossing gates, topped with revolving spikes, may have been original c.1880, but most likely were added with the gateposts. It is uncertain whether or not the railings originally did incorporate crossing-gates.

During my own childhood, the resulting network of railings and crossing-gates maintained a grandiose, not to mention intimidating, Company presence all across the original vast expanse of Hunslet Moor. Only one short section of railings and gates remains; our most obvious visible link with the pre-1960 Middleton environment.

Strange though it initially may seem, they are probably one of the oldest sets of railings in Leeds itself, as most other railings - both public and private, plain or ornamental - disappeared to be melted down for munitions building during the Great War, along with housewives' pots and pans and a cannon which used to stand on Woodhouse Moor.

At this year's A.G.M., Tony Cowling confirmed that plans to 'modernise' our entrance had been shelved until it could be viewed as part of a wider scheme for that end of the yard. Perhaps in the meantime we can all learn to appreciate our 'survivors' a little more kindly, and view them as the positive asset they undoubtedly **could** be.

## Very Best Wishes

to Fred Youell,

the Middleton Railway Trust's first Chairman,  
now our Vice President.

Fred was in hospital again recently, but is now home and,  
hopefully, already feeling much better.  
Here's wishing you a very speedy and complete recovery Fred.



A recent photo of Fred, taken on May Bank Holiday Weekend at Park Halt in company with his doctor (centre) and the M.R.T.'s 2nd Chairman, Joe Lee (right). Photo: Keith Hartley.

## ERRATUM

Apologies to those members who file away their copies of *The Old Run* in numerical order. Having already had one mix-up with the issue numbers back in the 130's, the Spring issue also was wrongly numbered - this time entirely the Editor's fault. The correct Spring issue number was on Page 2, and **this** is Issue No.143.

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W.B. Hall, c/o Middleton Railway, Moor Road, Leeds LS10 2JQ. (Yard Manager) (0532) 710320

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