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The Old Run

Journal of the 1753 Middleton Railway Trust, Leeds



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The Old Run

Journal of the Middleton Railway

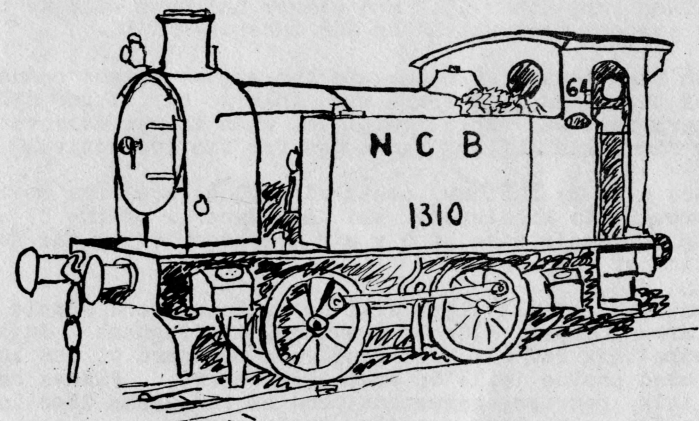
Trust, Leeds

EDITOR: B. W. ASHURST, 18 INGLEWOOD DRIVE, OTLEY, YORKSHIRE

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MIDDLETON GETS HISTORIC STEAM LOCO

The Middleton Railway Trust is acquiring a "new" locomotive - a historic O-4-OT Y7 class No. 1310 - thanks to the efforts of a group of North Eastern enthusiasts who set up the Steam Loco Trust 1965 to save the Coal Board-owned engine from the scrap torch.

It is particularly appropriate that 1310 should come to Middleton, as until the closure of Watergate Colliery last November, it worked along the site of the ancient Tanfield
(Continued overleaf)

Waggonway, which includes the classic Causey Arch, the first waggonway bridge, built in about 1727.

While not a fully-fledged railway, the Tanfield was one link in the honourable chain which came to fruition with the modern railway, and was built for similar reasons to the Middleton Railway. It started from the Tyne near the point where the Newcastle & Carlisle line runs along it and ended in the Stanley-Conssett area. Until November it still had steep gradients worked by rope haulage.

The North Eastern Railway H class tanks were introduced in 1888, and 1310 was built at Gateshead in 1891. The class was intended for dock duties, but there is a story that one of the class hauled a passenger train from South Shields when no other motive power was available.

The LNER built similar locomotives in 1923, and one of these was in regular passenger service on the North Sunderland Railway long after 1310 and others had been sold to the colliery company from which the NCB inherited 1310.

With the closure of Watergate the engine became redundant, and the Steam Loco Trust was able to buy it for £300. The enterprise was only completed when it was discovered that the Middleton Railway had a use for the locomotive.

There will be further costs of £100 before the engine can be brought to Middleton, and the owners of the Y7 are appealing for assistance towards completing the full restoration of the engine.

Donations of all sizes will be welcome and should be sent to Mr. J. Boyes, 3 Central Avenue, Billingham. Anyone giving more than 2s. 6d. will receive a postcard of the loco and coloured photos will be available later. Please help to make this reprieve permanent and at the same time help Middleton cope with its expanding traffic.

COMMENT

With this issue of The Old Run communications between the operating division of the Middleton Railway and members of the Trust enter a new and more satisfactory stage.

Instead of covering both historical and present day matters on Middleton Railway, The Old Run becomes a magazine whose emphasis is on articles of general railway interest. The news content will not be left out altogether but will be more selective.

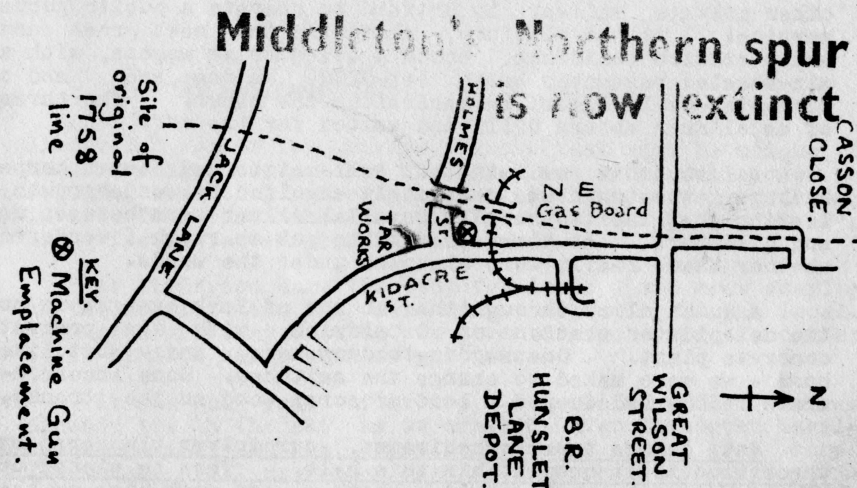
In addition to The Old Run, members only of the MRT now receive a duplicated monthly newsletter, containing news

items, MRT notices and details of work to be done on the line in the weeks following publication.

News items of outstanding interest will be followed up in The Old Run.

It is hoped that this new arrangement, which was agreed at the MRT annual meeting, will provide members with more up to date news and will encourage them to take an active part in running their railway.

Those who would like to help the Trust to keep the world's oldest railway performing its useful function may join at 21s. per year (students 12s. 6d.). The MRT membership secretary is J. Russell, 11, Crown Crescent, Leeds 6.



Since the abandonment in 1945 of the northernmost section of the Middleton Railway (to Great Wilson Street and Holmes Street), the Gas Board, who own the site of the railway, have been reorganising the gas works through which the line ran.

The low 7ft. arch over Holmes Street has, of course, been dismantled. The war-time machine-gun emplacement in the Holmes Street - Kidacre Street - Middleton Railway triangle went last year.

Just north of this was a sharp curve from Hunslet Lane Goods Depot to a level crossing over Kidacre Street and then under the M.R. Clearance permitted only wagons or midget locos to pass under to the Middleton Railway sidings inside. This connection kept going even after the M.R. access was abandoned.

New gas plant on the site has now meant the final extinction of the line, and the whole area is covered by a road surface up to 2ft. above the track. The level crossing line and 10ft. west of the road remain intact.

Skipwith itself will not continue for many more months.

The necessary shunting was performed, and we retired to the hard seats of the brake van for the journey back. As it was extremely cold we decided to light a fire, but our meagre efforts only produced smoke and swear-words. We explained our plight to the guard, who tore up some lino from the floor surface, put it into the stove, soaked it with paraffin from one of the lamps, and dropped in a match. This worked, of course, but still most of the heat went up the chimney.

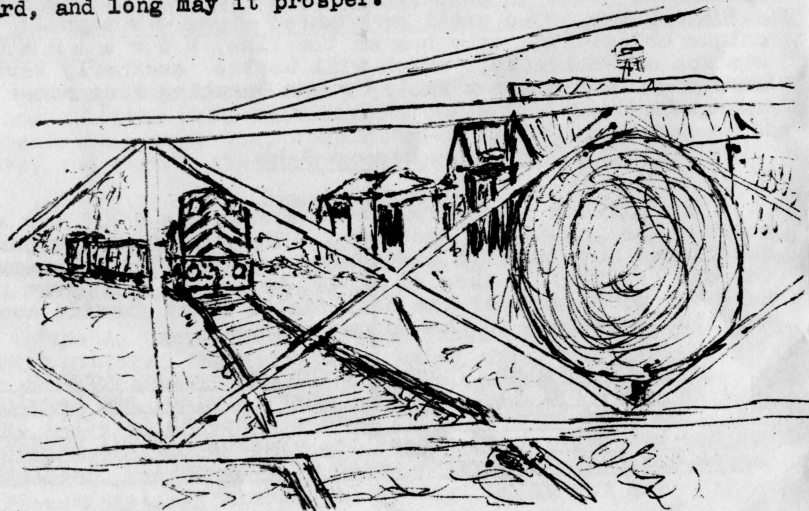
Relic of vanished days

It was almost dark now as we lurched and bumped our way along to York. Riding in this ancient brake van, with its coach-like windows, must be today's nearest equivalent to a trip on a real light railway passenger train - a thing which most of my generation will never experience. Regular passenger services on the line ceased in 1926, but I wonder if that brake van ride was so different from what the passenger trains offered.

As expected, the guard started moaning, as the driver had done before him, and the latter was one of the main targets. At Elvington the stationmaster joined in the general backbiting, and a good time was had by all.

This Elvington stop was the only one of any length on the return journey, and before long we were back among the coal dumps and electricity pylons of Layerthorpe. D2112 went off to do some shunting, and we went off to the "other" York station to catch our (passenger) train home.

So ended our day on the last of the rural light railways, which, despite the modernisation of its motive power, retains its charm and its unique atmosphere. Diesels or no, the line still employs such characters as our driver and guard, and long may it prosper.



BYE-BYE BATLEY

Ignominious end to another West Riding railway

BY JOHN BUSHELL

(The train service from Bradford to Wakefield via Batley ceased at the end of the 1964 summer timetable.)

The drizzle dripped steadily from the trees above, and plopped on the roofs of the four carriages of the stationary train. The hauling B1 sighed impatiently.

A red-faced Bradfordian pushed his head through the window into a foggy, damp West Riding afternoon and observed the weary engine and frustrated crew.

"It's t'ruddy Rocket on t'front," he suggested to his wife, encouragingly. Then, to the world in general, "It's gunna take us longer to go from blooming 'Batley to blinkin' Bradford than it did from Yarmouth to Batley."

"Well Erbie," said his wife intelligently, "there must be summat up."

By this time the guard was brushing between embankment greenery and carriage and soaking his trousers in the process.

"'Ere, guard, d'yer want a push?" asked Erbie helpfully.

Wanted - another Salamanca

His wife tittered and, up in the heavens, the Reverend Charles Brandling roared with laughter as he ordered another bucket of dirty dreary drizzle to be poured on the Batley area. "I always said Matthew Murray was right, you know. What they need is a B1 with rack and pinion!"

And probably both he and Erbie were quite right, for Salamanca just couldn't slip like that. Certainly poor old 61386 was not making much progress.

Having left Batley on time, there had been great difficulty in climbing the bank to Adwalton Junction with a 4-coach Yarmouth-Bradford Saturdays only extra train. The brakes on the carriages were binding and had caused slipping. The loco wheels turning and a tall column of smoke from our stationery engine had attracted much attention from the locals.

The engine stopped work. The driver and fireman tried
(Continued overleaf)

BYE-BYE BATLEY

(Continued from page 7)

to force off the brakes with a shovel, and tried it again. Slowly but surely, we moved again - little more than a train length before once more we came to a halt.

With a shovel full of sand, the fireman brought memories of the yellow expanses of Yarmouth to his impatient passengers. This he placed carefully on the track ahead.

Once again the 4-6-0 made a mighty effort, and moved us up to the point where the sand ended, whereupon a straight column of smoke and furious skidding ended progress.

And so the process was repeated again and again. There might as well have been a Hornby clockwork engine on the front.

An "ee-aw" heralded the approach of a Wakefield-bound diesel railcar, which momentarily halted and took our cry of despair with it. Wakefield shed was alerted and sent out a spare engine to assist. As the minutes went by, the criticisms of the passengers grew more and more acid.

Detonators

At last, the sound of detonators denoted the arrival of assisting locomotive, 61016 Impala. Three crows from the banker, three disgruntled poops from our engine, three cheers from the passengers and slowly, very slowly, we moved towards Bradford. The two engines worked furiously to conquer the heights of Adwalton Junction. Our assisting engine remained behind as we accelerated over the level track, and, as the gradient became favourable, left our own engine in sole charge. Cautiously, we made our way into Bradford Exchange.

"Well," said the disgruntled red-faced gentleman as he placed his cases on the platform 96 minutes later than scheduled, "I'll never travel this way again!"

And there was more truth in his statement than he anticipated. For, as "never again" resounded through the cavernous gloom of Bradford Exchange, the polished corridors of York HQ re-echoed the sound, for, as the fatal notices indicated, services were to be discontinued that evening. A railcar, the last, was already sinking into a neighbouring platform.

"Never again".

"NEVER AGAIN".

In Part I, the GWR is born - and the

HOW THE RAILWAY CAME TO BRISTOL

Midland
intervenes

BY P. WOODFORD

Bristol was the second city of England in 1824 when the first proposal to link it with London by rail was made. A route for the line, which would have been steam-operated, was surveyed by John McAdam, the road engineer. However, although all the shares of the London & Bristol Rail Road Company were taken up, the scheme fell through.

Several other schemes were put forward in 1825, only to suffer the same fate, and it was 7 years before another attempt was made to project a railway from Bristol to London.

These 7 years were not completely barren, however, for during this period the first railways to be built in the Bristol area were proposed - albeit railways in embryo. They were horse tramroads from the South Gloucestershire coalfield. One of these, the Bristol & Gloucestershire Railway (Act - June 1828 - opened - August 6, 1835) was destined for greater things, as will appear later.

In 1832, engineers William Brinton and Henry Habberley proposed a line to London via Bath, Bradford on Avon, and Trowbridge, through Pewsey Vale to Hungerford, Newbury and Reading, thence to Paddington. Again, insufficient support caused the death of this project - the Bristol & London Railway - in 1833.

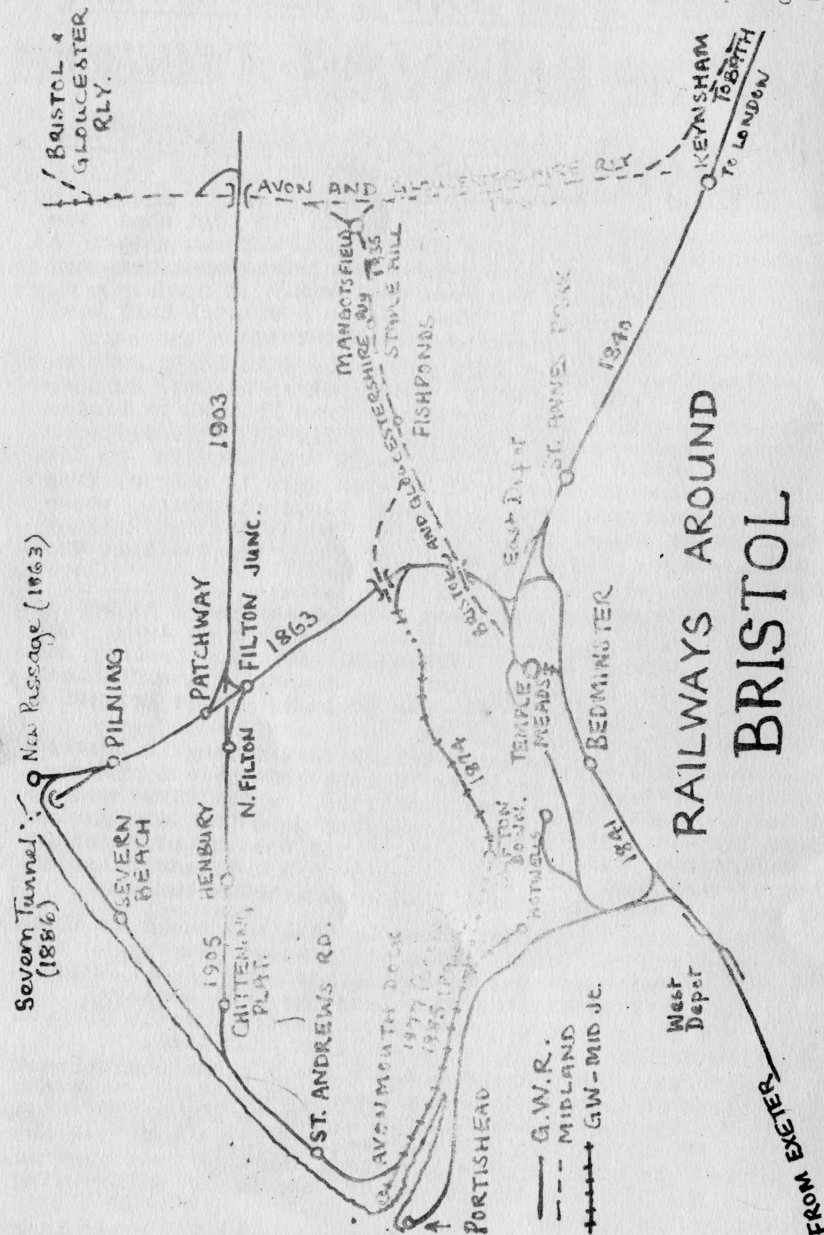
In spite of this setback, things were moving in Bristol. The City Fathers and corporate bodies of the city formed what was known as the Bristol Committee, which first met in January 1833. The bodies represented were the Corporation of the City and County of Bristol: the Society of Merchant Venturers: the Bristol Dock Company: the Bristol Chamber of Commerce: and the Bristol & Gloucestershire Railway.

These bodies (much of whose capital was based on slave trading) provided funds for a preliminary survey. The choice of an engineer came up and lighted on - I. K. Brunel. Brunel was at this time engineer to the Dock Company, and had already produced the chosen design for the Clifton Suspension Bridge - still to be built at that time.

The Bristol Committee persuaded its counterpart constituents in London to form a London Committee. At the first joint meeting of the two committees on August 10, 1833, the title "Great Western Railway" was adopted, and the prospectus prepared. Parliamentary sanction was applied for, but the Bill was turned out by the Lords after being approved by the Commons.

A second Bill presented in March, 1835, after long argument received the Royal Assent on August 31, 1835.

Brunel immediately broached the subject of gauge, and was able to convince his directors of the superiority of his



7ft. gauge - at first in doubt because of a proposed branch connecting with the London & Birmingham Railway near Wormwood Scrubbs, running thence into Euston; but this idea was, of course, finally dropped in favour of Paddington.

Work on setting out the line started almost at once from both ends. Construction at the London end began in February, 1836, and from Bristol to Bath in March.

The first contract consisted of "Avon Bridge", over the river at the east end of the station, and the three tunnels (Nos. 1, 2 and 3). Only two tunnels now remain, No. 1 having been opened out in 1887-9.

Trouble with the contractors led to delays and it was not until August 31, 1840, that the GWR opened between Bath and Bristol, 10 days after a trial run by Brunel and the Committee. The railway opened right through to London on June 30, 1841, by which time through running was possible to Bridgewater on the Bristol & Exeter Railway.

Bristol Temple Meads station, unfinished at the time of opening, was of unusual construction, as can be seen from platforms 13 and 15 of the modern station - parts of the original structure. Trains were boarded on the first floor. The offices were underneath the tracks, which were supported on arches. The frontage of the station is unchanged to this day except for the removal of iron railings during the war.

Ground floor goods depot

The adjacent goods station was at ground level. Goods traffic entered 12ft below the main line and at right angles to it, and lifts were provided to transfer wagons from one level to the other.

The Avon Bridge had to be widened shortly after opening to accommodate a connection with the Bristol & Exeter, which was leased to the GWR in August 1840, and opened by them (in that they provided locomotives and rolling stock) on June 1, 1841. The lease was to run for 5 years from the completion of the railway, and was extended by common consent until May 1, 1849.

On the east side of Temple Meads ran a railway which predated the GWR. The honour of being the first railway in Bristol belongs to the Bristol & Gloucestershire Railway, mentioned above. It runs from Avon Wharf through St. Phillips, by Lawrence Hill, Fishponds, and Mangotsfield to collieries at Shortwood, Parkfield and Coalpit Heath. The gauge was 4ft. 8½ins.

The Avon & Gloucestershire Railway ran from the Avon opposite Keynsham to Mangotsfield. Running powers over the Bristol & Gloucestershire gave access to Coalpit. It opened in July 1832, together with that part of the B. & G. north of the junction. The southern section of the B. & G. followed in August 1832. The purpose of both railways was to take coal traffic.

In 1839 an Act was obtained to extend the Avon & G. waggonway to Gloucester, and ultimately absorb it into the

(Continued overleaf)

Bristol & G. R a i l w a y, whose gauge was the same as the Birmingham & Gloucester R a i l w a y - standard. In 1842, however, the directors of the company broadened their outlook - and their gauge - to ensure friendly terms with the GWR. (The GWR purchase of the Cheltenham & Great Western Union Railway before it got started may have influenced them!)

In April 1843 agreement was reached on the building (by the GWR) of a line from Standish to Gloucester, and the Bristol & Gloucestershire obtained running rights to Cheltenham and into Bristol station.

Thus the Bristol & Gloucestershire Railway became a satellite of the Great Western - although the GWR did not operate it as they did the Bristol & Exeter. The opening was in July 1844, although the width of the railway was not to full broad gauge clearances, as many of the engineering works had been built to standard gauge clearances prior to the directors' change of mind.

Chaos ensued at Gloucester, due to the break of gauge, and although Brunel was said to have a very simple arrangement to overcome this p r o b l e m, it did not materialise. That same year negotiations were in progress with a view to extending the broad gauge to Birmingham by means of amalgamation with the Birmingham & Gloucester Railway, and a Bill was promoted in Parliament.

On June 24, 1845, the GWR stepped in with a takeover bid for the Birmingham & Gloucester and the Bristol & Gloucester, offering £60 of its capital (worth £123) for £100 of the Birmingham company (worth £109). But the companies stood out for £65. The meeting of June 27 was adjourned when the GWR refused to increase its offer.

Too late!

The next day, the two lines were snapped up by the Midland Railway.

In July, 1845, the Midland took over the running between Bristol and Gloucester. Operation remained exclusively broad gauge, however, until June 1854, when the Midland laid standard gauge rails. Broad gauge running also continued till 1872 when the GWR converted to s t a n d a r d gauge in that area.

On the southern section of the line, however, (Bristol-Westerleigh), broad gauge rails remained another 10 years after that to accommodate a Bristol & Exeter coal train from Parkfield Colliery, thus saving trans-shipment at Bristol.

The Avon & Gloucestershire Railway's running powers were retained between Mangotsfield and Westerleigh. This section thus became the first mixed-gauge track in the country, as the A. & G. R. remained standard gauge.

Standard gauge rails were laid inside the Bristol &

Gloucester at Bristol by the GWR to accomodate the Midland in both passenger and goods stations, and were completed by May 29, 1854.

(Make sure of your next copy of The Old Run for continuation of the Bristol story.)

FAREWELL FRIEND

(At the closing of Otley station)

Goodbye now.

We don't need you anymore.

Your spinning wheel and burning soul remind us too much

Of Early days.

Of honest work the fruit of open love,

Of innocence, and power, and praise.

You are embarrassing today.

Too big, too bold, too..... expensive.

We really can't afford you.

You are gone.

Yet something about you,

Some subtle, undefined attraction,

Haunts us still.

Pillar of cloud by day

And column of fire by night!

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60L82's. 6months old. Was 7 gns.,
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By
'7777'

WAS THIS THE GREATEST SUBURBAN TANK?

Only the electric could equal N7's performance

Early in 1915 two O-6-2T suburban engines with 4ft. 10in. wheels were built at Stratford works (order L77) to the design of A. J. Hill. These were the first of what was to become the renowned LNER N7 class, of which the last example is now owned by the Middleton Railway, Leeds.

The first engine, No. 1000, carried a non-superheater boiler and was turned out in a livery of light French grey with black panelling and white lining, and with the familiar initials GER in grey shaded red on the side tanks.

Although not superheated, the boiler carried two brass covered snifting valves behind the chimney, which, as usual for passenger locomotives, was fitted with a brass cap. The second locomotive, No. 1001, however, was fitted with an 18-element Robinson type superheater and was fully painted out in ultramarine blue with black panelling and red lining. Fitted with an indicator shelter at the front end, No. 1001 was tested on Chingford trains.

No. 1001 was the one and only Great Eastern O-6-2T ever to be painted blue. No. 1000 never was so painted and ran all through the First World War in its light grey coat, which steadily became more shabby.

All supplies of ultramarine blue paint in this country were promptly collected by the Admiralty on the outbreak of hostilities, and the GER was obliged to turn out overhauled locomotives in "shop grey", or "lead colour", for the duration, and, as it transpired, until integration into the LNER on January 1, 1923.

No. 1001, after a number of difficulties with the superheater and lubrication had been corrected, settled down on the Chingford line and proved an excellent engine, steaming well and having good powers of acceleration and a fair turn of speed. Steam distribution was by Walschaerts valve gear.

More engines were planned, but the Kaiser's War prevented them from being built until late 1920, when GE order K85 was issued for ten O-6-2T engines, Nos. 1002-1011. Strangely enough, they were built as saturated engines, and it was left to the LNER to fit 18-element superheaters to No. 1000 and 1002-1011. These were turned out in "lead grey" paint, and, from 1003 onwards, with 19" yellow Roman numerals on the tank sides instead of the letters GER.

All twelve engines were Westinghouse brake only. Known as "single-pipers", they remained so all their lives.

When amalgamation took place, ten more O-6-2Ts were on order (K89) and these were turned out from March 1923 onward in LNER lined black paint and numbered 990E to 999E. They

had cast iron chimneys of GE "goods engine" style, without brass caps, but were otherwise identical with 1000-1011.

They were well received, and 993E and 995E worked for a time from Bradford shed where the Great Northern crews did not care for their small driving wheels compared with the 5ft. 8in. wheels of the GN O-6-2Ts. In 1925 two of them were used from Marylebone on Wembley Exhibition specials.

Godsend to suburbs

These engines were a godsend to the Great Eastern suburban services (especially the Chingford line with its severe gradients), and a further 30 engines were ordered by the LNER in 1925 from Gorton works, numbered in the 400 and 800 series.

Robert Stephenson & Co. supplied 20, numbered in 800 and 900 series.

To these 50 engines and all following O-6-2T types, the plant pot style LNER chimney was fitted, and "pop" safety valves replaced the Ramsbottom 4-column GE valves on Belpaire fireboxes. The top feed was discarded, and was slowly removed in time from the Stratford-built engines, of which 999E (latterly BR 69621) was the last locomotive built at Stratford, and was completed in March 1924. This is the engine now owned by the Middleton Railway Trust.

The engines built by the LNER were all "run in" in the West Riding. All N7 engines built up to February 1927 were class N7/1 and had Belpaire fireboxes. From November 1927 to May 1928 Gorton built ten more, 2632-2641, fitted with vacuum brake only, class N7/2, and Beardmore & Co supplied 20 N7/2 locos 2642-2661.

End of the O-4-4 Ts

Their appearance in successive batches up to a total of 134 engines was very welcome in the GE suburban area and made possible the withdrawal of the GE O-4-4T engines 1100-1139. These locos had a distressing habit of stalling on Bethnal Green bank when hauling LNER 10 coach - articulated suburban sets, calling for very smart assistance from the J68 Spitalfields pilot.

Classes N7/1-2 had Belpaire, and N7/3 round topped, fireboxes. In November 1927 Doncaster works began building a series of N7/3 engines, Nos. 2600-2631, and fitted boilers with round topped fireboxes. The bunker coal rails were replaced with flat plates, and long travel valves were fitted, which gave them an excellent turn of speed.

The highest speed I ever recorded was 58mph with No. 2612, but I am assured that they could go faster than that.

The N7/3s worked out as far as Chelmsford in the suburban services and would also be regularly in charge of Southend excursions at weekends.

(Continued overleaf)

The N7s Run Spring 1965

The N7s were perhaps hampered by their water capacity of only 1600 gallons. Curiously enough, the 12 original engines were never vacuum fitted and were thus confined to the Chingford and Enfield trains. They could equally have worked the Westinghouse-fitted Ongar line and Shenfield stock, but almost never did. This may have been because "West Side" engines never had to perform alternative duties, but "East Side" engines had to be prepared to run vacuum-fitted Southend stock in emergencies.

Gradually the brass-capped chimneys of GE shape and the Ramsbottom safety valves were supplanted by pop valves, and in the last few years of their life the Belpaire fireboxes were replaced by the Doncaster round topped type. The majority of the class acquired "plant pot" chimneys.

No. 69614 (old GE 992E) was given a specially high paint finish and was kept spotless for the duty of Liverpool Street suburban pilot, a duty shared with the blue J69 0-6-OT 69619.

Last went in 1962

The spread of electrification on the GE line displaced the N7 tanks slowly, and they began to be withdrawn before they required heavy repairs, and at the end some incredible feats of maintenance were carried out in order to keep the last engines in service until the all-conquering electrics took over their last duties after the end of 1960. The last N7 was withdrawn in December 1962.

By this time many of the N7 engines, with the exception of 7999 (old 999E), were worn out and withdrawn as quickly as possible. Cannibalisation of the earlier withdrawn locos in order to obtain spare parts took place, and 69621 now has motion parts stamped 1000 and 1001.

For this reason it is felt that when work is started on refurbishing the engine this summer, it will be appropriate to finish her in the genuine GER ultramarine (sometimes called royal) blue paint with black edging and red lining.

In this connection it may be recorded that the GE always painted the cab fronts of its engines black, whether the rest of the engine was blue or grey. If grey, the boiler bands were always black, as was the Westinghouse brake pump.

It is hoped to fit a replica exterior Belpaire firebox casing even though the actual firebox will remain round-topped, and the safety valves will be almost hidden in the square casing provided for the Ramsbottom valves with cow-tails (easing levers) into the cab.

Any further suggestions as to increasing the realism of this preserved locomotive would be very welcome.

ANYTHING & EVERYTHING

for OO and TT model railway

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