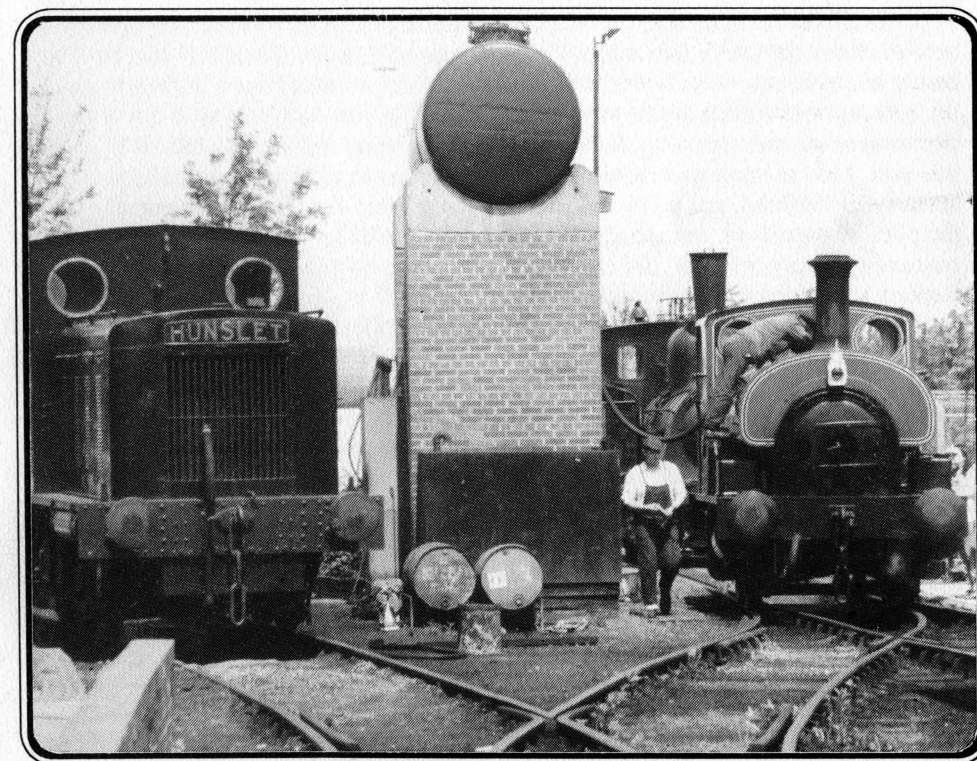


THE OLD RUN

JOURNAL OF
THE 1758 MIDDLETON RAILWAY
LEEDS



Number 139

Summer 1992

THE OLD RUN

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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 next Issue should reach the Editor by 1st September 1992.

Cover picture: *John Alcock*, 60 years old this year, stands by whilst *Mirvale* is prepared for the day's work. Photo: Keith Hartley.

EDITORIAL

The issue is rather late, for which many apologies, but I've been busy getting a new edition of the Guide into shape. There are also no Loco or Council Notes, but that hardly surprises me, what with the A.G.M. preparations having been in progress and the running season well under way. On the subject of the A.G.M., just a few **purely personal** notes, due partly to the fact that, as the meeting had to start later than usual this year, I had to leave well before the end in order to ensure that I caught the last 'bus home from Bradford, and partly to the fact that my notes disappeared temporarily into the piles of paperwork connected with the Guide, the Schoolday, *The Old Run*, and continuing history research, and only emerged at the last moment. Apologies, Minutes, Reports and Accounts were all duly received, approved or adopted. (The list of Future Prospects at the end of the Council Report was an excellent idea, especially for the not inconsiderable number of members who are unable to get to Leeds very often, and the ideas themselves are exciting, as well as challenging.) There had been a downturn in numbers of visitors and in sales during 1991, but these had improved slightly this season. Steve Roberts was thanked for taking on the Treasureship at short notice. Bore holes would need to be made at the former baled waste tip, to check for stability ready for the proposed extension. At Moor Road, there was a possibility that the footpath to the west of the station site might be closed and the land added to the station site. Chris Rogers had decided to resign from the Chairmanship, and Ian Smith was elected unopposed. Chris made it very clear to last year's A.G.M. that he was unable to represent the Trust during working hours, which Tony Cowling later defined in an *Old Run* article as being an important part of the job. However, he has done much valuable work on the administrative side of things, wherever possible trying to bring some co-ordination into the various aspects of running the railway. *The Old Run's* Council Notes were, I believe, one of his ideas, as was the new Contents list on p.23. Lately he

has obviously been very busy making a series of notice boards about various aspects of the railway's past and present, and these greatly improve the 'visitor-friendly' atmosphere around the station area. Tony Cowling and Steve Roberts were elected unopposed to continue as Secretary and Treasurer, respectively. Chris has also resigned from Council, at least for this year, but hopefully will soon return. Vernon Smith, Roger Walton and John Wilkinson had also resigned from Council. I'm sure that all members will wish to join the A.G.M. in thanking Chris, Vernon, Roger and John for their hard work on the railway's behalf, and to wish Ian all the best in the Chairmanship. Derek Hirst and Martin Plumb were elected to Council, and all the remaining members were re-elected. The proposed new subscription rates were then approved. Under charity status regulations, we are not allowed to subsidise any members, and Peter Nettleton's proposal to leave O.A.P. subs. at the present rate had to be turned down as the new rate only just covers their magazines and postage costs. I was very disappointed that a majority of the meeting apparently did not wish to honour the society's original stated aims and preserve the old boundary fence in situ, but they did adopt a resolution (again from Peter Nettleton) that Council should try to find an alternative to the present plan. This has since been under way, and the situation seems slightly more hopeful, for which many thanks Peter, and the officers and members of Council involved; the railway must progress, but I still strongly believe it would be wrong for it to do so at the cost of its last little bit of visible historical fabric. After I left, the proposed extension into Middleton Park was discussed and approval re-confirmed, but for further and perhaps more accurate detail, members must wait for their Minutes next Spring, or for articles on the various points which may turn up before then.

Sheila Bye, Editor



Rowntree No.3 poses at Moor Road. Photo: Keith Hartley.

The rest of the issue begins on a sad note, with obituaries for two great 'characters' of railway preservation, Captain Peter Manisty, Vice-President of the A.R.P.S., and John Cowling, a stalwart of our own first decade, and known to all who were active members at that time as 'Prentice'.

A SAD LOSS

Captain Peter Manisty, M.B.E., R.N.

From Dr. R.F. (Fred) Youell, Founder and first Chairman of our own Society.

A few days ago, Captain Peter Manisty, head of the Association of Railway Preservation Societies, died. We owe a great deal to him.

Many preservation Society events are blazened in the railway press with a fanfare of noise from the relevant Publicity Officers. Other events deserve quiet respect rather than trumpet blowing. I would hark back to an event which took place in 1961, but which was not blazened all over the railway press. Yet a great deal followed on from that item. Not all that number of preservationists remember things of over 30 years ago. Preservation, in the form of static exhibits, had been going for a long time. Preservation à la Titfield Thunderbolt, using 4'8½" gauge trains, was only just starting. Middleton Railway re-opened in June 1960, Bluebell in September 1960. At the same time, other groups were at embryo stage. The late Noel Draycott was active in trying to start preservation in the London area. Another group was active in a scheme at Hednesford, near Walsall, David Ives being one of their leaders.

In the first year of active preservation on 4'8½" gauge, there was little communication between Societies, for the simple reason that we did not know each other. The late Noel Draycott took the bold step of suggesting a joint meeting of someone from each active group. The meeting took place at Captain Manisty's house in Kennington, S.E. London. Noel also brought along David Ives and myself. I was at the time just recovering from a serious head injury and was not exactly at my best.

The outcome of the meeting was an agreement which more or less set the pace for future events. We agreed to keep communications going between Societies. We agreed that it would be beneficial to avoid treading on each others' toes, and having a mad scramble to grab any preservable material in sight. Preservation, we felt, was better done by selecting relics from railways that had some tangible connection with the local preservation group. The largely Southern Railway atmosphere on the Bluebell Railway is one indication of how this went in practice. After a slow start, the idea of co-operation, rather than competition, won the day, and the Association of Railway Preservation Societies grew to its present form. Noel Draycott himself took a big part in getting this off the ground. He died just when the ideas were beginning to show fruit. As compared with Peter Manisty, the others at the first meeting felt like mere novices. I looked to see that my boots were clean, and my tie straight, and respect for the Senior Service was in full swing. Peter Manisty welcomed us with open arms, and we had a general feeling of bash on regardless.

From that meeting, more than any other event, the seed of A.R.P.S. was sown. It is true that present day meetings of the A.R.P.S. fill a large hall with frightfully important looking people present, but it really got off the ground with just the four of us in Kennington at the start.

What has always encouraged me is that Peter put more importance on the enthusiasm of new volunteers than on the size of their group. Many preservation pioneers tacked on their activities to an existing occupation; I myself started with the rather shaky reputation of having the same qualifications from the same college as the late Dr. Richard Beeching! It is very largely due to Peter's initiative that the A.R.P.S. was elevated from the impression of a group of railway enthusiasts (which does sometimes give the picture of a group of small boys playing trains) to a well organised, thoughtful group which (most of the time) thinks before it acts. It was largely Peter Manisty's leadership and guidance that got A.R.P.S. - and its component groups - respect and a good reputation.

None of us at the Kennington meeting in 1961 had any idea just how much the proposal could catch on, and the extent to which organised groups would spread throughout the country. We must remember that at that time, Noel Draycott and David Ives were only just getting their projects off the ground. Middleton Railway was "just" a goods railway, though people often forget that to handle a loose coupled goods train on a wet rail with gradients as bad as 1 in 20 is more difficult than with continuously braked passenger trains. Bluebell was getting a lot of public recognition as the "Stockbroker Belt" member of the pioneers. I hope we do not forget that initial meeting in Kennington, and what grew from it.

I am, of course, sad to lose Peter Manisty. I am very grateful indeed for the benefits to railway preservation that arose from Peter's leadership right from the start. So thank you Peter Manisty, R.N. Your name will long re-echo down the railway lines of time.

From Ian Smith, our Society's present Chairman and former Publicity Officer.

Peter Manisty's death on 15th June truly marks the end of an era for the preservation movement. There can be very few societies or individuals over the last 32 years who have not benefitted from his expertise and, above all, his enthusiasm. I first met Peter in 1987, when Vernon Smith and I attended an A.R.P.S. meeting at Peterborough, but our friendship did not really begin until the following year, when I first mooted the idea of a "30th Anniversary" celebration to A.R.P.S. The idea was accepted by A.R.P.S., with Peter very firmly in the driving seat. From that moment on, Peter's enthusiasm for 1990 knew no bounds, and any obstacle (of which there were many) was met with the same reply, "Never mind - press on!". I think it is true to say that, without Peter Manisty, there would never have been a 1990 Celebration year, and perhaps it is opportune to relate a couple of anecdotes which really sum up Peter Manisty as a person.

On one occasion, Peter and I were discussing our plans whilst riding to Middleton Park, with our own Fred Youell as guard. Fred was strangely silent and, on being asked why, replied "I couldn't get a word in edgeways with you and Peter - you can't interfere with the Royal Navy!" Peter was one of the few men who **could** silence our Fred!

Perhaps my most abiding memory of Peter in action, however, was the day we ran the "Middleton Pioneer" in June, 1990. The plan was to run from King's Cross to Carlisle via Leeds, with electric haulage to Leeds and L.M.S. Class 5 No.44871 *Sovereign* to Carlisle. The Leeds stopover would be occupied by a visit to both Middleton and Armley Mills, both of whom had a steam loco running. Our loco was, of course, the N.R.M.'s J52, No.1247. Unfortunately, 44871 failed whilst *en route* to Leeds, leaving us steamless for our Settle and Carlisle run. Peter spent nearly an hour on our 'phone at the M.R.T. Shop, trying to organise something different for our participants. He even suggested that we could use No.1247 to haul the train to Carlisle! Needless to say, B.R. declined - they had no sense of adventure. On the return trip, the rostered Class 47 replacement was piloted by celebrity loco *Tamworth Castle* which, because of a fault on the train loco, ended up doing most of the work. On arrival at Leeds, the 47 finally expired and caught fire, leading to its immediate withdrawal. On learning of this, Peter's comment was perhaps typical - "If they had listened to me and used 1247, everything would have been fine!"

As we mourn the loss of a true friend, we should at the same time celebrate his life and many achievements. Farewell, Peter - I am sure that you will "Press on!" as enthusiastically in your new home as you have done down here.

JOHN 'PRENTICE' COWLING

Andy McKenna

It was with regret that I heard of the death of John Cowling, known universally as 'Prentice'. The origins of the name have long since passed into folklore, but he was a prominent figure in the days when it was commonplace to be recognised by a nickname. Prentice was usually to be found in the company of Gumley, Ern and originally Paddy, dealing with the wooden aspects of the railway.

He and I started around the same time in the early sixties when, to many of us it was seen as a way to occupy a Saturday, the only day when you could guarantee that more than just yourself would be present. We went to have fun, the running of trains being a secondary activity, and they were only goods trains anyway. Prentice was usually around when things went wrong; he was present when the waggons ran away through Moor End gates, when the late John Bushell's briefcase was run over, when the Velocipede mysteriously appeared on the Broom Pit branch and had to be thrown off the track to avoid being flattened by a Black 5. He was nearby when Fruit Cake's overall caught fire and when the Tilley Lamp developed a round base, fell over and

exploded (no electric in those days). The list could go on. Prentice must be given the credit for developing the 'Yard People' culture, apparently so much disliked by the 'Authorities'. There were those who thought that professionalism was not evident even then.

Of course, many useful projects were undertaken; the Ballast Brake was converted to a passenger vehicle and the famous Prentice seat was made available for passengers to seat their weary bums on. (Not for long, it was too uncomfortable, a design feature!) The containers were converted to a shop and the trains were operated, eventually carrying passengers. But, the world moved, on and Prentice went with it, his involvement became less and less and the railway has not seen him for many years. Without him and many others in those pioneering days, there would be no railway today and we must pay tribute to that fact.

My abiding memory is of the day that, whilst dining, I offered him a large, white, shaped block and invited him to take a bite. The block was soap and the bite was large. He was not deterred, but declined a further portion!

The world has lost a fine character, but his spirit will be causing mayhem wherever it may be.

Goodbye Prentice.

The Editor, too, remembers the irrepressible Prentice very well, though I only came upon the Yard scene with the starting up of the Visitors' Service in 1969. His untimely death has shocked all of us who knew him, and old memories have been mulled over. The bench which Andy mentions was painted a beautiful 'sky blue', but unfortunately had been built with the back set at too wide an angle, so that anyone sitting on it and leaning back was in danger of upskittling the whole thing off the rear edge of the platform, where Prentice had proudly placed it. Another well remembered item was the following *Old Run* article, first published in February 1972. It is reprinted here as my own salute to one of the "good blokes", and to the era which he so irreverently described.

THE SINGED EYEBROWS SAGA

John Cowling

I think that I can lay claim to being one of the founder members of that small but devoted band of worthy men, the top-link locomotive crew of the Middleton Railway passenger service. Yes, I was the fireman on that far off summer's day when JAL (to his friends, J. Arthur) had a rush of blood to the head and set the first regular passenger service in motion. The day was blazing hot, Hunslet Feast was in full swing in the open space behind the rugby ground.

I well remember the queues of people waiting for the privilege of riding up to Miggy Park propelled by *HENRY DE LACY II* freshly converted from oil to coal firing (vandalism!). Thus it was that, as well as having to chat up potential customers at the old tram crossing, the two soot, sweat and grease begrimed entrepreneurs had also to learn how to handle their charge.

I must now take a swig from my bottle of tepid, discoloured water, taken from the engine's tank, and pass on to the first winter. If that first day was the honeymoon, this was married bliss setting in in deadly earnest (who asked him?). Or should I say the wolves came down from the hills and howled at the door. Anyway, more often than not it was a case of a loco crew of one for part of the day at least, and I well remember being promoted to driver in spite of my age. One of my first firemen, good old (One lump or two?) Phillips sheared off after only a couple of hours on the job. Well, it was snowing into the cab at the time!

Now we move the clock forward through the arrival of the passenger wagon (this is progress already?) and another locomotive, and several minor mishaps - tubes leaking, the saga of the amazing vanishing side-rod bearing etc, up to the end of last season [1971] with seedy commercialism well established in the brake van, along with what at first sight appears to be a rather portly milkman.

However, we digress. I must now come to the point and explain why it is that I go in for this particular form of insidious masochism, which is a big word for this time of day. I suppose the best thing would be to give a diary of a typical day's events. The first thing that happens on the great day is that you wake up at about 8-30, and decide to get up. As the cold lino soaks through your feet and congeals the cockles of your heart, you get dressed. Wondering whether or not to end it all, or tell the Traffic Manager and the CME what they can do with THEIR passenger service, you burn your fingers while making breakfast, a meal which is supposed to shrink your tongue, put the top back on your head and kill those rampant trolls in your eardrums. Then you drive down to the railway.

You arrive at 10.00 am. There are two reasons for this. On average it takes roughly three hours to raise steam, and it's as well to allow time to deal with the inevitable "surprises" which occur.

And you have to light up - if your fireman is keen enough to be down at this time, he will be too inexperienced to manage it on his own.

So you check the water level and clean out the firegrate which sometimes must be done from inside the firebox, thereby silting up your nose and throat. Next you scout around, find some paper and some wood, and attempt to light a fire, which goes out. Then you open the damper, and remembering how the boy scouts did it with one match, pour on some used sump oil. This time the fire goes, as too do your eyebrows, in spite of your remembering to remove the chimney cover.

Then, with the fire going satisfactorily - and hoping that the smoke doesn't attract that invariably irate gent from Garnet Road, whose wife only hangs out the washing when there's an engine in steam - you put on your soggy overalls (who used them to block that broken window?), pick up the oilcan and crawl under the engine.

You can either do this by crawling along the ground, filling your boiler suit with cinders, or between the running plate and the boiler which is awkward because spring hangers, grab irons and oilcups tend to snag on tender regions of your anatomy. When you're underneath, you realise your oilcan is empty and crawl out again.

Back under once more, you pour some oil up your left sleeve, some into your boots, some on your head and about six drops into each oilcup!

A little later, you think that maybe some dinner would kill those trolls, so you go out and buy two pork pies. The first one you eat immediately, but it is cold, having just come out of a fridge, and it makes your fillings ache. So you put the other one near the fire for a few minutes, which chars the crust but leaves the innards as cold as ever. This one tastes even worse, and the last half gets thrown over King's wall.

Sometime just after one, there is sufficient steam for you to move down to the coal pile, but first you must pour some cylinder oil into the oiling points on the cylinder fronts. Then you open the little tap, and it fires oil over your glasses. You may have opened the drain cocks, but you still get showered with a hot, sooty solution when you move off, which is why you don't clean the paintwork before you've moved about a bit. At the coal pile you curse the man who didn't fill the bunker the previous evening, and miss death by inches (well a few feet anyway) when the inherent instability of twelve tons of coal on a stage fit for about twelve hundredweight is displayed to fine advantage.

By now some of the ancillary staff have turned up. These may include one or two people regarded as "good blokes" - a term which may include ladies - and also the guard (alias the milkman, ice-cream man and several less printable names) complete with about two cubic yards of assorted paraphernalia. As there is a feud in progress between him and you, you mock him in a thoroughly petty and childish manner, which helps to pass the time. Then you tear up the yard in order to wake up these good people - after all, the Sales Manager may be a "good bloke", but he gets a bit mercenary when it comes to giving a free pop to loco drivers. You also want to put some water in the tank.

By now, zero hour approaches, and you thunder down to the platform. The next part of the day is perhaps the most boring, and the following are some of the things which make time pass more quickly:

Baiting the guard by asking for his Shunter's Certificate, but making sure first that you've got your driving pass.

Talking to an old gaffer who remembers your engine when it was a) Powering Joe Blogg's three abreast gallopers; b) working underground at some colliery; c) operating the Southend Pier Railway; or d) just a baby engine.

Posing for photographs with a glassy look on your face, bearing the escutcheon of the two digits rampant.

Assuring potential passengers that if you met a loco driver with a hangover like yours, you'd go by submarine.

Tearing a strip off the fireman.

Blowing the whistle at a passing dolly bird.

Running a train.

The procedure for this latter diversion is complex, and merits some expiation for the benefit of the layman. First you signal to the guard by means of the whistle, and the guard then checks the barriers and so on, and waves you on in a peremptory fashion.

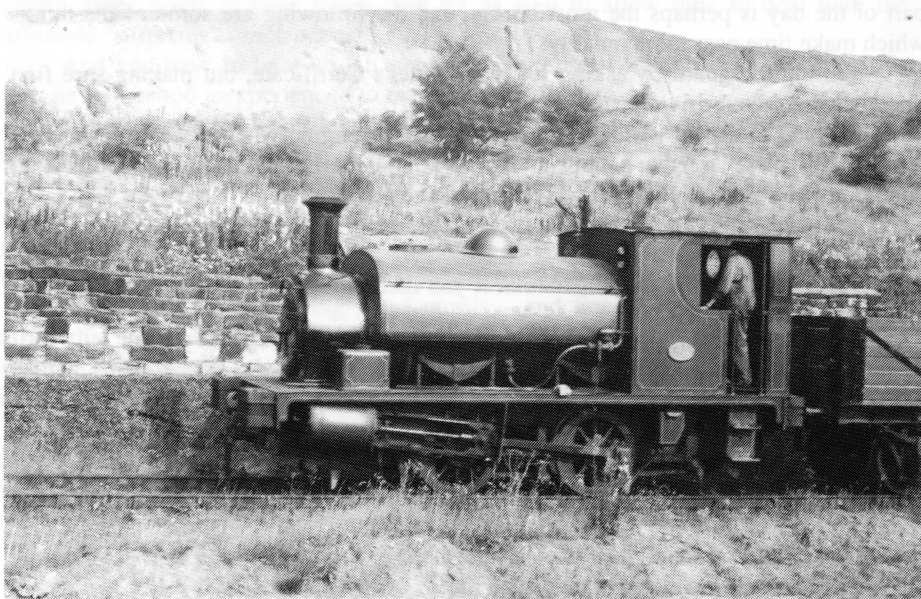
This annoys you, so you wait a little before setting off, to demonstrate to the guard that he is the lowest form of human life.

As the train lurches its way up to the park, you keep a supply of fist sized pieces of coal handy, in case of attack by injuns (or, in more orthodox terminology, the offspring of the locals). As the train nears the final curve, about 500 yards from the halt, the pressure will start to fall alarmingly, showing that you have failed to berate your fireman sufficiently before setting off. So you are careful about stopping at the top as the efficacy of the steam brake is impaired at low pressures, as certain deformities in the level crossing gates at Burton Road mutely testify.

On the return journey, you may slow down almost to a crawl by the Parkside Rugby ground if a game is in progress. It has been known for the visitors to score three tries and convert two of them while the train was passing.

A little later it is time for the ancillary staff to pack up and go home, but you still have to "put the engine to bed", which means filling it up with coal and water, and raking most of the fire and clinker into the ashpan. You can then go home, bath, have tea and then reflect to yourself that you wouldn't half write an article for *Old Run* if you had the time.

[For at least some of those who have arrived in the M.R.T./A. during the latter half of our preservation existence, a short guide to the article may be needed: JAL, Jim Lodge, was then Chief Mechanical Engineer; our train consisted of engine, waggon and brakevan - sometimes without the waggon, and the only "shop" was the guard's desk and a rack on the brakevan wall; the platform at Moor Road consisted of three or four layers of sleepers - which more often than not had to be rebuilt on Saturday after weekday attention from the local vandals; the "rather portly milkman" was the much maligned first Chief Guard, Robin Brogden; the mercenary Sales Manager was Tom Apperley; and the Hunslet rugby ground immediately adjoined the railway just north of Parkside bend.]



Henry de Lacy II near Park Halt sometime between 1969 and 1972 (the loco was turned the other way round by the low-loader which brought *John Blenkinsop*). Photo: M.R.T. collection.

FROM THE CHAIRMAN

Ian Smith

As we struggle through the 1992 season, with its reduced passenger (and income) intake, we should perhaps reflect that, whilst our situation is not particularly good, we are at least much more able than most to be able to weather this recession. Unlike many railways, we do not have an overdraft, and in fact have a relatively healthy bank balance. This allows us to be able to sit back and consider our options with a little less urgency than some of our larger colleagues in the railway preservation business.

Your Council is concerned with events, but we are not going to rush in to attempt to plug the gap. Rather, we are planning what to do for **next** year instead. Our Publicity Officer, David Monckton, is looking towards reviving the Marketing Committee to fully plan events, enlisting help from interested members where necessary. There is major activity regarding our Schooltrain Service, with consultation taking place between myself and the Schools Liaison Service, so that Middleton can feature the National Curriculum as much as possible.

For my part, I intend to bring our railway to the attention of as many influential people as possible. I hope to be able to invite local politicians to the line as and when possible, and to feature our railway in the local press where possible. The working membership of the Middleton Railway needs a major boost, and to that end an 'Open Day' will be arranged for next April, as announced at the A.G.M. My intention is that we will not only encourage new members to join us, but also will use the occasion to invite Tourist Office staff to sample what we have to offer. Other ideas are in the pipeline and will be announced in due course.

The Middleton Railway has much to be grateful for this year. Thrifty management in the past has ensured a reasonable bank balance which has enabled the Trust to actually authorise a new boiler barrel for Bagnall *Matthew Murray*. Despite the recession and the lack of working members, much good work is carried out at Moor Road, where Chris Rogers is now producing notices for our passengers to read whilst looking at stock and other items.

We can be proud of our railway and our working membership. As we plan for next year, may I ask those members who have previously been unable to assist us, to see if they can spare even **ONE** day to help the railway in its aims? No qualifications are necessary, training can be given where required, and I can assure potential working members that they will receive a warm welcome if they are able to join us.

A 'SITE' HAPPIER YARD MANAGER

Brian Hall

During the Members' Weekend earlier this year, *Rowntree No.3* needed testing with a train in tow, and *385* and *Mirvale* needed steam testing. These were successfully put through their paces over the two days. The members who turned up enjoyed their rides and the opportunity to talk at length to members of staff. We even gained one very welcome new "worker". Also reassuring were the comments that the site looked much tidier and cleaner; a real boost for those of us still suffering the aches and pains of achieving this improvement.

I am delighted to report that, with a lot of help from my co-workers, a great deal has been achieved in our intention to improve the site. A scrap metal skip was delivered, duly filled and sent on its way, followed closely by a waste skip, which was rapidly filled, but went not quite so rapidly on its way. The coal stack surroundings have been cleared and re-planned. An extension to the track at the rear of the shed is in progress, as is the replacement of the fencing along the edge of the platform, and the laying of paving slabs. A sterling effort by all involved - but we're nowhere near finished yet and we desperately need more helpers. Although I am sure that my mechanically orientated colleagues thoroughly enjoyed getting very wet and cold, and using muscles they did not know they had, heaving scrap metal and waste into the skips, their talents are needed to get the locos ready to face another busy season - and keep them going. So if there is anyone out there, willing and able to lend a hand - please contact me, or anyone at the railway; we can easily put you to work!

[The station looked beautiful for the Schoolday on Wednesday 24th June, what with all the grass, shrubs and flowers, and Chris Rogers' crop of explanatory signs. The public area was immaculate, and the workshop and backroad areas looked as clean and tidy as could reasonably be hoped for (a working railway cannot be expected to look like a fitted kitchen advert), and anything which was lying around was doing so in a nice orderly fashion. It was a real credit to Brian and his helpers.]

EXHIBITION MANAGER'S REPORT

Derek Plummer

On the morning of Wednesday 18th March, I represented Middleton at a Yorkshire & Humberside Tourist Board literature exchange, at York Racecourse. Some 109 separate groups or organisations had table space. We had leaflets and posters available for visitors, including hoteliers and tourist offices, plus a small display of photographs of our activities. The tourist information centres were given

bulk supplies of leaflets and posters, in accordance with their pre-advised requirements. We have orders for Santa Special leaflets already! About one boxful of leaflets was distributed, in addition to the pre-arranged supplies.

On Monday 25th May David Monckton will be taking the outdoor sales stand to the Steam Gathering at Templenewsam, whilst on Saturday 6th June, Simon Turner will be displaying his 00 gauge layout at the Model Railway Exhibition at Horsforth Central Methodist Church where, as usual, M.R.T. leaflets will be available as well as a small selection of M.R.T. souvenirs.

Future days on which help with manning a sales stand would be appreciated include: Leeds Model Railway Exhibition at Carr Crofts, Armley, on Friday 23rd October (17.00-21.00), Saturday 24th (10.00-19.30), and Sunday 25th (10.00-17.30); Wakefield Model Railway Exhibition in November (venue & dates not yet known).

[For any members who are able to help at Exhibitions, Derek's address and 'phone number are on the inside back cover of the magazine. Derek enclosed with his report a cutting from *The Yorkshire Post* of 23rd April, about the sale of John King & Co. (Leeds). The chain-making company went into administrative receivership on 19th March, and the business had just been sold to the former works manager and a former director, who had already purchased the Garnet Road works and site. Until 1983, King's was our next door neighbour (and recipient of Prentice's discarded pies).]

A.R.P.S. SIDELINES

from John Crane

National Archive for Manuals Further details of this will be given in a later edition. Please keep the subject in mind though, and do not throw away old railway manuals on rollingstock, machinery, tools, etc. that may be needed to maintain old equipment which is still in use somewhere. Using photocopies in the work environment will help keep original manuals from being spoilt.

Membership It is possible to become a private member of A.R.P.S. for only £12. For those interested, name, address and cheque payable to A.R.P.S. should be sent to Arthur Harding, 6 Ullswater Grove, Alresford, Hants., SO24 9NP.

Transport & Works Bill Unfortunately, the Election on 9th April brought no likelihood of radical change to the Drink and Drugs proposals, which would have been difficult anyway as the Bill received Royal Assent just before the old Parliament was dissolved. In the later debates on the Bill, there was some emphasis towards the Drink & Drugs proposals not being stringent enough, and that permitted levels should be reduced. All of which made it rather difficult for A.R.P.S. "to avoid giving the impression that we are in any way condoning people working on our railways while under the influence of drink and/or drugs". However, this part of the Bill eventually was amended so that prosecution may only be brought by, or with the consent of, the Secretary of State for Transport or the Director of Public Prosecutions.

GREAT RAILWAY JOURNEYS

2. MOSCOW TO LENINGRAD

Dennis Caton

After a stay in Moscow, where we travelled on the fantastic Metro underground railway, etc., we travelled the four hundred and twenty five miles northwestwards on the electric railway to Leningrad [now renamed St. Petersburg]. This journey was quite a contrast with the Canadian one. The track gauge is the same as our own, so we had rather more room to move about in the spacious, air-conditioned carriages. The train was an express, but there were speed restrictions all the way through the seemingly endless suburbs of Moscow. Having left them behind, we quickly gathered speed, hauled by a massive electric locomotive which had a "Skoda" makers' nameplate.

We soon reached the Volga river, about a hundred miles north-west of Moscow, and crossed it on a long lattice girder bridge, and we were surprised to see how very wide that river is, only about one hundred and sixty miles from its source in the Valdai Hills. The river, from this point, still has about another two thousand miles to flow before it enters the Caspian Sea in southern Russia, which made us wonder how big it must be in its southern reaches. Just north of the Volga, we had a short stop in the city of Kalinin, which reminded us very much of Leeds, with its many tall blocks of flats.

Mile after mile of the country on this journey is thickly covered with coniferous and silver birch forests, and even though it was the month of May, the forest floors were still thick with snow. Nowhere does this line have to penetrate any very hilly terrain so, unlike the Canadian route through the Rockies, there are no tunnels on the whole length of the railway, although there are several deep cuttings in the eastern foothills of the Valdai Hills through which the line passes.

At Bologye, about halfway on our journey, there was an eight minute stop because of signals being against us. The charming girl carriage-attendant gave us permission to get out of the train to take photographs of a preserved steam locomotive placed on a pedestal on the station platform. From this big junction, lines radiate to places such as the ancient city of Novgorod (which we later visited), west of our line, and to Yaroslavl on the approaches to the Ural Mountains, much further to the east.

More and more forest country was passed through, and several more small towns, all with their gilded domes, and also extensive farmland with glimpses of the Volkhov river flowing slowly northwards through it, before we approached Leningrad, near the Gulf of Finland.

Tosno is the last town of any size (about forty miles still to go before journey's end), and every mile after this is built up: suburb after suburb, factory after factory, until we pulled into the great city built on the delta of the Neva river. We arrived just after dark, six hours after leaving Moscow - the end of an immensely interesting journey in a very strange land.

DISCOVERY

Brian Hall

On the edge of Leeds by the M1 way
We found, when out and about one day

After following the signs till we could see,
The small but thriving M.R.T.

When you ask "What's that?", as well you must,
We'll say it's the Middleton Railway Trust.

To add to the joys you'll see unfurled,
It's the oldest railway in the world.

The track - just over a mile in length,
But the Railway goes from strength to strength.

'Twas an Industrial Railway, and along its lines
Came coal to Hunslet from open cast mines.

A village once stood at the end of the track,
But in time that goes a long way back.

Now there's fields and trees - and here's a lark,
You can walk from there into Middleton Park.

There's steam and diesel and rolling stock,
Coaches to ride in - a loo and a shop.

They use different engines, and on certain weekends,
They even have Thomas the Tank Engine's Friends.

They run Santa Specials in December so cold,
And a weekend of Cops and Robbers so bold.

And if for that party you want something new,
A train can be hired especially for you.

There's Sentinel, Mirvale and Carroll and Percy,
Danish, Ruston and Mary and Henry de Lacy.

There's Windle, Blenkinsop and others to see,
And a ride on the train at a reasonable fee.

If you find yourself near to this Gem of our past,
Pay them a visit - it won't be your last.

MEMBERSHIP MATTERS

Mike Scargill

All June 30th renewals are now due. The renewal notices went out with the A.G.M. mailing. Please check to see if you have paid yours, and if not, early payment would be appreciated. About half have already renewed, thank you, and thanks to those of you who have sent stamped return envelopes. Only a small point, but it does help to keep costs down. For the future, as the present stock of membership cards are used up, and that has just happened, all the new ones will be a little smaller, Credit Card size. I hope that this will prove to be convenient.

On the subject of recruitment, if you can persuade friends, relatives, etc., that they would like to join us, then they will be more than welcome.

Also, any offers of help in running the railway would be most welcome. I know Steve would certainly appreciate more help behind the counter in the shop. Do not forget that we have just entered into an agreement with both the Nene Valley and Keighley & Worth Valley Railways to allow **working** members free travel on these railways. Certainly, I personally can vouch for the K.W.V.R. arrangement working. To this end I shall be producing working passes to be used at these establishments, and they will be distributed as soon as they are to hand, and I have the authorised listing of working members for distribution purposes.



Henry de Lacy II receives some attention, Spring 1992. Photo: Keith Hartley.

REVIEWS

Ian Smith

In the last few months, a number of items have become available which feature the Middleton Railway in some way or other. Here is a quick review of three publications.

1. *A NOSTALGIC LOOK AT LEEDS TRAMS* is, as the title suggests, a review of the old Leeds City Tramways. A very good little publication, this looks at all the old tram routes and their trams. There is just one photograph of the Middleton Railway - the "classic" shot of Feltham car No.542 running over the tramway crossing, whilst *Blenkinsop*, unfortunately described as an 0-4-0ST, waits patiently. The book is published by Silver Link Publishing and retails at £7.99, but if you remember the old trams with affection, this one is for you.

2. *LEEDS TRAMS* is a 115 minute video of the Leeds Tramways. This is an absolutely superb video, much of which is in colour. Quite apart from the many Leeds scenes, now vanished, there is a lovely sequence on the Middleton Light Railway, showing trams running through Middleton Woods, with the Middleton Railway quite visible as trams emerge, running downhill. The real gem for Middleton members, though, is the sequence showing a tram coming off the old Moor Road, past Whittaker's Staithes and alongside the Middleton Railway. Steam loco *Blenkinsop* is in a number of these shots, whilst the real stunner shows the loco parked on the Balm Road branch by Whittaker's turnout. I can assure members that they will hardly recognise the place now! This video is thoroughly recommended, and at £18.95 is good value.

3. *PRESERVED DIESEL & ELECTRIC LOCOMOTIVES* is a somewhat specialist publication, again by Silver Link, listing all preserved diesel and electric locos. Middleton's L.M.S.7401 is featured, but many of the "facts" he gives are somewhat at variance with real life - did members know that 7401 ran at Middleton as L.M.S.7051? The Middleton Railway certainly didn't!! Unfortunately, this book is littered with inaccuracies, whilst some of his photographs, particularly the one of *Tamworth Castle* at Appleby, were gained by trespassing on B.R. property, not a good example to set enthusiasts, I fear!

THE LAKESIDE CAFE, MIDDLETON PARK

Monday to Saturday 11.00-16.00 (closed Thursday), Sunday 10.30-17.00

THE MIDDLETON EXTENSION - 1809

Sheila Bye

One of Charles John Brandling's first moves on succeeding to the family's estates, in 1802, had been to seek a new Act of Parliament, giving him a price increase of c.6.7p to c.35.5p a ton, and a quota increase from 45,000 tons a year to c.56,250 tons (the 1803 Act stipulates 80 waggons a day, and the annual tonnage depends on the exact weight of the wagon load, and the number of days worked).

For a few years afterwards, little seems to have happened, and the business continued to be "in recession", as it had been since 1801 when sales of coal via all the outlets totalled only 61,318 tons, as opposed to 73,773 tons in 1800. In 1803, the annual tonnage shot up to 75,488, but then declined again, until in 1808 a mere 59,216 tons were sold. In short, the 1803 Act did not provide the hoped for prosperity, and on Saturday 22nd August 1807 "The extensive Lordship or Manor of MIDDLETON" was advertised for sale by auction. Included were "Two desirable Residences", farms containing c.1,400 acres, and "the inexhaustible Coal Works, communicating with, and serving the Populous Town of Leeds, according to an Act of Parliament". There were "Two Powerful Steam Engines, and Five smaller Raising Engines, with complete Machinery; a Water Corn-Mill, a Brewery, Malting, and numerous Warehouses, Stabling, Tenements, and Other suitable Buildings". The property was described as lying "nearly within a Ring Fence, and is capable of the greatest Improvement, so as to render it one of the most productive Estates in the West Riding". On 12th September, one third of the Manor of Hunslet was added to the sale list, though a month later, on 17th October, this was lowered to one quarter.

Perhaps the phrase "capable of the greatest Improvement" reveals the reason for the projected sale. The estate needed money spending on it, and, though for many years it had been Charles John Brandling's "cadet establishment", he had now taken his father's place at Gosforth House near Newcastle, he appears not to have had children himself, and Middleton was a distant outpost of his empire in an era when there were no mechanical means of bridging that distance. In short, if it was not profitable it was expendable. However, Mr. Brandling does appear to have been reluctant to go ahead with selling. The advertisement continued to appear in every issue for more than four months, always with the statement that "Due Notice of the Day of Sale will be given": it never was. During December, another advertisement in *The Leeds Mercury* asked for £3,000 on mortgage of land and buildings near to Leeds, an "Eligible Estate" worth £10,000, with an un-named owner of the "first respectability". Did Mr. Brandling need money, and was sale or mortgage of his Middleton estate an easy way of raising it? Certainly, I already have photocopies of several documents referring to him doing just that in the 1810's and 20's, and have note of there being "a lot" of document copies at the West Yorkshire Archives for the year 1808 (obviously another trip to Wakefield is called for - more information later).

Some time during the same period, Mr. Brandling appears to have commissioned two Tyneside mining experts, Thomas Fenwick and John Watson, to make a detailed survey and valuation of the Middleton Colliery, and this was sent to him on 28th January 1808. It valued the Colliery at £24,951, and may have been done specifically as preparation for a sale, but by the time it was in Mr. Brandling's hands the *Leeds Mercury* advertisements had ceased. Shortly afterwards, John Blenkinsop arrived to become "viewer" at Middleton. He quickly embarked upon his own survey of some of the pits, detailing the working methods and potential of each pit, and coming to the general conclusion that many improvements could be made, especially in the method of bringing the coals to the surface. Regarding transport, he noted that a new "Wagon Road" was planned to pass on the north side of Middleton Lodge, and go through the Woods to join the "present Wagon Road" a little east of Belle Isle (i.e. the old miners' village which stood near the modern Park Halt). Blenkinsop considered that it would be much better for it to join the main "Road" at Hunslet Common, which probably would have brought it along much the same route as the 20th century tram track, joining the modern Railway route at Parkside bend and continuing north to join the **then** "present Wagon Road" at about our Moor Road Station. (Until 1875, of course, the Railway ran down Old Run Road and along the side of the modern Hunslet Lake Park.) The report indicates that almost seven decades earlier, the perceptive Blenkinsop had realised the advantages of the present alignment.

Transport costs were probably already causing problems at Middleton, where the wagonway was still entirely horseworked. Records of sales at the Thwaite Gate river staithes appear to have ceased by the end of 1807, most likely as an economy measure, and on Saturday 4th March 1809, *The Leeds Mercury* had advertisements from two local carriers, announcing that they were raising their prices due to "the long-continued high Price of Horse Provender" - caused by the Napoleonic Wars. Richard Trevithick's *Catch Me Who Can* locomotive had made widely publicised experimental runs during 1808, and Blenkinsop might already have been considering the use of steam locomotives at Middleton. However, some rather more swiftly achievable improvements were needed.

The idea of extending the 1758 wagonway, to make it replace the 1755 way as a river outlet, might even date back to the formulating of the 1803 Act, which allowed for coal to be delivered to "the said Repository at Casson Close aforesaid, or at any Place near thereto, to be used as a Repository for Coals instead thereof". Until now, this has always been considered to indicate that Mr. Brandling intended to **cut back** the Leeds end of the line to the modern site of Great Wilson Street, but this was not done until some time between 1812 and 1815, and his actual intention may have been to keep his options open for a future **extension** of the line. In the Spring of 1809, John Blenkinsop wrote the following letter of enquiry to John Hardy of Bradford, a partner in the Low Moor Iron Company, which had an extensive network of wagonways around their works and company mines:

Mr. Brandling who by act of Parliament engages to supply the inhabitants of Leeds with Coals at his Staith near the bridge has it in contemplation to extend his Rail Road from thence to the River Aire and in doing so will have occasion to cross one of the public Streets leading

from Leeds to Holbeck - but the Rail Road will be laid even or rather a little below the surface of the pavement.

Query - Can Mr. Brandling do this without subjecting himself to an Indictment for a nuisance and without any interruption from the Surveyor

On 22nd April, John Hardy replied:

Opinion I am of opinion that the interruption created by the Railroad would be subject the parties laying it to an indictment but that when laid it would not be considered as a nuisance to the Streets although the number of Wagons crossing the Street might occasion sometimes an obstruction that would be held probably to be a nuisance particularly if the said Road be laid in a place where there is not already a crossing for Coal carts and other Carriages. The side of the Highway belongs to the Lord of the Manor and if Mr. Brandling has his permission I think he may lay his Wagon way without the surveyor being entitled to interfere taking care however to leave a free passage the obstruction as I have stated would principally arise whilst the Wagon[sic] was being laid and it would doubtless be completed before the end of the twenty days which must expire after notice given by the Surveyor before the latter can interfere - Mr. Brandling will certainly be treading on tender ground if the Surveyor or any other person are hostile to his plan though he will I think have gained a great point if he can get his Road laid without interference -

Whilst the opinion held promise, someone at Middleton was still not sure, and a query was sent to G.S. Holroyd, a solicitor of Carlisle.

This time, the query was far more detailed and informative. It explained how the late Charles Brandling had obtained his Act of Parliament, recited the title page of the Act, and mentioned that other Acts had been obtained since. It then explained that:

Mr. Brandling has for many years sold large quantities of Coals to be sent by water and for that purpose laid a Rail Road from Middleton to a Staith at Hunslet about two miles from Leeds by the side of the River Aire whither all the Coals intended to be sent down the River were conveyed [i.e. the 1755 Thwaite Gate waggonway] -

Mr. Brandling instead of sending the Coals to Hunslet purposes to convey them from Casson Close to a Staith above Leeds bridge by the side of the River Aire either by laying a Rail Road and conveying the Coals over a street called Meadow Lane a principal and much frequented entrance to the town of Leeds called Water Lane or without laying a Rail Road.

Mr. Brandling cannot put his intention into execution without crossing a flagged causeway laid for the accommodation of foot passengers both in Meadow Lane and Water Lane nor without breaking a Carriage Road from the Closes opposite Cassons Close immediately on the flagged causeway in Water Lane where there never was one before by which the passage of foot people and carriages and Horses will be greatly impeded and rendered very dangerous from the number of Coal Wagons that will be continually crossing Water Lane and Meadow Lane -

An "Act for the better supplying the town and neighbourhood of Leeds in the County of York with water and for the more effectually lighting and cleansing the Streets and other places within the said town and neighbourhood and removing and preventing nuisances annoyances encroachments and obstruction therein" was then mentioned, which forbade a large variety of wheeled vehicles from barrows upwards from being driven, wheeled or placed on the footpaths of the town's streets.

Your opinion is desired if Mr. Brandling can be prevented from laying a Rail Road on Meadow Lane and Water Lane and if he can be prevented from carrying Coals in any manner than with a Rail Road to the River Aire over Meadow Lane and Water Lane - and if you are of opinion that he can be prevented from doing either or both which will be the best method of

proceeding against him and if he will be liable to the penalty imposed by the said recited act for occasioning annoyances in the Streets.

Mr. Holroyd's Opinion, dated 4th August 1809, was predictably very much more verbose than Mr. Hardy's reply. He compared the pros and cons of the case, whether the possible advantages to the public if the rail road was extended might outweigh the nuisance it caused. The way in which he considered discontinuing the rail road for the width of each lane, restarting it on the opposite side, makes one suspect he did not entirely understand waggonways. Of course, he may have been envisaging a waggonway laid with tram plates, which **would** allow gaps without causing much difficulty. The legalese continued for several pages, eventually coming to the conclusion that Mr. Brandling might not have the right to "break open" the road or the footpath even if it was built on his own land, and he concluded that -

He would I think be bound to use the ways with his Wagons in such a way with every reasonable precaution to prevent danger -

However, the Middleton Extension was about to meet with problems closer to home, and John Blenkinsop recorded under the dateline "Leeds 28 Aug 1809":

"At a Meeting of the Magistrates of Leeds to take into consideration the propriety of allowing Mr. Brandling to extend his Rail Road across Meadow lane -

It was unanimously resolved,

"That in their opinion such Rail Road would be most dangerous to individuals and a great public nuisance and therefore they think it their duty to refuse their assent to such Railroad being made"

Thomas Tennant, Mayor

The Magistrates might have considered this to be the end of the matter, but Mr. Brandling apparently was still intent on improving his transport system. On Saturday 4th November 1809, page 2 of *The Leeds Mercury* carried the following defiant advertisement:

COALS TO BE DISPOSED OF,

On the most advantageous Terms.

NOTICE is hereby given, That CHARLES JOHN BRANDLING, Esq. the Proprietor of the extensive and valuable Coal Mines, at Middleton, near Leeds, is ready to deliver any QUANTITY of COALS on Board any Vessel or Vessels to be placed in the River Aire for the Purpose, either immediately above or below the Bridge, in Leeds, at Eighteen Shillings per Waggon, containing Twenty Coal Bolls, Winchester Measure, weighing Forty-five Cwts. and upwards.

For further Particulars apply to Mr. John Blenkinsop, of Middleton.

The advertisement was repeated throughout November, but even on the day of its first appearance there apparently were signs that even this mere shadow of Mr. Brandling's original plan was not going to be accepted calmly by the populace. Page 3 of the paper contained a letter:

LEEDS PUBLIC WHARFS.

MR. PRINTER, - I wish to call your attention, and through the medium of your Paper, the attention of the public, to two Wharfs above the Bridge, constantly occupied by some persons or other. The one is just above the Watering-place, near the Fountain Inn, the other is a piece of vacant ground opposite to the house lately occupied by Wade Brown, Esq. Both these Wharfs belong to the public, for their use to load and unload goods, free of expence, and are

the only places that are not private property, adjoining to the River Aire, from one Canal lock to the other.

If some means be not used, to put the public in full possession of these rights, they may be lost by non-usage, and ere long we may have to pay a wharfage for all goods in Leeds as is now done in London.

I received the substance of the above yesterday, from a very worthy gentleman of this town, who has made several *private*, but ineffectual attempts to get the nuisances removed; in that light I consider the stones, & c. that now lie upon these Wharfs.

If you can present these facts before the public, and call upon them to unite and preserve such valuable rights, the above Gentleman will, I dare say, be found foremost in the throng, though he knows nothing of this letter, from, Sir,

Your FELLOW TOWNSMAN.

Leeds, Nov. 1st, 1809

The letter does not mention either the Middleton Colliery or Charles John Brandling, and whilst the advertisement offers delivery above or below the Bridge, the letter specifies two wharves **above** the Bridge. However, there is really little doubt that the encroaching "stones & c." were actually Middleton coals.

After the last of the advertisements, on 25th November, nothing more appeared until 27th January 1810, when it was announced in the page 3 local news section that:

We are happy to hear that the encroachment on the public property in the two WHARFS on the South-west side of Leeds Bridge, mentioned in a former paper, was presented before the Magistrates of this Borough, on Tuesday last, and we feel persuaded, that the free, entire and uninterrupted occupation of this property, so important to persons in trade, will, from the cordial and spirited manner in which the business has been taken up by the Magistrates, be secured for the public use.

Nothing further was mentioned in the news columns, and wharfside sales were not advertised again. The wording of the "Case" which John Blenkinsop put to the solicitor Mr. Holroyd is curiously discouraging, with its assertions that "the passage of foot people and carriages and Horses will be greatly impeded and rendered very dangerous from the number of Coal Wagons that will be continually crossing Water Lane and Meadow Lane". His Patent for the rack rail was granted less than 2 years later; the system must have required much careful thought before he described it for the patent application, and there must have been some lapse of time between application and granting of the Patent. Was Blenkinsop already tempted by the idea of a set of steam carriages working his coal trains, and was he deliberately drawing attention to the drawbacks of the extension scheme in the hopes of being able to divert what little money there was in the direction of an even greater improvement in transport from the colliery? Alternatively, he may just have been more anxious than his employer to adhere to the terms of the 1803 Act, which reaffirmed that all coal brought down the 1758 waggonway must be for the people of Leeds.

Whatever may have been the reasons for Blenkinsop's half-hearted promotion of the plan, that was the end of the Middleton Extension. We can only hope that our own extension of the Middleton Railway, just approved by the A.G.M., meets with far more good fortune than did that of 1809.

MIDDLETON RAILWAY TRUST LTD.

(Limited by guarantee and not having a share capital)

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