

MIDDLETON RAILWAY TRUST

Minutes of the 1971 Annual General Meeting, held at the Houldsworth School, Leeds University, on Saturday 20th February 1971 commencing at 2.30p.m.

Present: Mr. J.K. Lee (in the chair) and 48 other members.

1. Apologies for absence: had been received from Mrs. D. Atherley, Lord Garnock, Mr. C.C. Metcalfe, Mr. M. Midgeley, Mr. D.T. Plummer, Mr. R.H. Roberts, Prof. W.A. Tuplin, and Dr. R.F. Youell.
2. Approval of minutes of the 1970 A.G.M. (2nd May, 1970): proposed by Mrs. S.M. Youell, seconded by Mr. J.D. Carr, and carried nem. con.
3. Approval of minutes of the Special General Meeting of 10th October 1970: proposed by Mr. J.A. Lodge, seconded by Mr. M.N. Phillips and carried nem. con.
4. Officers' reports and questions to officers:

Secretary: Mr. J.D. Edwards had submitted his report in writing. In reply to Mr. S.J. Roberts, he advised that the Trust was now insured for £100,000 for death or injury to the public and to members, and for damage to the public's property. Members' personal property was not covered and the Trust would not therefore accept liability for loss or damage to it. In reply to Mr. W. McArdle, he advised that the National Trust covenant protected the line owned by Claytons', that is from Dartmouth and Robinsons' to Balm Road, with branches, and (in doubt) as far South as Parkside bridge. In reply to Dr. Barnett, he confirmed that the only track owned by the Trust was the section from Parkside bridge to Middleton Park Gates, purchased in 1970 from the N.C.B., and running over land being sold by the N.C.B. to Leeds Corporation.

Treasurer: Mr. J.D. Carr had submitted a written report and unaudited accounts. He warned that the recent demurrage problems with Robinson & Birdsell's traffic might lead to its loss, and encouraged members to contribute funds by way of sales of waste paper and other means. Mr. T.S. White pointed out that sales assets, which exceeded £250 in stock and debtors, had not been included in the figures presented; Mr. Carr was in the process of consolidating the sales accounts with the main books.

Membership Secretary: Mr. B.W. Ashurst added that, since the preparation

of his written report, six new members had joined.

Publicity: Mr. J. Bushell had presented a written report. Mr. A.E. Thorndike asked what publicity had been organised for the coming season's weekend visitors' service; Mr. Bushell replied that it had not been heavily publicised due to uncertainty about interruptions due to motorway work. Mr. S.J. Roberts remarked that little mention of the Trust had recently appeared in the railway press, and various members expressed views for and against frequent press releases.

Sales and Publications: no questions were asked upon Mr. T.S. White's written report.

Editor: Mr. M.J. Leah reported that he had taken office at about the time of the Special General Meeting, at which it had been decided to curtail the newsletter and that the 'Old Run' magazine should become the Trust's main news journal. He had arranged for Mr. C. Oldroyd to supply about 4 pages of current news for each issue. His plan to produce an issue for March had been frustrated by the postal strike, but he would attempt to produce it within one month of the strike's end. For future issues, he needed more contributions relating to the railway - not general interest items, of which he had plenty. Recent photographs, reports from officers on their activities and the background of their jobs, letters to the editor, and book reviews were all welcomed and needed. Mr. T.S. White had just learnt of a large bill for printing from Leeds University which was unpaid; Mr. J.D. Carr reported that the bill was for about £100, covering orders placed by Dr. Youell over the previous 18 months. He would not pay it until an itemised account was available.

Traffic Manager: Dr. G.D. Crapper had submitted a written report. Mr. J. Cowling asked how dependent was the operation of freight traffic upon members of Leeds University Union Railway Society; Dr. Crapper reported that students ran all traffic in term time, but that other members worked traffic during evenings out of term. Operation would be a great strain without the students' work.

Mechanical Engineer: Mr. J.A. Lodge had submitted a written report. Mr. J. Bushell asked what was the status of the Y7; Mr. F.W. Hampson (Steam Power '65 Trustee) reported that it was hoped to steam the engine again in 1971 after boiler test, but that restoration of the paintwork might take longer. Mr. J. Cowling enquired about the missing spares

for 'Windle'; Mr. Lodge had requested Mr. Ben Wade on several occasions to return them, and Mrs. S.M. Youell would remind Mr. Wade. In reply to Mr. w. McArdle, Mr. Lodge and the Chairman advised that the Midland hand crane was to be restored to working order in the near future. In reply to Mr. A. Thompson, Mr. J. Foster advised that he hoped to have the Bagnall back in service during 1971.

Civil Engineer: Mr. C.C. Metcalfe had submitted a written report. The Chairman remarked that professional commitments at British Rail had pre-occupied Mr. Metcalfe during the year, and invited questions to be put to Mr. A.J. Cowling. Mr. Cowling requested members' help to complete replacement of Whittakers' Junction before 6th March.

Chairman: Mr. J.K. Lee invited questions from the floor. Mr. A.E. Thorndike asked how many visitors had been carried in 1970 and remarked that the service seemed to be in chaos during his visits; Mr. T.S. White reported that records had been kept during the latter part of the season, but were not to hand. Mr. R. Brogden advised that records would be kept for the 1971 season. Mrs. S.M. Youell felt that many members involved in operating the railway needed to alter their attitude to the public, and that sales staff and guards must make a greater effort to sell the railway's attractions. The Chairman called for senior members to attend weekend operations more frequently, and reminded all members of their duty to conduct themselves appropriately. In reply to Mr. M.J. Leah, Mr. Brogden reported that he had instituted a rota for driver (who should find his own fireman), guard and salesman. Mr. W.E. Holliday complained that paint intended for use on the brakevan had recently been misappropriated.

5. Preservation of Unserviceable Locomotives: Mr. J.A. Lodge reported that the engines in question were the Avonside 'Swansea', and 'Chairman'. They could not at reasonable cost be restored to working order; both had unserviceable fireboxes and parts missing. Parts from 'Chairman' would be useful to keep 'Henry de Lacy II' (identical except for water tank size) in service; in particular the brake gear would be needed within 12 months, the buffers had already been transferred in order to improve the ride on the visitors' trains, and brasses and slide bars would be needed in the future.

The Chairman reported that Messrs. R.H. Roberts and S.J. Roberts wished 'Chairman' to be restored externally rather than dismantled, in the hope that it could be eventually restored mechanically. Mr. Lodge said that this would amount to condemning 'Henry de Lacy II', since spares would in future become difficult and expensive to obtain. For example, new brake gear would cost about £150. He recommended that those who wished to

restore engines should devote their efforts to more worthwhile projects, such as the repainting of Carroll, Bagnall, and Windle; there was a better case for restoring 'Swansea' than for 'Chairman', since fewer parts were missing and the engine is the Trust's only Avonside.

Mr. J. Bushell wondered whether those who wished to restore 'Chairman' were willing to restore 'Swansea' instead. Mr. S.J. Roberts said that he disagreed with Mr. Lodge on several points. Mr. D. Broom endorsed the previous comments of Mr. Thorndike and Mrs. Youell upon the Trust's image, and felt that scrapping 'Chairman' would cause further bad publicity. Mr. Thorndike thought, however, that unserviceable engines created by themselves a bad image, and pointed to the danger of spending much money painting up useless engines at the cost of losing the ability to run a railway.

Mr. M.J. Leah advised the meeting that 'Chairman' was not a rare specimen; fourteen similar engines were still in industrial service and one was preserved at Lytham. He felt that, to avoid being labelled with a scrapyard image, the Trust should if it wished to cut up 'Chairman', publish and justify its intentions and contact other bodies interested in preserving the same class of engine. Mr. J.D. Edwards had contacted Midland Tar Distillers, the donors of the engine, and had confirmed that they had no objection to the engine being dismantled for spares.

Mr. J.D. Carr thought that with space restricted now and possibly to be still further restricted in Claytons' yard, a depot must be acquired before the Trust could consider keeping unserviceable locomotives. Mr. R. Greenhough reported that several L.U.U.R.S. members were willing to repaint 'Chairman', and pointed out that unserviceable parts from 'Henry de Lacy II' could be fitted to 'Chairman' for a static exhibit. Mr. J. Bushell wished to acknowledge the Trust's indebtedness to L.U.U.R.S. for traffic and engineering work without which the railway would not now exist; but effort could be better directed to other ends than restoration of 'Chairman'.

The Chairman then put to the vote the proposal made by Mr. S.J. Roberts and seconded by Mr. R. Greenhough: "That the group of members who have expressed willingness to take over 'Chairman' be allowed to do so, to reassemble, repaint and protect the locomotive so that it is attractive to the public and laid by as a static exhibit until such time as it is possible to start a mechanical overhaul, however far ahead this might be." The proposal was lost by 27 votes to 12.

After further discussion, it was proposed by Mr. F.W. Hampson, seconded by Mr. T. Leech, "That the locomotive 'Chairman' be offered on suitable terms in its present state to other railway preservation bodies to be kept preserved; and that if this offer be not taken up within six months of

the ending of the postal strike, the Trust should decide in Committee further action."

A differing proposal by Mr. A.E. Thorndike and Dr. A.L. Barnett was withdrawn at this point. After the adoption nem. con. of an amendment proposed by Mr. M.J. Leah and seconded by Mr. A.J. Cowling, to add at the end of the proposal the phrase "but before any action is taken, the Trust's proposals and reasons for them be fully explained in the railway press", the amended proposal of Messrs. Hampson and Leech was carried with 3 votes against.

Mr. J. Bushell suggested that members who were keen to repaint 'Swansea' should be briefed by those who had knowledge of its history and condition, and proposed, seconded by Dr. A.L. Barnett, "That 'Swansea' be kept as a static exhibit". This proposal was carried nem. con.

6. Proposal by Messrs. J. Cowling and M. Midgeley: "That the Annual General Meeting shall instruct the Committee to use the remaining components of the prefab lying in Claytons' yard as soon as possible, in order to extend, augment and improve existing structures belonging to the Trust. This use being in the best interests of the Trust, by cutting the Trust's losses by the use of such parts, which now constitute some seventy-five percent of the original total; before they, too, are irreparably damaged. The meeting recognises the fact that the originally intended use of the structure is now out of the question."

The proposal was put to the vote without discussion and carried nem. con.

7. Election of officers and committee: in view of the postal strike, the Chairman invited additional nominations from the floor: Mr. S.J. Roberts was thus nominated as a member of Committee by Messrs. J.D. Carr and T.S. White. Other nominations having been received previously, the Chairman declared the following elected unopposed:

President: Viscount Garnock

Vice-Presidents: John Alcock, Esq.

Dr. R.C. Lawrence

Rt. Rev. Eric Treacy, Bishop of Wakefield

Prof. W.A. Tuplin

Chairman: J.K. Lee

Deputy Chairman and Publicity Officer: J. Bushell

Secretary: J.D. Edwards

Treasurer: J.D. Carr

Committee Secretary: T.S. White

Membership Secretary: B.W. Ashurst

Traffic Manager: Dr. G.D. Crapper

Civil Engineer: A.J. Cowling

Mechanical Engineer: J.A. Lodge

After a ballot for the four remaining members of Committee, the following were declared elected:

P. Nettleton, M.N. Phillips, D.J. Hebden, G.E. Duckworth.

Appointment of auditors: on nomination by Mr. J. Bushell and Mr. A.J. Cowling, Messrs. J.A. Cox and N.A. Brampton were appointed.

8. Other business:

- (a) Mr. F.W. Hampson suggested that 'Chairman' and 'Swansea' be protected by tarpaulins.
- (b) Mr. J.D. Carr invited members to give to the Appeal Fund as they left the building.
- (c) Mr. J. Cowling enquired how long would pass before registration of the Trust as a limited company and as a charity. Mr. J.D. Edwards confirmed that the Committee wished to press ahead with this work, which would take several months yet to complete. Arising from this, Dr. A.L. Barnett enquired whether Deeds of Covenant were meantime of any use to the Trust; Mr. J.D. Carr advised that probably not, but that any covenants in existence at the time of registration as a charity could take effect immediately thereupon.
- (d) Mr. A.E. Thorndike, seconded by Mr. F.W. Hampson, proposed a vote of thanks to the Chairman and to all members involved in running the railway.
- (e) The Chairman, seconded by Mr. A.J. Cowling, proposed that Dr. R.F. Youell be appointed Permanent Way Adviser to the Trust, and this was carried.