

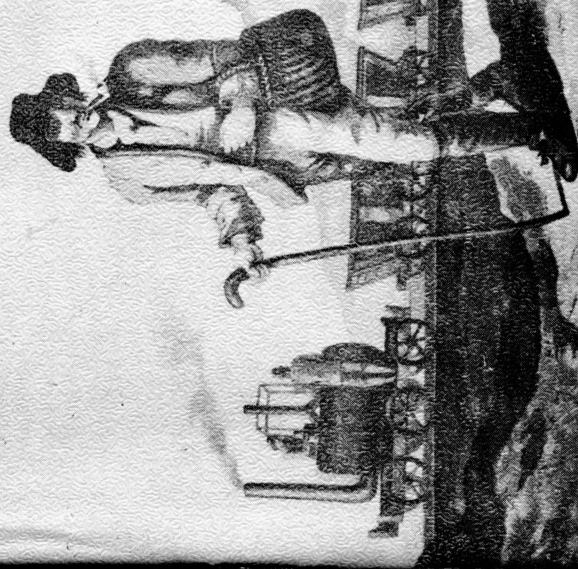
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# The old run

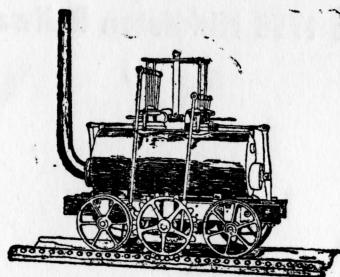
Journal of the 17th London Railway Road, London

George



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# THE OLD RUN

**Journal of the 1758 Middleton  
Railway Trust, Leeds**

Editor: B.W. Ashurst, 18 Inglewood Drive, Otley

VOL. 8 NO 60

SPRING 1968

## MRT RELAYING PLANS WILL SAVE BR TIME

The fact that a thing has been done a certain way since 1881 does not mean that it cannot be improved on. For as long as we know, Middleton trains long or short ran down to Balm Road Loop and the BR shunter came out to pick it up and pushed back empties instead.

The same practice has been continued in our own time. This results in the Balm Road shunter being on the wrong side. Whereas he is on the Down side of his train when shunting in the Yard, he is on the Up side of trains delivered or taken from our line. This involves a cumbersome running round, and if all the sidings are occupied and also the Down goods line, the shunter may have to wait until the Down main is clear before running round in preparation for a trip to or from Middleton.

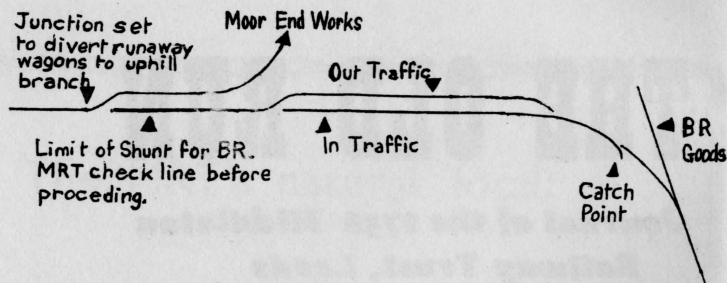
It occurred to a Middleton member that if the loop were made safe for BR locos the Balm Road shunter could tow our train in, run round at the top end and then propel our out train into the Balm Road yard WITH NO TIME SPENT ON RUNNING ROUND.

A careful examination of all aspects resulted in the following scheme:

1. The loop to be relayed up to BR goods standards.
2. One line to be occupied only by wagons out to BR and left clear of the fouling point so that a train could pass them on the other line.
3. There would be no need to have a separate block section for the loop, as it can be regarded as an interchange siding rather than a main running line.

*Continued overleaf*





4. The junction to Moor End being left set for the divergent road by catch point lever or clamp unless traffic is operated over it, so that any accidental runaways are diverted to the steeply uphill Moor End Branch and there is no fear of their running on to a BR loco delivering into the loop.

5. One locomotive beyond the top of the loop there will be a board with one side "BR engines not to proceed beyond this point" and on the other side "MR engines to ascertain line clear before proceeding towards departure line."

6. BR will still be protected by the catch points at the bottom loop junction.

This idea resulting from joint consultation is likely to save at least 50 hours unnecessary BR loco shunting time per year, more if traffic builds up again.

It should be pointed out that track does not lay itself, and the sooner the MRT gets on and lays it the sooner the new scheme will be started. The track itself has been in store for a long time, and a regular Wednesday afternoon team of University members has already gone to work. There is occasionally some useful p.w. work done on Saturdays and would doubtless be more if more members could be spared for this vital work. Even the Old Run editor has done some key bashing and chair-screw-twiddling, although he looks at the fishplate spanner as if it were a typographical error!

Though only a small achievement, this development does show that railway progress has plenty of room for such properly thought out economies.

We appreciate the consideration and thought given to the matter by the Divisional Operation Safety Officer, BR Leeds, in this development.

A further check on the proper operation of goods trains leaves no doubt that all trains and light engines on the main running line between Dartmouth Yard and Balm Road must carry a white headlamp and red tail lamp at all times, lit after dark. Even on single lines worked one engine in steam it is a necessary safety precaution. It is in the BR rule book and we are strongly advised not to think we can do without it. Train crews please note!

## 'NEW' STEAM CRANE APPEARS ON OLDEST RAILWAY

By DJ HEBDEN

Murray, Wood (Barry), Wade and others have all done it in the past. All are associated with Middleton and all were, and still are, great engineers past and present. Now Middleton strikes again with another FIRST: a Restored Steam Crane.

The search for a replacement boiler for the old steam crane led to Moor End Works. In the yard was a crane that had not been used for five years. Ben Wade made inquiries and the result was that we were a steam crane better off on the condition that if Clayton's needed it they should borrow it.

All this took place a year ago and since then much hard work has been done to move it over 50 feet of home-made track to raise it up to the level of the new track, an extension of Youell Siding. At one stage the crane was nearly right over when the Y7 pulled a little hard. Work progressed slowly with a boiler test in October.

On November 11 the crane was given a trial steaming, all going well until a gasket blew with the result that the fire had to be dropped and more work will have to be done, but it is hoped the crane will be in full service during 1968.

This should ease the permanent way situation as it is able to lift four tons, an achievement rarely accomplished even by our stoutest members. This will be restricted until the jib has had a few repairs, but it is still hoped to get everything ready soon, once I have found out how it works and who the assisting staff are.

For the technically minded the working pressure is 90lbs - twice that of the old crane. Since the initial boiler test and steaming work various valves have been ground and the list of Jobs Awaiting Attention can be dealt with as time and seasons allow. We still need a boiler for the old crane - 11ft high by 39ins diameter. Any offers?

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## It's time to fabricate

### Your help is needed to erect Middleton's prefab museum

A recent issue of The Old Run featured the story of the erection of a wooden building, which it was hoped would serve as a mess-room-workshop-museum. This building has proved most useful for the former, but the MRT's dream of a railway museum has so far remained unfulfilled.

Now, thanks to the brain-wave of Andrew McKenna, a new, completely separate building awaits erection on a site close to the present workshop, and it is hoped that work will have started on this by the time this article appears in print. Andrew saw the temporary prefabs being dismantled close to his home, heard that they were selling cheaply, and suggested that Middleton might purchase one for use as a locomotive cover.

Adaptation for this purpose was impracticable, but such a strongly constructed concrete building would make an admirable museum. The Railway purchased the building in the spring of 1967, with the necessary cupboards for publicity and sales materials, and an option on partitions to divide it into rooms.

Thus there is now the opportunity of developing an interesting collection of "railwayana" with particular reference to Yorkshire railways. There will be space to display it tastefully, and coherently tell the story of Middleton and its more recent neighbours! - If - and this is where YOU come in - IF you can help.

Labour is needed for the completion of the building, painting and preparing the inner area. It will, perhaps, be a safe home for that prized relic that your wife/mother threatens will "disappear" the next time she cleans out the attic! Careful hands will be needed to restore and renovate items to their former glory, and, of course, help with the new "shop" and watchful attendants on Open Days.

This long term prospect offers much scope, but requires much work before Middleton's dream becomes reality.

## ARX YOU A KXY PXRSON?

Xvxn though my typxwritxr is an old modxl, it works quitx wll xxcept for onx of thx kxyx. I havx wishd at timx that it workd prxfctly. It is trux that thxrx arx forty-six kxyx that function wll znough, but just onx kxy not working makx all thx diffxrncx.

I havx somxtimx thought that thx Middlxton Railway is somx-thing likx my typxwritxr - not all thx pxoplx arx working! You may say, "I am only onx pxrson, I won't makx or briak thx Middlxton Railway!" But it makx a big diffxrncx.

So nxxt timx you think you arx not nxxdxd. rxmxbxr my typx-writxr and say, I AM A KXY PXRSON!

# The Kepwick Run

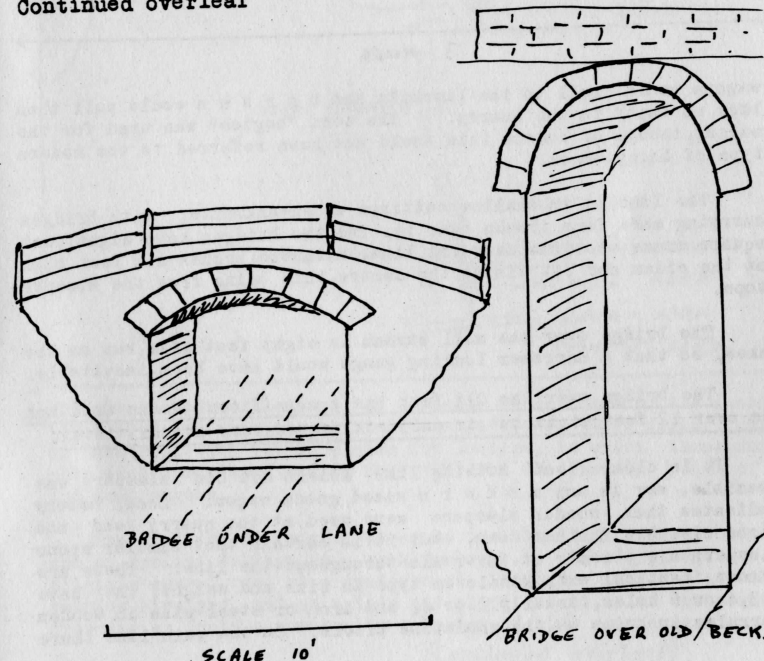
When one mentions stone sleepers spaced every three feet and at a gauge of less than 4ft 8 $\frac{1}{2}$ in, one would normally be thinking only of Middleton. But within 50 miles of us there lies a similar line slumbering peacefully in the grasslands beneath the Hambleton Hills. It is only shown on the One Inch Ordnance maps as two faint bridge marks over a footpath that is suspiciously straight, but the 6in. map (surveyed in 1853) shows just over three miles of

### 'Resident Mineralogist' wanders down a once busy waggonway

"OLD TRAMWAY" starting five miles due north of Thirsk and running slightly north of east to Kepwick limestone quarry on top of the hill above Kepwick Hall and Village.

"Quarry", "Claypit" and "Lime Kiln" abound on the map near the line and a curious railway historian on a mineralogical expedition promptly makes a beeline for the tramline. The word Tramway occurs more than once but the whole atmosphere is of a mineral wagonway, the level crossing cottage being named "Railway Cottage".

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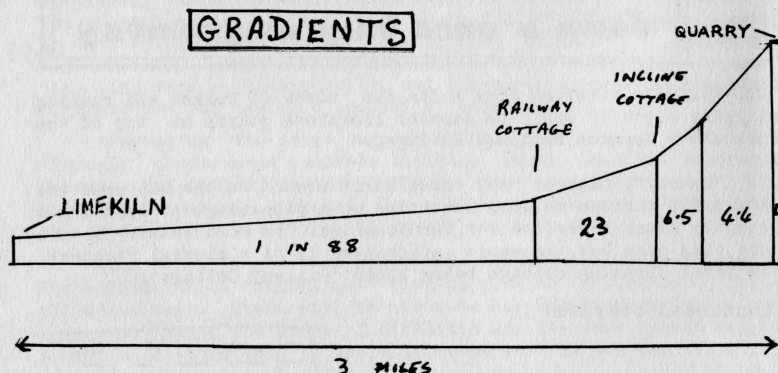




## The Old Run

The line was built to get the very good limestone from the quarry to a place near the only good road of the time, the turnpike from Thirsk to Yarm. The short roadway from the lime kiln to the turnpike is in a cutting on a steady incline. At the lime kiln, the wagonway ends on a high embankment so that the limestone could be tipped straight down to the furnaces, then down again to the wagons (road wagons this time apparently) for their exit on the turnpike for use in building or agriculture.

What is at once evident is that quite substantial earthworks and bridgeworks were undertaken to give a steady gradient downhill. Mr Kendall of Incline Cottage said that in his father's time the



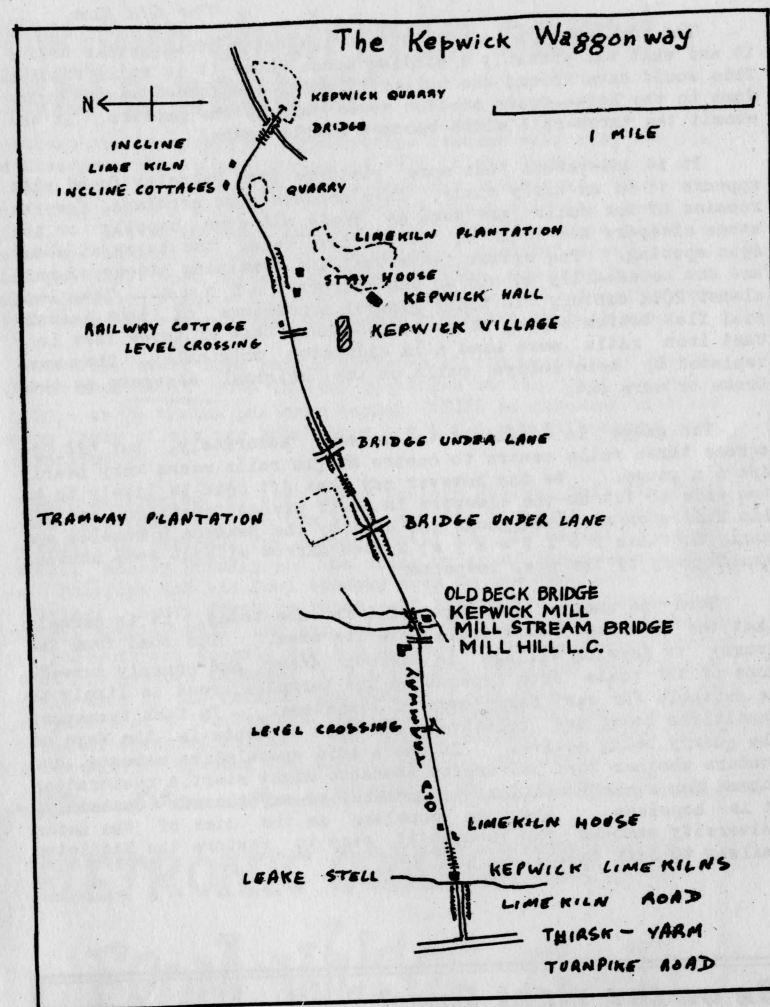
wagons would roll to the limekiln and horses would pull them back up empty to the quarry. The term "bogies" was used for the wagons, though of course this could not have referred to the modern type of bogey wagon.

The line is in shallow cuttings or embankments, with bridges carrying mere farm tracks over it. The two bridges have eight feet square cross sections over the line, with the arches six feet high at the sides and 7ft 6in at the centre, this being from the sleeper tops.

The bridge over the mill stream is eight feet wide but on the skew, so that a narrower loading gauge would have been inevitable.

The bridge over the Old Beck has a magnificent Roman arch and is over 12 feet high, but is only six feet square at rail level.

It is clear that nothing like modern 8ft 6in sleepers was possible, nor is any modern sized goods wagon. Local memory indicates that wooden sleepers were used at the quarry end and stone sleepers further down, but it is certain that similar stone sleepers appear at intervals throughout the line. These are almost identical with Middleton type in size and weight. They have 2, 3, 4 or 6 holes, usually 2 or 4, and iron or steel pins in wooden ferrules in holes on the sandstone blocks. On the main line there



appears to be two sleepers, or a single track, and on the incline three sleepers with about 9ft 2in gauge across three rails. This is identical with the Middleton Top Incline, in which three rails were used spreading out to four just at the passing point of up and down wagons.

The gradient at Kepwick steepens to 1 in 23 at Railway Cottage and at Incline Cottage rope working began. The first section is slightly curved, and at a gradient of 1 in 6.5. The incline then becomes straight and on a 1 in 4.4 slope right up to the summit, crossing en route a roadway by a bridge of 15ft square section.

(Continued overleaf)

The top level is about 20 feet long with stone walls beside it and what was probably a winding house above it is still visible. This would have housed the pulley by which the loaded wagons going down to the horse-drawn section would pull up the empties. At the summit the three-rail width becomes single again.

It is understood that some visitors from Helmsley found what appears to be an early chair. This arouses some problems, for the remains of the rails are such as would sit down happily on the stone sleepers and could be pinned down using the holes at about 4½ in spacing. The writer feels that the remaining pieces of rail are not necessarily as old as the sleeper layout. They look almost 20th century in their general appearance of light industrial flat bottom style. It is not unlikely that if three feet long cast iron rails were used at Middleton originally, they were replaced by more modern rails on the original sleepers as they broke or wore out.

The gauge is difficult to measure accurately, but 9ft 2in across three rails centre to centre of ¾ in rails means very nearly 4ft 6in gauge. We can however say that 4ft 8½ in is likely to be too wide to fit on the sleepers in their present position, and 4ft 1in Middleton standard gauge (as used by the Swansea & Mumbles and early Scottish railways) is too narrow without some unusual skulduggery by the p.w. inspector!

Were the quarry workings still in use today, it is certain that the wagonway would still have its uses. The road from the quarry to Kepwick village is narrow, steep and sharply curved. None of the roads from Kepwick to the turnpike road is likely to be suitable for vast lorryloads of limestone. In fact transport conditions today are relatively similar to those in the days of the quarry being active. In one's more speculative moments, one wonders whether York University students might start a restoration scheme for a short section. Hopeless, we may think? Certainly, it is hopeless. About as hopeless as the idea of the Leeds University members who thought it easy to restore the Middleton Railway to life again!

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## How our chairman saved BR(E) a packet!

Few things are incapable of improvement, however well they are run. When Liverpool Street was opened in 1874 it was thought to be far too big, even though the erstwhile terminus Bishopsgate (formerly Shoreditch) was cramped to bursting point with the expanding traffic. Yet in 20 years another eight platforms were built to make it the busiest (though not the largest) terminal station. In trains per day, both halves of London Bridge and both halves of Clapham Junction might exceed it, but this implied adding the traffic from two separate and adjoining companies in both cases.

There are still some raised eyebrows at the mention of the 30 trains an hour dealt with in four platforms in the "Jazz Service" of 1920, or 7½ trains per hour turned round as compared with the present limit of six per hour per platform with almost full electrification.

Each generation of the Great Eastern Railway had its great men who left their mark on the line and its history. Lord Claud John Hamilton, chairman for decades until the GER ceased to exist; Worsdell, Massey Bromley and the older order of locomotive engineers; Phillips and his fuel economy work on the "Holden's Patent" oil firing; Henry Worth Thornton and his drive and initiative; Whitworth Scholar Hill and his ability to pack power into small light locomotives; Russell and his behind-the-scenes genius giving rise to his Rainbow Express; Charles Fryatt of the GER S.S. Brussels shot by the Germans for defending his ship; down to the later genius of G. F. Pienness and his expertise on making really full use of electrification. Not a rich railway, no races to the North or Mallard speeds, but a good line for all that.

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Turning by way of diversion from pressing Middleton permanent way problems to a line on which he had once travelled daily, the writer recalled that at one time East Side trains sometimes left Liverpool Street from the West Side if running very late at night or at other odd times, notably the 4.25am Gidea Park newspaper train, which left from West Side Platform 3.

It seemed that Sunday traffic nowadays as compared with the 68 train paths an hour in the weekday peak hours was relatively small, and there seemed no reason why it should not be crammed into one side, thus enabling half the station staff to have Sunday off and giving a large saving in electric lighting. With little hope of such a radical alteration being officially approved, the plan was sent off to the Bishopsgate Offices, with a faint feeling that one was trying to teach one's grandmother to suck eggs.

To our delight, the plan triggered off some detailed research into the possibility and we allowed ourselves a little merriment at the official announcement that we have done what no trade union has ever done—closed the busiest terminus in London every Sunday. From Fireworks Day 1967 the East Side has handled all the traffic and apart from the inquiry office the older West Side is closed.

To lend an air of verisimilitude to an otherwise bald and unconvincing narrative, the BR press handout pointed out that passengers going to the Sunday market in Petticoat Lane would not have so far to walk. One feels that the saving of costs arising from the concentration would be worth it even if Petticoat Lane did not enter into it!

It is rather cheering to find that the odd suggestion made by an outsider is not cursorily brushed aside, but is looked into carefully by BR. However, enough of this tarradiddle — I must get back to urgent p.w. planning!

## **All hail to thee, O MIDDLETON!**

There is a railway that runs at Leeds,  
Upon which men have accomplished magnificent deeds.  
Here came true our pioneer's great dream,  
Of machines that would move by the power of steam!

"These are nought but madmen's toys!" some folk did say,  
As they saw them snorting and bellowing along the Iron Way,  
With rods and wheels that did clank and clatter,  
They made all manner of life hurriedly to scatter!

Today we salute these pioneers of steam and steel,  
Though other stout shoulders are now at the wheel;  
Not for glory do they stand and fight,  
But for the survival of their ancient birthright.

Whether we are right to struggle on today,  
Only our future history books can say;  
But we hope that men will still accomplish magnificent deeds  
Upon this railway that runs — at Leeds! — 'Anon.'

## **Vietnam Railways still deliver the goods**

"Ours is probably the most dangerous railroad in the world," modestly claimed Nguyen Ngoc Lam, director of South Vietnam Railways, last November.

Despite the Viet Cong, the railway, which has seen hard times since its construction by the French in the years 1885-1930, keeps on going. It has to, for not only is it handling more freight than ever (even though two-thirds of the system is out of operation) but it is an important element in the psychological war. If the trains stopped running, say the Americans, the will to fight would be dealt a severe blow, for the railway is associated with order and stability in people's minds.

The railway has 54 diesels, mainly American, and 87 steam locomotives, many of them French-built. Many of the steam engines are unserviceable.

Reconstruction of the line is a continuing process and since 1955 the US has invested \$25 million in it.

All trains are equipped with radio and are heavily guarded, and particularly important ones are preceded by light spotter planes who radio for help in the event of an attack.

Let's hope that one day the signals will be green all the way from the Mekong Delta to the Red River.

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# WHODUNIT!

By 'Waveney Valley'

Detective stories range from crude "whodunits" to first class literature. As incidentals or essential parts of the plot, it is delightful to note that railways appear quite often. At times it is clear that the writer's knowledge is not as expert as it should be, though admittedly the errors are normally only seen in film versions, along with trains that mysteriously change locomotive several times without stopping!

In this article, however, "Waveney Valley" looks at a few

## Railway detection work reveals new light ★ ★ ★

### ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ an Conan Doyle's geography

stories in which railways play an important part and which are generally accurately described. The article is a shortened version of one which appeared in the 1966 magazine of the Leeds University Railway Society and is reproduced by permission.

In The Moabite Cipher, by R. Austin Freeman, the forensic science expert Dr. Thorndyke has a false trail laid before him in an attempt to get him out of the way at a crucial time. The conspirator (after dangling a spurious arsenical arrowroot sample for testing) lures Thorndyke to "Rexford" in Essex on the 7.15pm train, which is supposed to arrive at 8.45, with a promise of a late train home after investigating the crime.

A wily Thorndyke disappears to his laboratory to look up his GER timetable, and then follows the conspirator, who at "Rexford" looks for "my cab" and vanishes over the bridge into the last up train three minutes after they arrive!

But Thorndyke and his assistant climb aboard the six-foot side of the moving train and let themselves in with a carriage door key, and later that evening the criminals are arrested en bloc at Lincoln's Inn by Thorndyke plus the police. The "up train" crawled along in most untypical Great Eastern fashion and stopped at all stations, taking over 2½ hours for the journey.

The only stations which fit linguistically are Wickford and Alresford. Wickford, a bare 30 miles from Liverpool Street, simply could not be 1½ and 2½ hours journey by express and stopping train respectively. Alresford, three stations beyond Colechester on the Clacton line, just about fits, while about 24mph for a stopping train is about right for the return journey.

The Blue Sequin affair took Thorndyke from Charing Cross to Weldhurst, on a branch line from Halbury Junction, with Shinglehurst as the next station. We cannot reconcile a passenger travelling via Halbury to Worthing, as the Charing Cross train must have run via the SE&CR route, whereas Worthing is west of south from London. The circumstances of the journey seem to indicate Paddock Wood as the Junction, and Goudhurst and Hawkhurst as the real Woldhurst and Shinglehurst.

The old chestnut "a cow on the line" is resurrected to help the investigation of a "murder" of a woman passenger in the branch line train by a steel spiked staff owned by the traditional "last person to see the deceased alive". Thorndyke ruthlessly demolishes this idea, and finds that some long-horned oxen were in a cattle truck alongside the running line, and that a haystack fire had panicked them into trying to escape. At the same time, the passenger stuck her head out of the window in flagrant contravention of the notice, and the sharp end of the horn did the damage. Result: "death by misadventure".

The Tilbury line sets the scene for a really scientific investigation by Professor Priestley, in John Rhodes' The Elusive Bullet. Two men are in a compartment on a train running between Rainham and Purfleet. One has a rifle, the other dies of a bullet in the head. It is a quite clear murder case until Priestley demonstrates that the bullet was not fired from close range and that the geometry of the compartment prevented the "murderer" from getting far enough from his victim to have aimed properly, and that the wound was the wrong type for a rifle bullet.

Careful investigation shows that Woolwich Arsenal was testing a new light machine gun of the Lewis type, but that the firing range was in the wrong direction for any risk of danger to the train, even for the bullet fired after the gun had slipped in its mountings. Then Priestley asked to see any flag-poles, and showed by his mathematics that one of them had deflected the bullet back to the train, spinning in such a way as to cause the rather unusual wound.

Looking at the real specialists in railway thrillers, we turn first to V L Whitechurch's railway stories. Some of these were blood and thunder, but all had good railway backgrounds. How the Captain tracked a German Spy took place between Lewes, Brighton, and the Portsmouth line, with the hero doing his journey on a platform ticket, in the absence of cash.

Whitechurch's classic of railway detection took place on the Didcot, Newbury & Southampton line, in the story of Sir Gilbert Murray's Picture. Thorpe Hazell discovered that the vanished picture had been in a goods van leaving Didcot but had disappeared together with the wagon on arrival of the train at Newbury!

The criminal's achievement of stealing a wagon from the

(Continued overleaf)



(Continued)

middle of a moving train is both amazing and credible. The wagon was by-passed by a temporary coupling of stout rope run outside it. On a downhill section the criminal unhitched the slack three-link coupling behind the special wagon, and between Upton and Churn let out the rope to give a long gap behind it.

A second shorter rope was used to let the wagon run halfway through the gap.

On passing Churn siding, an accomplice had tampered with the

## Where Sherlock Holmes really went

Annett's lock, and threw the switches so that the wagon containing the picture was diverted into the siding there, and the rope between it and the train cut. On a following down gradient, the rest of the train was coupled up and the rope thrown away, so that the train ran into Compton, the next station, minus wagon, ropes and conspirators.

Now let us look at some of the Holmes railway journeys. These have been dealt with by previous writers but will bear further discussion. Not all of his journeys are as easy to understand as one would wish. Holmes' last journey to the Continent, chased by Moriarty, was a tediously long way round, though this might be explained as evasive tactics. Holmes knew that railway telegraph poles were a constant distance apart in open country and worked out the speed from the poles passed per minute, commenting in his journey to Boscombe Valley on the GWR that they were moving at over 50mph.

We may deduce that The Hound of the Baskervilles adventure took place somewhere in the Lydford or Tavistock area of Dartmoor, since Baskerville arrived to see Holmes at Waterloo, whereas Holmes himself left from Paddington.

In The Bruce Partington Plans Holmes deduced from the finding of a body at Aldgate that it had been thrown off the roof of an Inner Circle train at the sharp curve and roll of the junction into the Metropolitan station there. He considered that it had been put on the train while standing between stations, and looked in the area where the Metropolitan trains run to join the District Railway between Kensington, Gloucester Road, and South Kensington. This led him to Cauldfield Gardens, Kensington, just on the Gloucester Road curve, where the house of a known international spy backed on to the line, just where trains would stop at signals!

Some quite good GER running is shown in The Dancing Men when Holmes returned from North Walsham on the 3.40p.m. with an almost

certain change at Norwich, and returning to Baker Street in good time for dinner. If we take 7pm for dinner and 30 minutes to Baker Street from Liverpool Street, and 30 minutes on the local train to Norwich, a running time of 2½ hours is left from Norwich to London, good running for that time via either Colchester or Cambridge. Uncertainty as to the Holmes dinner time and knowledge of his erratic habits, however, makes this only an approximate timing.

Let us look at one Holmes journey in detail, as I suspect it has been wrongly interpreted. This is the case of The Priory School. Holmes leaves Euston with the principal of the school, and arrives in the Peak District where both the school and the home of the Duke of Holderness can be found.

The area is described as "Hallamshire", which is a rather vague term referring to the eastern extremity of the Peak District near Sheffield. The Priory School was six miles south of Holderness Hall.

The duke's son was abducted from the school, and a master giving chase was killed on a bicycle half way across the moor. The nearest town was Mackleton, and the hill was a "rolling, desolate, wilderness" sloping upwards from the school to the Hall. The main road near the Hall is described as "the Chesterfield high road" which appears to have come from Mackleton.

Not far from the Hall was the Fighting Cock Inn, high up on the moors. From this inn, Reuben Hayes, the murderer, escaped in a light horse cart and was arrested in Chesterfield the same night by police tipped off by Holmes, who had a long walk to Mackleton to send his telegram off.

Leaving aside the events not directly relevant to the location of the story, let us look at the possibilities. The previous account published (in The Railway Journeys of Sherlock Holmes) seems to rely on the appearance of the name Chesterfield, and identifies Mackleton with Alfreton in Derbyshire. But this had several drawbacks, knowing Conan Doyle's habit of accurate description. The area between Alfreton and Chesterfield is surely too far east to be Peak District, and the country is mining and agriculture, not waste moorland.

Then again, why Euston for their journey? Admittedly Derby to Matlock was originally a LNWR project before it became Midland and went on to Buxton and Manchester, but at the time Holmes and Watson were travelling, Euston would have been out of the question except by changing at Birmingham, Tamworth or Crewe and then again at Derby.

Kings Cross-Hitchin-Bedford, or St Pancras-Bedford, would have been the normal routes after the Hampton in Arden-Euston line was abandoned if the hilly country west of Alfreton were the right place.

(Continued)

Let us look at the real Peak District, in the Buxton area. Here we are on routes served directly from Euston via the North Staffs Railway. Macclesfield and Congleton, or Macclesfield and Bollington, would appear to be the source of the name "Mackleton". The Chesterfield road could be the due west-east road from Macclesfield via Buxton and Hassop to Chesterfield, part of which is the A6 road nowadays. Allgreave or Wildboarclough could be the hamlets near which the Priory School stood, and Macclesfield Forest the village near which the Hall stood, with the Fighting Cock Inn on the moor road being the Cat and Fiddle at about 1700 feet.

How about the flight of the murderer? In mid-May, without the invention of Summer Time, it would be dark at about 8.30pm, and Holmes and Watson arrived at the Fighting Cock "just before nightfall". After eating they kept watch outside and saw the villain leave "driving at a furious pace" in the light cart in the direction of Chesterfield. Holmes left Watson to go back to the school while he went on to Mackleton to telegraph the police, and Hayes was arrested at Chesterfield at 11 o'clock.

How do the times fit in? If Holderness Hall is near Macclesfield Forest, and the Fighting Cock is the Cat and Fiddle, with the school to the south of the Hall, then all three are between 4 and 6 miles of Mackleton and the telegraph office. The departure of the horse cart we may put at about 9pm, and Holmes' arrival at the telegraph office about 10.30pm.

The Cat and Fiddle is 26 miles from Chesterfield, and if Hayes was arrested as he came into Chesterfield on the main road by police alerted by Holmes, that allows two hours for the journey, and a murderer is unlikely to spare the rod and spoil the horse. The road is steeply downhill to Buxton, and then drops steadily all the way to Baslow on the Derwent valley, with but a few uphill sections interspersed. Chesterfield is lower down than Baslow, but a long but not steep climb intervenes to Wadshelf. On the whole, the journey is better than level, and within the capability of a horse.

Can we therefore conclude that (using the Holmes/Thorndyke methods) the Priory School was not near Alfreton, but in the true Peak District? It also seems probable that Macclesfield, M. Forest, Cat and Fiddle, and Allgreave, are the true places used by Conan Doyle for Mackleton, Holderness Hall, the Fighting Cock, and Priory School. So it is Euston for Priory School, with North Rode, Congleton, or Macclesfield as the stations for alighting.

A pity the GCR had not been invented in the heyday of the Holmes era; otherwise we might have seen Holmes travelling from Marylebone, which would have been almost on his doorstep. For the original "Mackleton" at Alfreton, Kirkby Bentinck or Tibshelf Town would be quite adequate, but the Macclesfield Mackleton would mean going via Sheffield, Godley and Romiley, ending up at Macclesfield Central GC and NS joint station. The GC was in fact the only route by which both "Mackleton" real-life equivalents could have been reached.

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