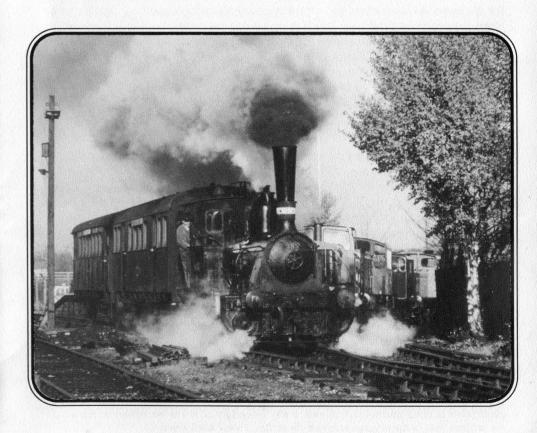
# THE OLD RUN

JOURNAL OF THE 1758 MIDDLETON RAILWAY LEEDS



**NUMBER 149 WINTER 1994/95** 

# THE OLD RUN

NUMBER 149

**WINTER 1994/5** 

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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 Spring Issue should reach the Editor by 1st March 1995, at the latest, please.

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Cover picture: 385 steams away from the platform on Sunday 6th November. A lovely photo, even in black and white, but what a pity we cannot afford to use colour on the cover; the autumn tints in the original are really beautiful. Photo: *Keith Hartley*.

# FROM THE CHAIRMAN

Ian Smith

I am delighted to be able to report the completion of the first stage of our new workshop building. Our trusty workshop gang are now powering ahead on getting it ready for fitting out but, not wanting to leave it unused, have decided to undertake a repaint of the L.N.E.R. Ballast Brake Van from its "Blobby" livery to a more sombre grey!

Treasurer Stan Holdsworth has been gently (!) persuading people to assist with the fitting out, and has to date managed to gain assistance with wiring, painting, heating and fitting out the upstairs! What do you do after lunch, Stan?

The official opening ceremony on 19th November was an occasion I shall long remember. After the formal opening, Fred Youell performed the naming ceremony, which he thought was for the "Matthew Murray Building". His face, when he unveiled the plaque saying "THE FRED YOUELL BUILDING" was a picture! The honour is well-deserved, since without Fred there would be no railway for us all to enjoy. I would like to personally thank all those who worked so hard to ensure that the 19th went so well. What was good to see was that all our guests enjoyed themselves so much, and I feel we really did make many new friends that day.

Of course, although we are gearing up for Santa at present, one major job which is looming for the New Year is that of tracklaying. We desperately need to lay six panels of concrete track before Easter, if we are to maintain progress on replacing all our track before it becomes life-expired. This means that we need a "Heavy Gang" to actually lay the stuff! Assistant Civil Engineer Rupert Lodge would be delighted to hear from any member willing to assist on this vital job. His number is on the inside back cover, or he can be contacted via the railway. Alternatively, just come down one weekend in the New Year and I'm sure a job can be found for you!

Finally, on behalf of the M.R.T. Council, I wish all our members a Merry Christmas and a peaceful New Year.

[The Middleton Railway Trust's first Chairman rang the Editor to ask that his grateful thanks also should be passed on to the membership, for the events of the 19th November. He was hoping to be able to write a letter for publication, but I think he has still not quite got over his surprise on finding his own name on the plaque when he removed the cloth.]

# A REET GRAND DO

Sheila Bye

In Yorkshire terms, that just about describes our shed topping out ceremony.

Even the weather was on our side, and the morning rain cleared up, leaving a fine afternoon with an hour or two of decent light for

photographing the special trains etc.

The ceremony started at one o'clock, with a gathering together of about a hundred people in the new shed. There were members, guests from the firms who had helped in some way with materials or work, and guests from the railway press and from the A.R.P.S. and other preservation friends, together with a sprinkling of members' and guests' children. Shortly before the ceremony began, three key guests arrived - our Vice President Fred, Mrs. Susan Youell, and their son Matthew.

With everyone settled in place, Ian Smith made an introductory speech (without his megaphone - presumably to test the shed's accoustics). He briefly mentioned the salient points of the railway's history and the history of the Trust itself, from its inception at the very beginning of 1960 by the Leeds University Union Railway and Transport Society members, led by their staff representative, First-Chairman Fred. He continued with some memories of that highly memorable character, including the story of how we got our tunnel. "A tunnel will be far too expensive," moaned the motorway men, "Isn't there any alternative?" "Yes," answered Fred, "A level-crossing!"

After Ian had finished by thanking all who had had any part in the planning and building of the shed, the official opening was performed jointly by our oldest working member, Geoff Saunders, our youngest working member, Andrew Plumb, and our oldest working diesel, *Mary*, who ceremonially entered the shed after Messrs. Saunders and Plumb had drawn back the doors.

Once *Mary*'s owner, Graham Parkin, had safely settled her over one of the inspection pits, Vice-President Fred was brought forward to perform the shed-naming ceremony by uncovering a plaque on the wall. At which point, a fairly well-kept secret was revealed - our new shed is to be known as The Fred Youell Building, in honour of that indefatigable gentleman without whom there probably would be nothing left to need an engine shed. It was the general concensus of opinion - at the time and afterwards, that no-one could remember ever seeing our Fred so completely lost for words, though he did manage a brief speech of thanks once the surprise had worn off a little. To end the ceremonial part of the afternoon, Fred was presented with an engraved plaque commemorating the event (complete with a picture of one of his beloved Great Eastern Railway Claude Hamilton locomotives), and Susan

Youell was presented with a bouquet. (Susan's own part in the beginnings of the Middleton Railway's preservation era was by no means insubstantial; she did a lot of hard graft both behind the scenes and "front of house" - I know, for instance, that Fred has always taken great pride in telling everyone that he is married to a lady engine driver!)

The official business being now disposed of, tea was brewed, and the multitude was duly fed. *Mary*'s glossy appearance was much admired, the displays of Middleton photos were perused, and there was much chatting with old friends and making of new friends. The only person who seemed at all unhappy was one of our tiniest guests, who was fascinated by the Middleton videos being shown on a T.V. set near the tea queue, and who looked most aggravated when Ian turned the set off for a minute whilst he announced that the first train was ready to depart.

Several trains were run: more than intended, in fact, as the sight of the Y7 and her train attracted quite a few of the passing public, who were accommodated in exchange for a donation - no tickets officially being on sale. *Mary* and the Y7 were specially chosen for the day's events because one is the oldest working diesel at Middleton and the other is the oldest working steam

engine at Middleton.

Both locomotives had been beautifully groomed for their starring roles and were a real credit to someone's "elbow grease". It was nice that Bill the Bishop and Alan Bowman were able to come down for the great day and see their Y7 in such fine fettle. Sad to say, that other Steam Power Trust stalwart, Ken, has been very ill and felt unable to make the journey. His presence was much missed, and I'm sure all his friends at the Middleton Railway will want to join in sending him our very best wishes.

The rest of the afternoon passed at a leisurely pace, with the train chugging up and down, and little clusters of people taking another look at the shed displays, or chatting on the platform in the fading light. One display in the new shed was a poster size sheet of paper, naming all the many firms who have helped us by looking kindly upon us when it came to charging for labour or materials during the building. Stan Holdsworth will be writing for the next issue about the friendly firms he has encountered on our behalf, and their names eventually will appear on the shed wall on a more permanent 'thank you' heard.

'thank you' board.

The 19th November certainly provided an afternoon to remember, and enough sheer goodwill and friendship was generated in the new shed to have burst the walls of a weaker structure. Everything seemed to be perfectly judged; just the right balance of ceremony and informality. Everyone seemed to go away with a happy smile (except perhaps our tiny telly addict), and I'd like to end with a bit of praise for everyone connected with planning, organising and working on preparations for the great day, and for those who worked in the shop, in the shed, and on the train, while the rest of us were busy chatting and enjoying ourselves.

Thanks a lot, all of you; it really was a reet grand do!

#### 5-PAGE PHOTO FEATURE



1. Preparing the Y7 to haul the special train. Photo: Keith Hartley



2. The train ready and waiting, just prior to the ceremony. Photo: Sheila Bye

## - THE SHED CEREMONY



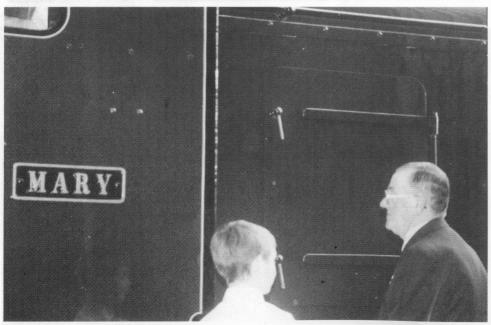
3. Key guest, Vice-President Fred Youell. Photo: Keith Hartley



4. Chairman Ian Smith addresses the gathering. Photo: Sheila Bye



5. Mary edges into the shed, driven by Graham Parkin. Photo: Sheila Bye



6. The shed-openers, Mary, Andrew Plumb and Geoff Saunders. Photo: Keith Hartley



7. Laura Hebden presents a bouquet to Susan Youell. Photo: Keith Hartley



8. Our first and fifth Chairmen in conversation. Photo: Keith Hartley



9. Present M.R.T Chairman Ian Smith poses with First Chairman Fred Youell, in front of the new shed's nameplate. Another plaque will join it on the shed wall eventually, naming and thanking all of the firms who have helped us in some way during the building work. Photo: Sheila Bye

Unfortunately, the usual batch of Loco Notes and Notes & News from Steve Roberts seems to have been delayed, first by the Middleton Railway's pre-Christmas rush and then by the Post Office's pre-Christmas rush. As it is important for December membership renewal notices to go out with this issue, the opportunity was taken to provide full photo coverage of the shed 'topping-out', and members will be brought up-to-date with loco and other yard news in the Spring issue.

Meanwhile, a few items of M.R.T. and other news:

**NOEL BRAMPTON** who, for many years, has been a much respected source of good administrative advice, has been appointed a Vice-President of the society.

**GEOFF SAUNDERS** (a source of much good practical railway-operating advice!) has become Yard Manager.

**DEATH OF AN EARLY M.R.T. MEMBER** - the Editor was sad to hear recently from Mrs. Hannan, of Sutton Coldfield, that her husband Eric - our Member No.194, had died in February this year. Mr. Hannan had obviously been a member from the society's very early days but, when he wrote to us early last year re blank pages in his *Old Run*, he revealed that in all that time as a member he had only been able to visit the railway on three occasions. Distance, work and, more recently, advancing years, had prevented him from coming more often, and yet he had retained his membership all those years, just to keep in touch with the railway's progress and, of course, to support the M.R.T. in its work.

#### FROM JOHN CRANE, A.R.P.S.:

A.R.P.S. A.G.M. - will be held in London, on the weekend of 28th January. Members' approval will be sought for the proposed new A.R.P.S. membership structure, and for a new, clear "Mission Statement". Major John Poyntz may be giving an update address on railway safety matters, and there might also be a chance of a 'Eurostar' trip to Paris on the Sunday. Further details from A.R.P.S.

FEDECRAIL 1995 CONFERENCE - will be held in Strasbourg on 19th & 20th May (note the change of date). Extramural possibilities include a visit to the excellent French National Railway Museum at Mulhouse, and trips on Strasbourg's new supertrams. Details from Peter Ovenstone, 33 Palmerston Place, Edinburgh, EH12 5AU.

THE RAILWAY LETTER SERVICE - a seminar on this subject will be held on 24th/25th March at Peterborough. Telephone Phil Jones, (01733 26683) for further details.

#### FROM M.R.T. MEMBER, RABBI WALTER ROTHSCHILD:

I came across the following in an old copy of Trains Illustrated (May 1960); I

wonder whatever happened to this particular scheme?

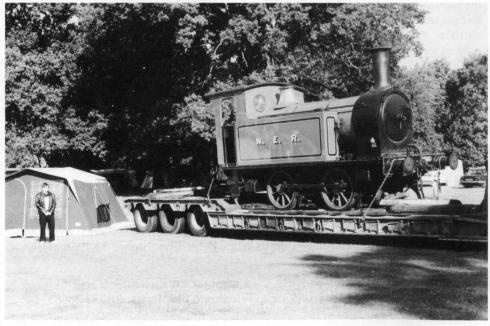
"Sir,- In commemoration of the Bicententary of the Middleton Colliery Railway (1758-1958), the Railway Correspondence & Travel Society propose to erect a tablet on the site of the coal staithe which formed the city terminus of the line in Great Wilson Street, Leeds. The anticipated cost is approximately £60 and all donations towards this amount will be gratefully received by Mr. W. Bottomley, R.C.T.S. Middleton Tablet Appeal Treasurer, 18, Greencliffe Avenue, Baildon, Shipley, Yorkshire, and will be acknowledged individually.

West Riding Branch, R.C.T.S. J.C.W. HALLIDAY, Chairman."

If any members have information about this scheme, please get in touch with the Editor (address on Page 2). It would be interesting to know if the appeal ever produced any results.

#### FROM RAILWAY RAMBLERS:

Fancy a change of railway scenery now and again? Railway Ramblers' Yorkshire & Humberside Branch organises monthly walks on and around railway routes, both used and disused. The group also holds informal monthly meetings at the Engine Inn, Moor Road, from 8.00p.m. the first Thursday of every month. (Ring Jane Ellis on 0274 667234, during office hours, for further details.)



The Y7 'rambled' off to the Harewood steam rally back in Summer, albeit on the back of a low-loader. Photo: Graham Smith

# TIMES PAST - WINTER 1740

Sheila Bye

The Leeds Mercury, Tuesday, 5th February 1740:

Newcastle Jan. 16.

The Coal Owners of the Collieries of Durham and Northumberland have been at very great Expence in clearing their Waggon-Ways of Snows, and still continue to employ great Numbers of poor People in that Work, who are by the Severity of the Weather deprived of following any other Employment. By these means the labouring People in this Neighbourhood have the Happiness to enjoy the Blessing of Plenty, whilst others in several Parts of this Island are (by all Accounts) starving for want of Subsistance. There are already above 600 Coal Carriages at Work, and others are going to work daily; so that if this Weather continues, the several Staiths will be well replenish'd with Coals, ready to supply the Wants of the Necessitous when the Frost breaks up, and the City of London and other Places will be well supply'd in their greatest Scarcity at the usual Rates; for though Coals are now selling from 19 to 20s. per Chaldron in this Town from the neighbouring Land sale Collieries, the Coal-Owners are selling theirs, of a much superior Quality, at the usual Prices, being about 2d. per Bushel, tho' the same Bushel is now retailed in London for Half a Crown.

Having researched the local papers around all the dates when it was known that something was happening on or to the Middleton Railway, I set about searching through all Bradford Local History Library's microfilms of *The Leeds Mercury*, to see what else was there, unsuspected, about the railway, the collieries, and their various owners. This little gem turned up almost immediately, the microfilmed copies of the paper starting in 1738.

It gives a nicely detailed picture of the busy waggonway scene on Tyneside, a full 18 years before our own waggonway/railway was built, and is not quite "foreign territory" as of course the Brandling family, who by then owned the Middleton estates, were a Tyneside family well established in the Tyneside mining industry and with two waggonways of their own in use in that area for more than four decades previous to publication of this newspaper report.

Snow has always been a problem to railways (as B.R. would have to admit after their more recent debacle over "the wrong sort of snow"). However, some seventy five years after the winter snows of 1740, John Blenkinsop proudly informed Sir John Sinclair that "The steam Carriage was at work last winter at Middleton night and Day and was not impeded during the great falls of snow"; and, of course, his rack rail, 'reinvented' by some foreigner many years later, became a standard means of traction on steep and snowy mountain slopes. It is a great injustice that Blenkinsop's invention has so often been dismissed as a "dead-end" in locomotive development.

# A HUNSLET EXPERIENCE

Henry Gunston

Despite the almost total disappearance of the railway's historic surroundings noted in '. . . By Any Other Name . . .' in the Autumn issue, older buildings and townscapes do still survive in nearby Hunslet. I offer the following outline of a possible "History Walk" to add to those already in the Guidebook.

From the station, note the old Vicarage and the former site of Hunslet Lake [1], then investigate the Arthingtons. With the single terraces at each end having blank back walls, and the variety of treatments of the terrace ends facing Arthington Avenue on the 'Lakeside', they are an interesting group of streets. [2]

There's a genuine "corner shop" at the far end, in Norwich Avenue, and Arthington View brings you to our Balm Road Branch. Turn right on to Beza Road, and the solid stone wall by the railway to the left, with Clayton's Moor End Works beyond, contrasts with the new industrial units to the right.

Follow Beza Road to its end, and you look across to the back of Bridge House, by Balm Road railway bridge. This was once part of a flax mill complex. [3]

Back across Acme Crossing and up Tulip Street, there is an old brick cottage on the right in "Baxter's Crushers", followed by the works and yards of Clayton's and Henry Berry's works. [4] Turning right, past the ancient 'Gardener's Arms', you come to the Beza Street frontage and office block of Berry's Croydon Works, and then have views from the Midland railway bridge. Once over the bridge, take the right turning towards the Balm Road Industrial Estate and straight in front, across the railway, is a view of the other side of Clayton's Moor End Works. [5]

In the amazing way that pubs survive in Hunslet when all about them has fallen to the bulldozer, 'The Sun' and 'The Brass Moulders' still stand proud in what remains of Church Street. Moving north west towards the site of the Midland Hunslet Station, a between-the-wars gospel hall survives on the right. Ahead is a neat combination of a red brick house and works yard on the corner with Hillidge Road. Now "Hunslet Waste Traders" (Rottweilers loose in the yard, so the sign says), it was apparently once a brass works and the complex still very much captures the style of a small works with house attached.

Turn left across the one-time Midland Hunslet Station railway bridge, and it is a short step through "Motorwayland" back to our station. This walk might not draw the crowds of the "Murray Men's Country Theme Park Extravaganza", but it is, I suggest, a "Hunslet Experience".

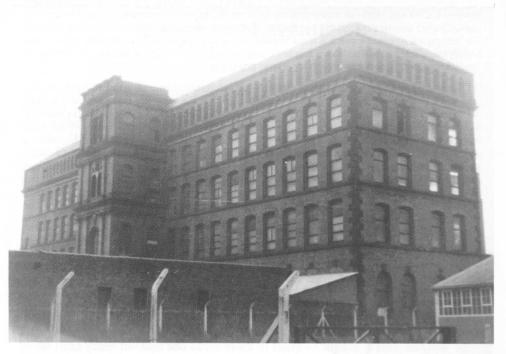
#### Additional notes from the Editor/Historian:

[1] Hunslet Lake was fed by the Balm Beck, the continuation of Belle Isle Beck which originated near Middleton Broom Colliery, and most likely consisted of water draining from the pits. The Lake, which for some years had a small raft on it giving boat-rides, was filled in c.1920 and bowling greens were made on the site.

- [3] The imposing central building of the flax mill has unfortunately been demolished within the last year or so. It was built in the early 1840's, I think, later than the surviving buildings. At that time, the flax spinning mill belonged to Wolff & Smith and then to Briggs & Co. By 1907, flax-spinning had long since finished on the site, and the buildings were used piecemeal by a variety of industrial owners: a glass bottle manufacturer, a maker of porcelain electrical fittings, a printers' engineers, a joiner and undertaker, and a machine tool manufacturer. Forty years later, in 1947, a printing works, a curriers', a construction engineer, and a haulage contractor shared the various buildings with the British Fish Canners Ltd., who canned sardines and sild. The latter, extremely decrepit and downright unhygienic-looking, premises were (actually in 1947 I think) visited by a school party which included the Editor: who made sure never to eat any sardines of that brand ever again! The Midland Railway at this point was the scene of the 1882 'Enterprise' fire subject of Henry's article in the last issue.
- [4] Other streets, long ago demolished, were called Gasholder Place and Gasholder Terrace, in honour of Clayton's most famous product. They supplied gasholders to the entire world, more or less, and one of our railway's heaviest trains conveyed parts of one on the first leg of their journey to New Zealand.
- [5] The Industrial Estate lies on the site once occupied by Nicholson's Chemicals (locally "Nickies"), whose workmen helped put out the 1882 Pullman car fire.



1. The older, Balm Road frontage of the flax spinning mill complex, as it was in January 1967. All photos in this sequence: *Sheila Bye* 



2. The monumental centre building of the flax spinning mill, only recently demolished.



3. Clayton's Moor End Works, in 1975, part-obscured by the company's offices on the corner of Gasholder Street. An old gentleman who worked at Moor End in the 1920's told the Editor that the gatekeeper at that time used a piece of rack rail as a doorstop.



4. Henry Berry's works, on Beza Street, with the white-painted Gardener's Arms nestling beside the work's offices. Photos 3. to 6. were all taken in 1975.



5. 'The Sun' on Church Street, with 'The Brass Moulders' to the right, with Hunslet Parish Church and the corner of Balm Road in the background right.



6. The site of the Midland Railway's second Hunslet Station (the first one having been situated a few hundred yards away near the end of our Balm Road Branch. The house mentioned by Henry is the one to the left of the group pictured.

[N.B. Unfortunately, Henry has been unable to complete the second part of his article about the 'Enterprise' fire in time for this issue, which has to go out on time with December membership renewals. It will appear in the Spring issue, and Henry sends his apologies for the delay. Part Two will be gleaned mainly from photocopies of *The Leeds Mercury*'s lengthy reports of the inquest on Dr. Arthur. The condition of the original papers does not seem to have been good, and the microfilm is old and much scratched by careless use. The photocopies were the best possible, but the only way of reading from them is with a magnifying glass, with a strong light directed on to the back of the paper! It will take some time.]

#### MIDDLETON ON THE BOX

Sheila Bye

Did anyone else spot our railway's vital role in the B.B.C.'s recent Seaforth series? It was, perhaps, not the sort of series that most Middleton members would be watching, but one of the better things about this 'sort of Yorkshire latter-day *Gone With The Wind*' was trying to spot the film locations. Seaforth's 'Mafeking estate' was the area around Trentham Street, at the other side of Dewsbury Road, and the Seaforth town centre was mainly, I think, Bradford's 'Little Germany' group of Victorian wool warehouses.

Due to conflicting viewing interests, I had to watch the series on video and, on one of several occasions when one of the characters looked at a large-scale map of the area, it was easy to use the Pause button and confirm from a closer look that it was, indeed, an old Ordnance Survey 24":1 mile map of Moor End Works, the Gasholder Streets, the Midland Railway, etc., with the small mineral line highlighted in red ink.

Which leads me to wonder how much the fictitious builder would have offered us for our Balm Road branchline. Or, just as unrealistically I suppose, to wonder how much the B.B.C. should pay us for our branchline's off-stage key role in their much-vaunted drama.

# LOCAL TRAM & RAIL ROUTES

R.F. Youell

It has been a problem for a long time, to clarify the reports of connections between tram and rail routes in the earlier years of the 20th century at Middleton.

The main snag has been the difference in the sizes of the flanges. The technique of using 4'734" gauge tram track, so that rail vehicles could run on the outer rim of the flange (as in Glasgow and elsewhere) could not be used in Leeds, as both tram and rail routes were the same 4'8½" gauge.

The 1919 plans show the route of the No.12 Middleton tram route as built from Moor Road, Hunslet, to Hopewell View, Middleton. However, there was an alternative route avoiding the sharp bends at each end of the Moor Road section. This would have proceeded towards the City, demolishing the Craven Gate public house en route, running immediately West of Middleton Railway, crossing the Midland Railway on a new bridge, and then turning along Jack Lane to connect with the existing tram route on Dewsbury Road. This was not built. [See sketchmap, Page 21.]

The evidence of a tramline/railway connection is in a plan for the Balm Road to Middleton tram route. This was actually built as centre road reserved track along the new roadway from Balm Road to Belle Isle, and on to join the No.12 tram route near Hopewell View, where it then terminated. However, this tram route went a different way. From Balm Road (then) tram terminus, it cut across to the bottom of Old Run Road (shown on maps as "Old Road"),

and then proceeded up Old Run Road, passing under the G.N.R. line. It then ran just East of Middleton Railway, ran up a steep gradient for the last section, crossed Town Street, and then turned sharply round to make an end-to-end connection with the No.12 tram route as built. [See sketchmap, Page 21.]

Although this route is shown on the same deposited plans as the route which was built, there is no evidence of its construction ever having got any further. Apart from a few yards at the Balm Road and Hopewell View ends, the line as built many years later did not follow the early plans. Middleton Railway is shown on the plans as "Mineral Railway".

About halfway between the Old Run Road G.N.R. bridge and Middleton Colliery, is "a connecting line to join Tram route no 6 with Mineral Railway". The gradient is 1 in 29.65 upwards from Middleton Railway to the proposed tram route, and is 1 furlong 1.06 chains long (about 242 yards). We are therefore faced with the use of goods wagons of standard gauge, but with flanges that would run on both tram and railway type rails. The railway flange width was to fit 1¾" flangeway, the tram width 1". A thinner-than-usual flange would have been required on the wagon, in fact. It is true that this would ride rather roughly over the junctions, and would certainly not be regarded as safe for passenger carrying. However, rough-riding coal wagons were nothing new!

Even though this tram route was not built as in the deposited plans, it seems reasonable that the designers would not have gone to the expence of parliamentary plans for a tram/rail connection unless they could come up with a wagon which would run on both.

So at last we seem to have an answer to the question "Did railway goods wagons run on the tramlines?", an answer which holds together most of the time.

[Many apologies for the somewhat late appearance of this interesting article. It was sent to the Editor at least a couple of years ago, with the heading "Suitable to go in the History". The information did, indeed, go into the last edition of the History, but unfortunately the script and accompanying sketchmap were then filed in the History research collection, from whence they have only just emerged during a tidy-up.]

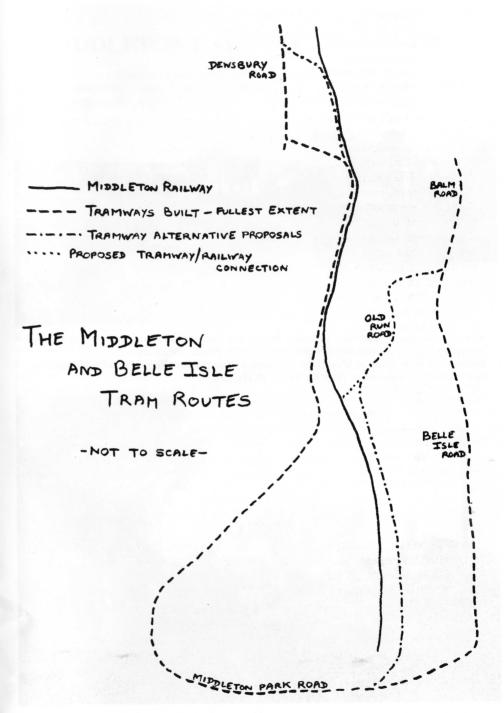
#### **IMPORTANT**

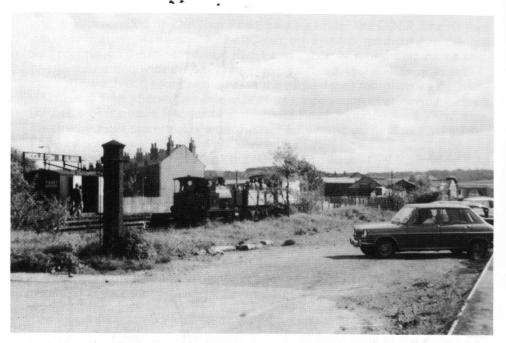
**PLEASE NOTE** that all the 'phone number area codes in the Page 23 contact list have been changed in preparation for the 16th April 1995, when most area codes will change to include a '1' after the initial '0'.

The few exceptions to this rule include two codes in our contact list:

Leeds . . . . 0532 becomes 0113 2 Sheffield . . 0742 becomes 0114 2

Our list has been changed early, as the new codes can be used now; until 16th April, the system will accept either the old or the new code. It may be *The Old Run*, but it does try to be up-to-date in some instances.





Above - Matthew Murray, pictured from the north, with our goods wagon and brakevan train at the old sleeper platform in 1975. Photo: Sheila Bye Below - the new scene at Moor Road Station, pictured from the south, with 385 and our two coaches in November 1994. Photo: Keith Hartley



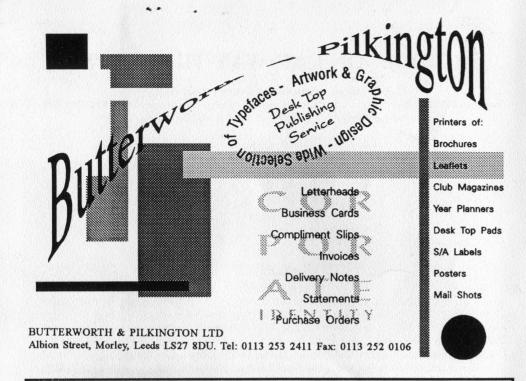
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