

OLD RUN NEWS

Newsletter of the Middleton Railway Trust

Number 26, April/May 1967.

This Newsletter has been delayed to enable it to be sent out with a back number of the Old Run, just produced, the minutes of the A.G.M. and the recent amendments to Operating Rules of the Railway.

John Alcock, 1697, will be out of action for maintenance for approximately 3 weeks, attention being given to a bent valve and a sub-standard cylinder. This will give an excellent opportunity for would be steam drivers to come and learn the trade on Tuesday and Thursday evenings and Saturdays. Your help will be much appreciated.

The heavy steel girders put up last year by John King & Co. (Leeds) Ltd. rather close to or line have at last been removed, thus eliminating a hazard to our shunters.

We hear that rail traffic to and from Middleton Colliery is likely to close in the middle of 1967. The main reason is that the coal now being mined is not good for power station use or the other heavy industrial purposes for which it left in train loads. It is understood that underground connections may permit some coal to surface via the Rothwell Colliery end and some of it will go by road from Middleton Broom.

The other reason is that the Motorway would have necessitated a long headshunt to be built at Parkside to enable shunting to take place. The line from Beeston Junction to Parkside has a 10 m.p.h. limit on it because of the condition of the track and traffic has to be worked from Healey Mills as Ardsley is no longer a locomotive and goods centre. The future of the line to the Colliery, laid in new track in 1958, is of course naturally in doubt (see article in Old Run on Parkside signalbox).

The Chairman has had discussions with B.R. Sales and Commercial Manager on the prospects of attracting more traffic to the line, and to see whether anything can be done to deal with our traffic having dropped to 40% of the 1961 figure.

As an outcome of the wagon demurrage crisis of last year, Claytons' traffic is, regrettably, still being delivered by B.R. road lorries, even though some of these have been to stay for three hours before being unloaded.

The Motorway. Many weeks of work have been put into the task of dealing with Motorway problems and many square yards of large scale plans and track layouts occupy the Chairman's house. Long correspondence and meetings with the City Engineer's Department hammered out the problems of diversion lines, replacement sidings, sites for development, level crossing and footpath regulations, safety clearances and gradients.

Details will be announced in due course, but it is permissible to inform members that the entire length of the line will be flanked by parkway or public open spaces all the way from Burton Road (which will vanish) right up to Broom Colliery. The thought of pit tips a-la-Aberfan, fireclay works waste and untended weeds and rubble vanishing makes all the headaches of the last five years seem worthwhile. Who knows - we may find bluebells on our line!

There was a public enquiry on 11th April at the Civic Hall. This was mainly concerned with a private householder who didn't want to be compulsorily purchased or to have extra traffic on the rather hazardous Beza St. bridge, also a firm who

did not want their advertisement hoardings demolished. It did not seem appropriate to indulge in a long and involved discussion over the merits of B and 8 or C and 9 turnouts or where to stick our facing point locks. Most of these had been sorted out in the less formal atmosphere of the Design Offices of the City Engineer.

Middleton on Television. Operation of the line was filmed by B.B.C. T.V. North Region with Barry Chambers on Wednesday, 22nd March. With Ben Wade in charge the Bagnall shunted and ran traffic all afternoon before the cameras. The B.B.C wanted a plate wagon at short notice for filming but B.R. could not obtain one the same day. Camera, microphone, announcer and Chairman in a coal wagon formed a rather grubby combination. The Chairman is not exactly the quietest speaker in the Society but the recording was all wagon and no Chairman. A re-recording alongside the line was carried out but train and wind won this time. Third time lucky! The final recording was done in the B.B.C. Leeds studio and sounded more logical and coherent than the first effort.

The film lasted six minutes and was screened in Look North on Wednesday, 19th April. With the account of the restoration and re-opening of the line went some good action shots of piston rods and slide bars, shining and well oiled, with the modern touch given by the 'works' of 'John Alcock' getting her Westinghouse pressure up to the level for starting work. Shunters flagging us across the Moor Road crossing, turnouts being thrown across, buffers clinking together and three-link couplings being skilfully thrown on the hook at first shot, gave an air of reality to the whole thing. Having, on a previous occasion, put the I.T.V. cameramen on a 'B.B.C' (for the uninitiated a Bogie Bolster, class C), the B.B.C. were on the back of the Bagnall and a 16-ton coal wagon.

The Marquess hauled the 'Mercian' from Stockport to Leeds on Sunday, 16th April. At Leeds Central Station, the 'Flying Scotsman' took over and hauled the train to Kings Cross. It was a nostalgic moment to see together two beautifully turned out L.N.E.R. engines in apple green livery, just a short week before Central closed.

A full account of the Derbyshire Dawdler will be published in the Old Run. It is sufficient to say that everyone seemed to enjoy themselves and the weather was fine until the return journey. Yes, we did have a Jubilee, 45593 ('Kholapur' on one side - 'Kolhapur' on the other!) - as far as Chinley, the Marquess running light to Chinley, then running to Derby and back to Leeds. This Jubilee, 45593, is likely to be the one preserved by the Jubilee Loco Preservation Society.

We need YOU! Firstly, to help sell and talk ON THE FIRST SATURDAY OF EACH MONTH when we have advertised mini-open-days. Don't let it always fall on the shoulders of the faithful few - as it too often seems to!

Secondly, we have been invited to exhibit at the Northern Model Railway Exhibition at Harrogate on Saturday, Monday and Tuesday of the August Bank Holiday. This promises to be a really first rate exhibition giving us much needed publicity. WE MUST BE THERE - BUT don't forget, if you can't spare a couple of hours, we can't exhibit!

Thirdly, we are having our annual Open Day on Saturday, 2nd September. Have you any suggestions to make the event attractive to the Public? Do you know anybody who can advertise the Open Day? Do you know anybody who could make a poster? Can you think of any celebrity who would be willing to be present on the day?

Finally, for ladies only! As our gentlemen members find it so popular to get hitched there must be now several wives. Would these wives like to join the Secretary in forming a Ladies' Committee? This Committee could perhaps help swell MRT funds by selling refreshments at the monthly open days and organise other social events. In any case - the Secretary would like to meet mothers, wives and girl friends if the menfolk could give them an evening off to come round for coffee. Interested?

Replies to all these pleas, please, to Mrs. S. M. Youell, 5, North Grange Mount, Leeds, 6.

Other Railways. Central Station is now closed. The Yorkshire Post gave it a sympathetic and affectionate farewell. The birth pangs of the new City Station have been rather long drawn out and B.R. deserve sympathy in the task of rebuilding a station from end to end and keeping it going all the time. Our Chairman is a guest at the formal opening ceremony of New City Station on 11th May, presided over by the Lord Mayor of Leeds and Mr. G. F. Fiennes, Eastern Region chief. The Chairman ruminates on the time when he and Mr. Fiennes travelled on the same train daily from Ilford, to run Imperial College Railway Society and the L.N.E.R. London Area respectively. But this was many years ago.

While on a mineralogical expedition to the darkest North Riding the Chairman found some stone sleepers and rails from a wagonway believed to date from about 1800. The line ran from Thirsk-Yarm turnpike to the Kewick Limestone quarries, about three miles. More of this in the Old Run.

The M.R.T. were represented at a most successful meeting of the Association of Railway Preservation Societies (ARPS) at Cadeby Light Railway on Saturday, 29th April. The Association now has approximately forty affiliated societies, many of whom were represented. Susan Youell was appointed Acting Hon. Secretary until a new Secretary (with time to cope) can be found. Mike Crew was appointed Acting Minutes Secretary. Some very serious and important problems were discussed - including insurance, the maintenance of preserved locomotives and joint publicity for affiliated societies.

Cadeby Light Railway is 2' gauge, 200 yards long, in the grounds of Cadeby Rectory. The owner is the Rev. E. Boston who has also at the bottom of his garden two traction engines and an enormous Great Western 'OO' layout, the details on which were absolutely fantastic. Locomotive power on the line is 'Pixie', a Bagnall locomotive originally from the Penrhyn Quarries in Wales. This delightful little railway is a must for a visit! Cadeby is situated on the A447, about five miles north of Hinkley, Leicestershire and due west of Leicester itself. Admission is free but donations are welcomed in aid of Church funds.

Congratulations to the Keighley and Worth Valley R. P. S. and the Kent & East Sussex Association both of whom having now taken the step of applying for a Light Railway Order. These negotiations are often lengthy and complicated but we hope to see both lines running in the near future.

Do you want to see the largest steam locomotive in this country - in steam? Then why not pay a visit to the Aschurch site of the Dowty Works, near Tewkesbury, Gloucestershire, and see 'Princess Elizabeth' (No. 46201) on Sunday 25th June.

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