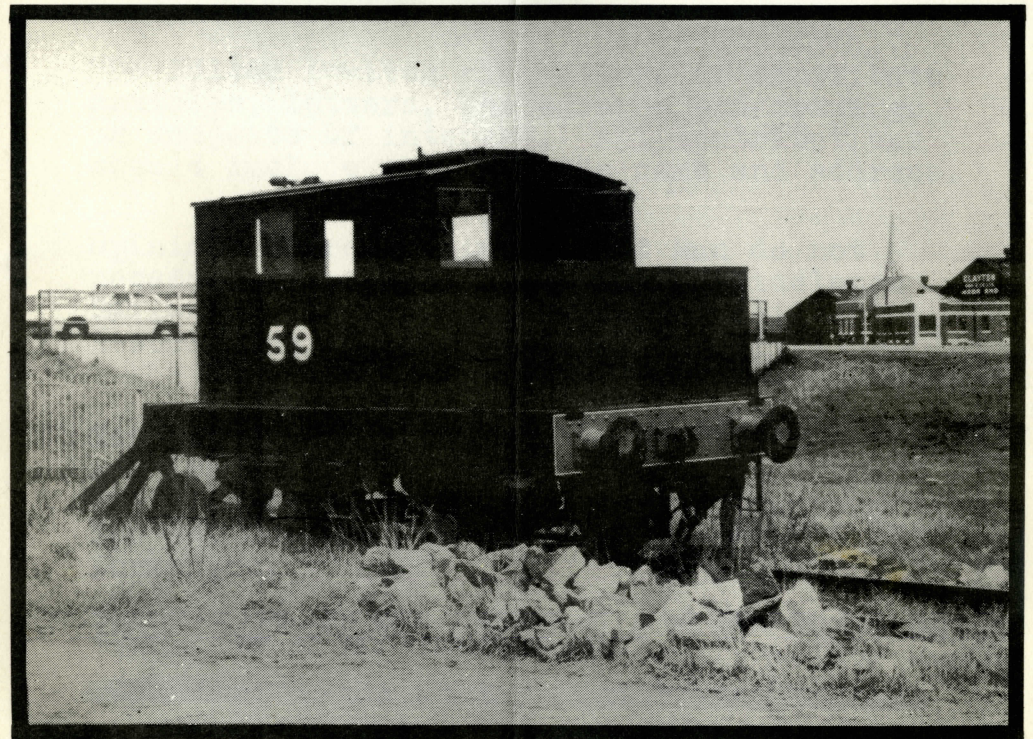


THE OLD RUN



JOURNAL OF
THE 1758 MIDDLETON RAILWAY
LEEDS

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The Editor invites all readers to contribute articles, letters, photographs and drawings on subjects of interest. All contributions should include the reader's name and address.

Opinions expressed in the Old Run do not necessarily reflect those of the Middleton Railway Trust Ltd, the Middleton Railway Association, or the Editor.

General enquiries about the Middleton Railway and its activities should be addressed to:
The Middleton Railway c/o Messrs Clayton,
Son and Company, Garnet Road Leeds LS11 5JY
Yorkshire.

MATERIAL FOR THE NEXT ISSUE SHOULD BE SENT TO THE EDITOR
BY 1st JUNE AT THE ADDRESS ABOVE.

FRONT COVER. The Trust's first steam loco arrived in Leeds on 23rd September, 1961, being transferred to Middleton a few days later, following re-railing. The loco was, of course Sentinel 54. This photo shows the loco as restored for the Shildon Celebrations in 1975, bearing the LNER numbering, as their No 59. She is seen on exhibition at a steam gala in 1980.

It is hoped to commence repairs to the loco during the coming year.

Photo: C NICHOLSON.

The Middleton Railway Celebrates it's Twenty-First Birthday

In June 1960 the Middleton Railway became the first standard gauge railway to be preserved in the British Isles, commencing with the operation of a freight and passenger carrying railway. A freight service was inaugurated between Messrs Clayton's, Robinson & Bimbell's and British Rail and passengers were carried officially for the first time during Rag Week of that year.

Both services have continued and are at present operated, passenger services at weekends during the summer and a freight service as and when required.

To celebrate the railways 'coming of age' it has been decided to set aside Saturday 13 June of this year as an occasion when all past and present members and those who are interested in the preservation of the World's Oldest Railway to drink a toast to it's continued success.

On this date also, members of the Branch Line Society will ride over the total length of the line where normally passenger trains do not travel.

Visitors on this date will be invited to join us at Middleton and sample a glass of sparkling wine during their journey from Hunslet to Middleton. It is hoped that a souvenir ticket will be available as a keep sake. A special all in price will be charged, any profits been devoted entirely to the museum building fund.

All past and present members are cordially invited to be present and join this rather unique occasion.

As railway enthusiasts will know 'keys' are used to secure rails in place on the permanent way. We hope that our twenty first key may be the one to our continued success in the next decade.

EDITORIAL

Well, we've actually made it! After some trials and tribulations, our railway is able to celebrate its twenty-first birthday.

Over the years, we have seen many changes in the area around the line, and to look at some of the earlier photos of the line is almost to look into another era. What this issue will do is to give members a brief glimpse into the pioneer years of the then Middleton Railway Preservation Society by means of a few photographs plus this extended "Editorial" which lists a few events that happened during the years 1960 to 1965. The next issue will deal with the years 1965 to 1975.

One thing about the history of this society is absolutely certain. Without the dedication of our first Chairman Dr R F YUELL, known to all and sundry as "Fred", this railway would never have gone beyond the "planning" stage. It was Fred who managed to raise sufficient interest within Leeds University, and it was Fred who worked tirelessly in the early days, often in all weathers, to get Middleton established. He retired in 1970, and he will long be remembered by those early pioneers who realise just how much is owed to him.

The railway opened in June 1960 when, during a rag week, the Hunslet loco "JOHN ALCOCK", then unnamed, pushed the Swansea and Mumbles double decker railcar up as far as Parkside Bridge. A condensed reprint of the article describing the events of that momentous week appears in this issue.

Following that event, the MRPS settled down to regular freight workings for Messrs Claytons and Robinson & Birdsell's whilst in the meantime bringing the line up to full operating standards.

Certainly, derailments were commonplace in those early days, due to the appalling state of the track when it was received by the MRPS. In early 1961, the first steam loco, in the shape of Sentinel 54, was received, from Darlington. She was almost immediately followed by "WINDLE", which loco then became something of a legend due to being sheeted over for much of the time.

These two locos were followed a year later by AEI569 from Bynea Steel, and sister loco Mersey Docks and Harbour Board No 21.

The traffic figures for the year 1960 to 1961 make interesting reading with a total of 6,200 tons being carried for Robbies alone, whilst Clayton's traffic at that time, which did not start until November 1960, carried a further 6,000 tons between then, and August 1961. These are quite incredible figures when it is realised that the whole idea of preservation by volunteers was considered "impossible" at the time.

The original "Hut" was a small structure about halfway down the Dartmouth Yard headquarters of the railway, alongside the 'back road'. According to the more senior members, this hut met with a fiery end during the middle sixties just after being replaced by the present structure.

Perhaps the most unfortunate aspect of early Middleton activity was the society's preoccupation which, with hindsight, appears to have been an ill-judged venture. A number of trams were gathered in Claytons Yard, where they were over the years subjected to severe vandalism, and many were unfortunately damaged beyond repair, being subsequently scrapped, although others were saved and went to specialist centres such as Crich where they can still be seen today. Amongst those which were finally destroyed was our Swansea & Mumbles railcar, which finally succumbed in 1969 despite strenuous attempts to get it preserved. Whilst this phase of MRPS activities was strongly criticised in the railway press, perhaps it should be mentioned that railway preservation was very new indeed then. Only the hard light of experience revealed that railway preservation demanded a lot of hard work which could not be diverted into tram preservation as well. The problem was that in 1960, no-one had that experience.....

The years 1961 to 1965 were years of consolidation for the society, with Fred Youell and P.W. team fully relaying the line, including the loop at Balm Road. Goods traffic boomed, and three more locos arrived, two being ex-main line locos.

These were LNER K4 No 3442 "THE GREAT MARQUESS", a 2-6-0 designed by Gresley in 1938. Owned by society President Lord Garnock, 3442 did much work pulling railtours in the early sixties, being stabled at Neville Hill MPD in between duties. Also stabled at Neville Hill, though not in working order, was another LNER loco, this time O-6-2T No 69621. This loco was built at Stratford works as LNER class N7 No 999E, the 'E' being a suffix to the intended GER number. The K4 arrived at Neville Hill in April 1963, and the N7 in January 1964 after purchase by Fred Youell.

The third loco was a little more mundane, this being an ex Bynea Steelworks loco, AE 1569, built in 1909. Named "SWANSEA", this loco was an O-6-OST, which was reputed to have worked on the Swansea & Mumbles Railway.

It was about this time that interest in Middleton began to wane a little, with the formation of the larger societies such as KWVR and Dart Valley, most of which boasted far bigger locos, better facilities, and what was more important, the chance to ride behind their locomotives. Middleton did not carry passengers on a regular basis for many years, although regular galas were held, and this, coupled with the environment the railway ran through, helped the decline in interest which was present from the middle sixties onwards.

The next issue will deal with the years 1965 to 1974, and will hopefully feature another reprint from that era, plus photographs.

THE FIRST TRAINS, JUNE 1960

Rag week, June 1960, was magnificent! It was so in four ways.

First, a derelict railway near the centre of our third largest city was put in running order and a regular passenger service operated along it, by amateurs, within six months of the formation of the Preservation Society. Secondly, the "impossible" task of dismantling, transporting and reassembling the World's largest double deck vehicle was undertaken in one week and finished in the nick of time, albeit with some of the seats still being screwed in as the first train left. Thirdly, the effort represented the most imaginative co-operation between local industries, City authorities and local people to raise money for charity that a Student's single "stunt" has ever inspired in Leeds. Fourthly, from our point of view, we leapt with a great bound onto the map of railway operators, and we are there to stay. That is just how a society which aims to be progressive while maintaining a unique tradition ought to begin.

Whilst Rag Committee saw it as a financial flop (Collecting only £15 from passengers all week), our first passenger service can be said to be successful, for we carried no less than 7,700 passengers during five days, operating from 4.30pm onwards each day except Saturday when we started at 1pm. Of these, only a few actually made donations to Rag funds. This is not really surprising when one realises that most of the passengers were Hunslet children having the time of their lives on innumerable free rides! How will we ever forget the calls of "Lasses upstairs! Lads inside!"

During the week (and at Balm road the previous week) we had enormous help from the youth of Hunslet, Belle Isle and Middleton, who quite cheerfully undertook much of the donkey work of cleaning, lifting and screwing & bolting, and ensuring a most welcome supply of light refreshments. From the proceeds of empty bottles donated to the society it is estimated that one member alone must have consumed 25 gallons of lemonade! In fact, what was really memorable about the whole effort was our excellent relationship with Hunslet and this is the moral we should draw. Our railway is a public service and so, if it is to perform its function best, it should always keep such a friendly association with the public as we achieved that week, becoming an accepted part of the social scene and an object of local pride.

The actual week's running had started by conveying our first passenger, Mrs Dora Langton, whose parents originated from Swansea, and who vividly remembered having her first ride in a Mumbles car when aged about seventeen. She was presented with the first of a batch of specially printed "Rag Railway" tickets and a photographic record of the occasion was also made by one of our members. One hitch occurred during the week when a number of stones placed on the track, combined with youngsters risking their lives by standing in front of the moving train, caused the driver to brake rather sharply. This caused a certain amount of damage to the towing gear and we had to suspend operations on the Thursday evening whilst necessary repairs were carried out by the Hunslet Engine Company. The only other incident occurred when a youngster put his head through a window (obviously so clean as to appear invisible, thanks to our helpers), and sustained a few minor cuts.

Apart from these two incidents the whole week was very successful and certainly very enjoyable for all concerned.

This article was condensed from two articles appearing in 'Old Run' in June, 1960, and March 1961. Many of the sentiments expressed in this article still hold true today, particularly the acceptance by the people of Hunslet.

When describing these momentous events, the author of these articles did not realise that Middleton had also made history by becoming not only the first standard guage railway preservation society, but also by becoming the first such society to operate a passenger train, beating the more famous Bluebell Railway by some weeks. In this, our 21st year, we "new" members should remember the efforts of the pioneers and salute their hard work in getting the society off the ground, for without their efforts, Middleton would not be where it is today.

Editor

DEPOT PLANS

A Museum/depot complex at Tunstall Road has figured in long term plans for that site for some years. However, in an era of high inflation, the chances of the Trust being able to raise the necessary capital for this scheme are becoming more and more remote.

Your Council is very much aware of this situation and has been considering what can be done.

Unlike most other preservation schemes, Middleton has always been very anxious to fund any projects from revenue surplus and has therefore never been in debt. We are still anxious to maintain our financial stability and yet provide the necessary finance for the vitally needed depot. After some thought, Council have put forward two proposals which directly involve the membership for the first time in its twenty one year history. These are:-

1. The provision by members of a guarantee to pay interest on a bank loan for a minimum period of about five years.
2. The provision by members of interest free loans for a period of about five years.

In each case the Trust would fund loan repayments from its revenue surplus.

This is the first time that we have asked for such a financial commitment from our members and it is hoped that there will be a good response. These schemes are aimed particularly at those members who have faith in the long term future of the Trust, and wish to see it prosper. Full details of the schemes are included on a separate sheet distributed with this 'Old Run'.

JOHN BLENKINSOP AND HIS RAILWAY

On January 24th, the MRT remembered the work of our pioneer engineer. The day started at Yorkshire Post Newspapers where an exhibition, "John Blenkinsop and his Railways" depicted the work of the pioneer; the locomotive building industry of Leeds that commenced after Matthew Murray received his first order; the Middleton Railway today, and of course Rack and Pinion Railways in general.

Snowdon Mountain Railway supplied photographs of their operations as did Bernese Oberland Balin (Switzerland) and Pike's Peak (USA). Possibly more unusual were pictures of the Hunslet Engine Co diesel rack locos which, after many tests, are now in operation at Kellingley Colliery in West Yorkshire. In addition to photos of current Middleton activities the Trust exhibited a number of works and name plates, plus a selection of old miners relics.

Following the exhibition, and after interviews and photographs by the local press, the party were conveyed to Rothwell Parish Church for a memorial service. The bus used for transport was an ex Yorkshire Woollen District half cab Leyland Titan and is owned by Gordon Goldthorpe of Batley. En route to Rothwell, the bus collected the choir and recorder group of the John Blenkinsop Middle School.

On arrival at Rothwell, the party was greeted by the Vicar, the Rev. E. Redhead, and a short "Act of Worship and Thanksgiving" took place in the church where, 150 years ago, John Blenkinsop was laid to rest. MRT Chairman Joe Lee read the scriptures, which included reference to "A line that shall know no end" - the pun was not intentional! MRT Archivist John Bushell gave a short address and there were musical items from John Blenkinsop School.

The final prayers took place at the tomb, along with a small wreath laying ceremony. It was a glorious spring like day for our commemoration and over seventy people surrounded the tomb as wreaths were laid. One wreath came from John Blenkinsop School, being laid by two children from that school. The other was laid by the great, great, granddaughter of John Blenkinsop, Mrs Patricia Machin from Bramham. Mrs Machin had been "discovered" by our Archivist following correspondence with the Wylam branch of the Blenkinsop family. Deaconess Pat Blenkinsop from Wylam was unable to attend the ceremony through ill-health, and she referred John Bushell to her niece living in Bramham, Mrs Machin. We had discovered a closer family representative than we had envisaged. Greetings were received from Mrs I Seith-Blenkinsop of Karlsruhe, West Germany, along with a cable from Mrs Helen Blenkinsop of South Africa, who had visited our line in 1975.

Following the ceremony, the party returned by vintage bus to Leeds for lunch, our special guests being provided with an excellent meal courtesy of Elizabeth Lee, before proceeding to Hunslet Boys Club for the afternoon's events.

The afternoon's events commenced with the unveiling of the nameplate "JOHN BLENKINSOP" by Mrs Machin. This was followed by an entertaining illustrated lecture about John Blenkinsop and his locomotives by our archivist, John Bushell. Your Editor particularly liked the references to that poacher living in Wylam in 1813!

The lecture was followed by a quick commercial, intended to sell the excellent cut glass goblets produced by Publicity Officer Tony Bell. These goblets are highly recommended, and are amazingly cheap, at £8.75p each. The audience certainly liked them, as Tony sold a large number of them on the spot, and after the film show. Any member who would like one is asked to contact Tony either at the Railway, or by ringing him at home on Wakefield 825658.

The commercial over, the audience sat back to enjoy two films on steam railways. The first was entitled "Giants of Steam", and was a BBC production of 1963, using a lot of their archive material.

This was a most entertaining film, and provided a number of interesting views of steam post and prewar. Perhaps the most interesting clip of all was the sequence showing the construction of "King" class locos at Swindon. One member, having journeyed up from the deep south (Stubbington) was heard to mutter "Why couldn't it have shown a southern loco being built?"

He was immediately cheered up by the second of the two films entitled "Engine Driver" which was a film aimed at schoolboys in the late forties early fifties and attempted to tell of the many jobs involved with loco driving. The film showed the Driver, one Wally by name, oiling round, checking for defects, and then actually driving his loco from Waterloo to Bournemouth. The shed in the film was Nine Elms, and the loco a rebuilt Lord Nelson which was still in M-lachite Greenlivery, although sporting BR number and logo on the tender. Altogether, this was an interesting film, although the narrative, aimed at youngsters, was a little dramatic in places, and the soundtrack was in places beyond belief. At one point, on moving down the shed yard, the "Nelson's" exhaust beat was so rapid compared to the loco's actual speed on film, that it was obviously dubbed later. The narrator was so caught up with describing the heroic driver that one young audience member was heard to say "Good old Wal!", which raised not a few laughs at the end of the film.

In all, the afternoon was a great success, enjoyed by all who attended. The audience was swelled by the arrival of several members arriving from Dartmouth Yard after spending the morning wrestling with present day locos and track, and even the most cynical of these admitted that he'd enjoyed the event.

The whole event achieved excellent coverage in the press, despite the absence of O. S. Nock, who was to have named P2003, but was unable to do so due to illness. The Evening Post gave us four entries, with five photographs, whilst Huddersfield Examiner produced half a page in the contemplative style of our member, Bill Stocks. Radio Leeds also gave good coverage, with John Bushell giving a two part Blenkinsop Biography in the Yorkshire Transport programme.

Fifty years ago, on 25th January 1931 (Nearly the Centenary of Blenkinsop's death) an engraving was added to the tombstone, reminding all who pass by that here lies the inventor of the world's first commercially successful steam locomotives. We, too, salute his achievements, and aim to continue the memory of his labours in the 1758 Middleton Railway, the oldest firm in the business.

Copies of the substance of the lecture mentioned in this article are available from John Bushell, 12, Trelawn Crescent, Leeds 6 at 30p each, plus postage, or from the MRT Shop at Tunstall Road from Easter Saturday onwards.

John Bushell

LETTERS

Sir,

"MIDDLETON RAILWAY TO BECOME A STATIC MUSEUM". Could this become the Headline to figure most prominently in our future publicity? Once again, due to lack of support, we have had to curtail our season, this time by the temporary suspension of Saturday running. This rapidly follows the reduction of the service to end in September as oppose to October, which was sanctioned in 1980. Why, then, has the Council taken this step?

Unfortunately, the major reason is a complete lack of support from the membership. By stopping running on Saturdays, the few members who do turn up can concentrate on permanent way work in order to finish the work started by our recent STEPP employees.

They did the heavy spadework by digging out the sleepers. What we must now do is the "technical" work of resleepering and lifting the track to meet Major Olver's requirements. This work needs many more hands than we are getting at present - a gang of only 6 people can safely manage this sort of work with ease. The work, carried out with these numbers, is not too physical, the company is excellent and cheerful, and the work is absolutely vital as we will soon be unable to run trains if it is not completed before too long.

Remember that without track, you cannot run steam or any other locos, and the attitude heard in the Yard recently of "I'm only here to work on the engines, someone else can do the track" not only discourages new members, but shows a selfish immature attitude which must cease or the railway will surely die.

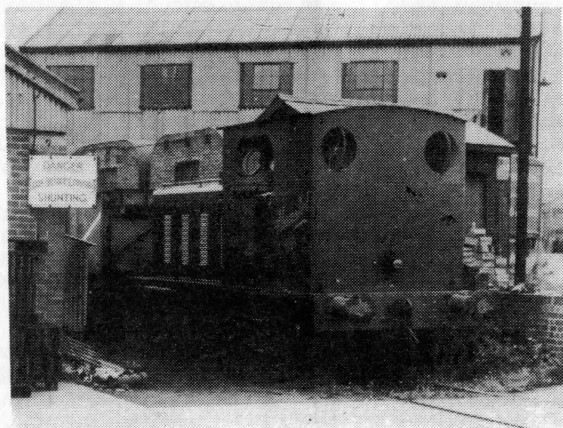
By far the major problem is the lack of support from our members. There are too few people doing too many jobs, and priority has had to be given to making our track safe to run on. This having been achieved now, we need to relay the Balm Road Branch, ballast the main line, and in addition restore our locos and stock, AND run a railway as well. We cannot do all this at present as we just do not have enough active members. Please try to come down and give a hand, just one day a month would be better than nothing, for without more support the Middleton Railway will surely end up as a static exhibit, which I hope no one wants - or do they?

A.P. BELL

MIDDLETON - THE EARLY DAYS

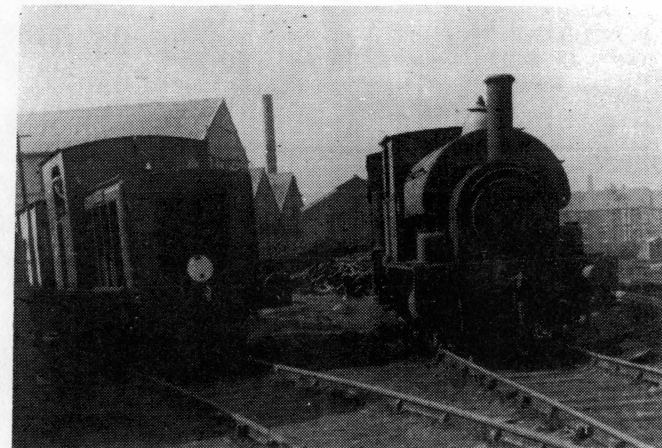


The Middleton Railway's first passenger train, in June 1960. Swansea & Mumbles No 2 is seen here commencing another journey up as far as Parkside Bridge, being pushed there by veteran diesel HE I697/32, as yet unnamed. Photo: MRT Collection

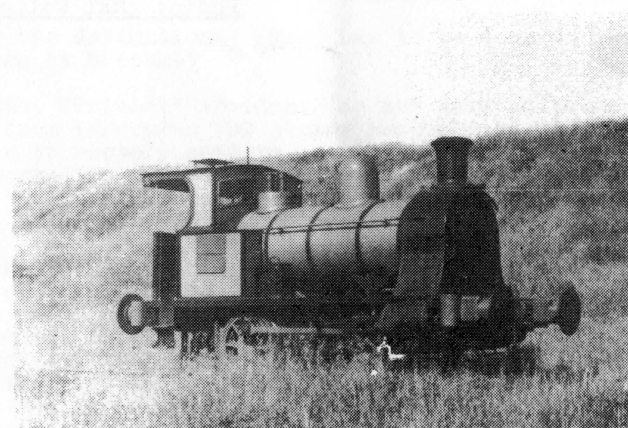


By now named "JOHN ALCOCK" (After her designer), but still carrying "Hunslet" livery, I697 is seen here working traffic on 12th April 1962, just passing "King's Siding". The two steam locos are AE I569 "SWANSEA", which arrived earlier that day (and left in 1976), and Sentinel 54, then undergoing restoration.

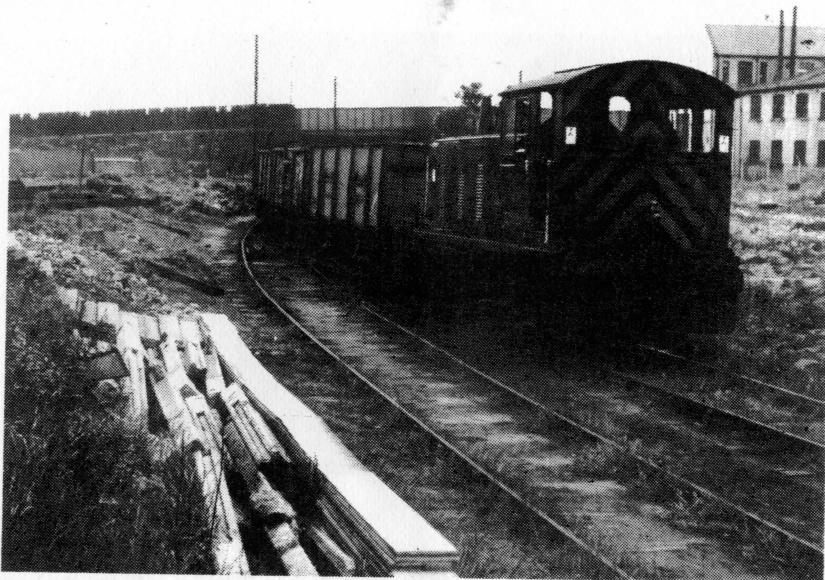
Photo: C C THORNBURN



A very interesting photo showing the very first freight train to be worked on the Railway, in August, 1960. The loco is HE I697, still in its "Hunslet" works shunter livery, and also facing the opposite way round to normal. The loco must have been turned at some stage as she has faced cab up the branch since at least 1962. Photo: C C THORNBURN



The second steam loco to arrive at Middleton was "WINDLE", presented by Pilkingtons of St Helens. She arrived in October 1961, but was not restored to working order until 1976. This photo shows the loco posed on the "ramp" on 16th June 1979. An article on these very interesting locomotives appears in this issue. Photo: I B SMITH



During the Summer of 1962, "JOHN ALCOCK" became unserviceable, and with 54 still being restored, the railway found itself without suitable motive power for its trains. The solution arrived at was to hire from BR a diesel shunter. Drewry O-6-ODM (later classified O4) D2323 is seen here at the old loop, Balm Road Exchange Sidings. The land to the left of the loop is now occupied by a pallett storage warehouse.

Photo: MRT Collection



ACCIDENT REPORTING PROCEDURES

The Government has recently introduced new legislation concerning the reporting of accidents. Since this now alters our own regulations for accident reporting, a review of the new arrangements in these columns would seem the best way of communicating them to all members.

All accidents can be classified into three stages, Major, Minor and Trivial. An accident is classified as "Major" if:-

- a) Any person is killed.
- b) Any person suffers either a broken bone (other than fingers or toes), or the loss of a limb (but not just finger(s) or toe(s)) or the loss of the sight of an eye, or any other injury which results in their being detained in hospital for 24hrs or more.
- c) Any railway vehicle collides with another, or strikes an obstruction on the track, or is derailed or becomes uncoupled as a result of a coupling breaking, unless (in all these cases) the incident occurred during shunting operations, and only involved vehicles from freight trains.
- d) Any railway vehicle runs unauthorised across a level crossing.
- e) The track or formation is damaged to such an extent that it becomes unsafe for trains to be operated over it.

A "Minor" accident is then any accident in which either track or stock is damaged, or in which someone is injured to an extent where hospital treatment is necessary.

A "Trivial" accident is any accident which is not serious enough to come into either of the above categories.

So much for the definitions: What has to be done to report any accident when it happens?

To begin with, "Trivial" accidents do not need to be reported at all, apart from informing the senior member present so that action may be taken to rectify matters on the spot. All other accidents MUST be reported to myself as Safety Officer, whilst "Major" accidents should be reported Direct to the Railway Inspectorate in addition to being reported to me.

In the case of major accidents, the Railway Inspectorate must be telephoned within 24hrs unless someone has been killed or seriously injured, in which case it should be reported as soon as possible after the event. In the case of Minor accidents, I need to know within three days at the very latest so I can fill in the necessary forms. I will need a written report from the senior member involved in the accident, and if I am unable to collect it, then it will need to be posted to me.

Should I be absent for any length of time, then I will make arrangements for someone else to take over this for me, details being posted in the Hut at Dartmouth during my absence.

Full details of all these arrangements are posted on the Traffic notice in the hut, along with all relevant addresses and telephone numbers.

THE BORROWS WELL-TANK

Although Leeds, the North East and the Midlands were the chief centres of the private locomotive manufacturing industry in England, other manufacturers could be found throughout the country..

The Lancashire town of St Helens was no exception. St Helens is, perhaps, more famous for its glassworks (and rugby team) than its locomotives but it was here that one of the more interesting of industrial types was evolved.

The Borrowers Locomotive, as it came to be known, has its origins with an early, well known locomotive engineer named James Cross who had been Locomotive Engineer of the St Helens Railway until its take over by the London and North Western Railway in 1864. Following the take over, Cross set up business in the old St Helens Railway Workshops and built several locomotives over the next few years. One of his more interesting locos was the first loco built to the design of Robert Fairlie (Of festiniog fame), which was supplied to the Neath and Brecon Rly in 1865. Unfortunately this loco, along with four others built later, was not a success. It was a design of four coupled well-tank, first produced in 1866, that secured Cross a niche in industrial locomotive history. He produced a few of these locomotives before giving up his business in 1869.

Meanwhile, Edward Borrowers, who had been principal assistant to Cross on the St Helens Railway, had set up his own company at the Providence Works, Sutton in St Helens and in 1872 began building well tank locos to the same basic design used by Cross.

Between then and 1913, Borrowers built some thirty eight similar engines, principally for the local glass and chemical manufacturers.

In 1913, the business was transferred to H. W Johnson & Company, who built a further three locos between 1913 and 1921.

The well known Stoke-on-Trent firm of Kerr, Stuart & Co Ltd also took an interest in the design and built twenty nine locos under licence, which differed only in minor details from the original Borrowers locomotives. Most of the Kerr, Stuart locos were supplied to I.C.I. who had themselves acquired Borrowers engines from the chemical manufacturers in St Helens whom they had absorbed. The Borrowers locos were nearly all employed in South West Lancashire but a few were sold or transferred from their original owners, and worked in other parts of the country, notably London and Tyneside.

As far as it is known, this design was the only type of loco produced by Borrowers. It is a four coupled, outside cylindered well tank, of which the most important characteristic is that the well tank is made integral with the frames, the plate frames also forming the sides of the tank. This results in a very rigid construction, but it does mean that it is impossible to place any valve gear between the frames, as was normal practice at that time.

Cross's solution to the problem was to put the valve gear between the wheels and frames by making the frameplates some eight inches closer together than on a normal locomotive. This allowed a space of about four inches between each driving wheel and the frame in which to place the valve gear, which is ordinary Stephenson Link motion. The valve chests are placed between the cylinders and frames with the port faces vertical. The same overall arrangement had in fact been used on the earlier Fairlie locomotives built by Cross.

The absence of valve gear between the frames meant that the driving axle could be placed further back than on a conventional locomotive and this enabled the wheelbase to be lengthened and so reduce the overhang at the rear. The Borrowers engine thus looks extremely compact and is relatively stable in motion. Its reduced overhang also meant that sharper curves could be negotiated without fear of buffer locking - a big advantage on many industrial lines.

A further feature of the design is the boiler, which is a short, but fat barrel, with a fairly small firebox which gives the impression that the loco was designed for a "maximum effort" of short duration, followed by periods standing idle.

The locomotives were of generally similar proportions, with 14% 14½ X 20" cylinders, 3ft 4" diameter wheels and a 6ft 6" wheelbase.

The Tractive Effort of 14,300Lb made the locomotives quite powerful for their era and size.

Suprisingly, out of only around 75 locomotives, four still survive, three of which were built by Borrowers. The earliest of these was built in 1898 (Works No 37) as No 4 of the Smelting Corporation of Ellesmere Port. It was subsequently sold to the Wallsend Slipway and Engineering Co in 1907, and presented to the Newcastle University Railway Society in 1966. The loco is an oil burner and is currently on the North Yorkshire Moors Railway but is likely to move to the Tanfield Railway in the near future.

Number 48, built in 1906 was supplied to the United Glass Bottle manufacturers and was transferred to their Charlton, Kent works in 1923, being named "THE KING" in the same year. It is now at the Shackerstone headquarters of the Market Bosworth Light Railway in Liecestershire, awaiting overhaul.

The final Borrowers example is of course our own "WINDLE". Built in 1909. (Wks No 53), "WINDLE" spent all her life at Pilkington's Glass manufacturers in St Helens, being presented to the then M.R.P.S. in 1961. The loco spent some years in store before being returned to service in 1976, and since then has regularly worked our passenger trains.

The fourth survivor is the odd one out, being built by Kerr, Stuart in 1918 as their No 3063. This locomotive is in the ownership of Fairfield-Mabey Ltd, Engineers of Chepstow. Unfortunately, it is many years since she was last used, and she waits derelict, in the company of an ex-GER 0-4-OST, surrounded by undergrowth, a decision as to her eventual fate, all attempts to preserve her having so far failed.

Although the Borrowers engines as originated by James Cross were relatively few in number, they were undoubtedly successful, having had an active life span of over 100 years from first to last.

With "WINDLE" having received a new boiler in 1950, the design should still be active in 2066 thus celebrating two centuries of usage.

S J Roberts

LOCONEWS

There is little progress to report over the winter due to the decision to concentrate our activities on trackwork this winter, working on the basis that its little point restoring locos if you haven't any track on which to run them.....

However, some work has been done, mainly to ensure that we have at least one working loco for the season.

P2003. This loco has been the subject of much activity over the close season. The loco was lifted off her wheels in October in order to check the condition of the axleboxes and brasses. Whilst brasses and journals were all found to be in fair order, the axleboxes were not so good, two of them being cracked in several places.

These were all repaired and replaced, the coupling and connecting rods and their brasses also receiving attention before replacement.

The piston rod and valve spindles have also been repacked. The new smokebox door referred to in the last issue has been obtained and fitted and work is now in hand on repainting the loco in a much lighter shade of green than hitherto used. This has been lined out in a style akin to Great Central, and the result is quite pleasing. The loco has had two nameplates made, and these will be fitted when she is officially named, hopefully sometime in the spring. P2003 has the distinction of being the only Middleton loco ever to bear the full name of "JOHN BLENKINSOP", all the other locos having simply been named "BLENKINSOP"

EB53. Work is now in hand towards the fitting of two replacement injectors so that she can fulfil the role of spare engine for the coming year.

DSB 385. Work continues on this loco, albeit spasmodically. All the broken stays referred to in the last issue were replaced and the loco subjected to a hydraulic test, only to find that a few more wanted replacing. Work on this is proceeding very well and 385 should soon be receiving a hydraulic test prior to reassembly and steaming this Summer.

WB2702. Awaits boiler inspector's opinion on her tubeplate. If this is favourable, the loco will no doubt see service in 1981, otherwise the major overhaul referred to in the last issue will commence once other commitments have been met.

HC D577. Member (And half owner) Graham Parkin has spent a great deal of time working on this locomotive. After freeing the controls and checking the engine, the loco was moved under its own power for the first time on 27th December last year. Since then much work has gone into sorting out the many minor defects on the engine, culminating in the replacement of all the fuel injectors, which has transformed the engine from a rough performer into a reliable unit. However much more needs to be done, including the refitting of the air start gear, before the loco can be considered a reliable working member of the fleet. The loco is due for lifting this summer to check the axleboxes for wear and tear.

The position with the rest of the fleet remains unchanged since the last "Old Run" but the decision not to run on Saturdays this year will help us catch up on the backlog of work.

A NEW ARRIVAL

The Middleton Railway is to become the home of yet another steam locomotive. The locomotive concerned has been purchased by member Tony Bell and his wife, Joyce, who incidentally is fast becoming a competent firewoman.

The new loco is another Peckett, works number 2103, and she has been purchased from Croydon "B" Power Station.

Although her builder's plates state she was built in 1950, 2103 was in fact completed much earlier than this, in 1948, along with her two sister locos destined for the same power station, Nos 2104/5. The reason for this discrepancy is that, when the locos were completed, all three were sent to the as yet incomplete power station, and the CEGB almost immediately sent them back to Peckett's for storage until such time as the new complex could accommodate them. When they were finally redelivered to Croydon, sometime in 1950, Pecketts decided to alter the plates of all three to give a builder's date of 1950.

After this "false start", all three locos settled down to work uneventfully for their new owners until Nos 2104 and 2105 were sold for preservation in the earlier part of 1973, both going to Quainton Road. 2103 remained as spare loco, although not used after 1975 as far as is known, until being put out to tender in December 1980.

The story of her purchase began in Mid January when society member Colin Billinghamurst showed your Editor a tender form for the loco. A phone call to CME Steve Roberts produced the comment that "We (MRT) can't afford it, but Tony Bell might be interested". Yet another call, to Tony soon established that he was, indeed, interested, and within three days, he had arranged to inspect the loco, and then purchase. There was fierce competition for 2103, and Tony's bid was only £70 in excess of the nearest rival.

In appearance, 2103 is a much smaller loco than our own "JOHN BLENKINSOP", and indeed she weighs some five tons less. The cab is some 6" lower than the rest of the loco to keep the overall height within the powerstation loading guage, a feature common to all three Pecketts. With a Copper firebox, and Brass tubes, she is also a quite substantial investment. Mechanically, the loco is in reasonable condition, bearing in mind the length of time spent out of use, but she lack both injectors, and one clack valve, although Tony has located these parts elsewhere. She also requires new cladding plates. Livery is the standard Peckett lined out light green used for all their post war locos unless a specific Livery was asked for.

Principal Dimensions are:-

Cylinders (0)	I2" x 20"	Boiler Pressure:-	I80 Lb per Sq Inch.
Tractive Effort	I2,000 Lb	Wt in working order:-	23 Tons.
	Length 2Ift 8"	Width	7ft II"
	Height from rail	9ft IO"	

FROM THE CHAIRMAN

It is with pleasure that I have accepted the invitation to contribute a small article to commemorate the 21st anniversary of preservation of the Middleton Railway, the World's Oldest, here in Leeds, a city which over the past years has made a tremendous contribution to the locomotive building industry of this country, and indeed the World.

It is highly improbable that the Brandling family would have envisaged over 223 years of continuity since the railway was first established by Act of Parliament, in June 1758. The early industry of the city depended on fuel for its processes, and local coal was conveniently obtained for this purpose from the rich seams at Middleton. Today, evidence of extraction may be seen from open cast workings which feed the hungry furnaces at Skelton Grange power station.

Commercially, the railway has always been a success and even today a modest freight service operates on behalf of Messrs Robinson & Birdsell, to whom we are grateful for their continued interest and support. The life saver of the line today is, however, the passenger service, which operates from Easter to the end of September, augmented by "School steam days", and Galas when other enthusiastic preservationists are invited to join us to display their immaculate vehicles.

The visitor to the line must be our first priority. These are the people who will either enjoy and remember their visit, departing to inform their friends; Or they will depart with the feeling that they wished they had never visited, will never visit again and will certainly discourage their friends from visiting us.

In short, YOU the member have a very important part to play in public relations when you visit the line. In particular, when you are actually staffing the train or shop, you are not only a potential 'bureau of information', but your whole attitude comes under close scrutiny by the ever inquisitive visitor.

If we are to survive the next decade, I would suggest that an appraisal of our past 11 years of passenger operation would be useful. I would also like to submit the following ideas for consideration by the membership:

The proposed extension to Middleton Park be completed as soon as possible, which would amplify the ride by adding more attraction as a complete journey.

The establishment of covered accommodation, plus proper facilities for visitors should be an immediate priority.

An increase in "Special" events such as 'Road, Rail, River', Period Costume days, and finally, a Traction Engine Rally in Middleton Park using the Railway to gain access to the event, with a special bus service from the city centre to Tunstall Road.

Joseph K Lee
Chairman, MRT

BRITAIN'S FIRST STANDARD GAUGE PRESERVED LINE FACES CUT BACKS

Due to a labour crisis which has arisen at the 1758 Middleton Railway Trust, Leeds, the Council of the Railway reluctantly has decided to temporarily suspend its regular Saturday Steam service for visitors, it was reported at the Annual General Meeting.

This does not, however, mean a gloomy future for the line as 1980 was the most profitable year to date, and Council views the future optimistically but concern is being expressed at the poor active support.

1980 was also the final year in which coal from Middleton was mined. The last of the opencast sites has finished production and will be restored to parkland thus bringing to an end an era stretching back over four centuries.

Freight movements to local industry are again increasing, with freight operations taking place most evenings.

All the track for the proposed depot and run round loops has now been purchased and it has been decided to concentrate the small labour force on laying this material at the expense of the visitors service.

There will be two new steam locomotives arriving later this year.

MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL

May I extend a very warm welcome to all new members who have joined in the past year, the original list was mislaid during change over of editors and so please to everyone welcome, thrice welcome,.

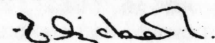
An important reminder to all members who have not renewed their subs. please send them now, you need not tear out the back page, just your cheque, name and address. It is so important to keep the cash flowing in and help to keep the Trust in the pink instead of the 'red'.

Unfortunately as with everything else we have had to increase subscriptions, but not a lot, full membership is now £3.00. Family corporate 50p. O.A.P. £1.50 Junior (M.R.A.) £1.50. Life. £50.00.

The M.R.A. is being gradually merged into the Trust to facilitate a better service so a special word to all junior members, your reminders for subs. will be twice yearly and the subs. due now will receive reminders for June and again at in December for the remainder.

I look forward to hearing from all Junior members in due course and any query please do not hesitate to contact me at any time.

Cheerio for now.



Membership Sec.

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

8th, 9th, 10th, 11th May, Road-Rail-River Tours

On the Friday 8th May and Monday 11th May, we will be running our Road-Rail-River Tour for the benefit of West Yorkshire School children. We need volunteers for this event for marshalling children at the canal and railway, also shop staff needed.

On Saturday 9th, Sunday 10th May our Road-Rail-River tour takes its usual format, again staff are necessary at the line, canal and manning the bus.

15th & 16th August - Waterways Weekend

This weekend Leeds plays host to boat owners with a waterway festival. Preserved buses will transport visitors to Thwaites Mills via Middleton Railway, again staff needed at the line.

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