

OLD RUN NEWS

Newsletter of the Middleton Railway Trust

Number 30, November 1967

Locomotive Matters The two Bagnall main steam pipes from regulator to cylinders, made of cast iron, have sprung leaks and are having to be replaced. John Alcock had developed a rattle of the less pleasant kind. The diesel motor pump seal is very silent, but the transmission was anything but silent. Loco. Engineer, Peter Nettleton, discovered after major dismantling of the transmission that a bearing in the clutch operating mechanism had degenerated into brass turnings, and that a larger bearing between clutch and gearbox was far below its best condition. Replacements plus a lot of struggling in awkward places are expected to give us a very adequate repair. We cannot turn John Alcock upside down to do up awkward nuts and bolts, so Peter joins the astronauts in being as skilful upside down as right way up! The Sentinel is in better condition than ever since she arrived. Cylinder and connecting rod bumps and rattles which were present on arrival have been eliminated, and only a few final tightenings up of gaskets is needed to finish a first class job. Several trips to Rotherham brought us many spare parts from Thomas Hills there, who were very helpful indeed. (Incidentally, if we wanted to dieselise the Sentinel, a Rolls Royce engine for it would cost £2000!) Sentinel motive power is now in exclusive use while the Diesel and the Bagnall are under maintenance. Congratulations to her Engineer, Barry Wood on a first class job.

Permanent Way Four 60' rails have been bent to the correct curvature for relaying at the bottom loop junction, and we are held up again only by a dearth of volunteers. Once again the P.W. team is often reduced at times to one person struggling with repairs. On one occasion when a good squad turned up, we re-sleepered and levelled a 30' length in one afternoon. The first 60' connection with B.R. is about ready to go in, followed by the A and 6 fabricated turnout.

We are pleased to report very helpful cooperation from the B.R. Traffic Manager's Office, Leeds. When the loop is completed and the track is up to B.R. goods line standards, it will be possible for the Balm Road shunter to pull empties into our loop, and to propel loaded out wagons back into B.R. This will save B.R. up to 20 minutes having to run round the train in the yard, at times waiting for a clear path on the goods line alongside the yard, and again to run round the out train. For our part we shall not have to do a 'double shunt' by hauling the 'in' train clear of the bottom loop junction and then propelling the 'out' train to the Boundary post. Over a year's work, the saving of time to both parties will run to many hours.

CAN WE EMPHASISE THE URGENT NEED FOR A PLENTIFUL SUPPLY OF P.W. VOLUNTEERS, ESPECIALLY WEDNESDAYS AND SATURDAYS.

Wagon Repair Engineer Wanted. Three of the ex-Laporte wagons are now available for conversion to internal traffic flat wagons. The timber bolsters have to come off and extraneous rods and bolts left over from the fixings of the Acid Tanks. Burnt off bolts must be replaced by new ones, and then the frame covered with surplus steel sheets, screwed to the timbers to provide a safe and level surface for interworks traffic. This will not be difficult but the finished article will be most useful to the M.R.T. If you feel you could take on this work, contact Jim Lodge at the Railway.

Nov. 67. 2

Early closing day- Saturday A_s from November 11th., Hunslet Down Yard will close at 2pm. on Saturdays instead of early evening. All traffic operators are asked to have the Saturday trains out and reported by midday so that they can be cleared instead of being delayed over the weekend.

New Customer Hardy's Motor Radiators Ltd. had a wagon of scrap steel loaded up on 30th. September as their first consignment on the line.

Steam Crane Boiler Progress A spare boiler has been fitted to the crane obtained from Claytons and has passed its test.

For your diary

The A.G.M. will be on Saturday afternoon, February 24th 1968.

The Annual Dinner will be a Buffet again this year ! with films as last year.

This will be on Saturday evening, January 27th. 1968.

The Matthew Murray Bicentenary Exhibition organised by us with the University Railway Society and to be held in the Parkinson Court, University of Leeds will be from January 22nd. to February 3rd. 1968. The Commemorative Service at St Matthew's Church, Holbeck and the naming of the Bagnall 'Matthew Murray' by the Bishop of Pontefract will be on February 3rd.

Details later when available.

Welcome - to our new Publicity Officer, David Jones whose first task is to tackle the Murray exhibition. Information on relics of Murray or any relevant topic that might be suitable for exhibition should be sent to Mr. Jones. We want to make this a first class effort depicting both Murray's textile and railway engineering activities. So please, if you have any information contact Mr. D. Jones, 77 Headingley Mount, Leeds 6.

- to two new members, Mr. S. Haggert of Hayes, Middlesex and Mr. H. Parkin of Whitby.

Ex gratia Publicity (always welcome) has come in various guises recently.

Gestetner quarterly magazine is featuring the railway in their Christmas edition. This follows the Chairman's purchase of a new Gestetner duplicator (so perhaps it isn't ex gratia !)

The Observer mentioned us recently in a feature on Industrial Archeology. This was followed up immediately by a letter from our Membership Secretary pointing out the inevitable mistakes !

The People newspaper sent photographers to shoot members in all sorts of unusual positions for an article which has not yet appeared.

The Secretary's recorded interview was broadcast in Woman's Hour on 30th October but there has been no avalanche of female applications to join the M.R.T. Perhaps they thought she was crazy !

A free-lance journalist is in the process of photographing various aspects of operation for an article to be submitted to various magazines.

The 'Look at Life' filming was a chapter of events. The cameraman concentrated mainly on locomotives although various interesting P.W. activities had been arranged.

First mishap was that John Alcock split the switches at Whitaker's junction and was rerailed very promptly with traversing jacks. Then her gear change mechanism went wrong and 1310 was left singlehanded to haul an extremely heavy load, leaving the 'dead' diesel at the Loop. Meanwhile the cameramen were hovering impatiently at the level crossing wondering what was wrong.

Later on in the day, the Sentinel on test firing of the overhauled boiler blew a gasket with spectacular but not dangerous results. Finally a wagon derailed on the tram siding while being towed out, and was rerailed by lifting with the hand-crane and some

ov. 67 3.

orderly heaving over. This siding is now out of use as it has to come up for Motorway works.

This train of untoward events was notwithstanding careful planning beforehand for a good and filmable show.

M.R.T. Record A Leeds firm is at present making recordings of our steam engines for an E.P. to sell at about 12/6d. This will be announced when available.

Corn Exchange Exhibition - the Leeds Model Railway Exhibition was held on October 26, 27 and 28. This year it coincided, by chance, with the Leeds Schools half term so there were many more visitors during the daytime. We are particularly grateful to members who gave up their time to man the stand for the very long hours that the exhibition was open and to David Spencer for lending us one of his locomotives. Although we have made many improvements with our layout and stand it is obvious that we haven't enough room to display all our material and some further work with Dexion will have to be done to extend the stand vertically.

Sackcloth and ashes Due to a lack of consultation between the Chairman and Secretary a large vote of thanks to David Bushell (brother of our Membership Sec.) was omitted from our last newsletter. David provided his Public Address equipment free for the Steam Gala in September and our thanks go to him for this. The fact that we were able to make announcements etc. was much appreciated by all.

Live in The West Riding and get Monday evenings free ?

The Swarthmore Educational Centre, Woodhouse Square, Leeds 3 are running a series of lectures on the history of railways in Yorkshire. The lectures are on Monday evenings from 7.30 until 9 pm and are given by DR.R.G.Holliday, the fee for the 24 lectures being £2. The first lecture was last Monday, November 6th and the series promises to be most interesting and entertaining. Members can attend a lecture before deciding to continue with the rest. Just turn up at Swarthmore on any Monday at 7.30 pm. Due to lack of publicity, the numbers already attending are small and the class would appreciate quick support from others to avoid terminating the series after Christmas.

Museum Gift The M.R.T. is indebted to Jackson Boilers of Elland Road, Leeds for their gift of a colour photograph measuring 6' by 4' of the Blue Pullman. A very fine addition to our museum material.

Members visiting the line on Open Days etc. may have noticed the large number of B.R. Station signs. These are from Leeds Central, alas, no more and are thus most fitting to be a railway museum in Leeds.

North Yorks Moors R.P.S.

The first meeting of this new Yorkshire railway Preservation Society is on Saturday November 18th. at 5 pm. in Goathland. Their membership now stands at 573 and they have been given a period of time to raise funds for the purchase of the disused line from Grosmont to Pickering. A 6 month period until the 1st. April has been agreed.

To Rule or Not to Rule.

by "7777".

Rules are not made for the purpose of annoying anyone, or in order to make the operation of traffic more complicated. They are made in the interests of SAFETY. Your safety, the Safety of the public and my safety too. One out of every 10 Railway Accidents is caused by non-observance of rules, and every day no less than 130 men are injured on the railways sufficiently badly to keep them off work for at least 3 days. Worse still it is found that the injury was basically due to the injured man disobeying the

Nov. 67 4.

the Rules - he knew better than the men who have run the railways for over 100 years. In 1937, a seat in a passenger train in this country was THE SAFEST PLACE ONE COULD POSSIBLY OCCUPY! because at that time everyone observed rules, discipline was at a high level, everyone knew the correct procedures and could rely on his fellow railwaymen to do the same. There was a great decrease in injuries, the silly, senseless and careless minor accidents (due nearly always to impatience and not following the correct procedure) happened very rarely, and, when it did happen, the sufferer was not regarded as a sort of hero or Clever Dick, he was regarded by his mates as a dangerous thrombosis - a Bloody Clot in the system in other words.

Let us face facts. Any wheeled vehicle from a child's scooter upwards IS A POTENTIAL KILLER if carelessly handled. And the driver thereof is responsible for the results of his carelessness. Do not continue to live in a fool's paradise and do not go on thinking "It can't happen to me". It can and it will, sooner or later, because every transport undertaking in the world, sooner or later, has a bad accident. But careful working, strictly according to the rules, the taking of no risks whatever, & above all the observance of the splendid principle "When in doubt, Stop" will surely put off the date when someone is seriously injured or who loses his life because he did not do his job correctly according to the rules.

In 1966 the Ministry of Transport altered their requirements and made a report obligatory on many minor mishaps! Each area has a reporting officer who is required by law to report certain types of accident. It is my dreary but very necessary duty to do this in respect of Middleton Railway. So that I may report as few things as possible, all accidents are required to be reported to me at once and a written statement made on a sheet of paper by all concerned. You do this TO PROTECT YOURSELVES, so that someone else who knows the regulations and the Law, knows all about it, and can thus help you defend yourself if any action is contemplated against you.

There have been a couple of incidents which involve insurance claims, which are not yet finally settled and which cause great anxiety. Yet both incidents were partially caused by slackness of members who couldn't be bothered to do the job properly.

Report all accidents, however slight, in order to protect yourself. Make a note of the circumstances there and then, and go home and write a short report on paper post it to me and you will be treated most fairly, and probably hear no more of it. If you do, you will be most fairly treated, you will be given the benefit of any doubt and you will learn how the accident could have been avoided by correct working.

We all make mistakes - I make lots of them - and silly ones too! But I admit my mistakes and you are sincerely advised to do likewise and thus to improve the discipline of the railway, and to lift it from the present level to a very high standard.

And if not? There is only one remedy - immediate suspension for at least 14 days, of anyone guilty of carelessness, wastage of fuel or unnecessary use of rolling stock or materials, and most serious of all disobedience of instructions. This suspension can be applied by officials of the Society from the Deputy Chairman upwards, or the Secretary. A "new idea" is necessary - let each and every member do his job Really Properly safely and carefully, let us eliminate silly careless mistakes or futile disagreements, and let our public image be one of quiet efficiency, not one of slipshod slack or dangerous fooling about.

These are hard words but they are sincere ones indeed! Rather like a nasty tasting dose of medicine?

Reginald C. Lawrence.
Permanent Way Advisor,
Safety Precautions Officer,
Vice-President,
Middleton Railway.