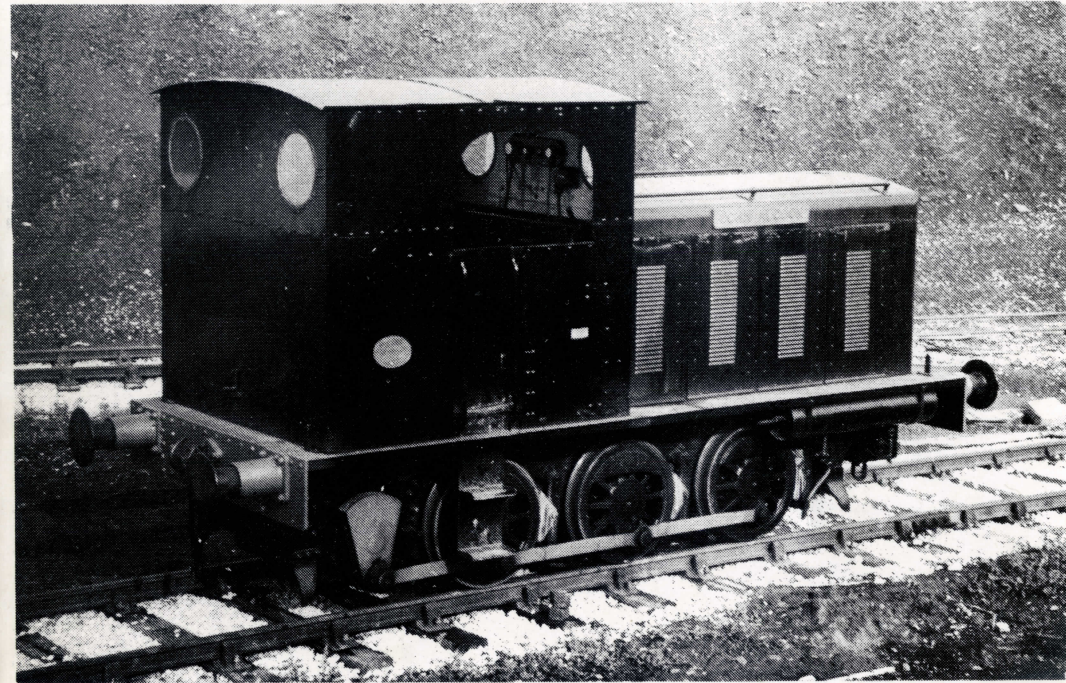


# THE OLD RUN



**JOURNAL OF  
THE 1758 MIDDLETON RAILWAY  
LEEDS**

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The Editor invites all readers to contribute articles, news items, letters, photographs and drawings on subjects of interest! All contributions should include the reader's name and address. Opinions expressed in the magazine do not necessarily reflect those of the Middleton Railway Trust Ltd, the Middleton Railway Association, or the Editor.

All articles for the next issue should reach the Editor by 24th March 1989.

## EDITORIAL

Old Run has a new Editor this issue (yes, again!). Ian Smith and I have changed jobs, so that I can take over more of his former duties, freeing him to concentrate more time on his publicity work. He will now act as my Assistant, chivvying yardfolk and others for news items, reports and photographs.

It seems a good opportunity to thank Ian for his many years of work on the magazine. He became Editor in 1979, completely lacking in experience of magazine production, and his skill was largely self-taught as the former Editor had moved to the Midlands and was not readily available to give advice. (As the passenger figures soared last year, it appears that Ian isn't too bad as a Publicity Officer either!)

Sadly, this issue must also record the tragically early death of John Bushell. Tributes to our Historian and Archivist appear on later pages, as does his last article for Old Run, written shortly before he died. John will be much missed in many aspects of the Railway's life, not least in the pages of this magazine. I am sure that all members, whether they knew John in person or only through his writings and local radio broadcasts, will join us in extending our greatest sympathy to his father and brother.

SHEILA BYE

Frontispiece:- 1697 'John Alcock', soon to return from York. (See Loco Notes.)  
Photo: M.R.T. Collection

## THE GERMAN CONNECTION

It all started with an unusual telephone call at School. "Come on, be quick," said the Secretary, "It's from Germany!"

She was wrong. Not the call, but certainly the caller, Wilhelm Wunderlich, was from Germany. An employee of the Siemens firm, he had been visiting Britain for a meeting of the Institute of Railway Signalling Engineers. As an enthusiast and a historian, he had heard something about Middleton, and wanted to meet the author of the Trust's official history, *The World's Oldest Railway*. Starting investigations with a bookshop in Birmingham, he heard that John Bushell is a teacher somewhere near Leeds, so to Leeds he came. A letter addressed to the Middleton Railway, Garnet Road brought no reply. (It was, a month later, returned to Germany!)

A night at the Queens Hotel, a taxi to the abandoned Clayton's Garnet Road site, the eventual discovery of the new Moor Road Sidings; numerous telephone calls (as a result of some help by the N.A.C.R.O. team), and eventually Steve Roberts was able to say where I worked. And so the telephone call came. I hesitated. Perhaps we might meet in the evening, as I was teaching all afternoon?

"I have to take the 16.45 train from Leeds to catch the night Harwich - Hook of Holland boat", said Wilhelm.

There was no alternative. We chatted between classes, on the way to Batley Station, and on the train through to Wakefield. But why such special interest in our historic railway? Wilhelm Wunderlich was writing "*Die Erste Deutsch Staateisenbahn*" (The First German State Railway). John Blenkinsop is a name revered in our railway history, as the patentee of the Rack and Pinion method of propulsion. John Stanley Blenkinsop, his son, is revered in Germany as engineer to the pioneer state railway between Braunschweig and Wolfenbüttel, opened in 1838, and its anniversary celebrated in 1988.

So it was that in August, I made a brief visit to join the celebration, which was centred at the Braunschweig main station of today. The present "Hauptbahnhof", the third, is a through station. Nothing remains of the first terminal, which lasted from 1838 to 1843. The second, a replacement which Blenkinsop must have known, is actually close to the city centre, and is now beautifully restored and converted to a bank and offices. The 1938 celebration took place here, but now all tracks have disappeared. The new station, which avoids the need for reversal, replaced the 117 year old terminal in 1960.



Deutsche Bundesbahn used the exhibition as an opportunity to look forward rather than to look back. Certainly an early diesel hydraulic - we would call it a "Warship" - was present, together with early electric locomotives. The main attractions however, were the latest Inter City electric design I.C.E., with one power car, one passenger coach and the test car. This was the World Record Breaker, reaching 406.9 km/h on part of the newly built line of 150 years later - Würzburg to Fulda. Various modern and refurbished passenger carriages and wagons filled the platforms. Contrasting demonstrations included a four wheeled pedal velocipede, a radio controlled diesel shunter, plus various track and signalling techniques. Although no steam engine was in the display, a series of three steam hauled excursions traversed the original route. They were hauled by 01.1100, an oil fired pre-war Pacific, similar to 01.1063 which is preserved on a plinth outside the station.

I was interested to learn that the development of Braunschweig (Brunswick) as a railway centre was partly due to the innovative genius of the Englishman, John Stanley Blenkinsop, who was born to John in 1813. After apprenticeship in engineering, he was working in 1837 for the firm G. Forrester and Co. of Liverpool. This company built two locomotives for the first state railway. (The very first locomotive for the private Nuremberg-Fürth line, the "Adler" (Eagle) was built in 1835 by Robert Stephenson. Blenkinsop rack locomotives had been built in Berlin as early as 1815. The pioneering role of Britain in railway engineering cannot be underestimated.)

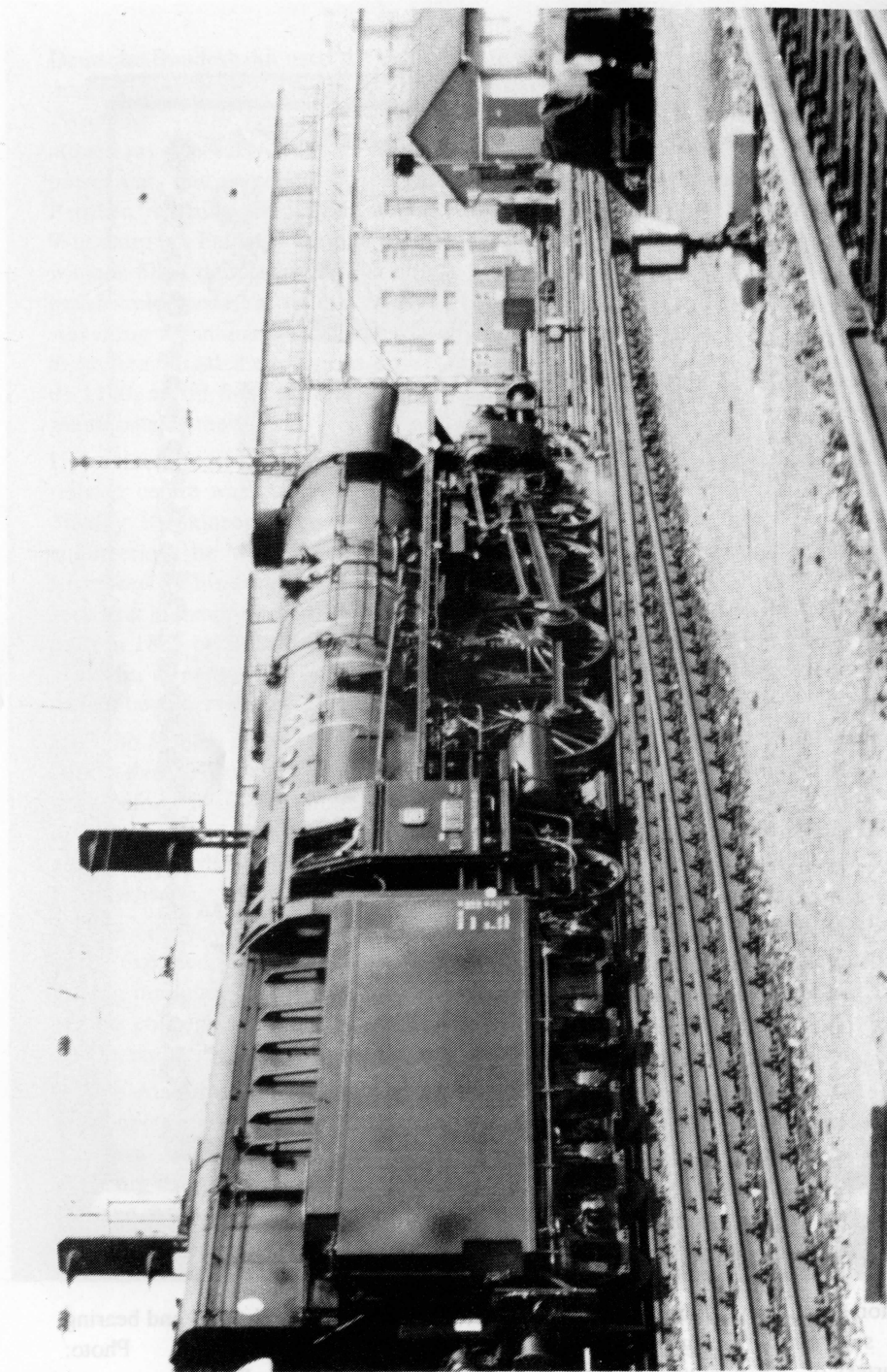
So, John Stanley was sent to Braunschweig in summer 1838 to prepare the "Swift" and "Advance" for service. He lodged in an inn close to the station. It was not long before, it is rumoured, the neighbours were puzzled by his walk to work diverting from the direct route to pass the home of an attractive young German girl! Soon, the ties of marriage made more reasons for J.S.B. to stay in Braunschweig.

By the 6th November 1838, the loco "Advance" was prepared from the "kit of parts" exported, and ready for test running. The 28th November saw Blenkinsop driving the other loco "Swift" hauling 160 soldiers for a test train, and with J.S.B. and his colleague, James Black, the opening trains for the first state railway ran on 1st December, 1838. The "Swift" was capable of a speed of 45 m.p.h.

Philipp-August von Amsberg's vision was rewarded. The first section as far as Wolfenbüttel was opened amidst great ceremony. by the 31st October, 1841, the line was extended to Vienenburg, but the section from Vienenburg to Bad Harzburg had been opened on the 10th August 1840. The difficulty was caused by crossing the local state boundary, and the reluctance of their neighbours to accept steam traction. As the steam special of 1988 sped from Wolfenbüttel to



Union certificate of John (Stanley) Blenkinsop, dated 26th March 1834 and bearing the seal of the Glasgow branch of the Friendly United Mechanics. Photo: courtesy of R.F. Youell, presented by a German friend of John Bushell.



01 1100 on special train service at Nuremberg Hauptbahnhof, August 1986.  
Photo: S.Bye

Vienenburg, we were aware of binoculars trained upon us. They were not, alas, the "railway-friends", but the communist guards, for today's political boundary between West and East Germany is very close to the railway here.

Vienenburg Station is today the very oldest railway station building in Germany, and surely one of the oldest working stations in the world. It became in part a museum in the summer of 1988, containing a library and small exhibits, whilst outside is one of the few remaining 4-wheel diesel railbuses and some mechanical signalling.

The last section, to the terminal station at Bad Harzburg, is heavily graded. The steam special on which I was travelling required diesel assistance into the terminal station. A diesel was attached to the rear for the whole journey, but this was the only plea for assistance from the 01. The whole train reversed with the diesel to the front, steam to the rear, before a further reversal at Goslar, and a return to Braunschweig.

Today's Braunschweig is still a railway centre of great importance. I was able to inspect the major diesel locomotive repair shops, served by 2 traversers. Wilhelm, my guide, told of how nearly 150 years earlier, the Englishman Blenkinsop had pioneered steam locomotive repairs in the city. He insisted on "preventative maintenance" as the best way of maximising the locomotives' period in service. Many were dubious of his innovative ideas, and he had to face opposition. His locomotive shed, too, had various traversers considered to be too expensive.

Blenkinsop was well aware that the developing railway system needed a more sophisticated signalling system. After attempts with imported British "Saxby and Farmer" equipment, it seemed a natural progression for a German firm to develop in a similar way to supply the growing rail network. So it was that, in 1868, the engineer Büssing joined with G. Vuperade to set up the German signalling firm. Next to the station today is the great Siemens works, which produces the modern day equivalent. An old British Saxby and Farmer signal box has been obtained from British Rail (Southern Region) so that the museum will be able to offer comparison between 19th century British and German practice.

Braunschweig today also provides the main bridge maintenance works for the State Railway, whilst at nearby Salzgitter is the 150 year old works of Linke-Hofmann-Busch. This private contractor has built most of the sleek, swift and modern Braunschweig tramcars, but is better known for building rail multiple units and carriages too - and London's "Dockland Light Railway" automatic trains.

All this started when John Stanley Blenkinsop arrived as an employee of Forester, and ended up as Chief Engineer to the First State Railway in Germany. The regard in which his work was held in 1882 is reflected in his being awarded the



Knights Cross 2nd Class of the Dukes order of Henry the Lion, by Wilhelm Duke of Braunschweig. In 1843, he built two steam locomotives at his Braunschweig works. One was named "Braunschweig", the other "Blenkinsop", which strangely was 23 years before the Middleton Railway first named a locomotive "Blenkinsop"!

My thanks to Wilhelm Wunderlich for help in preparing this article. Wilhelm was able to make a proper "Middleton and Yorkshire" visit to coincide with the Autumn '88 Steam Gala, and we are delighted.

JOHN BUSHELL

## TRIBUTE TO JOHN BUSHELL

John was a founder member of the Middleton Railway, and one of his favourite stories was that he had been "pressganged" as the first guard on the inaugural passenger trains using Swansea & Mumbles 2 and the Hunslet diesel 1697. John's other claim to fame in the pioneer days was that he was the person who suggested that the Middleton should be preserved, when Fred Youell was looking for somewhere to place the Leeds University's recently acquired trams. The rest, as they say, is history.

During his long association with the M.R.T., John held several positions, some of them council posts and others more mundane, but no less important, such as Old Run Distributor in 1964. His most important contribution to Middleton's administration was as Membership Secretary, between 1964 and 1970. John overhauled the membership system and will always be remembered for this work. He was also the Trust's Archivist, always on the lookout for items relating to the history of the Railway and its impact on South Leeds. He wrote the history of the Railway which is accepted as the definitive work on the subject - "The World's Oldest Railway".

John was very much a "white collar" member, but was regularly seen on site, either visiting or acting as guard on the passenger trains. He will be sorely missed by his many colleagues and friends. The Railway is to erect a suitable memorial to John Bushell on site during the summer. Anyone wishing to attend the ceremony should contact the Chairman or any Council member during May/June, by which time arrangements will hopefully have been finalised.

IAN SMITH

## JOHN BUSHELL - AN APPRECIATION

I could fill several pages with appreciation of John's work both for Middleton Railway and elsewhere, and to compress it into a short obituary isn't easy.

Although he was born in Leeds, John's family came from Norwich, which his father left in 1935 after working as an electrician for the L.N.E.R. - railways seem to be in the blood.

Though the Middleton Railway Preservation Society (as it then was) contained only University members, John was very early on the list once it was open to all comers. His devotion to transport showed up in many ways. To get to the Batley school where he worked, John went via Headingley and Leeds City Stations, at times when neither section of the journey was as well supplied with trains as they are now. We shared an interest in trams, John being expert on such Leeds specimens as "Lance Corporals" and "Horsfields", myself on London County Council "Hilly Route" HR2's of which we had 3 in Leeds, one at Headingley tram depot.

John has had what might be called "tummy trouble" as long as I have. We entered hospital only a few weeks apart, and it is a matter of great dismay that I survived and John didn't. He was a very good lay preacher in the Methodist Chapel, and I speak from a fair knowledge of clergymen. It was both a shock and an honour for me to see John in a wheel chair as I read the lesson at Morning Service at the Infirmary Chapel in Leeds. What will stay in the memory most is the fact that, when faced with the bad news, John emitted cheerfulness rather than depression, and seemed to wish to "go out with a bang". To lay on vintage 'buses for the mourners at the Funeral, and to have the whole thing planned in detail is typical.

John achieved more in his quiet, unassuming way than many people I know who raise quite a dust as they pass by! His best work must be his painstaking work on the history of Middleton, and his book 'The World's Oldest Railway' will be a lasting memorial: it is a pity it is out of print. Before he became too ill to continue, John and I were exchanging ideas on the few remaining unverified sidings and customers in any way connected with the Middleton Railway. These details had so far evaded other historians who were less painstaking than he was.

One of John's last contacts was with a German historian whom I escorted as his representative to Sheepscar Archives Office. John did remark that foreign countries seem to pay more respect to Middleton, Murray and Blenkinsop than does our own country, and this is certainly true.

Middleton Committee are preparing a fitting memorial for John and his work. I might quote what was said of Christopher Wren - "If you require a monument, look around", a remark that also applies to John. We did recognise John in a minute's silence at the lunch which preceded the Santa Steam service and prayers.

Sincere sympathy goes to John's father and brother David. Both of them asked for their thanks to be passed on to the many people who have paid tribute to John.

It is depressing to lose pioneers of railway preservation. Tom Rolt of Tallyllyn has gone, Horace May of Bluebell, and now John, equivalent pioneer of Middleton. I begin to feel my age at losing such people. John's departure leaves a large gap at Middleton as well as a big personal loss to myself. To quote Tennyson, "His name will long re-echo down the corridors of time."

R.F. YOUELL

## MORE CONNECTIONS

The anniversary had already come to our notice before John's article arrived, and a letter was composed (in German!) to send to this junior outpost for the 1st December. (Our own Railway was 230 years old in 1988!)

Last year in Germany, we came across yet another mention of Middleton. We visited the splendid Auto & Technik Museum at Sinsheim - hundreds of vehicles of all varieties, winged and wheeled, housed in two enormous sheds, each about the size of the Railway Museum at York. Their shop had copies of a steam loco book, being remaindered at about £2.50. It looked like a pretty, "coffee table" picture book, but when I found Middleton in it, of course I bought a copy. The relevant section says:

"In 1811, John Blenkinsop could complete his first locomotive. He proclaimed enthusiastically to have built the first 'economical' working steamhorse. All the same, it pulled a 100 ton weight at pedestrian speed over the 5 kilometre long track of the Middleton Coalroad, but must certainly have rested there and again because the steam ran out. This didn't matter to the coal, but the passengers took offence at it."

At this point, the writer's imagination obviously ran riot - one of a few unfortunate errors I spotted in an otherwise attractive and informative book (another was an insistence on calling Timothy Hackworth "Jim"). The typically ponderous German prose goes on to mention the locomotives built in 1815/16 at the Royal Iron Foundry in Berlin to designs taken back from Middleton by Krigar and Eckardt, and there is an illustration of one as depicted on the company's 1816 cast iron New Year 'card', reproduced in full in John Bushell's booklet 'John Blenkinsop of Middleton'.

Some years ago, DB started a Junior Club and our son became a member. In addition to the initial issue of badge, membership card and Bahnbuch (a log book full of information on rolling stock, signalling etc., renewable after 5 journeys over 100 kilometres have been recorded and accredited with a stamp of each guard's ticket clipper), members receive copies of the monthly Blickpunkt railway newspaper. On the inside back page of the December 1988 issue was a familiar name - John Blenkinsop!

The writer had apparently visited an exhibition at the Lower Saxony Regional Museum (Braunschweig is in Lower Saxony, so presumably the exhibition was connected with the railway anniversary). There, the writer had discovered that John Blenkinsop, described as Braunschweig's first engine driver, may have been involved in the inventing of the steam locomotive as well as George Stephenson. A second German letter has, of course, been sent - this time to Blickpunkt, sorting out their rather hazy view of locomotive (and Blenkinsop) history.

A third German letter has been composed to send to the Museum itself, as the Blickpunkt article mentions them having the correspondence between John (Stanley) Blenkinsop and his mother after his arrival in Germany, and also his letters to Forresters, who supplied the Braunschweig locomotives. As well as making sure that they know of the Middleton Railway's continuing existence, we hope to be able to obtain copies of the correspondence if at all possible.

If you spot any German tourists at the line this summer, please let me know as it would be interesting to see if all this laborious foreign letter-writing generates enough interest to encourage any of the recipients to come and see our Railway.

SHEILA BYE



## A BIT OF PRAISE -

does not go amiss, so we print this letter from Henry Gunston, whom all but our newest members will know for his interesting Old Run articles on British steam locos in Africa.

"On Christmas Eve I rode on a 'Santa Special', my first chance to travel on the railway again after some years living abroad. 'Carroll' made a good sight as I entered the car park, leaving the visitor with no doubt that this was a railway, and a friendly welcome followed in the Norwegian van and at the shop.

On the train itself, the coach behind 'John Blenkinsop' was new to me, but it gave a good ride, accompanied by 'Away in a Manger' and 'Jingle Bells' from the younger passengers. Santa urged us to search the fields for his reindeer Rudolph, but I suspect the nearest red noses were in the pubs of Hunslet. On the way down there was "a deal of excitement", as Driver Joe Duddington said of events in the L.N.E.R. dynamometer car on Stoke Bank fifty years ago, but I think Santa would have found it difficult handing out presents had our speed actually touched 125 m.p.h. A further welcome was waiting at Moor Road in the form of a glass of wine and a mince pie, and the families I travelled with seemed to have fully enjoyed their outing.

In the yard, Ian Smith gave me a tour of Sentinel No.54, whose restoration is of particular interest to me due to my involvement in the Sentinel Trust Egyptian railcar project at Quainton Road. It was useful that my visit resulted in the passing of queries and answers on Sentinel problems in both directions. Philip Lodge kindly showed me round the yard, and I was impressed how tidy the site is when compared with some preservation schemes where derelict bits and pieces lie rotting in the undergrowth. A special delight was the chance to see 'Mary' again, my personal favourite standard gauge diesel shunter.

Although it was only a brief visit, I was greatly impressed by how much progress the railway has made in the last four years, and my thanks as a member go to all those who have done so much to carry things forward.

HENRY GUNSTON

## SANTA TRAINS - A NEW OUTLOOK!

Middleton has always tried to keep up with neighbouring preserved railways. The fact that we are on the small side should not stop our coming up with ideas that put Middleton on the map.

Too often, the commercial aspects of Christmas can eclipse what Christmas is really about, and it was decided that we should do something about it. The Chaplain to the Infirmary, the Reverend Philip Clarke, and his part-time assistants the Reverends Helen Mace, Marjorie Toller and Canon Stapleton, and Mrs. Clarke, Sister in the Clarendon Wing, are Middleton members. Helen doesn't like to be called a railway enthusiast, but her knowledge of the subject is unchallengable. Her late husband, the Reverend A.W.C. Mace, was doing first class railway photographs as far back as 1925. She prepared an order of service. To avoid drowning everything with the noise of safety valves, we put the service between trains, and the train came in just in the middle of the last hymn. The service ended with the blessing of the children and parents on the train.

The introduction and blessing were shared by Philip Clarke and Canon Stapleton, and the Christmas service in between was conducted by Helen Mace. To allow the voices of the clergy to be heard above the noise of the crowd, we are grateful to Mr. David Bushell - electronics expert of Headingley, for bringing in an amplifier for the occasion.

Others in the supporting cast were Joe Lee, Mrs. Vernon Smith, and Woman Police Officer Sue Hedley, who arrested two thugs who had stolen and smashed up our latest Vice-President's motorcycle. Also we were pleased to have Noel Brampton, Middleton backroom boy, and Mr. Benson of the Infirmary who skilfully overhauled the aforementioned Vice-President's firebox, tubes and smokebox.

This is the sort of event that could go disastrously wrong, but it didn't. There are few preserved lines on which hymns and Christmas prayers were as audible as at our Santa trains. Thanks to all those who made this a success.

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## "SNACK BOX" BURTON ROAD

run by members Keith, Jöhn, Rita and David, welcomes you if the station is shut, or any time, for - hot and cold sandwiches and hot snacks.

Mon.-Sat. 7a.m.-3p.m. Sun. 8.30a.m.-1.0p.m. Tel. 779919

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## 1989 OPERATING DAYS

Please make the following alterations to the calendar of events which appeared at the end of the last issue:

the event on 15 July has been renamed "Gricers' Gathering", and will include all-line tours and photo session for enthusiasts. (Tours are pre-booking only.)

SANTA TRAINS will now run on 26 November, and the 2/3, 9/10, 16/17 and 24 December.

## 1990 IS COMING!

The significance of 1990 should be obvious to most people, it is the 30th Anniversary of the opening of the Middleton Railway as a volunteer-run concern. The Middleton was the first standard gauge railway to be opened by volunteers, and also the first to carry fare paying passengers, just beating the better known Bluebell line. As is often the case, the Bluebell managed to gain much more publicity by virtue of being in the South of England, but the fact remains that we in Leeds were the pioneers.

To celebrate our achievement, we are, in conjunction with the A.R.P.S., holding a major series of events under the general banner of "30 Years of Standard Gauge Preservation". Already being printed at the time of writing is a major article for "Railway World" about Middleton and our plans for 1990. This should appear in the June 1989 issue. "Steam Railway" also intend dedicating a special issue to ourselves and Bluebell, for publication in 1990, whilst "Railway Magazine" are also going to do something. Other outlets are also being investigated, and should give us unrivalled publicity for the full year. Full details of all our 1990 plans will appear in the next issue of Old Run, but one major event planned is a society Dinner. Anyone interested in this is asked to contact me as soon as possible, in order that I can assess the demand for such an event. The cost is likely to be in the £10 range, for a three course meal.

IAN SMITH

## LOCO NOTES

On the face of it, little appears to have happened since I last put pen to paper. This does give some cause for concern when we consider what we are hoping to achieve in the next few years. However, the momentum does seem to be improving again and it is hoped that it was only a lull.

However, if progress has not been apparent in the workshops it has been considerable on other fronts. A new diesel loco has arrived on loan, agreement has been reached on the overhaul of the Y7, and discussions are at an advanced stage for another steam loco to come to the line.

54 Our Sentinel has been away on a short holiday to the North York Moors Railway, as was noted in the last Old Run. This event was considered to be a total success, but we have learnt a few things about Sentinels and ours in particular! The 18 mile journeys and the heavier loads showed up a few shortcomings. The worn chains are very noticeable at speed, and a suitable source of replacement must be found (they are two and a quarter inch pitch, which is no longer a standard size). Since return to Middleton, various minor jobs have been carried out. The pre-heater cover joint was leaking and investigations revealed it to be slightly warped. A replacement has been fitted. New blastpipes have been fitted, this being the simplest way of renewing the blower pipes which were rapidly becoming corroded. The old blastpipes will be refurbished for use as spares. There is a continuing problem with leakage of steam from the steam brake into the cab, and the fitting of a new closer tolerance piston and rings has not completely cured it. Finally, at last the remaining cab windows have been refitted following replacement of the frames. 54 was one of the two steam locos used on the Santa Specials.

2003 'John Blenkinsop' has been available for traffic, apart from the inevitable replacement of a tube, and worked the Santa Specials. After the New Year it will be prepared for its annual boiler inspection. 1989 will be its last full season in service before the 10 yearly boiler stripdown.

1882 'Mirvale' Work progresses steadily. The frames are now totally cleaned down, primed and undercoated, and should shortly be finish painted. Two axleboxes have been white metal lined and machined up to restore the correct clearances. The remaining two will be done imminently. Once the brasses are refitted to the axle journals it can be returned to its wheels. The steam brake has been freed off, and a new rear drawspring fitted. On the boiler, the welding requested by the insurance company has now been carried out. The smokebox is



all but complete, but will not be fitted and finished off until the boiler tubes have been fitted. These are on order with a mid-January delivery promised. The tubes are being purchased as part of a job lot with several other railways, so enabling us to obtain a good price. Our thanks to the Yorkshire Dales for organising this.

385 Stored serviceable for the winter. Some tube leakage in the firebox has occurred, and if it recurs a re-tube may be necessary. Otherwise, no work is planned.

1310 Agreement has been reached with the loco owners for it to remain at Middleton, and for the railway to carry out an overhaul, with the intention of having it back in service by 1991, its centenary year. Plans are to start stripping the loco early in the New Year, and it will come into the workshops once 'Mirvale' is mobile and 'Alf' has received attention. The Y7's overhaul promises to be the most comprehensive yet. New side tanks are required as well as much work on the chassis. What work will be necessary on the boiler we do not yet know.

138C At long last, this loco has come into the workshops for fitting of vacuum brake equipment and other minor attention, including a repaint. Space limitations prevent the exhaust being driven directly from the engine crankshaft and a layshaft will have to be fitted to transfer the drive to the rear of the engine compartment.

98 'Alf' Little work has been done on this diesel due to pressure of other work, but the 3" thick bufferbeams have been drilled for the vacuum pipes, and various parts acquired, including an exhaust.

No.3 The latest arrival on the line has been test run and, following some work on the gearbox, appears to be in reasonable condition. Pending further work on the compressed air system, it is presently in store.

1697 'John Alcock' It is a long time since this loco featured in the loco notes. Following a recent Council meeting, it has been decided to bring our pioneer back to Middleton so that it might participate in the thirtieth anniversary celebrations in 1990. It is not presently known what work will be necessary, but it is hoped that it will be put back into working order for restricted operation.

D577, D631, 1738 and 4220038 are all serviceable, and used as necessary. All other locos are stored out of use, awaiting major repairs.

STEVE ROBERTS

## CARRIAGE AND WAGON NOTES

Following completion of the B.P. tank wagon repaint, work has again been concentrated on the conversion of P.M.V.No.1867 to a coach. All the panelling has now been fitted and the two internal partitions fitted in. One end is more or less complete, but work on the other is awaiting approval from the Railway Inspectorate for a gangway connection. Glazing and beading the windows is a major job still to be tackled. It is hoped that the seats can be made by the Community Industry scheme, and if this is the case it will reduce the work load considerably.

Internal lighting has been fitted to coach No.2084, and the L.N.E.R. van, and was made operational in time for the Santa Specials. Similar lighting is being fitted to the new coach.

STEVE ROBERTS

## LIGHTER NIGHTS

Members will be aware that a lighting pole was erected some time ago to provide good quality lighting to the depot site around the shed and platform area. The north end of the site is well lit by the motorway lights and there has been no need to provide any lighting there. Most evening work outside is carried out in this well lit area, but the lighting here only served to emphasise the fact that the rest of the site was a black hole in comparison!

With improvement of this situation in mind, a purpose made lighting tower, some 36ft. high, was purchased in 1987 but has languished in pieces until recently, principally because no one was mad enough to climb up it to fit it out! However, a volunteer was eventually found (conned!) and we now have probably the best lit depot of any of the private railways, with five 400W sodium floodlights beaming down on us, not to mention the massive floodlight towers of the motorway junction. All we need now are the volunteers, and we can work 24 hours a day!

STEVE ROBERTS

## GOODS FOR REAL

I make no apology for changing that ghastly Americanism "Freight" for "Goods"! If this photograph was not one taken by me, it is a spitting image of it.

It is reasonably easy to pinpoint the details of the picture (Old Run Autumn 1988). The flat wagon was of the type used to carry plates to Clayton Son and Co. Ltd., the "21 tonner" was Wally, R.&B.'s favourite for taking scrap out of their depot. So the picture was taken before the Clayton's versus B.R. row over demurrage, which resulted in all their traffic being diverted to B.R. lorries between Wellington Street goods depot and Dartmouth Works. The locomotive has the "John Alcock" name plate on it, which means it cannot have been taken before 1962. The name "Hunslet" in yellow has been painted out in green, and this was done just before the locomotive went on loan to Hunslet's works for their centenary exhibition. This was a rather tactless blunder, but we specialise in these!

The caption to the picture states "approaching Moor Road from Balm Road", but this is impossible, because the plate wagon is empty out of Dartmouth Works and the 21 tonner is full out of R.&B.'s. It was going TO and not FROM Balm Road. It was probably in the period before we completed the loop to allow outward and inward trains to be dealt with at the same time, and have the loco at the front of the train. This, however, is not an absolute certainty because trains could still be propelled down to B.R. to avoid having to run round at both ends of the route. I would put the date as between 1964 and 1966, though after 20 years my memory is not too good.

R.F. YOUELL

Many thanks, Fred. Not believing the comment about your memory, I shall expect similar notes on this issue's Golden Oldie!

## ON YER BIKE!

A certain motorcycle-owning Vice President hand-delivered the last issue of Old Run to members in the Leeds, Bradford and Wakefield areas at a cost of under a gallon of petrol plus his own time and effort. About £20 postage was saved. A further advantage was that our delivery man brought one or two lapsing members back into the fold (not a service offered by the G.P.O.). The V.P. in question wishes to thank all those who furnished him with welcome refreshments during his travels.



A busy scene in Dartmouth Yard in the early 1960's, with the ex-broad gauge crane in steam. Photo: ?



2003 'John Blenkinsop' running round the train at Moor Road, Summer 1988. Photo: K.M.Hartlëy



## WRITING THE RULES - III

Once compliance with the Factories Acts had been achieved, attention had then turned to the operation of trains, and in particular to the question of whether we needed a Light Railway Order. This had been a fairly constant item on the agenda for committee meetings since early in 1972, and the minutes of the meeting on 2nd March 1973 recorded that "Mr. Edwards said there were rumours that the Department of the Environment might invoke a clause in the 1933 Act, which stated that anyone operating a passenger railway must have the approval of the Railway Inspectorate. The Dept. was worried about public safety, operations might have to be officially approved and therefore an LRO would be required." This meeting had taken place shortly after the AGM of the Association of Railway Preservation Societies, which John had attended as the railway's representative, and presumably this was where he had picked up these rumours. On hearing of them, the railway's committee were also worried, because it was becoming clear by this time that obtaining an LRO was going to be a complicated and possibly expensive operation, and it was not clear that there was any way of obtaining the Railway Inspectorate's approval apart from applying for one. If the DoE had acted in the way that was being rumoured, it could have resulted in our passenger service having to cease for some considerable time, and by then it was a sufficiently important part of our economy that the railway would probably not have survived.

What the committee probably did not know at that stage was that the railway did have some approval from the Railway Inspectorate: at least, I did not know then that this was the case, and by the summer of 1973 I had taken over as safety officer, as Gordon Crapper had moved away from Leeds. Recently, however, I was going through some old committee papers (looking for a totally different piece of information) when I discovered the following item in the minutes of one of the very earliest committee meetings (to be precise, the fourth meeting, held on 25th November 1960). "Col. Robertson ... had visited the railway; he was quite well impressed, and had seen worse track!" At that time, Col. Robertson had been the Chief Inspecting Officer of Railways, and so his approval had counted for quite a lot, although it had only been for freight operation, of course, and not for passenger traffic. Furthermore, in 1960 the entire railway preservation movement had consisted effectively of the Bluebell, the Welsh narrow gauge lines and ourselves, whereas by 1973 most of the main preserved railways were established and operating, and a number of smaller organisations were beginning to appear. Some of these were regarded as having

a rather cavalier attitude to the accepted standards of railway operation, and this fuelled our committee's concern about what the DoE might choose to do to improve things. Thus, even if we had known about Col. Robertson's inspection and approval of our line 13 years earlier, we would probably not have attached much weight to it.

In the event, we need not have worried, for 1974 was to see the passage of the Health and Safety at Work Act, which (amongst other things) set up the Health and Safety Executive to take over the work of bodies such as the Factories Inspectorate. Even before the Act had been passed, unofficial messages had emerged from the Railway Inspectorate to the effect that they intended to use its powers (in conjunction with the HSE) to ensure that non-statutory railways were properly regulated, which meant in practice that we would not have to apply for an LRO in order to be inspected and approved. This was probably just as well, for by the end of 1973 it had become clear that we had no hope of getting one quickly, and that the idea of applying for one would have to be shelved for the time being. The reason for this was that the City Council were then in the middle of trying to formulate their plans for the development of the old Middleton Colliery site, and all sorts of fancy ideas were being floated, some of which would have involved diversion of the railway. Consequently, they (as one of the land owners involved) would not give their consent to any application for an LRO until the future alignment of the railway had been fixed, and so it would not have been possible to make any progress.

Having established that some sort of official inspection was going to take place sooner or later, attention was turned to trying to prepare for it. At that time it appeared that there were two main aspects of our operation that the Inspectorate were likely to be concerned about: one was that we propelled trains up the hill to Middleton Park, and the other was that trains did not have continuous brakes. The main danger from propelling trains was that the guard, at the front of the train, could not stop it directly, but had to rely on flag signals to the driver to stop, and there was always the possibility that the driver might be temporarily attending to something in the cab, and so not see the signal immediately. The main danger from not having continuous brakes was that the train would not automatically stop if a coupling broke, but we felt that this was not so serious, since the rest of the train could not run away very far because the engine was at the downhill end. To improve safety, therefore, we borrowed an idea that was being used at several other preserved railways, and installed a signal bell system. This consisted of a bell unit at each end of the train, containing a bell, a battery to operate it and another battery to power the circuit that connected the two units. As long as the circuit was intact the bell stayed silent, but as soon

as the circuit was broken the bell rang. This meant that the bells would ring at each end of the train if a coupling did break, and each unit had a push button switch in the circuit which could be used to make the bells ring for signalling purposes.

Once this mechanism had been devised and built, it was necessary to produce some instructions for operating it, and these were drafted in the form of an appendix to the rules. It was also necessary to modify some of the rules, so as to require the bell units to be used on all passenger trains, and while these were being drafted a number of other minor changes were made. Most of these reflected the fact that the railway had become a limited company in 1974, and so references to the society or the committee had to be replaced by references to the company or the council. Because we still had a large stock of the 1973 revision of the rule book, it was decided not to print a new revision, but rather to issue a sheet of amendments to go with the existing books. This was approved by the council on 5th April 1976, and (partly because of the railway's change in status) it was issued directly by the council rather than by the R&DSC.

Having thus prepared ourselves as best we could, we then went ahead and arranged for an official inspection to take place, and a fairly full account of that inspection appeared in the Old Run for summer 1976. It left us with a lot of work to do and, inevitably, with more revisions to make to our operating rules.

A.J.COWLING

## THE OLD FIRM

Unfortunately, Henry and Anne Wall have had to resign for personal reasons, after only one season as Shop Managers. Many thanks for all your hard work Henry and Anne: it was nice to see the Shop looking so bright and well-stocked last season, after a year in which no-one was able to devote the necessary time and attention to it.

John and Olive Chaplin have once again taken over as Shop Managers, and I am sure will be grateful for as many offers of staffing help as possible ready for the start of the 1989 Season. The arrangement is only temporary, and anyone interested in becoming Shop Manager is asked to contact Vernon Smith (address and 'phone number on the back page).

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