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Price
ONE
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The Old Run

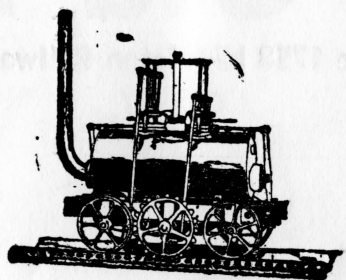
Journal of the 1758 Middleton Railway Trust, Leeds

George



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Foot of Old Run Road

THE OLD RUN

**News of the 1758 Middleton Rail-
way at Leeds**

Spring 1969 Vol. 9

No. 64

HENRY ARRIVES IN TRIUMPH

**Oilburner will be useful
addition to MRT stud**

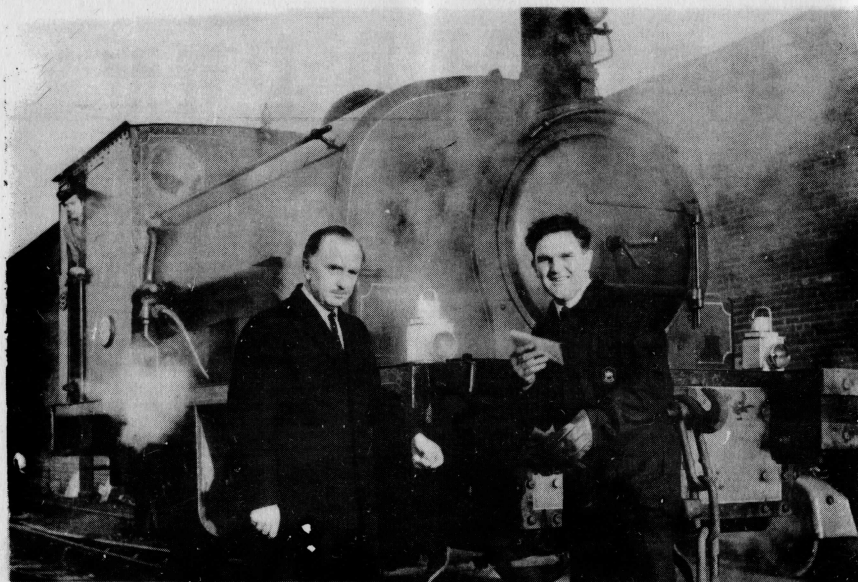
The Middleton Railway Trust is now the proud owner of "Henry de Lacy II", an 0-4-0 oil-burner donated to the society by Kirkstall Forge Engineering Limited in February.

This famous engineering firm had cut down its sidings last year to the number sufficient to deal with such traffic as came by rail. This meant that the steam shunters Henry de Lacy II and III were going to be retired. The MRT asked to buy Henry II (Hudswell Clarke, 1917) as in the better condition and struggled to raise the purchase price by the end of 1968. Slowly, very slowly, the money came in.

The Trust had been asked to move her in Autumn 1968, but before arrangements could be made, a BR goods derailment ploughed up a large part of the main line and cut off communications to the Forge. Meanwhile the MRT was trying to create siding space at Clayton's, where the pint pot already held more than one quart of useful or historic relics. A short siding laid specially for the Courgae diesel provided just a de Lacy shaped gap in the back road, and all was ready.

Henry II was inspected by BR and passed as fit to travel either dead or in steam, and the slight extra cost of being in steam was felt to be worthwhile. This was many moons ago. Then Kirkstall Forge had to demolish and rebuild in such a way that the shed where Henry II was under cover would be cut off. Henry was moved closer to BR junction, and the wait began.

Then on Saturday, February 1, traffic manager Joe Lee heard that



Tuesday would be the day, but that BR didn't know yet the time. The chairman went to the BR offices, who could tell him nothing beyond the fact that someone was going down to see if the engine was fit to run! With the Yorkshire Post and TV and Radio Leeds notified, a cancellation would look very bad.

After a frustrating Monday, the yard master at Balm Road rang up to tell Dr. Youell (the MRT chairman) it would catch the 9.29 from Apperley Bridge goods yard. The maximum speed to Hunslet Up sidings Balm Road, would be 15 mph. (There has been a morning train stopping at Kirkstall Forge since as long ago as 1869, when an all-stations train called there between 9 and 9.30.

Then, to his horror, Joe found that Kirkstall Forge had not been told about the timing! The letter inviting the company to the farewell scene before TV was their first intimation of the move. Some very fast work overnight got the brass polished up and the oil firing ready.

On the morning of 4th. February, the 9.29 goods arrived, filming was done as with full steam up Henry II backed down on to the goods, double heading with a BR stinkpot. The oil firing did a wonderful job and Henry II did all the work into Leeds hauling the goods train and pushing the BR stinkpot at a nice legal 15 mph. Past the industrial archaeology of Kirkstall Power Station and Holbeck Low Level, and then trouble was spotted. A clog in the steam feed to the oil injector cut off the fuel supply and the pressure began to drop. Joe Lee and Stephen Roberts nursed her through to the destination, uncoupled from the goods train and puffed across to the Down side on her last breath of steam. There Henry II came to a stop.

Our Fowler and Courage stinkpots were summoned into action, and

THE OLD RUN

3

a mammoth reorganisation in Dartmouth Works Yard made room for the Newcomer, and still warm and sizzling Henry II came to rest in her new home at lunch time. A friendly Hudswell Clarke man met her at Hunslet Down on arrival, for she had of course passed within a few feet of her birth place en route.

A sudden boom in MRT goods traffic produced a train of loaded wagons going out and then a long train of empties in, and the rare sight of two MRT stinkpots en echelon - the Fowler and Hunslet working together. By happy coincidence there was a representative of each of three famous Leeds loco building firms in action on the same day.

The steam feed to the oil firing is easily brought back into proper working order and there will be a warm welcome to the new arrival. The de Lacy name dates from Norman times and even the streets in Kirkstall are named after the family.

The biggest and most pleasant surprise in a rather hectic three days came at Kirkstall Forge. One of the Directors of the company announced that as the line was as historic as both the de Lacys and Kirkstall Forge, the company had decided to make the engine a present the Trust would appreciate, and returned the deposit.

In a time when all finances are very tight indeed, this handsome gesture is especially appreciated. Everything will be done to make sure that Henry II's donor's generosity is reflected in a permanently spick and span condition as a memento of the famous firm in which the locomotive has spent its working life.

The 9.29 train from Kirkstall Forge on Tuesday, February 4, will long be remembered. With "Flying Scotsman" in Hunslet Works under-going repair, Henry de Lacy II was definitely the only steam engine on BR pulling a goods train that day!

FOOTNOTE: The letter from Mr J. A. Hodgkinson (company secretary of Kirkstall Forge Engineering) says of the engine's name:

"The original Henri de Laci, Baron of Pontefract, gave the land to Alexander and his followers on which Kirkstall Abbey stands and Kirkstall Forge was subsequently built in about 1150. In recognition of this fact it was felt that it would be a fitting gesture for Henry de Lacy II to be given to the Society."

OLD FRED COMES NORTH

There was an old engine named Fred
Who said, as it left its home shed,
"Emily", "Charlotte" and "Anne"
Are not names for a man.
Be a Brontë? I'd rather be dead!

- ANON.

TRAINS CROSS WHERE?

Early in our career, the Leeds Police safety officer recommended a TRAINS CROSS HERE sign at Moor Road crossing. Unfortunately local twiddleomaniacs tended to interfere with the poles with the result that the sign faced anywhere but the oncoming motorists. Not long ago the Highways Department refixed the signs to the concrete lamp - posts, which are untwiddleable, so that the warning to road users was unmistakable. They also cleared away a lot of tarmac which had been placed on the headshunt so close as to interfere with access to sleepers for inspection. We (in the person of our Chief Civil Engineer) dug out a lot of tarmac blocking the rails on the Burton Road level crossing, which had come from we know not where, so that the old main line towards Whitakers could be used again for wagon storage.

Fairly recently we had a number of cases of motorists beating the red flags and parking on Beza Road in such a way as to endanger safety on both rail and road. Our Traffic Manager read the riot act to one offender with professional skill, and Leeds City Police Safety Officer, Sergeant Jones found that the signs were completely out of date. So we have a new set of Level Crossing No Gates and diagonal red crosses now at both Burton Road AND Beza Road. We have also been promised some secondhand signs from near Normanton to protect the highly irregular ACME entrance. So Middleton has moved with the times. The only trouble seems to be that whereas "Trains Cross Here" is a fair warning, few people seem to understand the new continental equivalent. C'est magnifique, mais ce n'est pas la gare. To be on the safe side, Burton Road also has a "level crossing no gates" first warning sign protecting both level crossings. To our pleasure and appropriately for Middleton, the "Modern" warning sign contains a delightful STEAM locomotive - apparently nothing can replace this as a clear warning of a railway ahead! We are about the only place now where this "Modern" sign means what it both says and shows!



ROMANS AND MAD IRISHMEN

By 'Resident Mineralogist'

The great iron ore rush in the North Riding was a conspicuous part of the industrial revolution. Starting mainly on the Northern escarpment of the Cleveland Hills between Eston and Staiths, with smaller workings from Grosmont up the Esk to Kildale and Swainby, and further South to Rosedale Abbey, this plentiful and moderately rich iron ore made Middlesbrough the centre of the Tee-side steel industry, as well as contributing to that of the Consett area. The

Everyone went after the North Yorks iron ore!

Stockton and Darlington Railway were sitting pretty with iron ore coal, and finished steel running to and fro along the length of its line.

The wonderful story came to its end with the closure of the last mine at North Skelton in the last decade right in the centre of the main seam of ore. With it has gone the need for intense mineral traffic, the Nunthorpe - Brotton line having vanished, along with the multitude of sidings at Grosmont and the miles of high level line to Rosedale.

The story has not been neglected by railway historians, but a couple of mineralogists at large came across two lines in the area which have never hit the headlines. One is apparently very ancient, the other a mid-Victorian effort that fell by the wayside after a brave try.

Archaeologists tell us that the Romans worked ironstone in this part of Yorkshire, and point out primitive furnaces at Spaunton and Lastingham. Naturally they assumed that the ore came from nearby Rosedale, but the slag and other remains indicate an entirely different ore with traces of copper as found near Boroughbridge.

Early iron smelting has left a pile of heavy slag at Rievaulx Abbey making one wonder whether all abbots are metallurgically minded! Unfortunately archaeologists occasionally take the wish for the deed, and we were solemnly presented with some "early iron ore" which had about 10% of iron and nearly 40% of silica - hopeless by modern standards. A bit of digging did however produce some good sideritic ore at Post Gate in Glaisdale.

There were two Victorian mines at Glaisdale village with allegedly

poor ore, but in fact quite good when sieved from the shale mixed with it.

Post Gate is on a road "Unsuitable for Motor Cars" but it is believed to have been a stage coach route from Eskdale over the moor to Rosedale and the Vale of Pickering. A chapel there is right on the doorstep of the adit to the iron ore mine in the side of the hill.

The present road is too narrow, hilly and winding to have got the ore away in mediaeval workings. With delight we found a well-laid-out wagon way. It starts from the adit and runs along the side of the valley, on a climb which is fairly steep at first but settles down to about 1 in 40 with primitive cuttings and embankments, adequate to keep the way straight and uniform in gradient.

After a short level section in a cutting at the top, it descends at about 1 in 10 with small embankments to take it up to the cart tracks which cross it. It heads straight for the village at a point just west of the Church. If continued in the same line, it would have descended steeply to join the Picton-Grosmont line at about the same place as the low level sidings from the 19th. Century workings.

There is no trace clear of such an extension, and a steep drop down to the river and railway would have nullified the economy of a reasonable grade on the line from Post Gate.

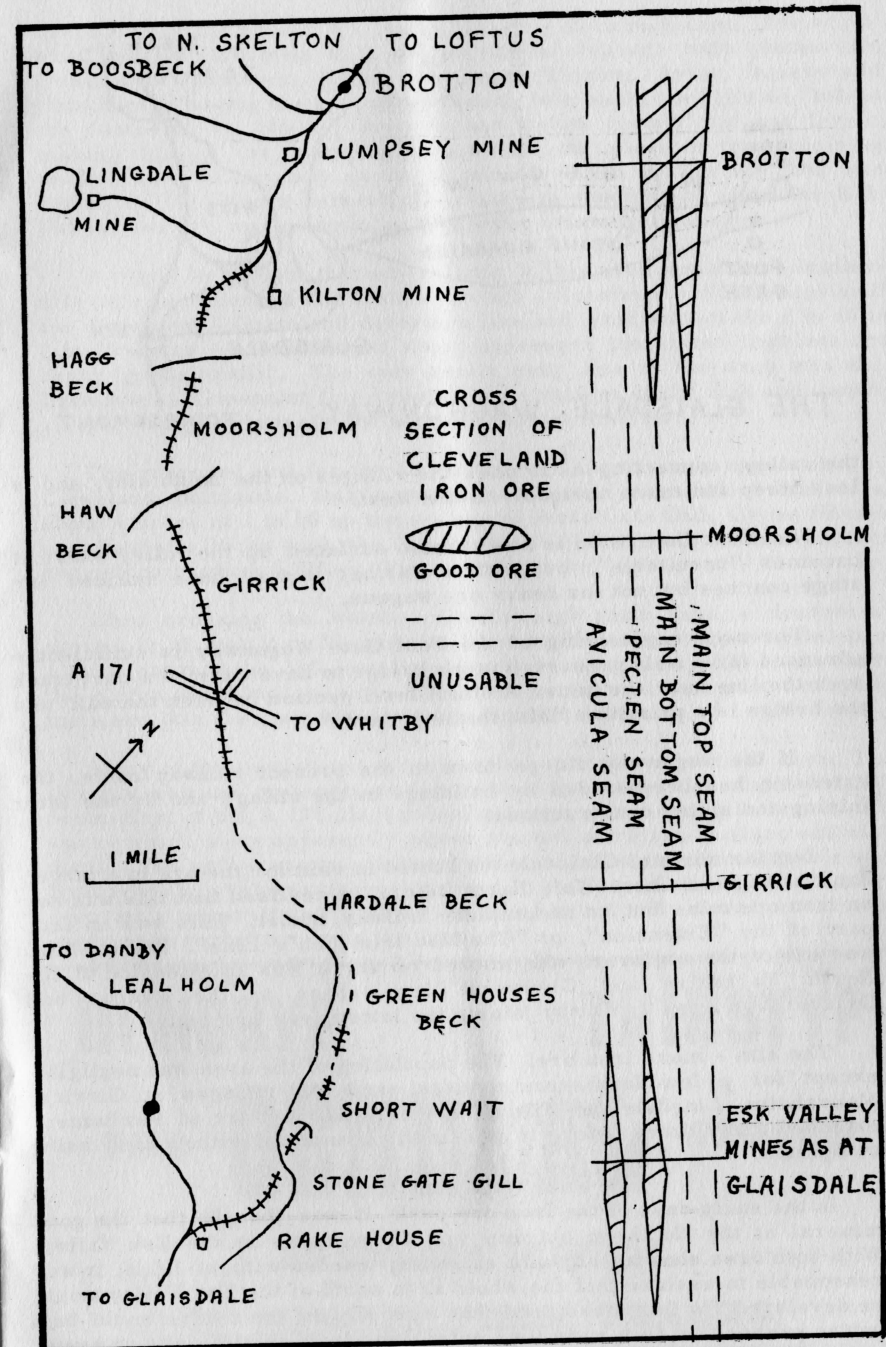
According to local residents with historical knowledge, the quarries for building stone which cut into the wagonway embankment half way up from Postgate were of fairly early Victorian origin themselves and have been disused for a very long time - certainly the appearance of the various quarries is compatible with their having been disused this century. It would appear that if the quarries which cut the line were quite old, the wagonway must have been older still.

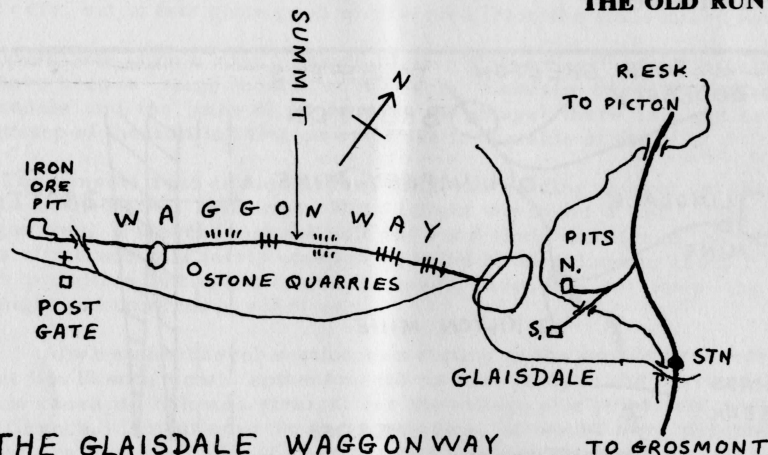
The building stone quarry evidence would indicate that the wagon way was built before the Picton-Grosmont Railway and carried the ore locally to the "Main" road at Glaisdale. The "Main" Road admittedly has Limber Hill at 1 in 3 to the East, but it is about the oldest road in

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the valley, connecting as it does the villages on the South side, and is less steep and more navigable to the West.

The Post Gate road is now tarmac surfaced up the valley where it becomes "unsuitable", but without tarmac it may have sufficed for stage coaches but not for heavy ore wagons.

The civil engineering of the Post Gate Wagonway is sufficiently advanced for a well preserved stone bridge to have carried a cart track over the line near the mine. A small level section between the adit and the bridge is a primitive "Marshalling Yard."

If the wagonway did go down to the present railway route, the extension has been eroded by buildings in the village and by the later mining and siding constructions.

Not far north of Glaisdale we hunted in vain for the ore in a larger excavation near Short Wait Farm before we realised that this was not an iron ore mine but an incomplete railway tunnel. This was in fact part of the "Extension", or "The Mad Irishman's Line". The Irishman was one of the engineers who worked on it. It was an extension of the North Yorkshire and Cleveland line across to the Redcar and Guisborough lines to Whitby joining the latter near Brotton.

The aim - more iron ore! The population of the area was negligible except for a few farms and houses, and the villages at Girrick, Moorsholm, Lingdale and Kilton. The line had its Act of Parliament extended many times before it was finally abandoned without ever being completed.

In the early days of the iron ore rush, it was thought that the good mineral at the Northern outcrop was the same as in the Esk Valley. With both ores showing signs of extending almost without limit, it was reasonable to assume that the whole area north of the Esk Valley would be developed for iron ores, and that new pits on the moors would be a better proposition than very long extensions from existing pits at a very

THE OLD RUN

deep level in the Stanghow - North Skelton - Boosbeck area. The whole area had its iron ores in a saucer shaped deposit, with places like Grosmont, Upleatham, Eston, Roseberry Topping, Ayton, Ingleby and Osmotherly having the exposures clearly visible in the hillside, but in the centre at N. Skelton the ore was below ground and sea levels, making this pit the "pumping station" for the whole of the remaining worked area in the last years of mining. Even though the land was higher on the Moors between the Northern escarpment and the Esk Valley, the ore was going to be no deeper below the surface.

It might be thought that any railway in this area would have intolerably steep gradients. The Middlesbrough - Boosbeck - Whitby line and the Grosmont - Goathland diversion line had gradients of the 1 in 40 to 1 in 50 order - tolerable for short passenger trains but hopeless for heavy goods traffic. The only really easy line in the area was the Battersby - Grosmont line following the valleys of the Esk and Leven rivers, with a relatively low summit East of Kildale.

The proposed line for the Extension was surprisingly reasonable by Cleveland standards. Starting at Rake House, just north of Glaisdale, about 4 miles at 1 in 60 up the valleys of Stone Gate Gill, Green Houses and Hardale Becks took the line to the 700 feet contour which it then hugged for another 4 miles almost straight and level across the moor.

After crossing the Whitby - Guisborough main road, a descent at about 1 in 90 took it to Moorsholm Moor at 550 feet, steepening to about 1 in 60 down to the 350 feet level about 2 miles South of Brotton where the Kilton and Lingdale mine branches joined up to run past Lumpsey mine and into the main lines outside Brotton Station.

Many of the earthworks were carried out and can still be seen. The line ran on a low embankment for most of the route, but about 3 miles South-East of the A 171 main moorland road are not easy to trace. The works which were apparently never started were the bridges and viaducts. The well - known viaduct between Loftus and Skinningrove was typical of the engineering work needed in this area. Mining subsidences eventually necessitated shoring up this viaduct with vast quantities of shaly rock sorted out from the iron ore.

HUNGRY?

THIRSTY?

THE GENERAL STORES

1 Gasholder Terrace

ONE MINUTE FROM TRACKS!

Viaducts of at least this calibre were needed across the Hagg Beck and the Haw Beck either side of Moorsholm. Rather smaller works were needed at Rake House where the new line started at Grosmont, in crossing the Esk, and across Stonegate Gill, where embankments ran near the stream but there is no evidence of any construction or preparation for a bridge or viaduct. The deep cutting up to the tunnel at Short Wait is predominant, but the collapse of land prevents us seeing how much tunnelling was finished.

The early idea that ore ran all the way under the moors in workable quantity held good until geologists of the Fox-Strangways calibre found that the seams at Grosmont were uneconomic to mine in the North. Conversely the main seam from the North mines split up into two and then more parts with shale partings until the miners were digging up ore with only 50% usable material. There were other thin seams like the Top Dogger and Two Feet, but whereas if they occurred all together they could then be mined as an entity, if they were separated only the richer seams could be worked as paying propositions. There are many million tons of unworked ore left in the thinner seams of Cleveland.

The upshot of all this was that the main seam thinned out to the South and the lower seams of the Esk Valley thinned out to the North. Much later test boreholes at Moorsholm Girrick and Dimmingdale showed that the prospects were only of thin seams here. Mineralogically, therefore, this was a sandwich with good slices of bread but virtually no meat in between. The "Extension" line died a natural death but only after many attempts to keep going or resuscitate the building progress.

Just how hit-and-miss iron mining was in the early days is shown by the long alleged poorness of the Glaisdale ores. Careful research shows that the analyses of the ore have been confused and the wrong figures quoted at least three times in official publications, and also the BULK analysis of the Glaisdale ore (i.e. Ore plus shale mixture) has been compared with the SEPARATED analysis of the ore ONLY without shale from Grosmont and other places. The ore from Glaisdale was in fact quite good in richness though at times marginal in seam thickness.

By a freak of railway politics the railway through Glaisdale has not been Beeching-ised, notwithstanding the closure of the other lines from Whitby to Malton, Scarborough and Loftus. Apart from a short branch from East of Saltburn to Skinningrove, all the iron mining lines have gone. It is rather a shock to realise that for a century this was the major industry of Cleveland. The "Roman Waggonway" of Postgate, and the stillborn "Extension" line to Brotton therefore slumber in a goodly company of North Riding mineral lines that have departed this mortal life.

JOIN THE MIDDLETON RAILWAY
WRITE TO: JOHN BUSHELL,
12 Trelawn Crescent, Leeds 6

Bluebell... Bronte... And now...

THE WASHING LINE

You have heard of the Bluebell Line, The Farmers' Line (the ill-treated Kent and East Sussex Railway), the Bronte Line (Keighley and Worth Valley Railway) and so forth. An incident occurred recently that could qualify the Middleton Railway for the title "The Washing Line".

A train of loaded goods wagons proceeded steadily down to Balm Rd. Suddenly the shunter gave the emergency signal and the driver released the regulator and wound down the brake hard, while the other shunter dropped and pinned down all remaining brake handles on the train. On a steep falling gradient even 5 m. p. h. needs a certain safe braking distance. The train pulled up in time. The Obstruction? A line of washing strung across both tracks just around the corner!

A lot of newspaper articles have appeared recently about the activities of gypsies in Leeds.

The Middleton Railway has had sleepers stolen and cut up for firewood; lorries parked on railway property without asking permission, and the police say it is almost impossible to pin the miscreants down. I hear that if they are summonsed for having no license on their lorries

The GREAT one in ENGINEERING

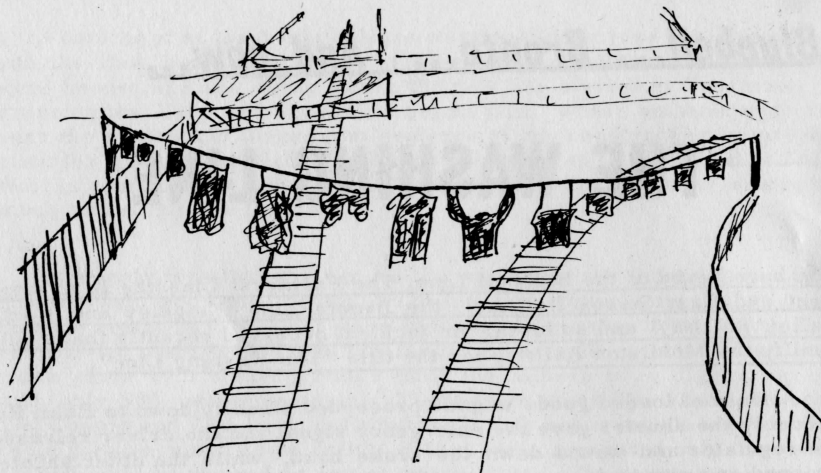
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they vanish into thin air by the time the case comes up in court.

This marvellous effort was due to the use of railings on both sides of the railway to hang the washing line. A really full display confronted the train crew. There was no semblance of having done wrong; in fact the gypsies appeared to consider the members irresponsible in running a train on the line!

What with the City of Leeds, the G P O, C E G B and Relay Wire-less digging holes ad lib with no prior consultation, and now the washing hanging up, we have seen everything.

Our train crew did at least pull up before hitting the obstruction... a tribute to the ability of MRT shunters to look round corners and to act quickly.

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My most interesting trip

When Spring-heeled Jack nearly made it

A circular tour covering about 200 miles in a week does not sound a very promising start to an interesting trip. But if the circuit consists of parts of the Shropshire Union, Trent and Mersey, and Macclesfield Canals in the heart of rural England, the prospect is much more enticing!

Within the confines of Nellie - 6 feet wide and 32 feet long - four of us were able to eat, sleep, sunbathe, play cards, but above all, WORK, for seven days from sunrise to dark. Nellie was comfortable but very cramped. Her single cylinder donkey engine functioned adequately and,

By Brian Ashurst

on a straight, wide stretch of waterway and helped by a following wind, she could attain five miles an hour. On canals there is a critical speed, beyond which the conventional boat will not go, as any increase of the power is offset by increasing drag from the wake reflecting back from the banks.

Her tiller was not so predictable. It was loose and habitually took 100 yards to respond to any change of direction. This we quickly got used to and it did not matter too much - the wake bouncing off both banks kept us roughly in mid-channel.

The compulsory hooter was out of action, so the hiring company provided us with a gigantic canister with a handle and plunger, which when plunged gave a passable imitation of the Queen Mary. This was fine for the one cooking breakfast to rouse the others with.

A problem to be overcome was negotiating locks. We'd had verbal instructions before leaving, but our first encounter with the real thing was awe-inspiring and filled us with dread.

Entering a lock in the rising direction, the canal suddenly presents a solid wall to you - great towering dripping black masonry precipices 30 feet high creep menacingly nearer. Before going in, two of the crew would jump ashore with the keys (yes! locks have keys!) and disappear over the summit. The two left on board slowly edged between the caver-

nous cliffs and stopped the boat at the centre. Then behind us the narrow vista of bright green fields and friendly black and white cows would slowly disappear as the massive gates were swung shut.

Up there in the sunshine our comrades now ran to the top end of the lock to open the sluices. These were normally kept closed with paddles, which could only be raised by winding them up with the special lock key. As the giant's bath began to fill up, we stood by the throttle ready to steady the boat as the current caught her. What a panic! Instead of drifting backwards, as we had expected, we were being sucked rapidly forward towards the top gates! We just found reverse in time to prevent damage to the boat and gates - next time we were wiser.

When the water levels were the same on both sides of the top gates we were able to open them and continue forwards.

Although we learnt to get through the locks in 4 minutes, they never quite lost their sinister, treacherous aura.

One set of locks on the Trent and Mersey were treated with particular respect by the canal fraternity, and we held our breath as we passed through: for there is was that the legendary Spring-heeled Jack once leapt from one side to the other to prove his love. He nearly made it. Today his ghost sighs in the sluices and his apparition still takes that fatal leap, bringing consternation and despair to those unfortunate enough to meet him.

Another ghostly tale hangs on the Harecastle Tunnel, where the same canal lives between the hills and for two eerie miles slinks through another world. When it was built in the early 1800's this tunnel

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was to have been the central axis in the whole network of underground canals connecting various towns in Staffordshire. This was actually started, but tunnelling techniques in pre-railway days left much to be desired and there were several calamities, so that the branch tunnels were abandoned. But they do say that, whether it be the ghosts of the men killed, or the goblins disturbed in the operation, even in living memory boats have gone into the tunnel and never come out the other end.

For a long time until recently boats were towed through the tunnel by an electric tug which collected current by means of a trolley - pole from an overhead wire, like a floating tramcar. Today they are allowed through under their own power provided the authorities are satisfied that they will not break down half way through.

We managed the tunnel part all right, but we had a shattering experience before we even went in. Arriving too late to enter the tunnel (which operates like a single-track railway, admitting "trains" of boats in each direction alternately), we decided to moor for the night. Unknowingly, we tied up in the turning basin opposite the tunnel mouth, and early the next morning were rudely awakened by deafening hoots and shouts as a train of barges came out of the tunnel straight towards us! That was the first, and only, time we cast off in our pyjamas, and it was under the mocking gaze of rush-hour workers passing by on the street above!

One stretch of canal was right alongside the railway, and here we took advantage of our Queen Mary hooter to greet passing steam trains. Generally they responded with a whistle!

I have not mentioned at all the delightful towns and villages we passed through and explored; nor our battle with a hungry herd of Her Majesty's swans; nor the panic in their ranks as we bore down on a girls' school canoeing session; but I hope I have said enough to indicate that an excellent way to see England is at four miles an hour, in a boat.

Auntie Jane recognises us

"Jane's Book of Ships" is fairly well known. We were a little less aware of the fact that Auntie Jane through the editorial medium of Sampson Low, publish an equivalent railway book annually, "Janes All The World's Railways".

Although published in England the enquiry note that came round was very confusing in that it used a number of incomprehensible Americanisms like "Number of Switching Locomotives" and "Line Haul". After some mental dexterity trying to interpret this in Plain English we sent off the information. Unfortunately in the 1967 edition (Jane claims to include ALL the railways in the world but forget us until then) our building date was put down as 1785, and our Chairman's name mis-spelt. One or two distressing misprints occurred, and we had quite a job giving a clear picture with half our line still shifting coal, and the other half general goods ("Freight" NOT "goods" to keep the Yanks happy).

Here is Middleton condensed into one line in the Magnum Opus of Jane:-

1785 Middleton Railway, Leeds, Yorkshire. Chairman Dr R F Yovill. Gauge 4'8 1/2" (arising from our gauge being quoted as 4'1" then 4'8 1/2" and then mixed up) 1.435 metres. Route 3 1/2 m (5km). Track 8M (12km). Locos Steam 8 Diesel 1 Railcars Petrol 1 Elect 1. 4 Freight Train Cars. 312,5 thousand tons per annum. Average haul per train 0.5m (0.8km) Average Train Load Coal 200T Frt. 40T. Max Trailing Load 600 T Passengers total Blank Average Journey Blank Average Speeds Frt 5mph (8km) Max Speed 10 (16km) Passenger train speeds Blank Revenue Expenses Blank Operating Ratio Blank Brakes Air Westinghouse Metcalf and Davies. Couplers Standard Buffers Standard Rls Weight 95 lbs/yd. (47 Kg/m) Sleepers wood 5" (127mm) Spacing 30" (762mm) Curvature Max 21.8°. Max Grad 4% Axle Load Max 20T Altitude Max 500 feet (152m) No of Staff Employed (All voluntary) Requirements F cars 6, Loading Gauge Blank.

We are the only line to appear as "All voluntary" staff. How the max. speed came out as 10mph is a mystery and 312,5 thousand tons is rather too high for the Colliery traffic and somewhat above our annual tonnage.

Incidentally we find that the Mersey Docks and Manchester Ship Canal have maximum speeds below 10mph so we are not the only slow-moving railway in the world.

A little proof correction is indicated, to put it mildly. 4'8 1/2" even makes Brunel look a bit reticent on the gauge question. However all of this appears in tabular form and totals about 18 inches wide by 1/2 inch high. Middleton Railway in a nutshell! (It's good to see that I'm not the only one who makes mistakes - Ed.)

EDITOR: B. W. ASHURST, 18, INGLEWOOD DRIVE, OTLEY.

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