



The

OLD RUN

Journal of the Middleton Railway Trust

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2010

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volunteer operation**

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Old Run

No.207
June 2010

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Editorial

This first issue of *Old Run* to be published in our 50th Anniversary year contains an article chronicling the history of the Middleton Railway from its inception to the present time, and an article prepared by the Editor of *Old Run* for the Railway Magazine and answering the question “Has Middleton ever had a main-line locomotive running on its tracks?” which should make interesting reading.

We also include articles by two of our founder members: the first by Norman Fearnley (Operating Superintendent from 1963 to 1967) first published in 2000 and looking at the exploits of freight traffic workings by volunteers in the 1960s, and the second first published in 1983 by the late John Bushell who did various jobs, including Historian, before his early death in 1988.

We hope you will find these articles of interest in this Anniversary Year, and we hope to include similar ones of a historic nature in following issues during this year.

Howard W Bishop, Editor

The deadline for the next issue is 15 Aug 2010

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Front cover

Manning Wardle 0—6-OST (MW1210 of 1891) *Sir Berkeley* and Hudswell Clarke 0-6-OT MSC No 67 (HC1369 of 1919) attack the gradient after negotiating Great Northern Curve on 27 September 2009 during the gala weekend.

(Howard Bishop)

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From the Chairman

From the Chairman From the Chairman From the Chair-

I hope you have now all recovered from the excitement of the General Election which failed to surprise, or in my case even entertain. Not wishing to favour any particular flavour of politics on these pages, I am sure that you will agree that we were told less than the truth by all parties.

We are now left in a position of having to guess how this enormous debt is going to be paid off, by us, the tax payers. Whatever methods are employed we can be certain that any amount of surplus cash in people's pockets is just not going to be there.

This is very worrying when running a Heritage Railway as we depend on the spending power of the public. You can't go without food, or fuel in your vehicle, but you can go without a trip out to a railway. I hope I am far off the mark with my assessment but in reality I don't think so.

As organisations such as ours go, we are in very good shape. We saw a lot of this coming and prepared for the worst, plus a bit more, and this has paid off. We do not owe the Banks, or investors, and we have the money in the Bank to complete our current projects.

Although a gloomy outlook for the future, there is no doom yet!! On the brighter side we have had a number of new volunteers come forward to join in the running of the Railway, both in the workshops, and I am very pleased to report, in the shop area.

To all our new volunteer members, a very big welcome to Middleton Railway, and I hope your involvement with us comes up to expectations. As well as these new members coming in we have had some old ones return to the volunteering fold, again a very good sign that we are running an attractive operation.

Inevitably there are grumbles and disagreements but Council are taking steps to try and give everybody an equal opportunity and iron out the bumps.

Finally, I do hope that you can make it to the Railway for the June celebrations: if not, why not consider the September Gala which will be our biggest event since we opened the Engine House.

Perhaps by then the weather will have improved!!!

Andrew Gill,

Chairman

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From the Chairma From the Chairman From the Chai

Middleton's historical record Middleton's historical record

To commemorate 50 years of operation by volunteers, our Historian and Archivist, Sheila Bye has provided us with a short annotated history of the Middleton Railway from its inception in the 17th Century to the present time. This document was originally provided by us for use by the *Railway Magazine* in their preparation of an article in that Journal about the Middleton Railway..

Dates to remember

- 1697 Ralph Brandling, of a Tyneside land and coal owning family, marries Anne Legh, heiress to the Middleton estates and mines, eventually bringing these into his family's possession.
- 1755 A waggonway is constructed between Middleton and staithes on the River Aire at Thwaite Gate.
- 1758 **First Act of Parliament solely concerning the construction of a railway or waggonway is obtained by Charles Brandling in June; the waggonway from Middleton to Casson Close, near Leeds Bridge, ceremonially opened on 20th September.**
- 1765 Matthew Murray born, probably near Newcastle-upon-Tyne.
- 1781 George Stephenson born at Wylam, Northumberland.
- 1783 John Blenkinsop born at Felling, County Durham.
- 1788 Murray comes to Leeds seeking work. Employed at Scotland Flax Mills, Adel.
- 1795 Murray & Wood's first foundry opens at Mill Green, Holbeck.
- 1796 Murray & Wood's new steam engine manufactory established in Water Lane, Holbeck.
- 1801 Incorporation of the Surrey Iron Railway (Wandsworth-Croydon), first public goods line to be sanctioned by Parliament.
- 1802 Fenton, Murray & Wood build the round fitting-up-shop, which earns the works the nickname 'Round Foundry'. James Watt junr. comes to Leeds incognito, to discover the reason for the superiority of Murray's cast iron.
- 1804 First experimental use of railborne steam traction on the Pen-y-daren tramroad, Merthyr Tydfil, with a locomotive designed by Richard Trevithick.
- 1808 John Blenkinsop appointed 'viewer' in charge of the Middleton Colliery and estates. Richard Trevithick's *Catch Me Who Can* locomotive demonstrated, pulling a carriage round a circular track near Euston Road, London.
- 1811 Blenkinsop patents the rack and pinion method of propulsion.
- 1812 **World's first commercially successful steam locomotive, *Salamanca*, commences work on the Middleton Railway. Four locos in total are designed and built for Middleton by Matthew Murray at the Round Foundry. Included in the design is Blenkinsop's rack and pinion drive, and two cylinders (earlier locos had been single-cylinder). This is the first regular revenue-earning use of steam locos as distinct from experimental operation. At busy times the locomotives are known to haul trains of around 30 loaded coal waggons, a total load of over 100 tons drawn by a c4 ton locomotive!**

Sheila
Bye

Middleton's historical record Middleton's historical record

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- 1813 In January, locomotives built by Robert Daglish, under licence from John Blenkinsop, commence work on the Orrell Colliery waggonway near Wigan. They work for over 36 years. On 2nd September, George Stephenson watches another Murray/Blenkinsop loco start work on the Kenton and Coxlodge Colliery waggonway on Tyneside. A Murray steam-boat commences regular operation between Norwich and Great Yarmouth. Hedley's *Puffing Billy* enters service, the first locomotive to use adhesion successfully for traction purposes, though not with such spectacular success as the Middleton locos.
- 1814 Stephenson's first locomotive, closely resembling the Middleton locos but working by adhesion and therefore not nearly as strong as them, begins work on the Killingworth Colliery railway.
- 1816 Grand Duke Nicholas of Russia, later Czar, inspects Murray's Middleton locomotives.
- 1818 The streets of Leeds first lit by gas, with plant made by Murray. The first Middleton locomotive, the *Salamanca*, explodes due to the carelessness of its driver.
- 1825 Opening of the Stockton & Darlington Railway, using Stephenson locomotives.
- 1826 Death of Matthew Murray, and of Charles John Brandling, M.P.
- 1829 Stephenson's *Rocket* wins the Rainhill trials, to decide on the design of locos for the Liverpool & Manchester Railway.
- 1830 Stephenson's *Invicta* pulls the first regular steam-hauled railway passenger service in the world, on the Canterbury & Whitstable Railway. Opening of the Liverpool & Manchester Railway.
- 1831 Death of John Blenkinsop.
- 1834 Opening of the Leeds & Selby Railway, the first Leeds main line, using locomotives built at the Round Foundry. A 2nd Middleton loco explodes, probably due to old age and hard work.
- 1835 The last of Middleton's four Murray/Blenkinsop locomotives withdrawn from service.
- 1865 The Middleton estate, including the railway, is sold to Leeds brewer, Francis William Tetley, who soon takes partners to form the Middleton Estates and Colliery Company.
- 1866 Steam traction reintroduced on the Middleton Railway, using conventional industrial locomotives.
- 1875 Part of the route realigned to cut out the lower incline at Hunslet Carr.
- 1881 Gauge of the Middleton Railway changed from 4'1" to 4'8½". First link established with the Midland Railway, at Hunslet Lane.
- c1894 Branchline opened at Hunslet Moor, to link the Middleton Railway to the Midland Railway main-line near Balm Road, Hunslet. MRT. later uses this to operate its goods service.
- 1920 Branch lines are built west of the main line near Hunslet Moor, to carry goods to and from a group of industrial sites, using the colliery track and locos.
- 1947 Section of the Middleton Railway north of Hunslet Moor staithes closes. Middleton Colliery nationalised.
- 1951 Railway enthusiasts commences operation of the Talyllyn Railway: the first volunteer-operated narrow-gauge railway.
- 1958 Bicentenary of the Middleton Railway observed. Line threatened with closure.

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| 1960 | The Middleton Railway becomes the first standard-gauge railway to be operated solely by volunteers (20th June passenger service, 1st September goods service) using sections of the line abandoned by the N.C.B., and based in the Dartmouth Works yard of Messrs. Clayton, Son & Co. The Bluebell Railway commences running several weeks later. |
| 1967 | Last coal leaves Middleton by rail. |
| 1968 | Middleton Broom Colliery closes, the last pit in the Middleton area. |
| 1969 | The Middleton Railway Trust takes over the remaining section of the Middleton Railway. Hunslet Moor-Middleton Park passenger service established. |
| 1971 | Route alterations and construction of a railway tunnel beneath the new motorway link into Leeds. |
| 1977 | Major landscaping programme at the southern end of the line. |
| 1983 | Clayton's close their Dartmouth Works, and the MRT. Headquarters move from Dartmouth Yard, Garnet Road, to new premises at Moor Road. A workshop building and ticket office/shop are built there and opened in the same year. Last goods trains operated by the MRT. from Messrs. Robinson & Birdsell's, via the Dartmouth and Balm Road Branchlines. |
| 1987 | 175th Anniversary of steam at Middleton. |
| 1990 | 30th Anniversary of volunteer operation at Middleton. |
| 1996 | The 'Fred Youell Building', our new workshop, comes into full use. |
| 1998 | Death of the society's founder and first Chairman, the indomitable Dr. R.F. (Fred) Youell. |
| 2000 | 40th Anniversary of volunteer operation at Middleton. |
| 2003 | The Middleton Railway becomes a fully registered Museum. |
| 2005 | MRT. receives a Heritage Lottery Fund grant towards setting up museum displays, educational facilities etc., and work begins on the new building to house these. |
| 2007 | The Engine House, the MRT's new museum building, is formally opened by Sir William McAlpine. |
| 2008 | 250th Anniversary celebrated of the opening of the Middleton Railway. |

Middleton's historical record Middleton's historical

Conclusion of article on pages 7 and 8 (Mainline locomotives at Middleton)

Forge. In 1968 the Forge closed its internal railway system and, following an appeal from the Middleton Railway's then Chairman, the loco was presented to Middleton. Although it never worked on the mainline during its working life, the method of transfer from Kirkstall to Middleton was via the

main line! It was passed by BR to travel to Middleton under its own steam: however because of track circuit problems (*Henry's* wheelbase is too short to guarantee operation of circuits) it formed part of a short ballast train with a BR diesel in the consist. After a formal handing over ceremony, the cavalcade set off for Middleton, with *Henry* doing all the work. The journey was all the more remarkable as the BR steam ban was then at its height!

tor



GNR Class J52 0-6-0ST No 1247 (BR 68846) (built Sharp Stewart 1899 works no 4492) emerges from the motorway tunnel at Middleton Railway in June 1990 visiting from the National Railway Museum York on the occasion of the 30th anniversary celebrations of volunteer operations
(Robin Stewart-Smith)

In connection with the coming 50th anniversary celebrations, we were asked the question, "Had Middleton Railway run mainline locomotives?" Here is the answer!

Visitors

GNR Class J52 0-6-0ST No 1247 (BR 68846) (built Sharp Stewart 1899 works no 4492). The engine that pioneered preserved steam on the main line, and originally owned by Captain Bill Smith, before being donated to the National Railway Museum. It visited Middleton in 1990 for the 30th anniversary of Middleton Railway's preservation.

Hudswell Clarke 0-6-0ST built 1901 (works no. 555), **GWR 813** (ex Port Talbot Rly No 26) (currently at Severn Valley Railway) preserved in 1967, visited Middleton Railway for a gala in Sept 2001.

GWR 0-6-0PT No. 1369, built 1934 at Swindon, preserved in 1966 originally by the Dart Valley Railway and now owned by the South Devon Railway, visited Middleton Railway for a gala in Sept 2003.

L&Y 0-4-0ST Class 21 'Pug' BR No 51218 (L&Y No. 11218) built Horwich in 1901 (works no. 811), visited from KWVR for a gala in Sept 1998.

BR D2323 Class O4 visited Middleton Railway in July 1962 on hire whilst our own diesel was being repaired. Withdrawn from service in July 1968.

Mainline locomotives at Middleton Railway Mainline locomotives

BR D2854 Class O2 diesel, (built by Yorkshire Engine Co) withdrawn from service Feb. 1970. Visited Middleton Rly Sept 1994.

BR D2578 Class O5 0-6-0 built Hunslet 1958. Used by BR in Scotland then based at Bulmer Centre, Hereford, now based at Moreton on Lugg Business Park, Hereford. Visited Middleton Railway for its gala in June 2009: first time visiting a preserved railway and returned to its place of birth, Leeds.

Our resident locomotives

NER Class H (LNER Class Y7) 0-4-0T LNER No.1310. Built 1891 at Gateshead by NER (works no. 38). Withdrawn 1931 and sold to Pelaw Main Colliery. Passed to NCB on nationalisation in 1947, in 1959 transferred to Bowes Railway, then in same year to Watergate Colliery, on the Tanfield branch. Withdrawn 1964 and from then on has been owned by the Steam Power Trust '65. Arrived Middleton June 1965 and restored to working order in 1991 for its centenary. In 2009 work started to rebuild to working order for a second time.

LNER Class Y1/2 Sentinel 4TGVB LNER No 59 (Sentinel works no. 8839 built 1933). Spent all its working life at Geneva PW depot, Darlington. Renumbered 8153 in 1946 and 68153 on nationalisation in 1948. Later became Departmental loco No. 54. Withdrawn 29 June 1961, purchased by MRT and delivered on 23 September 1961.

Hunslet 0-6-0DM Works no 1697 John Alcock, built in 1932. The iconic Hunslet prototype diesel loco! . In 1933 sold to LMS Rly. Worked at Hunslet Lane goods yard, then at Lightfoot St Warehouse, Chester, later at Ditton Junction sleeper yard. From 1943 based with the War Department. After the war was resold to Hunslet where it was used as a work's shunter and hire

loco. In June 1960 it was loaned to Middleton Railway Preservation Society to haul our first passenger trains, commencing 20 June 1960. It was subsequently bought by the Middleton Railway and found use as a regular loco on freight trains to and from BR.

Wickham 4w Railbus BR999507 (works no 8025) built 1958.. Originally the "Elliot Track Recording Coach" and used for measuring and recording track for research purposes. Used on the mainline and at the Old Dalby test track. Preserved in 1997 at East Lancashire Railway, came to Middleton in 2003, and converted into a passenger carrying railbus. Transferred to the Laver Line in 2009.

Drewry 4w railcar BR DB998901. Built 1950 for inspection and maintenance of overhead line equipment and used on the Manchester-Sheffield-Wath "Woodhead" route. In the early 1970s it was transferred to Old Dalby test track. Purchased by EM2 Locomotive Society and transferred to Middleton Railway in November 1997. Converted to passenger carrying and has operated as such since May 2002.

Danish State Railways Class H 0-4-0WT HA2110 Nr.385. Acquired by Steam Power Trust '65 and arrived at Middleton in September 1972. Built by the German firm of Richard Hartmann at Chemnitz in 1895, it was used in goods yards and docks and for shunting stock on and off the numerous train ferries that plied between the various islands in Denmark.

Hudswell, Clarke & Co 0-4-0ST 1309 Henry de Lacyll. Built in 1917 (Works No 1309) this loco spent all its working life at the Kirkstall

(Concluded on foot of page 6)

Mainline locomotives at Middleton Railway Mainline locomotives

The daily freight c.1964

Norman
Fearn-
ley

The daily freight c.1964 The daily freight c.1964 The daily freight c.1964

During these early years, the Middleton Railway operated a daily freight service. In 1960, drivers and crew were mainly University students, but their lengthy holiday periods soon caused crewing problems. Middleton freight ran for 50 weeks a year, with a two week holiday period in mid-August. Sole motive power was *John Alcock* or *JA* as the veteran Hunslet shunter was known. The Sentinel shunter was next on the scene, and did help out several times. *Windle* had appeared, but due to a tangled loan agreement, was never steamed for many years. My driving days started early in 1961, for civil engineering work and then as a holiday cover for University crews

This period in time saw me travelling daily to Doncaster to work for BR, so the Middleton freight was usually an evening run. Arrival in Leeds was usually behind a B1 4-6-0, at about 6.30p.m., then a brisk walk across to the bike/scooter park, and away on my scooter down to Middleton. The first call was always at the bottom of the line to see what was waiting to come in. The main snag for outgoing traffic was that if there was more than some 10 wagons, the loop entrance would be blocked, so nothing could go out until the incoming traffic was moved. However, there were two sidings available to park traffic in, one was the present station platform siding - it would just take 6 plate wagons, and the second was the newly laid siding into the 'other' Clayton's, which would take 4 or 5 wagons. Once the traffic had been assessed, it was up to Clayton's yard, where *JA* was kept. The rest of the crew would be there waiting - a second man and a shunter. *JA* was kept at the top end of the yard, next to the road. The battery isolator was clipped in, the decompression lever pushed in, the starter button would bring a whirr from the engine,

once up to max. motoring speed, the decompression lever was released and the engine would fire. Getting *JA* started was always tricky, but once running it was usually only a matter of waiting a couple of minutes for the air pressure to build up, then you were almost ready to go. Standing on the clutch and pushing the throttle lever shut applied the handbrake on the propshaft, and allowed you to engage forward gear. A full air brake application allowed you to release the handbrake easily, and then releasing the air brake and clutch you were away.

A gentle run down the yard across the rickety pointwork (it was Clayton's track, so we couldn't mend it), and then set back on to the centre road to pick up any empty steel wagons that Clayton's had unloaded that day. These wagons were drawn up to the end of the yard and on to the downhill slope, and the brakes were pinned down. Robinson & Birdsell's traffic was left outside their gate, and was usually 16- or 21-ton mineral wagons fully loaded with steel scrap. Tonight there were only 3 16- tonners. *JA* buffered up to the wagons, and the brakes were unpinned; this bit of the line was very steep and great care had to be taken easing the loaded wagons away. The load was stopped below the Clayton's yard point, and the Clayton's empties collected by reversing up the hill. The loaded wagons were always safer next to the loco for the downhill run. The downhill run to the headshunt gave few problems, the loco finishing up at the buffers in the middle of the rugby ground car park, reversing now and propelling the wagons, with the brakeman/flagman usually riding on the leading platowagon. The wagons rumbled over the tramway crossing and on to the straight, the load was brought to a halt with the leading wagon level with the old water crane, some 50 yards short of Moor Road. The brakes of the

The daily freight c.1964 The daily freight c.1964 The daily freight c.1964

The daily freight c.1964 The daily freight c.1964 The daily freight c.1964

wagons were now lightly pinned down, and the flagman went down to the road with red flags to stop the road traffic. Once road traffic was at a standstill, a whistle from JA, and the load was eased slowly over the road and the rear sanders were used to lay a layer of sand on the rails for the return run. The back sanders were much more effective, as the front sanders usually missed the rails!

A steady downhill run took the train into the left hand loop siding. The brakes were pinned down, and JA moved over on to the incoming road. The load tonight was four loaded platewagons for Clayton's, and two empty 21-ton mineral wagons for Robinson & Birdsell's. JA's limit up the hill to Moor Road was 6 loaded platewagons, about 150 tons gross. The wagons were drawn up the hill clear of the loop, and backed down on to the outgoing traffic to push it down to the end of the loop so that the BR 350 h.p. shunter could take it into Balm Road for despatch. JA now had to pull away up the hill with a full load of some 100 tons; full throttle in low gear gave flat out at 7 mph. We were supposed to stop when approaching Moor Road, so that the flagman could stop the road traffic (and if possible a 74 'bus!). JA would then pull away steadily with a bit of careful clutch control (you could stall the engine just the same as in a car if you let the clutch out too quickly). This was when that bit of sanding going down the hill paid off. The rails laid across Moor Road were invariably filled up with mud, which was cleared out periodically. The 80 yards above Moor Road (behind the present station) were always tricky - if you slipped to a standstill, the end of your train would be on Moor Road.

Once round the corner and on to the straight, you could breath easily and let JA recover - and let your Moor Road flagman catch you up! Once you were over the tram crossing, the load was

usually sorted into Clayton's and Robinson & Birdsell's traffic - a separate run round the sharp uphill curve was advisable. Robinson & Birdsell empties were pushed right up to the gate, with care being taken to avoid fouling King's road crossing. The loaded plate wagons were then collected and brought up the hill, again on full throttle, and left in the centre road of Clayton's yard for them to attend to next day. JA was then eased over that rickety point-work again, and up to the water tap at the top of the yard. The hand-brake was applied, and JA's engine shut down. The radiator was always drained if a frost was forecast - anti-freeze was too expensive in those days! The air reservoir was dewatered, the battery isolator switch taken out and locked away. The wagon numbers were always recorded in the log book, and this was locked away in JA's locker.

A good run with little extra shunting required could be completed in about 50 minutes, then it was back to the scooter and home for some overdue tea.

***Norman Fearnley
was Middleton's
Operating Superin-
tendent from
1963 to 1967***

[This article was previously published as a 'Times Past' item in 2000, to celebrate Middleton's 40th anniversary]

The daily freight c.1964 The daily freight c.1964 The daily freight c.1964

September Gala line-up

Leeds and Manchester, traditional Northern rivals in sporting circles, are coming together on 18 and 19 of September 2010. Leeds' locomotive builders provided most of the locomotives used on the once extensive railways of the Manchester Ship Canal. In its fiftieth year of preservation the Middleton Railway is bringing one of the Manchester locomotives home.

The Middleton Railway is pleased to announce its first visiting engine for this gala, MSC No.70. This locomotive is the sister engine to Middleton's own resident MSC No.67. Both are of the same "long tank" type of locomotive. MSC No 70 was saved for preservation and initially based at the East Lancashire Railway. It was then sold and moved to various other railways and can now be found on loan to the Lincolnshire Wolds Railway and normally based at the Swindon and Cricklade Railway.

Nos. 67 and 70 are the only two surviving long tanks and this event will see their reunion for the first time in preservation. Built by Hudswell, Clarke & Co, we will be reuniting them just a stone's throw away from the spot on which they were built. An illustrated talk by a well-known railway photographer is to take place Friday 17 September and photo charters are planned for the two days preceding the Gala weekend for which places must be reserved by booking ahead.

More information of the event can be found at www.middletonrailway.org.uk

Leeds Brewery helps Middleton Railway

The Leeds Brewery has handed over a cheque for £1,000 to the Middleton Railway. The Railway is celebrating 50 years as a privately preserved railway later this year and the money will help the celebrations along. The Railway was originally built in 1758 and is the world's oldest, whilst the Brewery has only been in existence since 2007, but both are proud to represent Leeds' heritage as a centre for locomotive building and brewing. The Railway has an early link with brewing as one of the original locomotives blew up when the driver had slipped away to slake his thirst at a local tavern! Rest assured that this particular incident has not been repeated since..!

Leeds Brewery owns three pubs in Leeds, including 'The Midnight Bell' situated in The Round Foundry development in Holbeck. Coincidentally the Round Foundry is where several of the Middleton Railway's first locomotives were built in 1812.

The Middleton Railway was taken over by volunteers in 1960, the first standard gauge railway in the country to be worked in such a fashion. In 2010 it will celebrate 50 years of continuous volunteer operation. It is hoped that Leeds Brewery will be involved further following their generous sponsorship – ale for the drivers will not be offered though!

(The above is taken from a Press Release issued to local and national media on 19 February 2010)

SEE PHOTOGRAPH ON THE NEXT PAGE



Sam Moss of Leeds Brewery presents Alex Bateman of the Middleton Railway Trust with a cheque for £1,000 towards the 50th anniversary celebrations
(Andy Hardy)



**Manning
Wardle
0-6-0 ST
1601/1903
Matthew
Murray** reaches its final stages of rebuild revealing the newly applied final coat of Longmoor Railway style blue with red lining,
 8 May 2010
(Andrew Johnson)



Brush/Beyer Peacock 91/7856 of 1958 0-4-0DE D2999 is seen on 10 April 2010 in two scenes returning from Park Halt in the spring sunshine.

Top: Paul Baxter exchanging greetings with Brian Jenkins on p.w. duty, and

Bottom: arriving at Moor Road to be greeted by the daffodils

(Andrew Johnson)



Middleton: the early years

**John
Bushell**

Middleton: the early years Middleton: the early years Middleton: t

The story of the Middleton Railway Preservation Society (*now the Middleton Railway Trust Limited, Ed*), as it then was, differs greatly from that of other similar groups. We were not engaged in resuscitating long defunct lines such as the Ffestiniog, nor were we preserving a line of great beauty. Our line had only closed earlier in the same year, and it ran between factories and slag heaps, passing back to back terraced houses on the way - No "Bluebell", "moors" or "parsonage" here! We had more vandals than visitors, whilst industrial archaeology as a tourist industry had yet to be born.

We did not suffer long, protracted negotiations with BR, or any giant fundraising projects, our negotiations only lasting from conception in 1959 to opening in June 1960. The railway was a unique undertaking in that it was owned by the Middleton Fireclay Company, a private undertaking, but linked a nationalised coal mine with a nationalised railway system. The Fireclay Company was in liquidation, and NCB locomotives worked all the trains. Our major source of revenue lay not in tourists, but in tonnage of freight. We received generous help from our future customers, Robinson and Birdsell's, and Clayton, Son and Company, whilst BR were most co-operative too (this was before Dr Beeching despised "small traffic flows").

On the face of it, all that the Middleton Railway consisted of was an unattractive remnant of a once extensive industrial line. The line itself was weed-strewn and uneven, its ballast (what there was of it) consisting of cinders. In fact, the Middleton Railway hardly justified preservation at all were it not for the fact that in 1958, people had flocked to ride in dusty wagons to celebrate . . . the BICENTENARY! The one fact above all others was that the Middleton Railway was the oldest railway

in the world, and we held the feeling that we should not allow this part of our heritage to be despatched into oblivion.

So the railway opened, initially to passenger traffic using our historic LMS diesel (kindly loaned by the Hunslet Engine Co. at that time, prior to purchase by the MRPS.) and the double-deck Swansea & Mumbles coach, looking more like a tramcar than the railway coach it actually was. It was at 16.45 on June 20 1960 when I was amongst those assembled to witness the reopening. True to Middleton tradition I was given a flag and appointed guard on the spot! As always, MRPS. was short of labour! Unlike other lines, which have since expanded their activities, we proceeded to celebrate the busiest week for passengers in our entire history, carrying no less than 7700 from Hunslet Halt to the old Parkside GN overbridge. The coach was too big to pass under the bridge and travel the few yards to the severed connection with the rest of the line to Broom Colliery. This had been purchased by the NCB and was operated by such diverse BR locos as 8Fs, Austerity 2-8-0s, Class 5s, and the odd 2-6-4T of varying sorts.

One major difference between ourselves and other societies was that we decided to preserve and operate tramcars as well as a railway. In fact, for years we had more trams than locos. The last tram in Leeds operated down York Road on 7 November 1959, and an urgent need developed to find homes for some of the redundant trams. Ultimately, we had eight lining the back road in Dartmouth Yard. From Leeds we had two Horsfield's (160 and 180) and an ex-London Feltham, two works cars and one of the renowned purple *Coronation* single deckers. Trams came from

Middleton: the early years Middleton: the early years Middleton: t

Liverpool bogie car (which was in fact from Glasgow!) and one of Sheffield's last trams owned by John Rothera. We very quickly discovered that Middleton was a most unsuitable location for such activities, as the tramcars would not run on our worn rails, and the area's high incidence of vandalism caused many problems, including the destruction by fire of a number of the trams. The surviving vehicles were quickly dispersed to other sites.

Middleton was, however, primarily a goods line and at first traffic was incredibly heavy. Ten thousand tons of steel and scrap were conveyed in the early years, putting a great strain on volunteers and locomotives alike. Some idea of operating conditions can be gleaned by reading Steve Roberts' excellent article *Freight train*, *Freight train* in the 'Special' issue of Old Run from last year [1981]. This strain led to the proverbial 'single handed' member situation. Many members made great sacrifices to keep the railway running (though by this time I was a student myself, studying away from Leeds) but it would be wrong to omit mention of Fred. Of all our early members, Dr. Ronald F. Youell, known to all at Middleton simply as 'Fred', was the one who spent most time on negotiation, administration, permanent way, driving - in fact you name it and Fred had undoubtedly done it! He was not alone, in spite of rumours to the contrary. Dr. (M.D.!) Reggie Lawrence, in spite of his health problems, was a stalwart on PW work. There were many others, but these two are worthy of special mention. One of the earliest problems was the need to operate goods traffic come what may, however much the member wanted to pursue his particular interest. This led to great ill-feeling between, for example, those who wished to preserve trams and those who maintained that the greatest need was to earn revenue by running freight. It is a matter of history that the latter group finally won the day.

Thus the MRPS. became a living railway. Unfortunately, heavy goods trains never

attracted the attentions that a passenger carrying line could, and membership grew very slowly to the 300 plus level, where it has in fact remained ever since. We sought to attract the interest of the public with exhibitions showing the story of the past 200 years. Monthly open days and occasional Steam Galas were also held. These last usually took place in Clayton's Yard and playing fields. Len Coles would bring his Mann Steam Tractor and Gavioli Steam Organ to entertain the crowds. His *pièce de résistance* however, was his White Steam Car with which he would proceed to offer a challenge to any brave motorist willing to take it on in a tug of war. The car always won! Other events, such as the vintage Fire engines putting out sleeper fires, and the demolition of the old Clayton's Pavilion by traction engines all helped to swell membership and maintain interest in our activities.

Perhaps a little strangely for a preserved line, early attempts to re-introduce passenger trains on a regular basis met with considerable opposition. We had from time to time obliged visiting parties, one such occasion featured on the cover of a Pete Nicholson publication *Preserved Main Line Diesel Locomotives*. Perhaps the one I remember best was a group from West Germany, complete with interpreter. Whilst travelling down to Balm Road on the LMS. van, I heard the frantic cry "Stop ze train!" I duly obliged to find that the 'emergency' was the need to take photos of the lines of washing hanging in Gasholder Terrace! Germans, it appeared, did not hang their washing in the street!

In 1967, an Ian Allan excursion hauled by 7029 *CLUN CASTLE* brought 400 passengers to ride the line in a series of open waggon trains hauled by a loco at each end. Senior committee members threatened to resign if we entertained the group, but we safely and efficiently moved the traffic. Sales were small and primitive, but the scene was now set for the development of regular passenger traffic when the colliery extension became our property some years later. The oldest firm in the business was becoming an established part of the South Leeds Scene. **IOR**



Manning Wardle 0-6-0ST *Sir Berkeley* approaches the motorway tunnel on 18 April 2010 (Andrew Johnson)



Times

Middleton history

LEFT: Hudswell Clarke 0-4-0ST (1309 of 1932) at Clayton's yard on 18 April 1969, with NER 0-4-0ST (1891) 1310 to the left (Barrett)

RIGHT: Hunslet 0-4-0ST (H1697 of 1932) at Clayton's yard on 5 May 1969 (Norman Fearnley)

Both by kind permission of the Middleton Railway Society



Fowler 0-4-0DM 390002 of 1945
gets a rare outing into the sunshine
on 21 April 2010 during a big shunt
to re-arrange exhibits in the
Engine House (*Kris Ward*)

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9 of 1917) Hen-
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rd on 7 April
ER 0-4-0T (38 of
o the left (Paul

inslet 0-6-0DM
32) on a pw
March 1961
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So, what's in a number? Well, ... quite a lot actually, and this one weighs nearly 10 tons!

For example, take this restored Pallet Van (Telegraphic code – 'PALVAN'), looking really splendid after some hard work by a small number of our volunteers at the railway. It's the right colour, properly lettered with all the usual and necessary information set out on the body side and with the correct number neatly displayed, isn't it?Well, yes and no – all is well, apart from the fleet number B769924....it's **wrong** and we need your help!

The vehicle arrived at the Middleton Railway in a badly-worn MoD livery, with a fleet number of ARMY 47957 displayed along with a subsidiary number of 27. Because the MRT doesn't have a record of the van's history, we have had to provide it with a number picked from the number series allocated to the British Railways PALVAN fleet. The normal expedient of checking the cast iron manufacturers' plate affixed to the solebars, for the necessary details, is not possible, as both plates appear to have been removed from the van before it arrived at our railway and there are no obvious numbers stamped onto the solebar.

We know that this vehicle is from a batch of Pallet Vans ordered by BR to their wagon Diagram No. 1/211 and built in BR workshops under several LOT numbers (job/batch authorisation numbers) between 1953 and 1961.

Following my own research, I have discovered that there were detail differences between batches constructed through those years and that all PALVAN's to Diagram 1/211

became notorious for poor riding and instability; being the cause of a number of derailments. Indeed, they had a short service life on the 'main line' (some for only about 6 years) and were generally laid aside and withdrawn from main line work and condemned during the mid to late 1960's. Being of recent construction, many were taken into BR internal use around the railway network or (as in this case) sold on to other users with internal railway systems.

Having checked a number of authoritative published sources there are a few details which assist in identifying the various LOT's and the individual workshops which constructed them. The variable details which have been identified, so far, on this vehicle are:

- Oleo Buffers (Chromed buffer spindles)
- No axle-guard tie bars
- Clasp brake system (2 brake shoes per wheel), fitted after 1958.
- BR Plain Bearing or Roller Bearing (post-1960) axleboxes with Disc Wheel sets.

Interestingly, there is one detail, the split-spoke wheel sets, currently fitted to the vehicle, which is particularly important in identifying which LOT it may belong to, as none of the Diag. 1/211 Pallet Vans were fitted with these old-style wheel sets when built. The earlier LOT's were fitted with BR-pattern oil axleboxes and disc wheels; however, during the early 1960's many of the later builds were fitted with the BR-pattern roller bearing axleboxes with disc wheels.

The present arrangement on our vehicle is symptomatic of the practice adopted by BR when the Diagram 1/211 Pallet Vans were condemned during the late 1960's; whereby, the roller bearing-fitted wheel and axle sets were taken from the withdrawn 'newer' PALVAN's and swapped for oil-axlebox wheel and

Your best Pal is a van (contd)

vehicles – as has happened to our van. One reference source has it that the roller-bearing wheel axle sets recovered from the Pallet Vans were used to upgrade the existing fleet of BR-built, 5-plank, 13T, 'HIGH' open goods wagons, thereby allowing them to be run at higher speeds.

From this evidence I believe that our Pallet Van is one of those which were fitted with roller-bearing axleboxes and disc wheel sets, which, coupled to the fitting of 'Oleo' buffers, 'Clasp' brakes and no axle-guard tie-bars, strongly suggests that our van is from one of the later builds of the period, probably of the LOT 3310 batch, totalling some 522 vehicles built during 1960/61. Many of these vans were built at Wolverton Works on the L.M.Region; however, a sizeable batch from this LOT 3310 was also constructed at Faverdale Works in Darlington on the erstwhile N.E.Region. The number series for LOT 3310 was B781752 to B782273.

So, dear reader, it's now over to YOU – if you could help us in

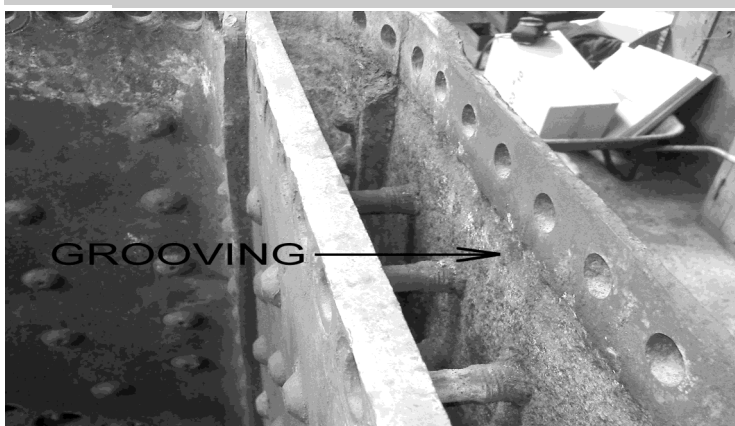
correctly identifying the number of our poor 'orphaned' PALVAN, we would be delighted to replace the present pseudonym. Failing which, in the interest of a more accurate historical representation of our very smart restored van, we may have to apply a number from the LOT 3310 batch (probably B781924, being the easiest to alter, Mr. Hardy?) until, hopefully, such time as the correct one is made known to us.

And now for the BONUS question! - Who has available, or knows the whereabouts of, a spare set of suitable disc wheels and axles with roller bearing axleboxes that would restore our 'modern' 1960's van to 'as-built' condition – preferably for, or nearly, 'next to nowt'? Or thereabouts...! The reader with the best answer will be allowed to sing the 'ALLELUYAH' chorus naked while raking out the ashpan of Mathew Murray (when he has been put back together again!) and Mr. Hardy will accompany providing the descant. You can't say fairer than that, now, can you? And it's all in a good cause; a bloke called Andrew said so.

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See accompanying photographs on page 20

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Some of the grooving on the outer plates on 1310 where they attach to the foundation ring. Grooving is a problem with steel plates on boilers and occurs where a plate is attached to a more rigid piece of the boiler. The most common areas for this are by the foundation ring and on the smokebox tubeplate where it attaches to the boiler barrel.

(Steve Roberts)

SEE ARTICLE ON
PAGES 22 TO 27



ABOVE: Restored PALVAN at Moor Road Station 10.04.09

(Geoff Lee)

BELOW: Unrestored PALVAN at Moor Road 28.05.07

(Geoff Lee)





A Jackanory style study taken by Andrew Johnson on 7 June 2009. Left—Visiting Hunslet diesel 2578 looking through its angular windows. Above—Looking through the round window of Hunslet diesel 7051 *John Alcock*



Looking through the front of the platform shelter on 10 April 2009 (*Andrew Johnson*)



Posing for a film crew—Alex Bateman and Andy Hardy on 13 June 2009 (*Andrew Gill*)

Throughout the week there is often much going on that is not related to locomotives and rolling stock, which doesn't tend to get reported.

Plant & Equipment The normally reliable engine on the Smiths crane failed and investigation revealed the fuel was contaminated with water. Further investigation showed that the fuel tank was corroded, allowing this water ingress. It is presently running with a temporary small fuel tank whilst a new replacement tank is fabricated. Our Crane inspector also picked up various small repair items that, although not affecting safety, ought to be done and these are now being attended to.

In the Workshops Fluorescent lights were fitted in both the workshop pits when the building was first built. However, these have proved to be very vulnerable to accidental damage and, over the years, have largely fallen into disuse. These have now been replaced with more compact fittings and wire cages have been fitted over them to protect them from the occasional dropped spanner or other heavy object.

A new 10-ton bench press has just been obtained. This will make the pressing out of bearings and other similar items a much easier task and has allowed the scrapping of the old lever operated press which was really unsuitable for the majority of jobs that we need to do.

There has been some re-arranging of equipment in the workshops. We have had a small reciprocating compressor installed for many years and it has had little, if any use in the last five years. This has now been removed and the two welders have taken its place. New, 3-phase sockets have been provided to enable the welders to be plugged in at this point and this area is now the designated

The Huron Milling machine has received a bit of attention. It is fitted with two sets of controls, one in front and a second set to one side, allowing the operator to work the machine from either position. However, one of the front controls and one of the side controls has not worked for some time. The side control problem was found to be a sheared drive pin and this has been replaced. The front control has however, proved to be more of a challenge. It relies on hydraulic cylinders to operate exactly in the same way as the clutch is operated on a car. In fact the cylinders are the same as those on some cars of about 30-40 years ago and are of Lockheed manufacture! The seals on these cylinders are worn and damaged and need replacing. However, we have so far been unable to source new seals. Some classic car spares dealers probably stock the right seals but those contacted always ask for the make of car they are for!

Moor Road Platform It was recently noticed that the tactile paving slabs on the platform at Moor Road had subsided slightly at one end, creating a $\frac{3}{4}$ " 'step' up to the platform coper. We at first thought that the platform had subsided but it was also noticed that one of the coach footboards was rubbing on the platform copers. Although we, at first, suspected some movement in the track, it was soon realised that the platform wall was starting to lean slightly and the two problems were related. The tactile paving slabs have now been lifted and re-set at a slightly steeper angle so as to eliminate the step. There is little practical that we can do about the slight movement of the wall, other than monitor it as rebuilding would be a major job. The reason for all this is likely to have been the cold, snowy winter and we can take a little comfort in the knowledge that Network

Rail has had similar problems at some of their stations.

Lowmac No progress to report with the vehicle presently stored at the far end of the headshunt.

LMS Van M85133 This 12-ton van is starting to look like a van, once more! All the body planking has been fitted and the majority of it bolted or screwed in place, as required. We have had to do much thinking on our feet as the job has progressed in order to work out exactly how to put it together. There have, however, been very few false starts in doing this and our team of amateur wagon builders have done very well in finding the necessary skills. Work is currently progressing on the doors. Both these have now had the frames built and the two layers of planking fitted. Two of the four rollers, from which the doors hang, have been stripped down and inspected. This has resulted in two new pins being made for them. The other two are likely to require similar treatment. Once the doors are fitted, we are definitely on the last lap, with just the various scantlings, such as handrails and door stops, to fit. The vehicle can then be finish painted. It is planned to fit shelving to the interior so that it can be

used for the storage of low cost materials and spares that are presently kept in the Southern PMV.

Coach 2084 Prior to the start of services, this coach received a thorough internal and external clean. This year, we have used traffic film remover to clean the paintwork and it has produced a very good result. In fact, the coach paintwork looks as fresh as that on the newly outshopped No.1867. The vacuum brake cylinder on this coach had started to leak off in about fifteen minutes when the brakes were applied. As the normal minimum is 20 minutes and ones in good condition will last for days, it was stripped down for overhaul. Although we have spare brake cylinders ready to fit this is not easy to achieve and it was decided that it would be easier to overhaul it in situ. The cylinder and piston were easily dropped from the housing and both these components were thoroughly cleaned out. We had a spare brake cylinder kit to hand and this was used to refurbish the cylinder and valves. Putting the cylinder back was not as easy as getting it out but it was fairly easily accomplished and a thorough testing showed that the brake was now back to full order and not leaking off. An intermittent problem with one of the vehicle lights failing has been traced to a loose



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connection, which has been rectified.

Coach 1867 The overhaul of this coach has gone very well, this year. We have found very little in the way of rot and only one panel has had to be replaced. A droplight window has needed some repairs, as have a couple of the seats. Progress with this work and of the repainting was such that it was ready over a week before it was needed, avoiding the usual need to burn the midnight oil!

Easter has now come and gone and from an outside point of view, there has been very little change since the end of last year. This fact does, however, hide an enormous amount of work on our loco fleet, both steam and diesel.

1601 MATTHEW MURRAY It was hoped to open this paragraph by saying that MW 1601 is now back in traffic but, alas it is not the case. Perhaps if these notes had been written a week later, it might have been possible to do so. On inspection of the crankpins it was found that four of the six had become quite worn, one being oval to the tune of nearly 1/8" inch. This situation was clearly not acceptable and, after much thought, a simple crank pin machining tool was made up. This hand-powered tool could be clamped to the wheel and centred on the crankpin. Once set up, it could be rotated to machine the crankpins round and true, again. It was a steady task to do this, each crankpin requiring a full day to set up and machine, following which the pin had to be polished using fine grade emery cloth.

Machining of the crankpins naturally made the bearing brasses too big for the pin and the brasses had to be lined with white metal and machined back to the new size, a job that took several weeks to accomplish. After this it was possible to offer the re-worked bearings to the coupling rods. The trial fits and subsequent adjustments took several attempts, and took time. We hope

that we've got it right: the proof will have to wait until the loco is back in service.

The final painting of the loco continued. The base colour is blue, as previously carried but there has been a change in the lining out. A single red line has replaced the single white line of the previous paint job and there is no longer any black edging: an altogether much simpler arrangement.

In the last *Old Run*, it was stated that a new flange had been made for the smokebox main steam pipe. This was fitted and the complete assembly subjected to a hydraulic test. No problems were expected so it was quite a surprise to find a significant crack in the copper pipe-work. Renewal of the pipe started a long saga in trying to obtain the correct size and thickness of copper pipe. Our regular supplier no longer stocked it in the required thickness. Enquiries elsewhere drew a blank. After several phone calls, a promised quote still hasn't materialised. A chance conversation with the NYMR brought a solution. A number of years ago they wrongly purchased a length of pipe of our required dimensions and it had been sitting on a shelf ever since, gathering dust! A 48" long piece was made available to us with grateful thanks: this has now been bent to shape, new flanges brazed on and will be fitted as the last job in the overhaul.

No. 67 This tank underwent its annual boiler examination at the beginning of March. It is now entering its ninth year of service and it was fingers crossed that all would be OK, which it was. The loco was available for the start of services at the end of March and also worked the Easter trains. We have for some time, suffered a small steam leak from the joint where the casting that

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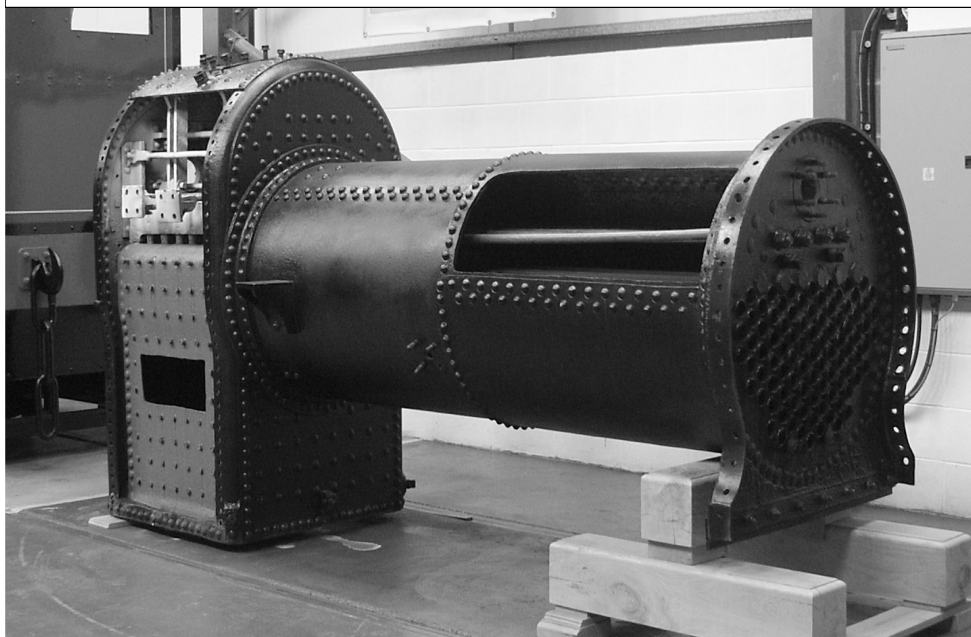
carries the fireman's side injector attached to the boiler. It was only noticeable on cold days. This was thought to be at the joint but several attempts at re-making this did not effect a cure. In the end, the cladding and lagging have been cut away and, with the aid of a mirror, it was established that there was a very slight weep through the actual casting itself, due to porosity. When removed and subject to a hydraulic test we were better able to locate the actual position but it was so slight that it was almost un-noticeable. The area of concern has now been filled with braze and this seems to have cured the problem. The newly overhauled fireman's side injector has been fitted but this has not been without its problems. The clack valve soon started to leak by and several attempts have been made to rectify this, with limited success. To be fair on South Coast Steam, who overhauled the injector, they did report back that it was in very poor condition and really only fit for

scrap and wouldn't offer any guarantee, although the clack valve was not cited as a problem area! Injector problem aside, the loco has been performing satisfactorily.

No. 6 There is little to report in the way of progress with this loco due to pressure of work in other directions. The boiler has, been moved to a new location and turned on its side to enable some investigative work to be carried out.

1210 SIR BERKELEY Like No.67, *Sir Berkeley* passed its annual boiler inspection. Unlike last year, there were no problems, the work on the firebox seams having proved to be successful with no recurrence of the previous leaks. A few maintenance jobs have been done on the loco over the winter months, notably packing of glands and taking up some play in the eccentric straps. An unseasonable spell of fine and warm weather allowed the loco to

The former boiler of Manning Wardle 0-6-0ST *Arthur* has been sectioned and is on display in the Engine House exhibition hall, 10 May 2010
(Andrew Johnson)



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be used over two consecutive weekends in April without the crews becoming perished or soaked in the process.

No.11 Unfortunately, there has been no further progress due to pressure of work elsewhere.

2387 BROOKES No.1 It is presently on display in the Engine House whilst future options for it are being considered.

No.14 The two rear buffers have been fitted to the buffer beam, otherwise there has been no further work on the loco.

No.1310 (LNER Y7) Work continues apace on this loco. The axleboxes have now been checked in the horn guides and very little wear is evident, certainly not sufficient to justify any work on them. The pistons have been removed from the cylinders and both are in satisfactory condition. The piston rings were renewed at the last overhaul and are fit for further service.

The remainder of the valve gear has been stripped out, and there are no obvious problem areas. The reversing shaft has been removed from the frames as the reversing arm is loose on its housing and has worn it quite badly. We think that the shaft can be mounted on our Huron Milling machine and the housing machined back to a satisfactory condition but we have yet to attempt this little exercise. If not, the shaft will have to be sent away for the repair.

Painting of the frames has continued and are now largely finished in red gloss internally and the first coats of black paint have been applied externally. The wheels have been cleaned, sanded down and primed. Their further painting is currently on hold as we are still trying to ascertain the correct shade of green paint necessary. The NER referred to it as Saxony Green but this is insufficient to correctly specify the colour for our

The owners (The Steam Power Trust) have requested that the loco be put back to its original build as much as possible and this means that the cab and bufferbeam extension will be done away with. The present bufferbeam and packing steelwork have been removed to expose the original bufferbeam, some six inches behind it. However, this was found to be bent when fully exposed and this has also been removed. The extension bufferbeam was new at the loco's last overhaul and, being in good condition, this is going to be re-used in place of the original. The various redundant holes have been welded up and new ones drilled, where necessary. Some of the footplate supporting angle in the cab area is badly corroded and this is in the process of being replaced. The availability of angle of the same size is now non-existent and metric angle is having to be machined to match the existing. As mentioned in the last *Old Run*, one of the brake hanger brackets was found to be cracked and a new one has now been machined up and fitted, along with the new pins.

The boiler has now been transported to the contractors (Locomotive Maintenance Services) at Loughborough and its overhaul is well on its way. Boiler overhauls are notorious for the amount of extra work that is found to be necessary once stripping commences but we have been relatively lucky in this respect. Once the foundation ring and tubeplate were removed, a much better assessment was possible. There is some quite severe grooving of the outer, steel, firebox plates at foundation ring level which will require the bottom six inches of steel to be renewed all around the box. This was expected but was not included in the original contract as, until the amount of grooving was known, the repair options could not

Otherwise the boiler is in very good condition for its age. The front tubeplate was removed for replacement as part of the planned work. It was expected that this would have suffered from grooving, as well, but this is remarkably absent. With the knowledge that we now have, its replacement would not have been necessary and the wastage on the outer surface could have been built up with weld but, with boilers it is always better to err on the side of caution.

We didn't expect the smokebox to require replacing as it was new at the last overhaul but it has been found to be quite thin in places and will be renewed, along with the smokebox door, which was in poor condition. Work has now started on the removal of the firebox lap seam rivets to enable their replacement.

003 AUSTIN'S No.1 Once the repaint of the coach was completed it was possible to bring this loco into the old shed for a much needed repaint and various other work. The loco has now been jacked up to enable access to the axleboxes. The rear axleboxes had no covers on them and frequently filled with water after any rain-

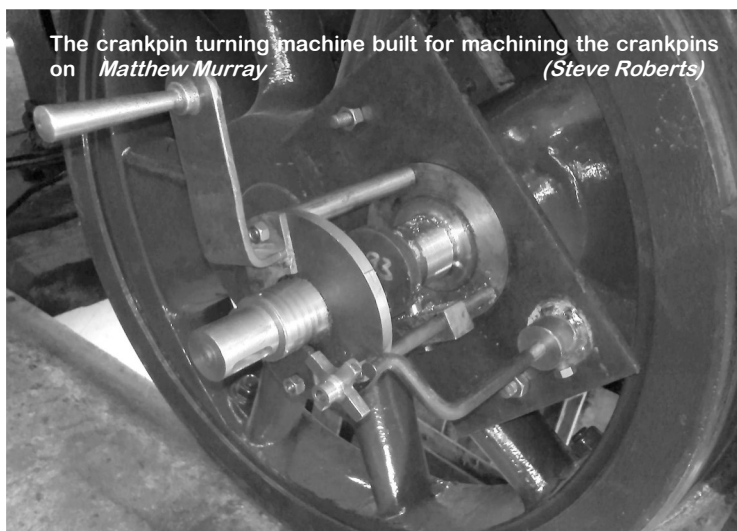
Water. New covers have now been made for these, along with new covers for the front ones, as well. The intention is to secure the covers onto the boxes and re-instate the original lubrication pots in the engine compartment. This will make preparation and oiling of the loco a much easier task.

The window frames have been removed from the cab sides. These are of very thin steel, which has corroded away in many places and new ones will have to be made up to suit. The engine compartment door louvres are similarly suffering from corrosion in several places and new parts will have to be made for these. Otherwise, the repaint should be straight forward. Fingers crossed!

The Gardner engine unit will also receive some attention although the extent of this will depend on what is found as work progresses

.D577 Mary Mary has been suffering from a fairly fast loss of chamber side vacuum in recent months. This has not been a major problem as the vacuum is maintained whilst ever the engine is running but would be if the engine ever stopped. To rectify this,

the vacuum brake cylinder has been stripped out for overhaul. It is obvious that the rolling ring (a rubber ring which effectively separates the two sides of the vacuum cylinder) was in poor condition allowing leakage across the piston, and a new one has been ordered. This should, hopefully, cure the problem.



The crankpin turning machine built for machining the crankpins on *Matthew Murray* (Steve Roberts)

Noel Brampton

We regret to have to announce the passing of one of our vice-presidents, Noel Brampton, who died on 29th November last at the age of 90.

Noel was born in Bolton in December 1918, but did not stay there long, as his father was a bank manager and his job involved the family in fairly frequent moves around the country. Noel's secondary education was at Stamford School, where he became head boy, and also won a prize that the school awarded "for common sense". In 1938 he went to Loughborough to study engineering, but the war intervened in his studies.

He was called up initially into the Army, and then transferred to the RAF, where his engineering experience meant that he was assigned to the aircraft maintenance section at various airfields, and then later to Research and Development at the Ministry of Aircraft Production. As part of this he was sent to a Naval base at Greenock, and while there a visiting admiral instructed Noel to look after his Wren officer. This was how he met Effie, and they were married in 1946: Noel used to say that the order to look after her was never rescinded!

On leaving the RAF at the end of the war, Noel joined the LMS as a traffic apprentice and rose rapidly through the ranks, to become the assistant district superintendent for the West Midlands area. In 1957, however, he was "headhunted" by a friend from his RAF days, who was setting up a new company and needed Noel's combination of engineering and management expertise. Thus, Noel left the "big railway", and he and Effie moved to Wakefield.

At that time Noel may well have thought that this would be the end of his involvement with running railways, but this was not to be the case, for the Middleton Railway Preservation Society came into being at the beginning of 1960. Noel soon joined it, although we do not know quite when, for in those days the focus was very much on keeping the organisation going rather than on leaving accurate records for posterity. He may at first have wondered quite what he had joined, for in those early years the turnover of officers was far too rapid for comfort. Indeed, in its first six years the Middleton Railway Trust (as it soon became) had four different treasurers, of whom the fourth had been in office for less than two years when at the beginning of 1966 he announced that he needed to resign from the job. It was at this point that Noel volunteered, and so at the AGM in March of that year he was appointed as treasurer. He held this post for the next four years, bringing much-needed stability to this aspect of the Trust's work, and when in 1970 he handed on the role and stepped down from the MRT's committee it was not in order to take a back seat, but rather to take responsibility for an even more important project.

This was to register the Trust as both a limited company and a charity, and Noel tackled these in a typically businesslike fashion, although he obviously found some bits frustrating, particularly when it came to dealing with the charity commission. In those days they were a very bureaucratic and legalistic organisation, and subsequently Noel liked to tell the story of the initial attempt to get advice from them – although it was never completely clear whether this story concerned Noel himself, or Fred Youell. The attempt began with asking the commission "What would be needed to make the Trust a charity?", to which they replied "it must have charitable objects". So, the next question was "What does it mean for the objects to be charitable", to which they replied "they must be objects that are suitable for a charity", thus leaving everybody back at square one. These difficulties were soon overcome, though, and registration as a charity was achieved in 1971, followed (after a lot of time spent on dotting I's and crossing T's) by registration as a company in 1974.

Very soon after this Noel was appointed to what was now the Council of the new company

and in all of this he was very much supported by Effie, and it is important that she should be included in this tribute. Indeed, when John Edwards, who had been the first company secretary, had to retire from that role in 1980 because his job was being relocated to Hursley, near Southampton, it was Effie who agreed to take over. She did so until 1985, by which time she and Noel were starting to plan for retirement, and again it was Noel who found a solution, by persuading me that I should take over the role from her. Wise guidance from both of them ensured that it was soon clear what I needed to do in this role, and since then I have valued the opportunity of being able to seek Noel's advice when necessary.

As Noel and Effie's planned move away from Wakefield drew nearer, Noel decided in 1994 that he should retire from our Council, after 20 years of service. The AGM that year marked this service by appointing him as a vice-president, a distinction that up until then had only been conferred on former chairmen. More prosaically, the Council persuaded him to accept co-option so that he could continue in an advisory capacity, both of which show the esteem in which he was held.

Even after Noel and Effie did move to Oxfordshire, and he finally retired even from being co-opted onto the Council, he still retained a keen interest in events at the railway, and kept in touch with what was going on. Sadly, though, they were not to enjoy a long retirement together, for Effie's health deteriorated rapidly, and she died in 2001. In view of the long links with what had been their local parish church in Wakefield, her ashes were interred there, and at a memorial service for Noel on 6th February his ashes were interred there too. I was privileged to represent the MRT at the memorial service, and as I did then I will close this tribute to Noel with the words of one of my colleagues on our Council. He was a gentleman, and we shall miss him.

Tony Cowling

Dear editor, "I must say....."

I recently rejoined my association with Middleton Railway as a mechanical engineer in the workshop and have been reading the History of Middleton Railway and came across a reference to the word **train** made in 1816 by Dr S H Spiker. I thought I would research the origin of this word with regard to locomotives as oppose to other definitions.

So I studied the *Online Etymological Dictionary* and found that the earliest recorded evidence was 1824. So I sent them this reference from 1816. **train (n.)** early 14c., "a drawing out, delay," later "trailing part of a skirt" (mid-15c.), also "retinue, procession" (mid-15c.), from O.Fr. *train* (fem. *traine*), from *trainer* "to pull, draw," from V.L. **traginare*, extended from **tragere* "to pull," back formation from *tractus*, pp. of L. *trahere* "to pull, draw" (see **tract** (1)). *Train of thought* first attested 1650s. The railroad sense is recorded from 1824, from notion of a "train" of carriages. British train-spotting "hobby of observing trains and recording locomotive numbers" is recorded from 1958.

I would like to offer this definition as possibly the oldest with regard to the word Train, which would in railway sense be 8 years earlier than your records? I am a member of The Middleton Railway Trust, the world's oldest working railway. On page 20 of *The History of Middleton Railway* is an account by The King of Prussia's Librarian Dr SH Spiker who visited the railway in 1816. "*It is a curious spectacle to see a number of columns of smoke winding their way through the countryside. As they approach we see them more distinctly, till at length along with the column of smoke, we perceived the waggon from which it ascends, dragging a long train of similar waggons hooked to it, which give it the appearance of a monstrous serpent.*" (NB. Waggon spelt as written in 1816)

So with a bit of luck, not only is the Middleton Railway the world's oldest working railway but may be the origin of the word "**Train**" in the railway sense.

David Hector (It has in fact been confirmed that this was the first official reference to a railway train in history! (Ed.)
Wakefield



**Manning Wardle 0-6-0ST
Matthew Murray** mas-
querading as a 2-2-2ST,
seen in the workshops
on 10 April 2010 prior to
final painting and lining
out and fitting of con-
nection rods

(Andrew Johnson)

TUESDAY SOCIAL EVENINGS AT THE ENGINE HOUSE MOOR ROAD

01/06/10	David Bapty	Transport on DVD
06/07/10	Ian Dobson	Seen in camcorder, part one!
03/08/10	Kris Ward	Narrow gauge railways of the world

Special events

19 and 20 June 2010 Middleton Railway 50th Birthday gala
3 and 4 July 2010 Model Railway show
4, 11, 18 and 25 August 2010 Wednesday trains running
30 August 2010 August Bank holiday services
1 September 2010 Wednesday freight service from Dartmouth Branch
18 and 19 September 2010 Autumn gala
30 and 31 October 2010 Ghost trains
4, 5, 11, 12, 18, 19, and 24 December Santa's special trains
1 January 2011 Mince Pie Specials



**THE LEEDS AND
DISTRICT TRACTION
ENGINE CLUB**
incorporating the
British Fairground Society

SOCIAL EVENINGS

All the socials commence at 7.45 for 8 p.m. on the third Tuesday in the month, and are held at Dewsbury Road Social Club, 393 Dewsbury Road, Leeds 11. Members of the Middleton Railway are invited to attend and take part.

SUNDAY 1 August (Yorkshire Day) - Toy Steam Engine Rally, Armley Mills Industrial Museum

Correction

The captions to the photographs on pages 1, 32 and 17 lower in OR 206 should have referred to Thomas Hill 4wDH 138C locomotive (built 1964) and not No.91. Somehow the Manx "little people" crept in unobserved, but hey! *some members must have actually read the journal(!)*, so thanks to them for the emails pointing this out. *Editor*

DEADLINE FOR NEXT ISSUE 15 AUGUST 2010



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Life Membership £275.00

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21 April 2010— The sectioned boiler of *Matthew Murray* is craned from the wagon and placed on the trolley prior to transfer into the Engine House for public display (*Kris Ward*)