



The Journal of the
Middleton Railway Trust
No. 246 APRIL 2020 £3.00
CORONAVIRUS 19 - COVID-19



The Old Run

No. 246
APRIL 2020

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Grateful thanks are extended to all those who have provided copy and images for this issue.

The Old Run is published quarterly by The Middleton Railway Trust Ltd. Publication dates are 15th January, 15th April, 15th July, and 15th October, with deadlines of 15th December, 15th March, 15th June and 15th September respectively.

The Editor welcomes contributions - photographs, articles, news items and letters - relating to the interests of the Trust and the operation of our and other Railways.

Items for publication, including images, are acceptable in any format and may be sent via email, post, CD or USB stick.

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Cover Picture: Brookes No. 1 on holiday last year at Pontypool, taken by Alistair Grieve. Obviously she enjoyed herself!

Our Chairman speaks:

When I last wrote my Notes I was expecting to write at this time about the successful start to the 2020 season, to be welcoming new members and volunteers, and to be talking about the plans to celebrate our Diamond Jubilee. In less than two months the world has been turned upside down!

These are worrying times for all of us and I hope that all members of the Middleton Railway Trust, and other readers of 'The Old Run', together with their families and their friends, are keeping well.

Thanks to prudent and careful management of the Railway by successive Councils, the Middleton Railway will survive this crisis and will continue to serve the people of Leeds for many more years.

Fortuitously, Council decided during the 2020 budgeting process not to embark on any major projects this year but to concentrate on bringing to completion a number of long standing projects. This decision will help the Trust's cash flow during this most difficult of times.

Nevertheless, there will be a price for survival: the deferral of planned projects until the Trust has rebuilt its reserves.

The Trust has taken the decision not to launch a public appeal for funds at this stage because the Middleton Railway's survival is not in doubt, and because it seems wrong to launch such an appeal when our visitors, neighbours and members may be experiencing financial difficulties as a result of the Covid-19 Pandemic. However, if any readers wish to contribute to the Railway to help us move forward with our long term projects, their gifts will always be gratefully received.

Our Chairman speaks:

At the moment the Trust is planning on the basis that the Railway may have to remain closed until the end of June, though the Railway is ready to re-open as soon as government regulations permit. The engine house floor has been re-painted, new signage prepared, shelves in the shop re-stocked, engines made ready for the season, all 'good to go'!

For now the Railway is still hoping to go ahead with the Steampunk Market, the Model Railway Exhibition and 'A Taste of Yorkshire' – our Diamond Jubilee food, music and ale festival. A lot of work has already gone into preparing for these events and we very much hope that this effort will be rewarded by them taking place, but this obviously depends on government guidance nearer the time. **For up to date information about the Railway please keep visiting our Website.**

Because of the current uncertainties, it is likely that we will have to decide to delay the Diamond Jubilee Gala until October. This means that we can ensure that this event is a worthy tribute to our sixty years of being a volunteer run Heritage Railway. We are still planning on having a visiting Leeds built steam locomotive and the Rt. Hon. Hilary Benn MP, our President, has agreed to open the event.

In the interim, as a reminder of what the railway has achieved during the last sixty years, pictures from each of our decades of operation are being posted on our Website, and on our Facebook, Twitter and Instagram Accounts.

Whilst the current regulations are in place, normal working on the Railway has been suspended but volunteers are still coming down to Moor Road to inspect the site, keep it looking tidy and repair any damage to site fencing caused by unauthorised people attempting to enter the site; this is all in accordance with government guidelines.³

A site which looks neglected and abandoned is more likely to attract unwelcome visitors. Thanks go to all those volunteers who are keeping an eye on the site.

This enforced break from normal life does give us the chance to catch up on those jobs around the home which we have kept putting off! It also gives us the chance to explore some of the very interesting material available via the internet on local history and railway history. I have discovered the 'Hunslet lost memories' Facebook Group which complements the Leodis Web site and gives access to a fascinating collection of photographs about life in Hunslet through the years. There are many pictures of the Middleton Light Railway, (in other words the Tramway) some taken near the 'Tram Crossing' and most surprisingly a colour picture of an NCB locomotive hauling a train on the Middleton Railway.

I can also recommend the films available via the British Film Institute which provide a fascinating reminder of what life was like when the more mature members of Council were just small children. For those with a particular interest in the products of the locomotive builders of the North East, look out for 'Ingot Pictorial No. 25' which has a section devoted to a train operating on the Trefil Railway – Britain's highest standard gauge line.

Hopefully when I next write these Notes normalcy will be fast returning to our country and we can look forward to the re-opening of our Railway – if it is not already open. Until then, please take care of yourselves and your families and friends, follow the government guidance and look out for any neighbours who may be in a less fortunate position than yourselves.

Charles W Milner, Chairman

CONWAY - hauling a train from Earlstrees Quarry to nearby blast furnaces



This is how "Conway" looked, when at the peak of its working life, hauling trains of freshly dug ironstone from Earlstrees, one of ten operational quarries, to the nearby blast furnaces at Corby, Northamptonshire. The photo was taken on 4th August 1967.

"Conway" was the first of a batch of seven 0-6-0ST built between 1933 and 1936 for the new integrated quarrying and steel-making development at Corby. In appearance, they were pure Manning Wardle, but were actually built by Kitson & Co, at their Airedale Foundry in Leeds, which had bought the MW goodwill, after that builder ceased trading.

A further five were built in 1940 and 1941. to increase wartime production, but by this time Kitson had also ceased trading, so they were built in Newcastle-Upon-Tyne, at the works of Robert Stephenson & Hawthorns.

After the war, this company worked with Stewarts & Lloyds Minerals, the quarry operators, to develop a much larger design of 0-6-0ST, which bore many similarities to the Hunslet "Austerity" class. Nine were built for the Corby system between 1950 and 1958.

With steel production at its peak in the early 1960s, and a large, well maintained fleet of steam locomotives to do the heavy haulage, the Corby management did not rush into diesels. This all changed, however, in 1968, when British Rail offered a fleet of unwanted Class 14 diesel-hydraulics at a knock-down price.

The result of this was a mass withdrawal of steam in the winter of 1968/69, but fortunately several escaped the scrap line, including "Conway". When restored, it will make for an interesting comparison with the much older MW "Sir Berkeley", which also spent much of its working life in the Midlands ironstone industry.

MORE READING: Eric Tonks: The Ironstone Quarries of the Midlands: History, Operation and Railways: Part VI The Corby Area:

My thanks to Mervyn Leah, a previous Editor of this magazine, for this very interesting information. See Conway as she is today on our back cover. Ed.

ODE TO A D20

Gone is the friend who, in my days of joyful youth
Twixt Border Castle and Minster of York so bold,
Would that “NER” was still no myth,
and was emblazoned as in days of old.
Whose Westinghouse at Carlisle town,
would wake the burghers, and make them frown,
upon the long arm reaching out
the “North Eastern” again, without a doubt.

The Scots were favoured by your presence too,
By having you allocated to an Haymarket “pew”
where spick and span, not like your colleagues now,
Made Gateshead rank high in Scottish eyes. Where is the glory now?
Where filth and dirt begrimes, the “locos” of the new generation stand,
like species from inferno dragged, to “operate”, not run,
the trains on which your triumphs great,
but “progress” runs them at a slower rate.

Dulled now your bright and gleaming brass,
that was the envy of every sweet Edwardian lass,
and brightened the eye,
as over Yorkshire planes your journeys take,
from five saloon with official bold, to ten and brake,
filled with holiday makers Scarborough bound.
From pick up freight on the Leyburn round,
to downward Alnwick, homeward bound.

Your days, now numbered fast,
were spent quietly, at last,
in Percy’s Northumberland, by the sea,
where from Alnwick and Alnmouth at early dawn
to work the gentlemen to Tyneside every morn,
This was all that was asked of you,
now in retirement, No. 592.

And now no more can we stand and wait,
at Benton Bank, or crossing gate,
to hear your coming, as in days of yore,
Heading back north on the old “5.04”.
Rest dear friend, you and your kin have gone,
but these were the trains we loved,
and memories linger on.

Dr. Prof. Frederick William Hampson



Sadly this is not a picture of No. 592, but the nearest I could find.

Train Spotting Days continued, by Mike Cox

24th April and we were on a trip to York but of course it included 55A Holbeck with six Jubilee's: 45573, 45593, 45608, 45626, 45661, 45664, and three Britannias, 70007 Coeur-de-Lion, 70016 Ariel, and 70002 Geoffrey Chaucer at 50AYork. 65 steam locos on shed including seven A1s: 60155, 60156, 60121, 60138, 60145, 60146, 60152. I must have fallen out with my brownie camera at this time because I don't seem to have any photos from this period. A few days later, which must have been a Sunday, 56A Wakefield and 56B Ardsley were visited, Wakefield containing 62 steam locos of which 42 were Austerity WD 8Fs, on to Ardsley with 30 steam locos with 60117 Bois Roussel, 60133 Pommern and 60148 Aboyeur in store. Mirfield shed was visited again on 16th May with 18 steam on shed with one cop 48411, not bad for a 20 mile bike ride.

I was now getting to the end of my college days and time to start looking for a job, I got an interview in Birmingham at the Grand Hotel (I wanted to be a chef) so on 24th May had the day out to Birmingham, I must have travelled via Stockport being hauled from Stalybridge to Stockport by 84026 then on by E3085 and D1688 part of the journey. I must have spent some time on Snow Hill station before or after the interview which just happened to be nearly next door to the hotel on Colmore Row as I have noted exGWR locos. The journey back started behind D1689 then E3058 with 42073 from Stockport.

It was then back to the Yorkshire staple diet of 56D Mirfield, 55A Holbeck and 50A York on the 6th June by coach with nothing to note out of the ordinary. The following week 51A Darlington and Works 51L Thornaby, and we could not miss a look into Holbeck on the way home. The first shed on the intinary being 51L which by now was all diesel, then on to Darlington works which still had a fair number of steam locos including 60010 Dominion of Canada, being prepared for export, also 60024 Kingfisher, for repair and 60100 Spearmint, which was for scrap along with 65033/99 still about the works. At the shed there were 51 steam locos including 60004 William Whitelaw and 60124 Kenilworth, also E3068 was noted there for some tests. At 55A Holbeck there was just the usual fare but I did cop two steam 43069 and 48127 so the walk to get there was not a waste.

On 23rd June someone came up with the idea of cycling to York, which was a one hundred mile round trip, which only produced one cop 92206 and a very sore bum the next few days. The ride from Leeds to York and back was mainly flat but the rest between Slaithwaite and Leeds was up hill and down dale all the way and was a killer on the return ride.

The next trip was to be a freedom of Wales for a week based in Cardiff in the YMCA there, Chris Thewlis did the organising with myself, Ira Chapman and Donald Macallum going along. The 17th July we set off being hauled part of the journey by 73126 then 44712 and behind D1652 into Cardiff with 7029 Clun Castle seen at Seven Tunnel Junction. On arrival in Cardiff it was straight on down to Barry scrap yard, the rest of the day being spent there and quite a few photos taken with my trusty brownie camera with 79 cops out of a total of 113 locos on site. The next day 86A Canton was visited but it was all diesel and then on to 88E Abercynon that being all diesel also calling in at 88C Barry on the way back. It was on to Llanelly the next day, with 7029 seen in Cardiff. 87E was nearly all steam, 11 in total (4675, 1623, 6691, 3671, 4668, 4604, 9631, 7249,

Train Spotting Days continued, by Mike Cox

7248, 4676 and 6613) with just a diesel shunter and two Brush type 4s on shed. It was on to 87A Neath with seven pannier tanks all out of steam: (3690, 3647, 4669, 9716, 9617, 3687 and 6614) and two diesels, was then back to Cardiff and back to Swansea and a visit to Birds scrap yard at Morriston with 4679, 6628 and 9461 present and then on to 87E Landore which like Canton was all diesel. The next day it was up into the valleys with 88B Radyr visited with nine panniers seen with only 9615 in steam, then a ride to Barry, then onto Cardiff and Newport, with 6829 Birmingham Grange seen, also 44466, 48737 and 73091 noted in sidings around Newport awaiting the call to the scrap yards. At Cashmores yard 7009 Athelney Castle, 7015 Carn Brea Castle, 7009 Swindon, 5986 Arbury Hall, 92248 and 6430 were noted (50 years later on looking on archive sites, 7015 was cut up at Sharpness and 6430 preserved, I have to say that at times it was difficult to identify ex GWR locos, with number plates removed (in looking at numbers stamped on various parts which of course got mixed up at works visits), It was back to Cardiff for the night at the YMCA with only two steam seen being 48672 and 90537. The next day Bristol and onto Swindon with Seven Tunnel Junction with steam locos on view on passing. 82C Swindon shed was visited, but only six diesels on, then into the works which was all diesel except three pannier tanks (9425, 8405 and 9457) which must have been works shunters. There were plenty of the D95xx diesel hydraulics about ,having just been built and having not much to do, also D0280 Falcon noted on works with a photo taken and D603 Conquest and D800 Sir Brian Robertson also noted. Back on the station 6932 Burwarton Hall on a freight and another photo taken and also 92216, which was nice to see among nearly all diesel day. It was then back to Cardiff and a run out and back to Newport in the evening. The next day, 22nd July, a trip out to the Cambrian lines, the first stop being 6D Shrewsbury with 28 steam locos but with several out of steam. It was then on to Aberystwyth where two of the Vale of Rheidol locos, numbers 7 and 8 were seen. It was then back to 6F Machynlleth, where 7820 Dinmore Manor, 75055 and 80098 were on shed. It was then back to Cardiff. The first part of the journey was behind 7819 Hinton Manor; on the day six Manors were seen, 7801 and 7827 out of steam at Shrewsbury. The next day it was down to Bute Road for 88A Cardiff East Dock with 44 steam locos with very few in steam, most stored ready for the scrap yards with 92220 Evening Star among them. The next day we must have had a day off with only a run to Newport and back being noted, next day saw another visit to 86A Canton and then on to Merthyr bus spotting then back to Cardiff and onto 86G Pontypool Road with not a steam loco being seen all day.

The following day a trip to Llandudno Junction where 29 steam locos were on shed including 45647 Sturdee, a Leeds loco. The next day 86A Ebbw Junction Newport was visited with 14 steam on shed, it was then according to my notes we went back to Cardiff and then to Seven Tunnel Junction behind D1067 Western Druid, the depot 86E with 22 steam locos on shed with almost all out of steam (stored lines 4115, 60, 44, 56, 07, 50, 21, 57, 10, 9619, 7205, 7252, 6974 Bryngwyn Hall and 92214) awaiting moving onto the South Wales scrap yards, it was then on to Bridgend via Cardiff for a visit to Hayes scrap yard; 1632, 7734, 7016 Chester Castle, 92236, 34062, 17 Squadron, 34075, 264 Squadron, 34083, 605 Squadron and 9642 which was preserved (was it the yard shunter or mistaken identity) were present. The following day first was a ride out to Seven Tunnel Junction where 7029 Clun Castle was working a train back to Cardiff so we rode back behind her,

Train Spotting Days continued, by Mike Cox

we then returned and onto Bristol behind a Brush type 4 D1637. Firstly we visited 82E Barrow Road shed with all steam 22 in total all cops with the exception of two, then to 82A Bath Road which was completely diesel. We then travelled to Swansea and visited 87D East Dock which only had four English Electric type 3s on shed.

The 29th July was a trip out to Llanelly and a visit to Birds scrap yard at Bynea which contained 2214, 75007 and 80014; there were also several ex SR electric units on site, it was then back to Cardiff and a run out to Treherbert 88F with only D6986 and D9520 on shed, it was then onto Bridgend passing a siding containing 3635, 5983 Henley Hall and 42716 waiting to enter Hayes scrap yard there. The following day was the journey back home with 762 cops for the week but that included a lot of diesels.

On 3rd August a trip to Leeds with 55A visited again, 20 steam noted including three Jubilees, the next day was my 18th birthday, but it was not celebrated, I had been having a few drinks in the local pubs for a while. The following day a trip to Doncaster with permits for the works and shed. The works was now devoid of steam with only electrics (E3125-35) being built for the West Coast mainline and several types of diesel for repair, it was nice to get down to 36A which contained 60 steam locos although by now only freight and mixed traffic types. That night according to my notes 56F Low Moor was visited full of steam with only one diesel shunter present with 29 steam.

I now left Slaithwaite to work in the Grand Hotel in Birmingham as a commis pastry chef; it was not long before I started the delights of Snow Hill in the afternoons as I worked split shifts. There was still plenty of steam about, mainly on freight with plenty of variety including ex GWR locos. The weekends that I did not go home I started to bunk the sheds in the Birmingham area. On 20th August a visit to 2C Stourbridge Junction which contained 24 steam locos, mainly pannier tanks. From there I went to 2A Tyseley where the shed had 39 steam, including a dozen Halls and Granges. The following day I spent on Snow Hill station with 19 steam noted including 70053 Moray Firth. Two days later I had a run out to Aston looking for the shed but it had long gone. On 3rd October, whilst at home, a visit was made to Leeds with visits to 55A and 55C. On Holbeck 45573 Newfoundland, 45608 Gibraltar and 45658 Keyes were noted withdrawn amongst 32 steam locos on shed. Whereas 55C had four Jubilees in steam (45643 Rodney, 45581 Bihar and Orissa, 45562 Alberta and 45647 Sturdee) of the ten steam on shed. It was then back to Birmingham and afternoons on Snow Hill, another weekend at home and the bikes were out for visit to 56D Mirfield containing 12 steam and one diesel shunter. Back in Birmingham on 21st October and 2E Saltney and 30 steam on shed including 73112 Morgan le Fay withdrawn from 70A Nine Elms, which was to follow me back to Leeds Holbeck. On 23rd November 2F Bescot was visited with

Train Spotting Days continued, by Mike Cox

36 steam on shed but with several stored. The next day 2A Tyseley was visited with 36 steam on shed with several stored here also including 6853 Morehampton Grange, 6855 Saughton Grange, 6857 Tudor Grange, 6858 Woolston Grange, 6861 Crynant Grange, 6879 Overton Grange, 6864 Dymock Grange, 5988 Bostock Hall and 7915 Mere Hall. The following day Saltney was visited again with 29 steam with 73112 still there. After a couple of weekends off at home it was back to the Midlands where a day off on 5th December saw me at 85A Worcester with 18 steam on shed with 6819 Higham Grange, 6829 Burmington Grange, 6838 Goodmoor Grange, 6856 Stowe Grange and 6876 Kingsland Grange all stored withdrawn, also ex GWR railcar W20W on site.

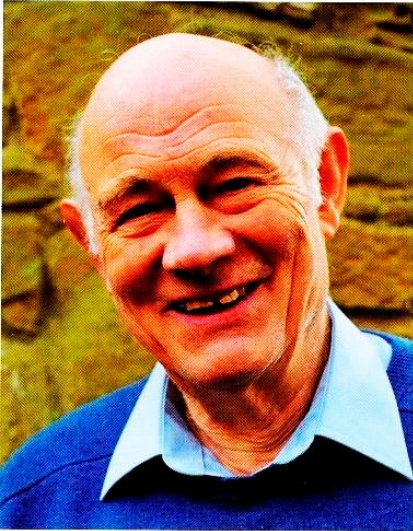
The next week found me back home and a visit to 55A Holbeck Leeds where on shed was 34051 Winston Churchill along with 73112 Morgan le Fay which had migrated from Saltney shed and four Holbecks Jubilees, 45660 Rooke, 45643 Rodney, 45675 Hardy and 45574 India.

Then I was back at work in Birmingham and on 19th December a trip out to 85B Gloucester with 36 steam on shed but as with every shed visited at this time there were steam locos cast aside with 7816 Frilsham Manor and 7829 Ramsbury Manor amongst them, but 7029 Clun Castle was on shed and still with my trusty brownie several shots were taken with it on the turntable. It was home again for Christmas 1965 with another bike ride to Leeds in the offing for Christmas day, I only got a mile or two down the road when the front forks on the bike fractured, so that was the end of the bike. It never got repaired. Leeds was visited on the 27th with 55A Holbeck visited as usual, with 28 steam and 36 diesels, with half the depot being converted for diesel use, 73112 Morgan le Fay was still to be found stored on shed. After Christmas it was back to Birmingham and work. On 2nd January and a day off and a trip out to 2B Oxley and 55 steam on shed, there were several locos stored including 6831 Bearley Grange, 6830 Buckenhill Grange, 6833 Calcot Grange, 6835 Eastham Grange and 6871 Bourton Grange. Also noted on shed was 70046 Anzac and 73119 Elaine (70G) and in sidings near to the shed 42783, 44716, 48774, 6683, 60843 and 60923 all awaiting the call to the scrap yards. It was back home again on 8th January and the following day a trip out to the Derby area with our club the Slaithwaite and District Omnibus and Rail Society. The day started at 16D Nottingham which was all diesel and then onto 16A Toton where 7 steam were noted; 78020, 78044, 78064, 78055, 48729, 44990 and 92135 along with 76 diesels.

The story of Michael Cox's railway-filled youth continues. I just wish he'd bake us a celebratory cake for our Diamond Jubilee in the next issue!

Editor

JAMES SOPER, AN OBITUARY



James Soper Dipl.T.P., Dipl. Arch. – Jim - who has died at the age of 85, was the archivist for the Leeds Transport Historical Society and author of its many books, notably his monumental five-volume history of Leeds Transport (with a sixth volume in preparation).

Although not a Middleton volunteer, Jim was a principal player in the restoration of former Leeds Horse Tram No.107 from garden shed condition, and during 2013 joined the Wednesday team at Moor Road completing preparations for the tram's return to service at the Leeds Festival of Transport that August. Back in Middleton's early years, Jim was one of the group moving the Leeds trams from Swinegate Depot to Parkside for preservation. Subsequently he worked in Robinson &

Birdsell's field on the overhead lines tower tram after the LTHS had purchased it from the (then) MRPS. That car's restoration was completed off site before it went to the Tramway Museum at Crich.

Jim was born in April 1934, the son of a garage proprietor. Living first in Alwoodley, then Meanwood, he noted at an early age the changeover from trolley poles to bow collectors on the Meanwood tram route. After the family moved to Chapeltown, he had a grandstand view of trams on Harrogate Road passing his bedroom window. He attended Chapeltown Council School and then Leeds Grammar School, travelling there daily by tram. He served a mechanical engineering apprenticeship at his father's premises but, after National Service, enrolled with the Leeds School of Architecture and qualified in 1962, subsequently gaining a diploma in Town Planning. He worked as an architect in Pontefract, Harrogate and Leeds, retiring in 1999.

Jim's early interest in trams led him to record the later years of the Leeds tramways in great photographic detail, both still and cin  . He was part of the team which founded the Leeds and District Transport News (now the Metro Transport News) and was a founder and lifelong member of Leeds Transport Historical Society. He served a term as president of the Tramway Museum Society and was its architectural adviser, masterminding the erection of the Bowes-Lyon Bridge and the reconstruction of the Red Lion pub at the Crich museum, doing much of the hard manual work himself.

Just before Christmas 2019 Jim suffered a major stroke and was admitted to Leeds General Infirmary, later being transferred to Harrogate District Hospital. He recovered only partially, being unable to speak or eat although fully alert. He was discharged to a nursing home in Castleford, where he died peacefully in his sleep on 29 March. A devoted family man, he is survived by his wife Valerie, brother Bob, two daughters Gillian and Helen and three grandchildren. Because of the Coronavirus pandemic, only a minimal funeral ceremony could be held, on 15th April. A fuller celebration of Jim's life will be organised when restrictions are lifted.

Malcolm Hindes

The Wooden Railway: how did it run? Richard Stead ponders

I cannot recall how the following question presented itself to my futile imagination but here it is: was the wooden horse-drawn railway of 1758-1812 single-tracked or was it double? More generally, what was the capacity of the wooden railway This in turn resolved itself into various sub-questions: what was the speed of movement? How much coal could a wagon take? How much weight could one horse pull on the flat? How long might the working-day have been? How many horses (and young lads to lead them) might have been needed? The context of this speculation is the legal obligation that Charles Brandling had assumed, namely, to deliver 22,500 tons of coal per year to Leeds (History 8th ed, p9) . If the working year of the time had 300 days, the daily delivery must have amounted to 75 tons. We also have the drawings of William Strickland which imply, but do not definitively show, a single track between the rope-hauled slope and the Leeds staithes. The drawings also give a distance of two miles for this stretch. This appears to me to be an under-estimate of perhaps half a mile,

I wandered the web and found the following:- "Report to the Subscribers for a Survey of the proposed railway from the Union Canal at Ryal to Whitburn, Plkemmet and Benar or the West Lothian Railway, by H Baird, Civil Engineer." (Dec,1824).

The cheerful news is that Mr Baird's report answered most of the questions. One horse could apparently pull 8 tons on a railway (as compared with 1.5 tons on a track or lane. This is because half of the time the horse has to pull the cart uphill out of ruts.) The speed would have been 2.5 mph. A wagon, according to Mr Baird, held two tons - thus a horse on a railway could pull four such wagons. Much depended on the lubrication. Strickland's drawings in the History also show wagons in trains of four. The journey to the Leeds staithes would take one hour each way or two hours for a round trip. Mr Baird's working day (for horses, not for himself, necessarily) ran to ten hours, permitting five return journeys. Thus one horse could thus deliver five trains of eight tons - total 40 tons - per day (just). To get 75 tons to Leeds, the colliery would have needed two horses, each moving 40 tons per day. Would there have been a need for a double track? A single track with trains moving in both directions - perhaps departing at random intervals - would have meant a series of fussy passing-loops and their attendant points. A single track could however have been made to work by having the horses and their four-wagon trains run in convoy. So that is my thesis: the wooden railway ran with two horses, each hauling a train of four two-ton wagons, the two working in convoy and completing five return journeys per day. This method of working yields a capacity of 80 tons per day, (or 24,000 tons per year, ie the legal obligation with a little margin for the unforeseen.)

The Wooden Railway - and a few things to make you smile!

Haplessly, dear reader, this gives rise to a further speculation. Did the foregoing calculations determine Brandling's commitment to deliver 22,500 tons per year under the Act of 1758 - rather than any thoughts about the production of the coal itself? And what about the poor horses!

Richard Stead

Come and help - you never know what you may find!

Calling all volunteers to help in the shop/café at the railway. We can promise you will find your time is a laugh a minute, even when it includes jokes like the ones below. Cedric Wood is a very faithful member of the railway, and always does his best to be cheerful and to cheer others. Here are some examples of how he does it.

The first Chinese man to be infected with the sneezing disease Coronavirus 19 has been identified as Mr R Choo.

This disease is not a new one, in fact a classical composer went down with it: Dry cough ski (Tchaikovsky).

Since more nurses are tending to Coronavirus patients, Accident and Emergency customers are having to wait longer and discuss their problems with each other. Below are some of the cases:

One child had swallowed a £1 coin. The latest report was no change.

Another child attended after swallowing a roll of film. Nothing was developing.

A man complained that he could not get to sleep. He was advised to sit on the edge of the bed and he would soon drop off.

A spotty patient attended asking for some ointment to clear his Acne. He was told not to expect rash promises.

A patient attended believing that he was a kleptomaniac. The doctor gave him something to take.

I won't mention the elderly patient who had an ache in his right leg, only to be told it was old age. His response was the left leg is the same age and that does not ache.

There is going to be an operetta based on the actions of the casualty department. This will be unusual in that the music will be in two keys: A & E.

People are social distancing themselves from me and not just by a couple of yards. I wonder why?

Cedric Wood

There, don't you feel better now? See you when we re-open. Meanwhile, take care so you are fit enough to cope with the above, for which we are very grateful.

MIDDLETON RAILWAY - A FIRST VISIT

by **Malcolm R Johnson**

According to the notes that I attached to the monochrome negatives of the pictures shown here, my first visit to the Middleton Railway took place in February 1964. At that time I was interested in the transport of Leeds and for a time regularly read the copies of the Leeds Transport News. It is likely that it was in these notes that I had read about the tramcars at Middleton.

I had missed seeing the tramcars on their last day of operation which was on 7th November 1959. The day was cold, damp and foggy so I had decided not to cycle to Crossgates to see the trams. A decision long regretted! Some four and a half years later it was of interest to me as some of the tramcars that I remembered had survived within the city. I decided to go and find them.

But how to get there? Well first of all I had to find out where this Middleton Railway was. Then out with the Leeds City Transport booklet which had a route map for the bus network and pages of time tables. Having planned the journey I set off from my parents home at Seacroft where I lived. I would have caught the 64 bus from the top of the road to the Leeds bus station. Then a walk to the Corn Exchange where I caught a bus which showed 'Dewsbury Road' as the destination. I alighted at Tunstall Road and walked to the railway.

Photography in the 1960s was still relatively expensive. There was the cost of the views photographed. On that early February day in 1964 I took five pictures of the remains of the Leeds tramcars and the Mumbles coach. So sorry, but I did not think to take images of a 'minor industrial railway'.

By the time that I visited the site the tramcars had suffered from vandalism and arson. There is nothing new there then! Image number 1 shows the remains of a four wheel car. I regret to say that I do not know what the design or fleet number was. I believe that the remains are mounted on a Peckham P35 truck. Pictures 2 and 3 show the remains of Railcar 601. A sister car is preserved at Crich. These cars were finished in a special livery for the Coronation of Queen Elizabeth II. The last two pictures are of the remains of the rail coach from the Swansea and Mumbles Railway. This coach was the first passenger carrying vehicle to be operated by the Middleton Railway Preservation Society volunteers.

My next visit to the Middleton Railway would have been in the late 1970s when I came along with my young family for a ride on the train. Let us hope that the present pandemic is soon over and that other young families can return to our railway to enjoy a ride on the train.

MIDDLETON RAILWAY - A FIRST VISIT

Image 1: The remains of a four wheel car. Hardly recognisable.



Image 2: Ex LTC Railway 601 at Hunslet



MIDDLETON RAILWAY - A FIRST VISIT

Image 2: Ex LTC Railway 601 at Hunslet



Ex Swansea and Mumbles Car No. 2 at Hunslet



MIDDLETON RAILWAY - A FIRST VISIT

Ex Swansea and Mumbles Car No. 2 at Hunslet



MIDDLETON RAILWAY GOODS TRAINS

When the Middleton Railway Preservation Society (MRPS) was first formed, it soon became obvious that it needed income and also that running regular passenger trains on the line was going to be a difficult proposition. The preservationists approached the local firms, Claytons, Robinson & Birdsell and John Kings, who had depended on the old NCB line, to see if they would be interested in having a goods train service to replace the one they had previously used. After some negotiation, both Robinson & Birdsell and Claytons agreed to let the MRPS operate their trains and so began the railway's association with goods traffic.

The very first goods train, operated by HE1697, ran on 1st September, 1960 and it was reported in the society magazine of November 1960 that such trains had raised the princely sum of £103. Goods trains formed the backbone of the railway's operations for many years – indeed until 1969 they were almost the only source of revenue. That year saw the introduction of regular passenger trains to Middleton Park, originally done for “Hunslet Feast” week, and these trains grew in importance over the years until eventually they became the mainstay of our income generation. Goods traffic continued throughout the 1970s, slowly declining in importance, and the very last train was in fact a delivery to the railway. This was the arrival of the spare EM2 bogies, which arrived in 1989.

MIDDLETON RAILWAY GOODS TRAINS

To celebrate our 60th anniversary, here is a selection of photographs from the
“Age of Goods traffic”.

Photo 1 shows “JOHN ALCOCK” in Robinson & Birdsell’s Loading Bay, with a 16t mineral wagon being hand-loaded for despatch to BR, in 1961.

Photo 2 shows “JOHN ALCOCK” again, now painted blue, about to couple onto empties bound for Robinson & Birdsell’s. On the left are the loaded wagons she has brought down from Dartmouth Yard awaiting collection by the Hunslet Down Sidings shunters for onward despatch.

Photo 3 is a photo taken in July 1966 with both 1310 and the Bagnall on a demonstration train during an Open Day. The old Riding Van was owned by Derek Raynor and John Charlesworth for use with their Aveling roller, “WHITE ROSE” The photo is taken on the stretch of line now obliterated by the motorway, between the headshunt points and Tram crossing.

Photo 4 sees NER 1310, newly repainted, working loaded wagons down the branch on 15th April 1967. The train is approaching the first Beza Road crossing, the houses on the left are part of the Gasholder streets. On the right, the fencing is what was left of Acme wagon works and I think the gent on the loco might well be Steve Roberts. Not long after this was taken, those streets were all demolished and the current Beza Road was built.

Photo 5 shows “HENRY DE LACY II” coming out of the motorway tunnel with a rake of loaded 5-plank wagons, in May 1980. We used to use spent ballast obtained from BR and this was such a working. The engine has just shut off ready to stop at the turnout in order to reverse into Dartmouth Yard. Peter Nettleton was the driver, with Ian Smith as fireman.



MIDDLETON RAILWAY GOODS TRAINS

PHOTO 2



PHOTO 3



MIDDLETON RAILWAY GOODS TRAINS

PHOTO 4



PHOTO 5



MOOR ROAD HAPPENINGS

In the last Old Run I made the simple statement that there were no planned trains until April and we were able to relax a bit. Little did any of us know just how much relaxation would be forced upon us. The present situation has brought a total stop to all happenings at Moor Road, other than an occasional presence to check that all is well. With no end to the Covid-19 pandemic in sight the various plans are largely on hold and we will have to make a lot of decisions once the signal is pulled to 'off', once again.

LOCO NOTES

1601 MATTHEW MURRAY

As reported in the last Old Run, Matthew Murray was drained for the winter and had its firebox and smokebox cleaned, along with the boiler tubes and placed in the Engine House for storage. It has a current boiler certificate until the end of June and it was intended to use the loco fairly frequently in the coming months. The chances of it now seeing service are getting less as the days go by. When the current certificate expires, the boiler Inspector requires a full strip down with tubes removed and the boiler lifting from the frames. Because of the state of the cylinder block there are presently no plans for any of this work to take place and the locomotive is likely to become a museum exhibit for the foreseeable future.

No. 6

Progress continues with this locomotive, both at Moor Road and at Northern Steam Engineering, who are overhauling the boiler. The new main handrail has now been made and fitted to the tank and it looks a much neater job than the old and very bent one that adorned the original tank. The tank itself has now been moved into the old workshop to enable it to be painted and the few other remaining jobs to be carried out. These include the fitting of the tank filler cap and the associated small handrails and the footsteps. A lamp bracket will also be required.

Painting of various bits and pieces has been ongoing. The majority of the footplate has now had a second coat of black gloss and the cab is largely finished in 'grass green' with black edging. This work cannot be completed until the cab is once more bolted to the frames, which will not happen until the boiler is back.

Mentioning, the boiler, this continues to make progress at Northern Steam. The latest planned completion date was the end of April but this is now not going to happen. Whilst Northern Steam are still working, it is with a much reduced workforce and we have to share this workforce with several other boilers. The regulator and 'J' pipe have been fitted. The tubes were being fitted and this may now be complete and work should be progressing on the smokebox.

New firebars are being cast at Robinson Engineering near Loftus. We have never used this foundry before but a large number of railways use them for their ferrous castings and they have a good reputation. However, having found them, it may well be the last time we will use them as they are likely to cease trading in the near future.

When locomotives are stripped down for overhaul, the various parts get scattered all over the place because we are so short of space and we have to make that

MOOR ROAD HAPPENINGS continued

storage space wherever we can. One of the problems is that it can then be difficult to locate things when they are finally wanted. This has proved to be the case with the Firehole doors for the boiler and, despite much searching over a long period, they have failed to turn up. We finally decided that there was no alternative but to make some new ones and this has now been done.

1210 SIR BERKELEY

Whilst we await the return of the boiler for No.6, Sir Berkeley has been the subject of much attention. Most of this has been the seemingly never-ending job of cleaning everything down ready for painting. This work is now finally coming to an end. The wheels have all been painted in red oxide primer, as have the axles. The left hand side coupling and connecting rods have had several coats of signal red although the right hand ones are still all in primer.

The various bits of the spring gear have been taken apart and assessed for repair. Most of it is reasonable but we have had to make a new pivot pin for the left hand compensating link.

The locomotive's owners, the Vintage Carriages Trust, have now decided on the livery for the locomotive. It is going to be returned to a 'best guess' of the livery it carried when working for Logan & Hemingway. This is a two-tone green with black and white lining above the frames and for the wheels; and maroon frames with a black edging and yellow line.

No.11

Still nothing to report.

No.1310 (NER H)

The boiler was washed out during January and duly examined by the boiler inspector. No problems were found with the boiler and it duly passed its steam test on the 11th March.

The steam feed pipe to the left hand injector had a couple of slight leaks at the joints. While not a problem they were not going to go away so the pipe was removed in its entirety. This is not an easy job as those who did it will testify, and thus the reason that it had been put off. The joints have now been repaired and all is satisfactory. Associated with this injector, the clack valve was passing slightly and the tank water valve was doing similarly. These have both been removed for repair. It was found that the clack valve had a significant groove in it which would have been difficult to rectify so a new valve was made for it.

Presently available for service but the loco has been drained and cleaned out until life gets back to normal, once more.

1544 SLOUGH ESTATES No.3

The Boiler Inspector came and examined the boiler on 19th January and declared himself sufficiently satisfied that he would agree to another year's service, subject to a satisfactory steam test, which was duly carried out on the 11th March.

Some of the washout plug holes on the backhead were getting worn and these

MOOR ROAD HAPPENINGS continued

have been re-cut to a slightly larger size. Similarly, we have had to clean up the fusible plug hole threads. We had just started to undertake a few other minor jobs when the country was put into lockdown, so these will now have to wait until we can start work once more. In the meantime, the boiler has been drained and cleaned for (hopefully) short term storage.

SENTINEL No.54

Work has been continuing with the Sentinel over the last few months but at a somewhat reduced pace. The boiler cladding sheets that we had previously made to drawings we had produced were found to be a poor fit. Whether this was due to subtle differences between the old and new boiler shells, or errors in the drawing, or manufacture errors is not known (and hasn't been investigated) The result has been a rather tedious process of adapting what we had to make it fit. This has now been done and the boiler is at long last fully clad and insulated, enabling the various fittings and pipework to be replaced. This was essentially as far as we had got when the enforced shutdown brought a halt to works.

The six windows have now been completed by one of our members and fitted. They are a really superb job and every bit as good as the originals. The work has also included the manufacture of a complete new frame to hold the two front sliding windows.

Once we are able to recommence work, the major outstanding job will be finishing off the vacuum brake system, which has had to await completion of the boiler cladding. The arrangement of ejector and pipework will be somewhat different from that originally fitted so it will not simply be a case of bolting the old bits back on.

HE 2387 BROOKES No.1

Brookes had its required visit from the Boiler Inspector on the 19th February, followed by a subsequent steam test on 11th March and all was found to be satisfactory. The repairs to the cylinder block carried out at the end of last year appear to be satisfactory and the loco is now available for service. Like the others though, it has been drained for short term storage.

K 5469 CONWAY

Conway presently resides in the Engine House while a plan for its future conservation is drawn up. The opportunity has been taken to swap it with MSC 67 so that it is adjacent to the emergency exit doors. As a safety measure due to the poor condition of the cab footplate, a timber floor has been fitted.

Fowler 42200033 HARRY

There has been no progress with the repairs to the various gauges and the loco is currently on display in the Engine House.

Peckett 5003 AUSTIN'S No.1

Still awaiting workshop space for repairs and a re-paint but, pending this, it remains in service and is used as required, although it has spent most of the last two months on display in the Engine House.

MOOR ROAD HAPPENINGS continued

D2999

This locomotive is available for service and is used as required.

D577 MARY

Mary is presently stored, serviceable, in the Engine House.

HE 6981

Work progresses, albeit slowly, dependent on the availability of suitable manpower. The radiator matrix has been fitted but awaits the fitting of the fan cowl, which is having to be modified to suit the new position of the fan. Associated with this we are having to slightly modify the water cooling circuit to clear the exhaust drive belts. Once this is done we will be able to fit the radiator cover and engine casing.

Work continues on the endless task of cleaning years of oil and dirt and removing corrosion, mostly with the aid of a needle-gun. This is a thankless task and is largely being carried out by one volunteer.

D631 CARROLL

Carroll is available if required, but generally on display in the Engine House.

L.M.S. 7051

This is available if required, but generally on display in the Engine House.

D1373 MD&HB No.45

Available for traffic and in fairly regular use for shunting purposes. We are starting to experience problems when forward gear is selected. The gear 'dogs' are not engaging properly, resulting in a loud grating noise. We suspect that one of the seals on the forward reverse cylinders is leaking but the matter does still require investigation.

HE1786 COURAGE

Courage has recently had an oil and lubricant change. It is suffering a bit and could really do with some attention and a re-paint.

All other locos are stored, either on display in the Engine House or awaiting overhaul.

CARRIAGE & WAGON NOTES

Coaches

The three coaches have spent the last three months in the carriage shed, away from the winter weather that does so much to ruin their paintwork and rot the timber. Hopefully, when the time comes for them to emerge once more, all that will be required is a routine examination and a good clean.

Although for many years we have managed with just two coaches and the entry

MOOR ROAD HAPPENINGS continued

into service of a third was seen as providing a spare to cover maintenance, etc we are increasingly getting to a state where three coaches are required on more than an occasional basis. This often happens when we host birthday parties because this takes up one of the coaches. However, the two coaches that can be used for this purpose (1074 & 1867) are both the ones with wide entrances to allow disabled access and, if only one of these is being used, it can present problems. The balcony brake (2084) has neither tables nor disabled access but remains the most popular coach with visitors so is preferred for normal operations. Changing the formation to suit the occasion is not a quick job as the guards walk-through connection between the coaches has to be set up and brought into operation each time.

For these reasons, we have had a long-term aim to acquire a fourth parcels van for conversion to a coach if a suitable one became available. However, the opportunity to acquire such vehicles is limited as they are in demand to provide chassis for old timber bodied coaches being rebuilt from garden sheds and other sources and, when they do become available, they often change hands without coming onto the market. We recently looked at one on the Tanfield Railway that might be available but, even though the asking price was attractive, the logistics of extracting it from its long-term storage site made it much less so. The Trust Council was still deliberating on this when a further one was advertised for disposal, based at the East Lancs. Railway. This was quickly inspected and a deal agreed. Although the asking price was more, extracting it was much simpler, just requiring a quick shunt. The van (No.2223), although privately owned, has spent the last several years as a stores van for the 73156 Standard 5 Group and, with the entry into service of that loco, was no longer required. It is in basically sound condition, other than for some slight damage to a buffer, which should be easily repairable. In normal circumstances the van should have arrived at Moor Road by now but is currently still at Bury, awaiting transport.

It is likely that work on the conversion will start once suitable workshop space becomes available, although the initial strip-down could be carried out in the open, as was done with the other coaches. There has been some debate as to whether we should start this work at this time but we have built up a small but good team of people who were responsible for the rebuild of coach 1867 and who are eager to get their teeth into this one. The expected cost of conversion, including acquisition is about £14,500, which will be spread over two years. The exact arrangement of design is yet to be agreed but it is most likely to be a straight copy of Coach 1867. i.e. a saloon coach with forty seats.

LMS Brake Van No.158760

Progress has continued over the winter months. The roof has been completed, although it remains to be painted, and the floor has been fastened down. Work has now turned to fitting the side cladding planks. These are 7/8" thick by 6½" wide tongue and groove and have had to be specially machined for us. Fitting these is not a huge job so it is likely that the progress will become more visually apparent than it has over the last few months when a lot of small tasks have been the order of the day.

MOOR ROAD HAPPENINGS continued

It was originally planned that the van would be ready for our 60th Anniversary gala in June but the June target is now impossible, due to the Covid-19 restrictions.

Palvan

The Palvan eventually arrived back at Middleton and was immediately shunted into the Engine House to allow Stanegate Restorations to complete the small amount of work still outstanding from their contract. With the van completed externally, our volunteers have been busy painting the interior. The van has now been moved into the yard compound where it will be fitted with shelving to enable it to take up its intended duty of a P.W. tool van. A vacuum brake cylinder overhaul is planned to be carried out over the summer.

La Porte Flat No.2

This flat wagon has been used for internal storage for many years and was in a poor state with both headstocks badly corroded through and holes starting to appear in the frames. A start has now been made on cutting it up, with just the wheels and axleboxes being retained as strategic spares.

LMS Van No.M85133

The van has been shunted to outside the north end of the workshops to enable the necessary door repairs to be carried out. However, this work has not yet been started.

Pipe Wagon

As has been noted in the last few Old Runs, we have recently cut up a couple of flat wagons. This was purely because of their poor condition and not because they were surplus to requirements. At present we have two flat wagons which are used for a variety of purposes. However, if we need to transport 60 foot long rails, which is the standard size, up the line we need three flat wagons to do this. For this reason, we have been looking at the possibility of acquiring a suitable wagon chassis that could be used for this purpose. The Llangollen Railway are in the process of clearing out redundant wagons and recently advertised some for disposal. We have inspected a pipe wagon, which had latterly been in service with the RNAD, and agreed to its purchase. It remains at the Llangollen Railway until such time as we are able to transport it to Moor Road. It will require a new timber deck but is in otherwise satisfactory condition.

CARRIAGE SHED

Although the carriage shed is now in everyday use for storage of our coaches and the ballast brake van, there are still various finishing off jobs still to do (isn't it always the case?) The main outstanding task internally has been the erection of a buffer stop at the south end to limit any damage that a rough shunt might create. In theory, the coaches should not reach the buffer stop because the instruction is to stop as soon as the coaches are sufficiently inside, which should leave three feet to spare. The main reason for this is to limit steam locomotive chimneys from entering the building and filling the place with soot and smoke. The buffer stops themselves consist of four lengths of bullhead rail sunk into 900mm deep holes and

MOOR ROAD HAPPENINGS continued

fully concreted in. They are secured to the running rails by four substantial 20mm thick gusset plates. The actual buffing face consists of a railway sleeper attached to the vertical uprights.

A second main outstanding task is the completion of the rainwater drainage. A drain has been installed to the soakaway previously dug but the six downpipes remain to be connected to this and presently discharge onto the ground. For small amounts of rainfall this does not present a problem but the ground does get saturated and muddy after heavy rains.

**Steve Roberts
Mechanical Engineer**



On the left (behind the steam) is Steve Roberts adjusting the safety valve on NER 1310 as part of its steam test earlier this year.

The back end of Slough is just visible in front of it; this was being steam tested at the same time.

On the right is the Sentinel being steam tested in November last year.



George Wainwright 1905 – 1992 - *told by David Hebden*

If you take time to wander round the display area of the shop, you may notice some old paintings on the wall. One is of the Middleton Colliery in 1962, and one of the fireclay works which were situated behind Park Halt, towards the park woods.

I knew “Uncle George”, from my time living at Middleton, and my family’s involvement with the Wainwright family. I knew he worked at the colliery doing amongst other jobs, wages and record keeping. As his family originated in Middleton, I decided to research the family and find out about the work they did and where they lived.

With the help of Duncan, George’s youngest son, I have pieced together some of the family history and jobs they did.

George’s Great Grandfather, William Wainwright (1818–1871), was living in Middleton, although birth records suggest he may have been born in Woolwich. He could have been one of the early miners at the colliery after Salamanca had been on trial. He married Hannah Hollings who was born in 1812, the year of Salamanca! He lived at Windy Hill, Middleton, and his occupation was shown in the 1861 census as a coal miner.

They had six children:-

David (1841-1903) who was an engine worker; Thomas (1844-1881) who was a coal miner; George (1847-1857) at school; Matthew (1850-1912) who was a coal miner; Joseph (1852-1907) who was a labourer, and Hannah (1855-?).

Thomas, the second son, married Sophia Woolen and they had five children:-

George (1868-1955) Coal Miner; William (1869-1943) Colliery Banksman at Middleton Colliery; James Frederick (1871-1906) Coal Screener; Millus (1873-1949) and Esther (1875 -?).

William, their second son, married Mary Elizabeth Flack. Mary Elizabeth (12) came from Littleport, Cambridgeshire with her older sister, Eliza (13) to work in service at Middleton Hall. William and Mary Elizabeth had four children:-

Jane Ann (1902-1994) Clothing factory machinist; Mildred (1903-1996) Unpaid domestic duties; George (1905-1992) Head wages and cost clerk for brick tiles and sanitary ware (from 1939 Register); Frank (1909-1993) Fitter Wrapping Machine.

Eliza Flack married William Hall from Middleton and they set up home in Burley in Wharfedale where he was a coal carter.

George Wainwright’s life:

George was born at 10 Nova Scotia, Belle Isle in 1905. (Nova Scotia was a block of cottages to the east of the colliery between the colliery and Belle Isle.) The house had no electricity, no running hot water and downstairs lighting was by means of gas lights. There was no lighting upstairs, just candles. There were two toilets four doors down, but these were shared by all the houses in the block.

George attended Middleton Church of England School on Town Street, Middleton, up the hill from his home. The school had an air shaft for the colliery in the playground, and was situated about 100 yards up the road from the colliery rope

George Wainwright 1905 – 1992 continued

hill. Next to the school stands an old building which in later years, George and his wife Winnie called home. This building dates back to the 1600s and was originally one building which was the village inn. This was later split into two dwellings. The land being subject to a Flying Freehold. (This means part of the property with the flying freehold either overhangs or lies beneath another person's property.)

George married Winnie Jagger (who was born in Woodview Mount, Beeston in 1905) in 1929 at Hunslet Baptist Church, living in Woodview Mount before moving to what had become the police house on Town Street, Middleton. The police house was half of the old village inn (as mentioned above) which had been divided into two dwellings. Mr Belt, who looked after the pit ponies, and was the school caretaker with his wife, lived next door, next to the school.

As George grew up, he had a head for figures and so had no desire to work down the pit. At Ebor House, on Middleton Road in Belle Isle, lived Mr C. J. Dixon. He was the managing director of The Middleton Fireclay Company which was situated near to the lower entrance to the park (to the West of the present Park Halt site). He asked George to consider doing the wages for the staff at the fireclay company, and also some work at Middleton Hall. At this time, before the colliery was nationalised (1947), the pit and fireclay company were jointly owned. When the fireclay works ceased, George continued working full time at the colliery site. His office was by the sidings and he would tell stories of the trains coming off the track and having to be re-railed so the coal could go out.

George's son, Duncan, recounts a tale told by his father of a trip out with C.J. This was before the ring road at Middleton was widened and the lamp standards moved from the edge of the road. C.J. always had a pipe in his mouth; dad was in the passenger seat of the Rover car when C.J. ran into a lamp post knocking one of his front teeth out with the pipe. His comment to George was "I'm glad you were sitting there George and not my wife, she might have been hurt!" Ebor house was sold in 1995 when C J Dixon retired and moved to Bedale to live with his daughter Joyce.

Part of George's employment was at Lofthouse colliery. To get to work, he used a "Cycle Master". This was an ordinary bicycle with a 25cc engine mounted in the rear wheel. This was used for a while, but the 16 ton coal lorries passing on the narrow roads put him off and so Duncan inherited it as a means of transport.

As George grew up, he enjoyed woodwork, building a bookcase and chest of drawers in the house cellar, by candlelight! Always artistic, preferring landscapes as he could never master peoples' faces, painting was one of the things he continued when he retired as there was a painting class at the old Middleton Church of England school on Town Street which had become a day centre. (This was the school at which Mrs Hebden, David's mother, taught and after retirement also returned to attend the painting class). Here he continued to paint scenes of Middleton, some of which are on display at the railway. His love for joinery continued, and he built his own greenhouse at the bottom of his garden overlooking the colliery; a view now obscured by the Manor Farm estate. As well as painting, after retirement he took up photography as a hobby, developing and printing his pictures of Middleton. Sadly most of the collection is no more.

David Hebden, with information from Duncan Wainwright

George Wainwright 1905 – 1992 continued

The picture below, by George Wainwright, is of Middleton Broom Pit in 1926; it can be found in the Engine House, beside the video screen which displays the “Tales of Middleton”

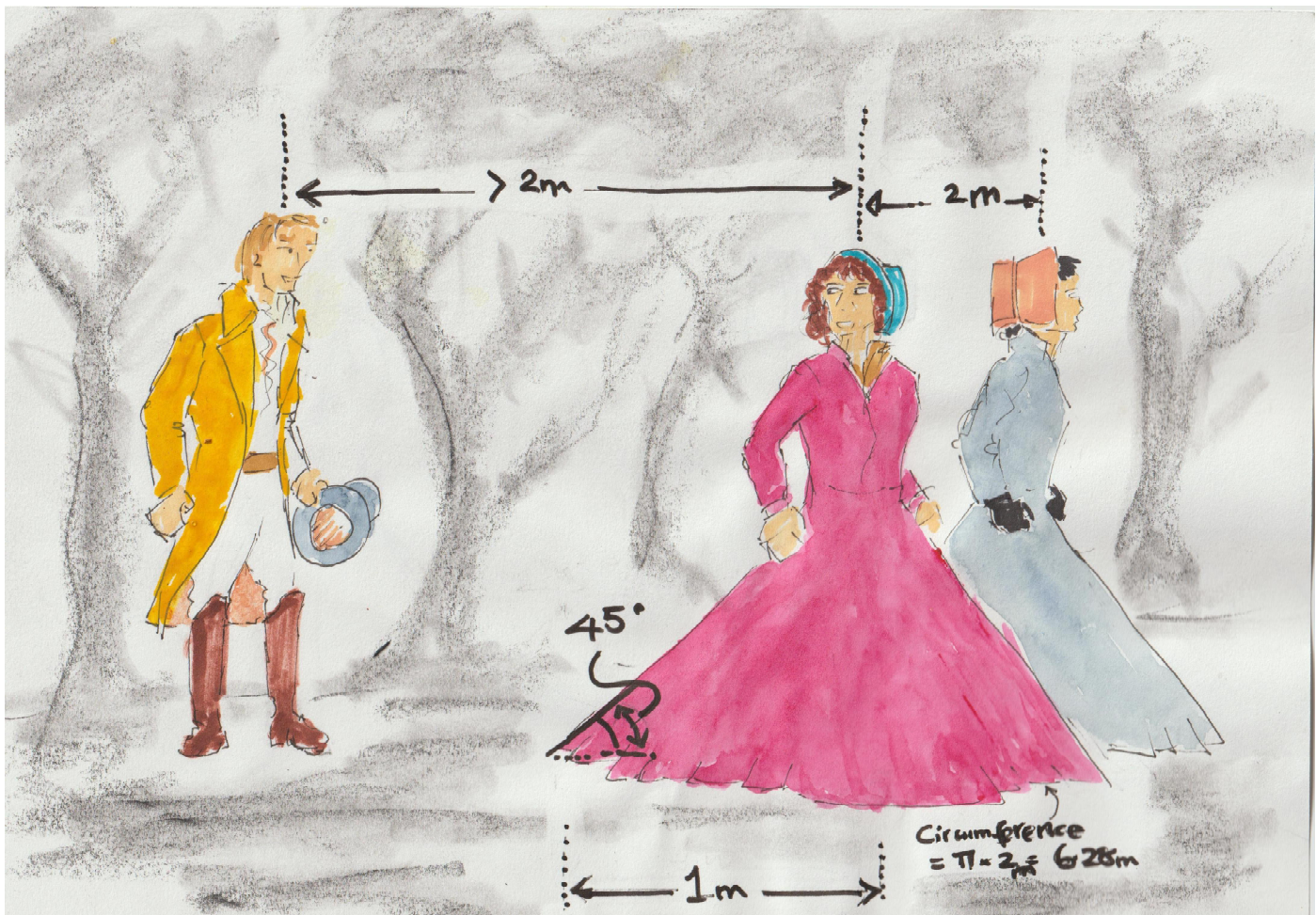


This picture, by George Wainwright, is of the Fireclay Works in 1968; it also hangs beside the video screen which displays the “Tales of Middleton” .



THE VIRUS AND SOCIAL DISTANCING:

As an aid to social distancing, there has been some talk of the return of the crinoline. Below are relevant technical drawings. Richard Stead, RA



LETTERS TO THE EDITOR:

Dear Editor

Just checking..

Some may be concerned that the Moor Road Site is languishing neglected, subject only to the attentions of malefactors, thieves and vandals. The railway Council Is, however, across this, and has set up a system of regular inspections. I was rostered recently and this is how it went.

I used the bike. When I first started at the railway I often came down by bike but failing energy-levels and mounting traffic-density combined with bone idleness worked against this. The day in question was, however, invitingly sunny so I decided on the bike.

Leeds was like a scene from The Day of the Triffids (but without the triffids. The book, not the film). I shared the streets with a few vans and cars and an 80-seat double-decker carrying, I think, one passenger. According to Look North that evening, NOx and other emissions are discernibly reduced and it was obvious how this had come about.

The good news for cyclists is that the cycle path south along Regent Street into central Leeds has been extended across the front of the Playhouse and down to the railway bridge near the Minster. The not-so-good news is that it stops at that point and you are on your own on the Nurnburg Ring, sorry, Loop. Given the small number of motor vehicles, crossing Crown Point Bridge was, this time, not a problem, though in other circumstances it might be.

There is little to say about the actual inspection as there was nothing untoward, though empty buildings can be a bit spooky... I am glad this is not taking place on late evenings in November when the ghost of John Blenkinsop is reported to walk abroad... What I can inform readers is that, thanks to the bike having a computer, the outer perimeter of the site measures 760 metres (to the nearest ten metres) or 832 yards which is getting on for half a mile.

I came back by a different route using back lanes as far as Leeds Bridge. Approaching home, I noted a police helicopter loitering (technical term) not quite overhead. What do we read into this? When I reached home, there, parked on a dandelion, was a peacock butterfly. A good morning.

Richard Stead

Thank you Richard - I hope the inspections made by the other stalwart volunteers are as uneventful and entertaining as yours. The invitation is now open to all - send me a report which makes me laugh (I'd prefer not to cry at some awful desecration!) and I'll publish it in the July edition of Old Run.. Ed.

God was seen walking around Yorkshire this morning. He was asked what he was doing. "I'm working from home." He replied.

Thanks for spotting Him, Malcolm.

For the Bank Holiday on the 75th Anniversary of VE day it had been planned to do a guided walk in Middleton Park on the theme, connecting with our 1 O'clock train. Of course, due to a bit of a bug going round that you might have heard about, this can't happen. The notes for the walk were nearly done so rather than letting them go to waste I turned them into an article people could read at home (while spending a lot of time there).

How the First World War created the Middleton we know today

Middleton as we know it today was built in the aftermath of the first world war, when Prime Minister David Lloyd George promised "to make Britain a fit country for heroes to live in." The old village of Middleton, mentioned in the Domesday Book, mostly consisted of mine workers' terraced houses and farms. The houses are still there as are the churches they worshipped in, but the farms remain in name only, e.g. Manor Farm, West Farm etc.. Much of the local housing was constructed after the First World War. The roads to the area were poor at the time so a railway was built through the park to bring construction materials to Middleton. When the Ring Road was completed this line was converted into the electric tramway; until 1959 this tramway took commuters from this new suburb into Leeds. The route of the tramway through the park is now a path. Middleton Park itself was created in 1920 when the Middleton Estate was sold to Wades Charity and leased to Leeds City Council to provide suitable recreational facilities for the area.

The searchlights that protected Leeds

The First World War also saw rapid development of aircraft designs; local firm Blackburns was one of many working to develop better planes at that time. On 11th June 1933 local people flocked to the clearings in the park to see Cobham's



Flying Circus demonstrate their daring flying skills (which sadly led to an accident in which two child spectators were killed). Just 6 years later and aircraft were a major part of the Second World War. The clearings in Middleton Park were considered a suitable place to make an emergency landing if a plane got into trouble over Leeds. It is not known if this happened but the clearings would have been kept clear just in case. Also, Middleton Park's position overlooking Leeds made it a good position for aircraft searchlights and anti-aircraft guns. Today miniature aircraft operators still use the clearings as an air strip for their model

planes.

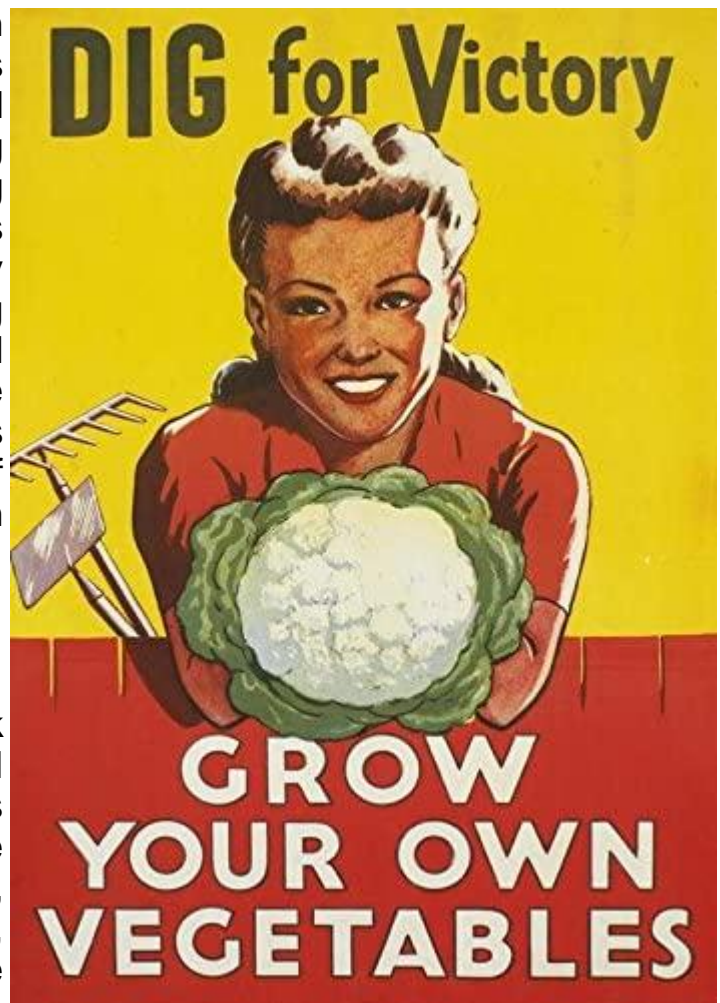
MIDDLETON PARK AT WAR! continued

The Cobhams company is still in business today and has temporarily turned some of its manufacturing capabilities to making ventilators for the NHS in the current Covid-19 crisis.

The construction of machinery for the war effort in the nearby engineering works would have made Leeds a likely target. Local engine makers John Fowler built large numbers of tanks in the second world war and neighbouring engine makers Hudswell Clarke made tail sections for Lancaster bombers. In the north of the city Avro built a large aircraft factory close to where Leeds Bradford Airport stands.

Digging for Victory

For a long time Britain has been dependent on imported food; this was a particular problem during the second world war resulting in food rationing and the government encouraging people to grow their own food with its "Dig for Victory" campaign. Any suitable land was used for growing vegetables, including land around Broom Pit that now forms part of the park. There were even vegetable plots established on the northern slopes of the large spoil heap just off Old Run Road.



Tunnels beneath our feet?

Towards the eastern edge of the park stood Broom Pit. In the war it was vital that the mines kept extracting coal as the coal was needed to keep the manufacturing industries running, generating power, pumping water, running trains. Basically at the time the running of the country was dependent

on coal. From December 1943 one in ten male conscripts aged 18 – 25 were put to use keeping the mines going, these young men were referred to as "Bevin Boys" after Minister of Labour & National Service Ernest Bevin.

It was only as recently as 1901 that the requirement to have more than one exit for underground workings was introduced to minimize the risk of miners being trapped underground. There was concern that bombing raids could now destroy both shafts at a mine, trapping miners and stopping the mine's production for some time. This concern only increased beyond the second world war when the threat of even greater destruction from nuclear weapons came along. Tunnels were dug between adjacent mines and Broom Pit was connected underground to Robin Hood Pit, which in turn would have been connected to other pits. There was

MIDDLETON PARK AT WAR! continued

speculation that secret bunkers were built into the mine workings in the paranoia of the Cold War.

The POW Camp

A Prisoner of War camp had been established at Post Hill near Pudsey towards the end of the war. As this became full a number of Italian prisoners of war were processed at Post Hill then billeted at Middleton Hall. Huts were built, presumably close to the hall, for further arrivals. The POWs would be put to use locally to carry out various jobs that needed doing with so many men away fighting. A typical job in this area would be filling coal sacks, POWs might also be required to mend roads or clear snow in winter. After VE day the POWs gained greater freedom to move around outside but it was nearly a couple of years after the war before the POWs left the camps; many chose to live in the area rather than return home.

More detail about the Middleton POW camp can be found here:

<https://middletonlife.wordpress.com/2015/06/23/italians-in-middleton/>



Italian Prisoners of War

Kris Ward, with thanks to Jim Jackson, Paul Hebden and Sheila Bye.



The Middleton Railway Trust Limited

(Limited by Guarantee and not having a share capital)

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Registered Company No. 1165589 Registered Charity No. 230387

Accredited Museum No RD2114

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CONWAY - on the way back to glory



CONWAY as she is today, at home in our Display Hall, awaiting further restoration.

Overheard:

Somebody gets a delivery-slot from Tesco so he puts his order in:

A turkey, brussels sprouts, mince pies , oh yes, and a box of Christmas Crackers!

An Optimist? Our thanks to Richard Stead, who spots these gems! Ed.



We look forward to seeing you again, when this horrible virus has been vanquished and we are safe to meet. Meanwhile, take care of yourselves and keep smiling.