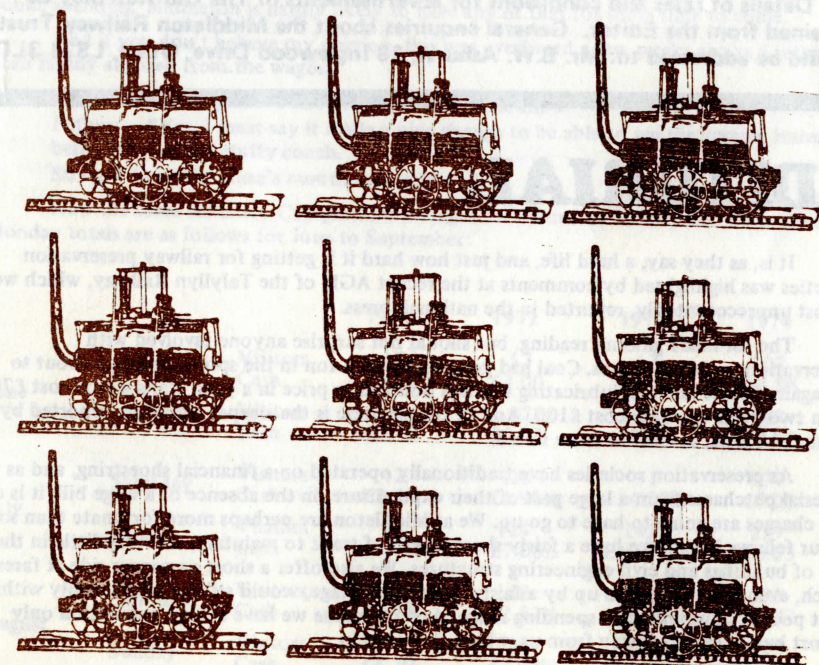


WINTER 1974

THE OLD RUN



JOURNAL OF
THE 1758 MIDDLETON RAILWAY
LEEDS

THE OLD RUN

VOLUME 11 NUMBER 3 WINTER 1974

EDITOR: Mervyn Leah, 134 Frobisher Road, Bilton, Rugby, CV22 7HS.

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

The next issue will appear in March, and all contributions should reach the Editor by February 10th.

Details of rates and conditions for advertisements in The Old Run may be obtained from the Editor. General enquiries about the Middleton Railway Trust should be addressed to: Mr. B.W. Ashurst, 18 Inglewood Drive, Otley, LS21 3LD.

EDITORIAL

It is, as they say, a hard life, and just how hard it is getting for railway preservation societies was highlighted by comments at the recent AGM of the Talylllyn Railway, which were, almost unprecedentedly, reported in the national press.

The list made gloomy reading, but should not surprise anyone involved with preservation society finances. Coal had gone up by £4 a ton in the spring, and was about to rise again. Diesel fuel and lubricating oils had doubled in price in a year. Rails which cost £70 a ton two years ago now cost £100. And of course there is the sleeper situation, reported by the Financial Times, as our last issue noted.

As preservation societies have traditionally operated on a financial shoestring, and as material purchases form a large part of their expenditure, in the absence of a wage bill, it is clear that charges are going to have to go up. We at Middleton are perhaps more fortunate than some of our fellows in that we have a fairly short length of track to maintain, and very little in the way of buildings and civil engineering structures. We also offer a short passenger ride at fares which, even if we put them up by a fairly hefty percentage, would still be comfortably within most people's discretionary spending range. And of course we have a large population only a short bus or car ride away from us, which should help.

Freight charges are another matter, however, although our own charge is of far less significance than that of BR. It is sad to note that, at the time of writing, the future of the Middleton Railway's freight traffic is, to say the least, uncertain, and although there are special short-term factors which have brought this to a head, it has been the case for some time that our customers have found road haulage cheaper than rail. Since rail uses far less fuel per ton/mile, and since nationally we are importing far more oil than we shall ever be able to pay for, one wonders for how much longer we can afford the luxury of "cheap" road haulage.

Still growing

After a fine, prosperous summer season, during which the weekend's takings never dropped below £20 and were frequently around £30, the rotten English weather has at last caught up with us, reducing our daily averages from £15.33 at the end of August to £14.10 at the end of September. Oh dear! But, as I mentioned in the last Old Run, a large proportion of our visitors use the train to get to Middleton Park, and who wants to go to the Park when it's blowing a gale and pouring with rain? Out of nine running days in September, five had bad or very bad weather, and only one day could be described as really good. Even good or middling days were badly attended, and one can only imagine that people were using them to dry out their clothes!

Before anyone shrieks "Buy a coach!", I must stress that the open wagon is the most popular vehicle in anything but the worst weather, naturally since that is where one is best placed to appreciate the full joys of a steam loco. Has anyone else, as I did this summer, tried to catch a glimpse of the loco from a Festiniog coach? It's well nigh impossible to see it from a coach window without endangering life and limb – or, more correctly, head. All that can be safely and fully appreciated from a coach window is beautiful scenery, and with the cuts in public spending, Middleton is hardly likely to have any of that for some time to come.

And if you don't believe my opinion, this was overheard a few weeks ago as a rather posh family alighted from the wagon:

Son: "That was great! I liked it a lot better than the W ---- V ----."

Father: "Yes, I must say it made a nice change to be able to see the engine, instead of being shut up in a stuffy coach."

Straight from the horse's mouth, one might say.

Now for some statistics. Comparative averages for Saturday, Sunday and Bank Holiday Monday totals are as follows for June to September:

			1971	1972	1973	1974
June	Saturday	Visitors	12	57	63	107
		Cash	£0.94	£4.00	£4.96	£10.88
	Sunday	Visitors	8	87	119	180
		Cash	£0.70	£5.33	£9.62	£18.39
July	Saturday	Visitors	42	28	51	77
		Cash	£2.87	£1.96½	£4.30½	£8.06
	Sunday	Visitors	93	124	142	219
		Cash	£4.18	£7.08½	£10.99½	£20.63
August	Saturday	Visitors	24	38	68	95
		Cash	£1.78	£2.82½	£5.79½	£9.77
	Sunday	Visitors	60	98	171	227
		Cash	£4.70	£7.08½	£14.71	£22.76
September	Monday	Visitors	43	164	91	186
		Cash	£3.25	£13.75	£7.38	£19.74½
	Saturday	Visitors	23	31	38	54
		Cash	£1.50	£2.10½	£3.23	£5.71
September	Sunday	Visitors	51	64	87	100
		Cash	£4.01	£3.89	£7.05	£9.98

Daily averages for the months June to September were:

		1971	1972	1973	1974
June	Visitors	10	72	87	143
	Cash	£0.82	£4.66½	£7.03	£14.63½
July	Visitors	52	76	102	148
	Cash	£3.53	£4.52½	£8.02	£14.34
August	Visitors	42	79	116	157
	Cash	£3.24	£5.93	£9.93	£15.96
September	Visitors	37	45	63	80
	Cash	£2.75½	£2.90	£5.15	£8.08½

See the newsletter for this season's last exciting instalment

Sheila Young

OLD RUN NEWS

FREIGHT TRAFFIC SUSPENDED

After running at very healthy levels earlier in the year, freight traffic to and from Messrs Robinson & Birdsell was temporarily suspended in September, one of the immediate reasons being industrial action at one of the firm's sources of raw scrap. From April to June, tonnages handled were 1000 tonnes outward and 110 tonnes inward.

On the line

Another crack in HC1309's firebox outer shell plates has been repaired to the boiler inspector's satisfaction, but during his examination the inspector found it necessary to condemn the boiler tubes, and the engine will be out of service until they have all been replaced. New tubes will cost several hundred pounds, and the job will have to take second place to maintenance and repairs on the serviceable stock, so Henry will be out of service for some time.

During the coming winter, a small number of tubes in HL3860 are due for renewal — replacements are to hand for these — and the firebox will be dropped out of S8837 for inspection, in addition to the work required every year for the boiler inspector's visit. The drain tap lever of WB2702 has been modified to operate from the driver's side of the cab, as in its original position it impeded the taking of coal from the bunker. HC1309 has been fitted with a mechanical lubricator, to supersede the original displacement type. Work is in progress to repair the cracks in the cylinder jackets of HC D631. HE1786 has been repainted in light blue and black.

The Steam Power Trust have been busy recently, and the Y7 is now practically complete. The possibility of fitting a steam brake to the engine is under investigation.

There has been a spate of vandalism at the line of late. Amongst other occurrences, both the joinery and the painters' containers have been broken into; the boiler-tube stakes

THE OLD RUN

supporting the Park Gates platform have been bent over into the path of the train; one works plate and one name plate have been stolen from WB2702 (thankfully fibreglass replicas, so the originals are safe); spray-paint graffiti have covered the shop container; and one end window and the starting handle have been destroyed on the new Wickham trolley. Action has been taken which will, we hope, prevent the reoccurrence of some of these happenings, but the rectifying of malicious damage will unfortunately remain as a most annoying task.

Jim Lodge

... and around it

The diversion of the line to a new terminus at Middleton Park will not now take place, and consequently our own plans to apply for a Light Railway Order for the passenger-carrying section, which had been held up pending any alterations in alignment, can now go ahead.

The Corporation has applied for a compulsory purchase order on the fireclay works site and the former Beatwaste tip, in order to reclaim the land as a public open space. Objections to the order were received, and an enquiry was to be held on October 2nd.

At the northern end of the line, adjacent land has been sold by Claytons to a timber firm, necessitating the removal of the Trust's sleeper pile before new fencing was erected.

Tom Apperley

Tom Apperley resigned the post of Sales Manager in September due to ill health. All members will doubtless wish to join in thanking him for the tremendous effort he has put into the development of the Sales department, and in wishing him a speedy recovery.

Mervyn Leah

Company matters

The registered address of The Middleton Railway Trust Ltd has been established at: 55 Village Way, Pinner, Middlesex, HA5 5AB, which is of course the home address of the company's Secretary, John Edwards.

The September Council meeting decided that the assets of the Trust would be formally handed over by the Trustees to the limited company on 31st December 1974.

Santa Specials

These will be operated this year on 14th and 15th December, from 13.30 to 16.30. Those who still believe in Santa should make a note in their diaries.

Clean-up success

The cadets, NCOs and officers of the 168 Squadron (City of Leeds) Air Training Corps have recently won first prize in 'Operation Facial'. To win the £350 award, they cleared the waste paper and all the general rubbish from the Beatwaste tip at the southern end of the line, which has resulted in the removal of a large and rather smelly eyesore from the lineside. Their Commanding Officer, Flt Lt J K Lee (also the MRT Chairman) and the cadets were presented with the cheque in October, on the Beatwaste site, by the President of John Waddington Ltd. Well done!

Stephen Dufton

Exhibition Notes

I wish to thank all those who have helped at events so far this year, particularly those who made our own exhibition at Horsforth a success, or took part in the 'Sheffield Four-Day Marathon'. Our sales stands, sturdily built by Tom Apperley, have stood up well to being carted about, and the outdoor stand stood firm in the teeth of a gale at Harewood, thanks to some good pegging down by Roger Bareham.

You will have read elsewhere that Tom Apperley is having to resign from the post of Sales Manager, and I wish to thank him for having stock and stand ready for each event, and checking stock afterwards, to say nothing of the hours spent manning the stand. He deserves credit for widening the range of items available since he took over Sales in 1971.

Model railway exhibitions at which stand space has been booked are as follows:

November 16 - 17: Bradford Wool Exchange (YDRS).
November 23 - 24: Unity Hall, Smyth St, Wakefield.

At the time of writing, no firm proposals to attend exhibitions in 1975 have been made, but if a programme of attendances like this year's is to be attempted, more help will be needed to transport and staff the sales stands. Please let me know if you can assist at either of the above events, and also make a note of the dates in your diary. I can be contacted at: 44 South Broadgate Lane, Horsforth.

Derek Plummer

When he was a lad

Following the TV Times article about the Middleton Railway, published in July, we received many letters. Most were from gricers wanting timetables, but they included an interesting letter from a gentleman in Birmingham, Mr Sandauer, who had many memories of the railway in the first quarter of this century.

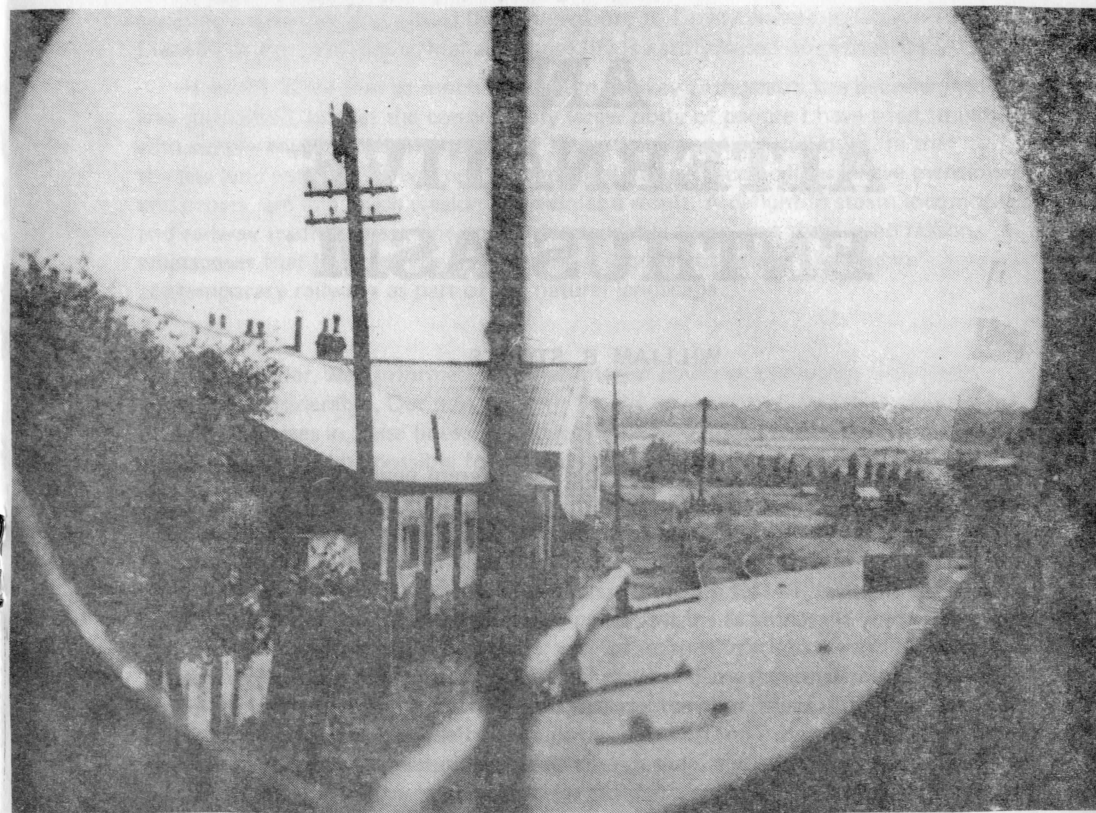
Not only the railway, but Clayton's too, for his family's connection with the firm dates back two generations before his own time, back to when his grandfather was one of the original workers at 'Old Joe' Clayton's first works in Belinda St, Hunslet. The family later lived at Gasholder Villa, adjoining Moor End works, when Mr Sandauer's grandfather was weighman there (incidentally using a piece of Middleton rack rail as his office doorstep).

Grandfather Sandauer was apparently quite a character. Iron posts had been set up across a rather 'posh' street formerly used by Clayton's wagons, and one day the old gentleman got steam up on one of the firm's traction engines, and went over with some chains to pull the lot out. Mr Sandauer himself started work at Clayton's in 1913, and eventually travelled all over the country erecting gasholders and gas plant for the company. He remembers racing 'Blenkinsop' as it steamed across Hunslet Moor, and also waiting to help wind the wheels that opened and shut the level crossing gates — if he was really lucky, he cadged a lift down to Hunslet Moor coal staithes on the engine.

I now await a promised visit from Mr Sandauer, to hear some more of his memoirs.

Sheila Young

Now and then



A 1964 view from the cab of John Alcock, showing the site of the present-day motorway tunnel. In the middle distance can be seen the facing turnout of the old line to Dartmouth yard, which was replaced by the present alignment as part of the motorway works. Middleton Park can be seen in the background, but our main line was at that time severed at Parkside Junction.

(Photo by Mervyn Leah)

From The Old Run, November/ December 1964:

For some time it has been obvious that the McLaren-Ricardo engine on John Alcock, the Middleton Railway's diesel, has been ailing. Repeated weekends of hard slogging repair and inspection work were spent checking up injection timings, bearings, carbonisation, and all the obvious mechanical faults which might have occurred. Spare parts from the Hunslet Engine Company were put in, but still the condition deteriorated. On October 19, the historic 1932 diesel growled down to Balm Road and back for the last time with this engine. With black smoke pouring out of the exhaust and cylinders misfiring, she struggled up with a single wagon and was ordered to stop for a major inspection. The motor is being overhauled by Petters of Yeovil, who specialise in McLaren-Ricardo engines.

AN ALTERNATIVE ENTHUSIASM

WILLIAM B. STOCKS

Enjoying railways means different things for different people and rightly so. My pleasure for example rides highest in two ways . . . early history, say down to 1850 . . . and exploring the contemporary system and appreciating its relationship with nature. The first is clearly steam centred but the second is not concerned with the power in the slightest. In fact a front or rear seat in a d.m.u. is pretty close to being ideal, and I enjoy sketching as I travel, using generally a black felt tip for rapid impressions.

Having explored thus from Thurso to Penzance, meeting and talking with many people; railway enthusiasts, railwaymen and just fellow passengers, certain conclusions have formed. That an extensive and varied network still offers an entrancing panorama of Britain 'through the carriage window', that our system is in effect an embroidery of gleaming steel threads doing little harm to the country it passes through, and surprise that exploring our railways is not a natural primary activity of railway enthusiasm.

As I look back over the very many fascinating rides my wife and I have covered in, say, the last ten years, one of the major impressions has been that people really enjoying themselves, because they were on a train in lovely country, were the people who really mattered. The technical jargon of so many specialised enthusiasts would probably have bored and repelled them. I am generalising of course, but railway lovers exist who would be the last to think themselves "railway enthusiasts". They are interested neither in history or technicalities and would probably name Stephenson's 'Rocket' as the first loco if asked. But what does this really matter? I believe there to be scores of thousands of them throughout the land, of all ages and types, these most important of all enthusiasts.

Important because they are rarely recognised as such, yet they qualify by having a genuine pleasure in using railways. By enjoying scenery and going places through the medium of trains.

Their value reaches its high peak when we think of our most highly scenic 'tourist' lines. These are almost invariably routes that cannot claim to pay their way in

any circumstances and so have no confident long term future. I think of lines like the Dingwall to Kyle now on two years grace only, the Cambrian Coast route awaiting a decision, and others like Shrewsbury to Dovey Junction, Craven Arms to Llanelli or Fort William to Mallaig whose life is hardly based on prosperity.

It seems to me that so much of modern railway enthusiasm has become insular and specialised, so that the considerably larger body of people I have tried to indicate, who simply enjoy trains, are no longer strengthened and infused by it. In the thirties (and earlier) this was not so, and lovely tourist scenic lines I have mentioned, and others, are in a much weaker position as a result. A delight in steam locomotives and railway traditions is a fine and understandable thing, but there is no reason whatsoever that I can see why, side by side, should not exist a pleasure in contemporary railways as part of the natural landscape.

If a broader, well informed, popular interest could be cultivated the effects might be considerable. Our new concern for the environment may well realise what allies it possesses in these lines. New ideas might enter the picture for there is plenty of scope. Would it be possible for instance to operate car-carrying trains using bogie flats over some routes, such as once, I believe, negotiated the Severn Tunnel? Maybe lines like the temporarily reprieved Kyle could become Government-sponsored preservation lines where selected youths from dubious areas could go for a form of adventure training? Could trailer cars from old d.m.u.'s be refurbished as light-weight observation cars?

Perhaps these are just pipe dreams and for reasons overlooked not very practical. But to return to hard fact . . . these lines do give tremendous pleasure to lots of scenery lovers and do no harm to the landscapes they pass through. They mean much to the sparser communities who live along them. And last but not most important of all, a growing, cultivated appreciation could lead to the ultimate powers (who hold the purse strings) admitting a new argument for the retention of a line proposed for closure. At present only proved hardship seems to carry weight. But why not "Exceptional Tourist Value" . . . Maybe only a handful would qualify, but with tourism and increased leisure high in our priorities it would make sense.

None of the foregoing has any intention of attacking or undermining the conventional enthusiast's activities and outlooks. Rather, to indicate what way, in the writer's considered view, pleasure in railways could grow and expand. Enjoying nature and scenery is an accepted part of the canal enthusiast's world. Turn to railways and nothing seems to cater — no societies, no literature, no articles in the railway magazines. Yet it is in this kind of travel that many of the best bargains in rail tickets are to be found.

The stagnation I describe, stirred sufficiently, could be the key to saving some of the long, lovely, lonely lines we would all deplore losing. A symptom of this failure, as it exists now, can be seen in the almost complete impossibility of buying picture postcards in Scotland showing views of the superb Highland scenic lines. So much to do!

Letters to the Editor

Wasting time

Sir,

I am not surprised we don't get a lot of pw jobs done quickly down at Middleton, due to shortage of labour, because all the time labour is misused on the train and in the shop. Many weeks I have gone into the shop and seen three people serving. I am sure the shop could be run with two people, so one could come out of the shop and help with the pw.

Also on the passenger train some labour is wasted. I am sure Sheila Young and Keith Hartley could run the train by themselves with one ticket-clipper, so why are we always seeing two ticket-clippers? So I wish people would stop trying to get out of doing some work, and get down to some hard graft.

Bradford

NICHOLAS BECKWITH

Oldest and Ugliest?

Sir,

I would like to thank Mr White for his thoughtful and constructive article in the last Old Run. Some of his ideas are outside the scope of the Publicity Officer, but others have direct relevance to the work I co-ordinate.

As regards livery, the varied colours of our locomotives reflect their varied origins, and I think it is good that this is so. We should, however, carry on our efforts to keep them clean and well-painted. Mr. White suggests that we adopt a new symbol to replace Salamanca. This idea appeals to me as an appropriate celebration of our new company status, although its implementation is not without expense. I will press for this innovation with other Council members.

It is pleasant to be able to say that most of Mr White's other suggestions about advertising have already been in use for some time. Our large poster is almost exactly as he describes, our regular adverts in the Evening Post employ wordings like "Why not take the kids to Middleton?", and the media report our activities (eg school steam days) whenever there is anything worth reporting. As yet, we have not used pretty girls in our advertising, and I would be very interested in hearing exactly what Mr White has in mind!

We need people like Mr. White to help us with our publicity, which is vital to keep the money flowing in. I would be glad to hear from any MRT member who would like to help.

Leeds 12

CLIVE HIRST

OLD RUN CLASSIFIED

FOR SALE. Pre-nationalisation goods consignment notes. Mostly from country stations, some now closed. W L Cooper, 307 Spen Lane, Leeds LS16 5BD.

ASSOCIATION ADVERTISER

JOURNAL OF THE MIDDLETON RAILWAY ASSOCIATION

NUMBER 6 WINTER 1974

Committee News

Mr C Paul wishes to resign from the position of Treasurer at the next AGM, owing to pressure of outside work. The Committee would like to thank him for his work over the last two years.

Trips and Film Shows

A full list of MRA visits and film shows has been prepared for 1975, and details will be circulated later.

Dinting

Dinting is a small railway society near Glossop. It has very good scenery, and is the ideal place for a day's outing. It can be reached by catching the 8.30am train from Leeds to Manchester Victoria, followed by a short walk across Manchester to Piccadilly, where you can catch a train to Dinting for thirty pence (half fare) and it will take you to the station at Dinting. A short walk across the station footbridge will put you in the society's yard. In the yard there are two large engine sheds, a shop, and a small shed at the far end. In the newer of the two sheds the large locomotives are housed, including "Bahamas" and "Leander" of the "Jubilee" class. Other small steam locomotives include a rather unusual crane tank, which has a normal horizontal boiler, but in the cab, mounted over the top of the normal boiler, there is a vertical cylinder, which has sprouting from the top a long crane jib. Other small locomotives worth taking a closer look at are, "Nunlow", and "Jacob". "Nunlow" is an 0-6-0T, and is kept in first class condition. "Jacob" is a diesel locomotive of steam locomotive appearance. It is aptly named because it was obtained by the society from the Jacobs Biscuit factory.

This is just a brief outline of what to expect. In my opinion it is well worth a visit and it is not too expensive for a good day's outing. There is normally somebody there during the week who will show you around the sheds. When the short line is in operation, footplate rides are obtainable on the large locomotives.

The End

Owing to lack of support, this will be the last Association Advertiser. We are very disappointed with the way members have responded, but I would like to thank the four people who have contributed articles in the past, especially the anonymous contributor of the Dinting article above.

Stephen Dufton

Symbol Print

● ***the fast printing service***

46-50 Gt. George Street, Leeds LS1 3DL

telephone: 34146

LOCKSIDE GARAGE

PROPR: R. SANDHAM, MECH.E., AUTO.E.

Thwaite Lane, Leeds 10

(Tel. 72699)

HIGH QUALITY CAR & COMMERCIAL REPAIRS

CONTRACTORS' PLANT

PAINTING & DECORATING?

For interior and exterior work contact:

William Holliday & Co

**27 High Ridge Park, Rothwell,
Leeds, LS26 0NL.**

PHONE 826701 after 6pm