

# THE OLD RUN

JOURNAL  
OF THE  
MIDDLETON RAILWAY  
TRUST



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# THE OLD RUN

NO.158

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Opinions expressed in the magazine do not necessarily reflect those of the Middleton Railway Trust Ltd., Middleton Railway Association, or the Editor.

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Material for the Winter Issue should reach the Editor by 1st December 1997, at the very latest, please.

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Cover picture: 7051 (*John Alcock*) awaits clearance to cross Moor Road with the 11.10 Goods Special from Balm Road during the September Gala Weekend. Photo: Ian Dobson

## THE RAFFLE!

During the past few months, Gerald Egan, our President, has managed to obtain sponsorship for us from two of the city's largest hotels, namely the Fortes Queen's Hotel and the Hilton International Hotel. Part of the sponsorship from the Hilton was a kind donation of a Family Weekend Holiday in any Hilton Provincial Hotel. The Council felt this was too good an offer to confine to a raffle at the Gala Weekend, so the 'Raffle' was born, with this holiday as the star prize.

Enclosed with this *Old Run*, therefore, is a book of four 50p tickets, which we hope you will sell. We have had 3000 tickets printed which, if all sold, will realise £1500 gross, the bulk of which will be used for restoration and improvement work at the Railway. Please try to sell the book of tickets enclosed and, if possible, more tickets. (SEE BACK PAGE ADVERTISEMENT FOR FURTHER DETAILS AND LIST OF PRIZES.)

I look forward to being inundated with requests for more tickets, and having to organise the printing of a second batch!

*Stan Holdsworth*  
Promoter and Trust Treasurer

*\*A Merry Christmas to all Members!\**  
... and a Seasonal Reminder that the Middleton Railway Santa Trains will be operating on 30th November and 6th/7th, 13th/14th, 20th/21st December, from 10.30 to 16.30 with trains normally every 30 minutes. Each child receives a present from Santa during the journey, and all adults receive wine and a mince pie in the Shop. Booking forms are available from the Station. Mince Pie Specials will run on 29th/30th December, at the above mentioned times. Thomas will be at the Railway for a New Year Party with his Friends on 27th/28th and 31st December/1st January, with lots of family fun. These trains will also run as above.

## FROM THE CHAIRMAN

Ian Smith

As usual, the end of September saw our annual Gala and, once again, what an event this was! Six well turned out locos, five of which were over 100 years old, plus a vintage diesel (LMS 7051), made it a superb weekend.

Sadly, *Matthew Murray No.3* (formerly *Arthur*) couldn't make the event due to an unforeseen boiler problem, despite heroic efforts from Nigel Crowther and team. The problem is under investigation but is thought to be relatively minor in nature, though clearly the loco could not run on the day. Never mind - it will be well worth waiting for next year!

Despite this setback, the whole weekend was a magnificent success and Kodak's profits must surely have soared, judging by the large number of photographers around. Although our own locos were, as always, well turned out, the two stars of this year's show were undoubtedly *Sir Berkeley* and *Bellerophon*, both owned by Vintage Carriages Trust. This was the very first time both engines had been in steam and working trains together, and very popular they proved. We had large numbers of KWVR members visiting, including their President, Ralph Povey, and all enjoyed themselves.

Saturday saw the arrival of the Lord Mayor of Leeds, Councillor Linda Middleton, as our VIP Guest. She spent an hour with us and had a light lunch on the train, kindly provided by the Hilton Hotel, for which we are very grateful. Linda enjoyed her time with us, and I have no doubt we shall see her again in

due course. In the evening, we staged a "real ale and jazz train", the entertainment being provided by the Pennine Line Partnership. This was a great success, and I was very jealous of this since I drew the short straw and was driving *Sir Berkeley* - and thus could not sample the beer! The music was brilliant and I hope that: a) they come back again soon and, b) I am not driving so I can enjoy their talents (and the ale!) myself next time!

We had a large party of folk from Leighton Buzzard Railway over the weekend, led by our own export, the one and only Rupert Lodge. Again, the lads appeared to enjoy themselves and I hope that a closer relationship will be forged between the two railways as a result. All in all, the weekend was a great success, with many new friends made and old friendships rekindled.

Well done to everyone who contributed to the success, and especially to Alan Gilchrist who organised the timetable and has transformed an end of season event from a "normal" event into something which is looked forward to by many people from all over the country.

## OBITUARIES

### DORIS PARKIN

It is with regret that I have to inform members of the recent death of Doris Parkin, mother of Graham, a regular Middleton member for many years. Doris, along with her late husband, Bill, was a strong supporter of the Railway and was a frequent visitor to the line. She supported Bill when he became Sales Manager several years

ago and the pair were often seen behind the counter of the shop.

In recent times, arthritis prevented Doris from participating in the line's activities but she was still a staunch supporter of the railway. She always had a ready smile for the members whenever she visited, and she will be missed by many of the regulars. Our sympathy goes out to Graham and the rest of the family.

### JOHN CHAPLIN

John Chaplin died during September after a long illness. John was a formidable character who did not suffer fools gladly, as many of the regular members found out to their cost!

He became actively involved with the Middleton Railway in the late 1970's, becoming both Treasurer and Shop Manager. He rapidly built the Shop up into a thriving business.

He was a familiar sight to all regulars during the late 70's and 80's, accompanied by his wife, Olive and, despite his sometimes rough tongue, John was genuinely fond of the railway and its members, and he gave us many years of loyal and dedicated service before resigning in 1989. Since then, although "retired", John kept an interest in the line and its activities, and he will be much missed by his many friends. Our sympathies go out to Olive and the family.

### **Obituaries written by Ian Smith**

**Editor's Note** I'm sure all long-standing members were sad to learn of the loss of two people who worked hard for our railway.

Doris was a very pleasant lady

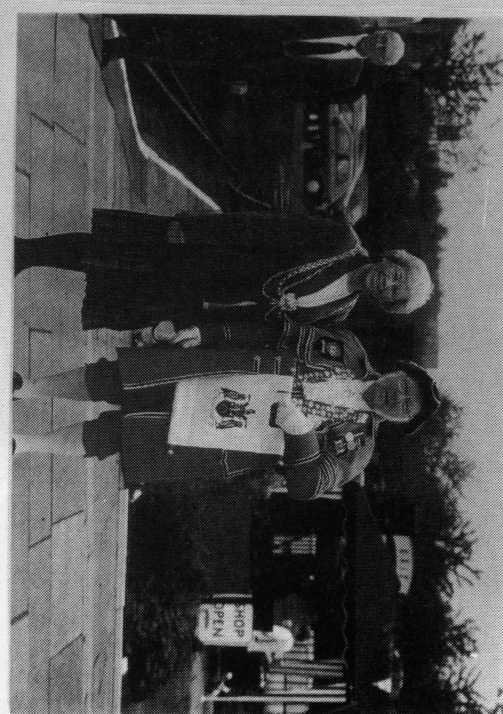
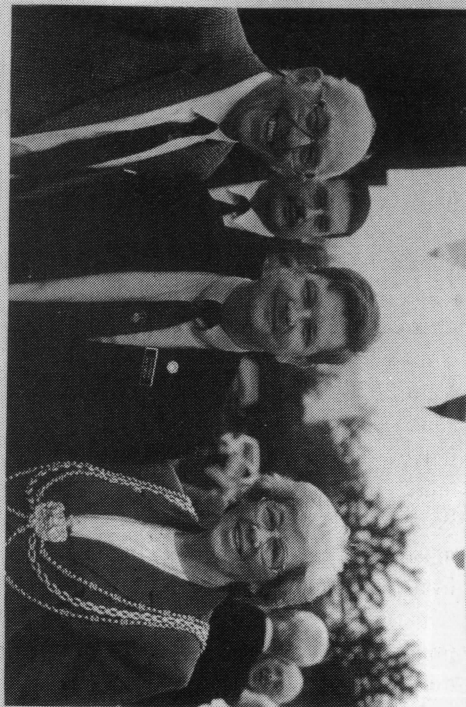
with whom to share a 'Shop duty' or a Schooltrain Day.

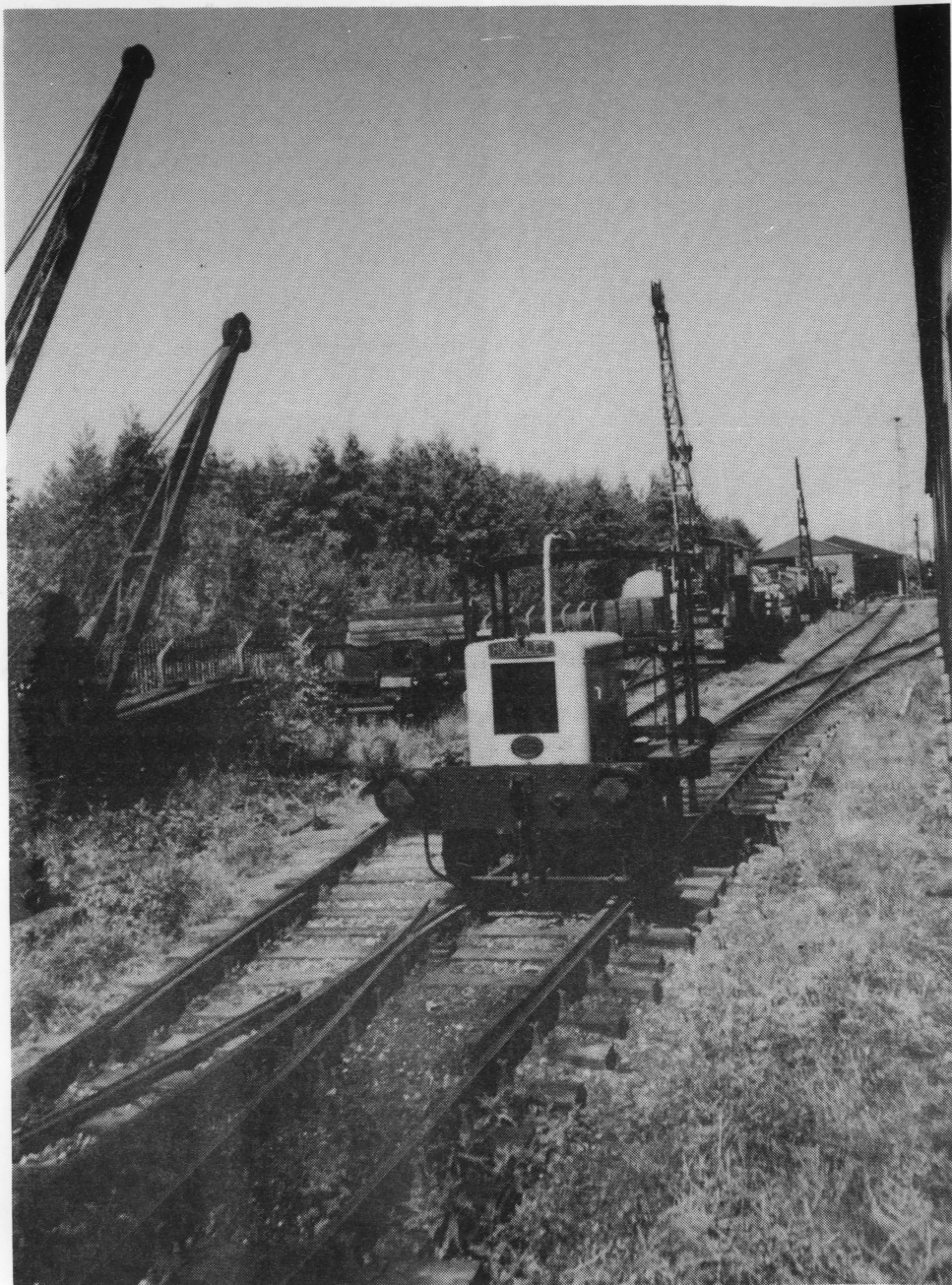
John was a first class 'sorter out' of problems, and our railway was not the only organisation to profit from his sound advice and seemingly limitless practical help. He also gave considerable help to the Hunslet Boys' Club, a local scout group, and a local cricket club. He joined the M.R.T. Council in 1979, and was Treasurer from 1983 to 1990. He became Sales Manager in 1979 and, though he and Olive tried to 'retire' from the Shop more than once, their good nature brought them back to the post when most needed, until they finally and firmly retired at the end of 1989.

In 1984, John and Olive Chaplin presided over the transfer of the railway's Shop facility from the cramped confines of the old wooden 'containers' into the new purpose built brick establishment which exists today. They quickly organised the new premises to create a 'professional', attractive and profitable business (not to mention a better service for our visitors), and in 1990 their work was ably continued, though for a sadly short time, by Bill and Doris Parkin.

The Middleton Railway Trust has had much cause to be grateful for their efforts.

**Opposite: Lord Mayor of Leeds, Mrs. Linda Middleton, meets some Middleton People.** She is seen, top left (with page turned), with her Town Crier, Stanley Haigh; top right, with President Gerald Egan and his brother, Norman; bottom left, with Treasurer Stan Holdsworth and Chairman Ian Smith, (all taken by Keith Hartley); and bottom right, with Guard Keith Hartley, taken by Norman Egan.





'Sweet Pea' plucks up *Courage* (sorry!) to venture past some rather threatening looking cranes down at the southern end of the Station Yard, on 9th August. Photo: Keith Wear

## LOCO NOTES

Steve Roberts

Good news and bad news to report this time. The good news is that we have made considerable progress in the works over the last few months; the bad news concerns the Boiler Inspector's report on **1601** which is a bit of a set back to our plans. For full details, read on

**1601** Recently known to all as *Arthur* but, since the last A.G.M., renamed *Matthew Murray No.3*. At long last it is well on its way to completion and will, hopefully, have been steamed by the time you read these notes. The bad news concerning **1601's** boiler is the Insurance Company's decision on the firebox throatplate following the recent visual inspection. We have always known that there was wastage of this part of the boiler and it was mentioned on the last inspection report carried out at Buxton in 1987. At that time it was not considered to be sufficiently bad as to warrant imminent repair.

However, although there has been no further deterioration, times and people change and, what was once acceptable, is no longer so. Thus, our Insurance Company is not prepared to accept the throat plate in its present condition, and are requiring suitable repairs to be carried out. In the short term they have intimated that it can operate for twelve months at reduced pressure, although they have yet to confirm this in writing. Upsetting as this may be, we have always known that repairs would be required to this eventually and it is, by today's standards, a relatively easy repair and

can be carried out without removal of the boiler. Present thoughts are that this can be carried out over the winter if the money can be found for the necessary contract work.

As regards the rest of the locomotive, an enormous amount of work has been put in over the last few months, following on from a successful hydraulic test. The boiler cladding has been fitted, followed by the saddletank and a large amount of new copper pipework and fittings manufactured and assembled. New brake blocks have been cast and fitted. A thousand and one small jobs have been completed, including new seats, valve control handles and even a bracket to hold the firing shovel when not in use. The remaining outstanding mechanical job is the finishing off of the coupling rod bearings which are almost completed. This job, itself, has taken many man hours as we have had to not only machine the bearings from raw castings, but have also had to make the associated glut blocks and cotter pins. The task was made all the more complicated as each one is different, and each individual bearing has had to be measured and designed. In the far off days when this loco was built, each individual item was hand fitted with little regard to standard dimensions and interchangeability.

Initial painting in Brunswick green is almost complete, and it is hoped that the loco will make its public debut at the Gala. [See From the Chairman]

**67** After a slow start, work has now started in earnest on the ex Manchester Ship Canal tank. Following a steam cleaning session, the chassis was moved

into the back road of the workshop where, after removal of the coupling, connecting and eccentric rods, the frames have been jacked up and the wheels removed. Examination of the wheel tyres has shown the profile to be satisfactory, and there is no need for the tyres to be turned. The axle journals however, have suffered from the long years of storage at Oxenhope, and there is considerable corrosion pitting to rectify. Some minor damage has also been caused by moving the locomotive, in its past, without lubricating the axleboxes and big ends. The dismantling process, so far, has not revealed any great problems or shocks, but one of the axlebox spring connecting pins was found to be cracked almost completely through.

Dismantling is now almost complete, and the slow hard task of overhaul and re-assembly has effectively started. Badly corroded rivets, which hold the rear buffer beam to the frame plates, have been cut out and replaced. Work has started on needle gunning the frames and painting with red oxide primer. Good progress has been made with this, a somewhat monotonous and unglamorous task.

In the coming months there will be no shortage of cleaning, scraping and degreasing work for anybody who would like to get involved!

**1882 *Mirvale*** This stalwart of our loco fleet continues to give good service with only routine maintenance being required. The annual boiler inspection was recently carried out with no untoward comment. The boiler is now into its ninth year of use since its return to steam, so we will only have one more

year after this before it requires withdrawal for overhaul. (Ten years is the maximum allowed.)

**385** is available for traffic and used as required. It is a somewhat sobering thought to realise that, like *Mirvale*, **385** is shortly to enter its ninth year of operation since its last boiler overhaul, and fourteenth season since it was first steamed. **385** was the very first loco to benefit from the new workshop facilities that we have gradually built up at Moor Road, and was returned to steam shortly after the original workshop was completed.

**1625F** The Cockerill sees occasional, if not regular, use. Although it has proved itself to be well capable of operating the standard service, it is unpopular with certain crews who seem to use any excuse to not use it! One problem that we have found with the locomotive concerns the ashpan. It would appear that these locomotives originally did not have an ashpan and the ashes just fell from the fire as it trundled along. The present ashpan is, thus, an afterthought and, as such, is not of the best design. There is not much room between the bottom of the vertical boiler and the rails into which to fit an ashpan and, because of this, it is very shallow and has to be cleaned several times during the day. Failure to clean the ashpan regularly results in the ashpan becoming choked and this leads to the firebars becoming burnt and damaged, as has happened on several occasions.

**1310** The problems with the regulator now seem to have been overcome, and the loco is in regular service. A good,

reliable performer.

**1210 *Sir Berkeley*** returned from its summer travels in Norfolk on 2nd September. It requires a boiler washout before being available for traffic, a task that should be carried out before the Gala weekend. It presently faces north for the first time.

**54** The Sentinel has not been used at all during 1997, and shortly after the expiry of its boiler certificate in August it made a brief entry into the workshop. During a hectic weekend, the boiler was stripped down and the firebox removed.

The loco has now been shunted to the back of the works, whilst work continues on the firebox. The boiler tubes have been removed. This box was the new (more correctly 'unused') spare, purchased with the loco in 1961 for the then princely sum of £20!! It was first put to use in 1975, and saw little service before the loco was withdrawn from traffic. The plain tubes were replaced during the loco's major overhaul in 1987, but the stay tubes were deemed fit for further use by the Boiler Inspector. Removal of the tubes has shown them to be still of reasonable thickness, but the very fact that they actually dated from the 1950's did give some cause for concern. At the same time the spare 'old' firebox has been retrieved from the undergrowth at the south end of the yard, and brought into the workshops for assessment.

Spare stay tubes were purchased some time ago in a joint venture with the Sentinel Trust, so these items are already to hand. Other new items recently purchased in a joint venture with this group are two blastpipe castings and a set of firebars and

trunnion bars. These latter carry the firebar casting, and allow it to be easily lowered when the fire is dropped.

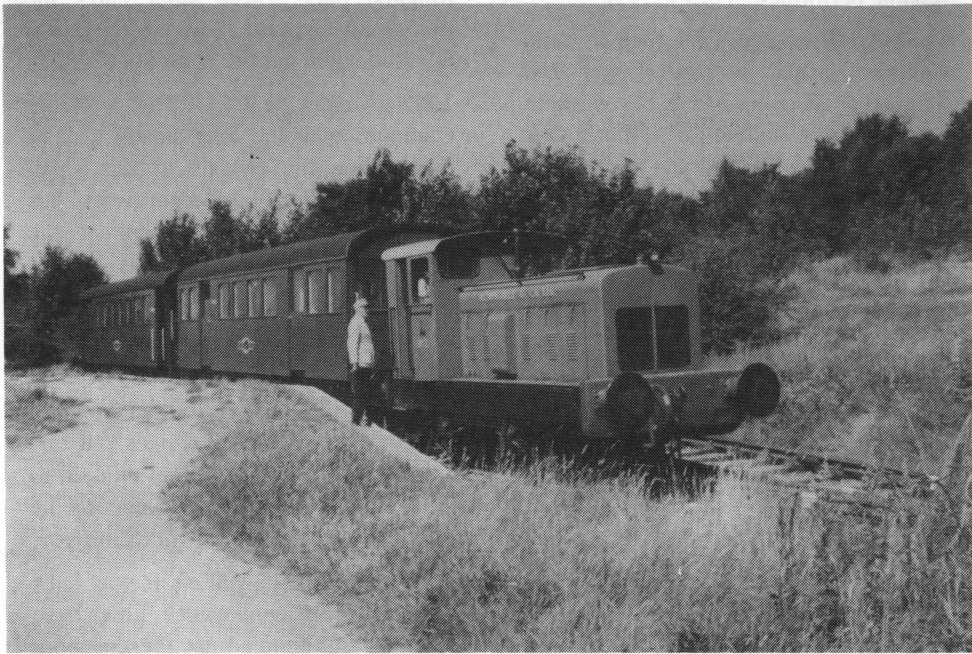
**2387 *Brookes No.1*** The owner continues with the long steady task of overhauling the chassis of this small Hunslet saddletank. Recent work has involved repair and overhaul of the sanding gear. Various options for the manufacture of a replacement boiler are being explored.

**91** The Brush diesel has been a regular performer both for shunting and Saturday passenger services. It is, however, suffering from fuel dilution to the engine oil, and will have to be stopped for rectification work shortly.

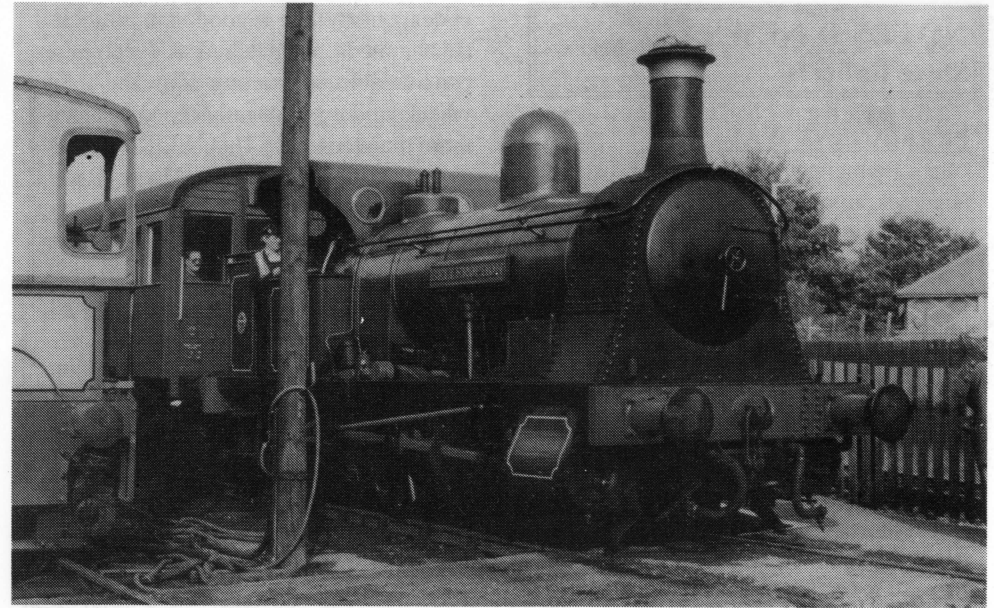
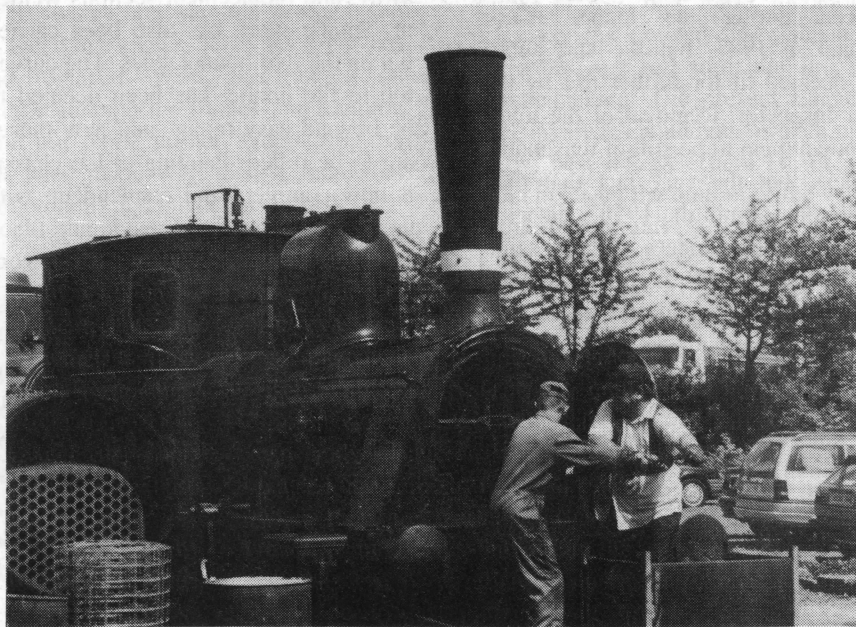
**D631 *Carroll*** is well on its way back together. The engine has now been replaced and coupled up. Present work is centred around cutting out corroded sections of bodywork. The bottom few inches of the cab sides have been cut away, and replacement sections welded in. Similar work has also been carried out on the two bonnet sides. The curved top to the bonnet has been deemed to be beyond easy repair, and new pieces are to be rolled. Painting of the chassis is now complete and resplendent, with the frames painted red inside and black outside, with lined out green paintwork to the wheels and sandboxes.

**138C** remains in the workshops for minor repairs. These are protracted, as the owner finds little time to do this in between carrying out many of the other tasks essential for the Railway, which he considers a higher priority.

**D577, *Rowntree No.3*, 7051, and 1786** are serviceable and used as required. All other locos are stored out of use.



Above: *Rowntree* No. 3, having a quiet rest at Park Halt on 9th August. Photo: Keith Wear  
 Below: David Hart and Paul Kittleson clean 385's tubes on 27th July. Photo: Keith Hartley



The Vintage Carriages Trust stablemates, at Middleton for the Gala Weekend.  
 Above: *Bellerophon*, seen at the Moor Road platform during Sunday 28th September and  
 Below: a beautiful 'atmospheric' shot of *Sir Berkeley* by night, taken during the real ale  
 specials on Saturday evening. Both photos: Ian Dobson



## NOTES & NEWS

Steve Roberts

### PERMANENT WAY

Permanent way activity usually becomes minimal during the running season, with activity being confined to routine maintenance and emergency repairs. However, this year we have found time to put in some much needed work on the Balm Road branch.

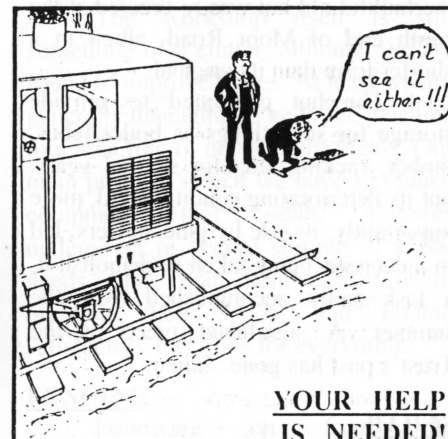
As this line is effectively unused, except for the very occasional special working, it is very low down on our list of priorities. However, its deterioration had reached a state where it was effectively unfit for running even non passenger trains, and something had to be done. Between Beza Road crossing and the top loop point, some of the rails had corroded completely through the web and, as a stop gap, these were replaced last year by an assortment of old rails that were lying around. This assortment included everything from good quality 95 lb/yd bullhead to (I think) 80 lb/yd rail of Midland Railway origin, with lots more inbetween! In order to improve the situation, and avoid spending lots of money, some reasonable quality 30 foot long 85 lb/yd bullhead rail was obtained from the North Yorkshire Moors Railway at effectively scrap price. The rail is of North Eastern Railway origin and, until recently, had been in use on the N.Y.M.R. running line. Although these rails are all of the same profile when new, after many years of use the wear patterns vary tremendously and, before relaying, each individual rail was checked for height and wear pattern, and matched to adjacent rails in an

endeavour to give a good smooth joint. (If a joint is mismatched, it receives a considerable hammering from the train wheels and consequently requires much more maintenance.) This N.E.R. rail has now been relaid between Beza Road and the top loop points and, along with spot resleepering and removal of the remains of the Moor End branch turnout, has improved this stretch considerably.

The remaining rails on the Balm Road Branch are generally satisfactory, but there are some odd lengths of 80-85 lb/yd 2½" wide rail amongst the general run of 2¼" wide which could do with replacement. Additionally, a not inconsiderable number of sleepers are in need of replacement, and it is hoped that this work will be done before the Gala at the end of September. Completion of this work, together with that being done by Contractors (see news item below), will generally bring the Balm Road branch up to a reasonable standard for the operation of non passenger trains. The only major work then required will be replacement of the Moor Road level crossing, where the track has spread over the years and is considerably wide to gauge in places. Whether and when this work is done (it will be expensive!) will cause much discussion within the Trust Council!

Elsewhere on the line, work has generally been confined to routine inspections, replacement of missing keys, and checking and tightening fishplates. The crossover in Moor Road yard received some attention, as it was found that it was not moving over fully when the ground frame levers were operated. This problem was traced to the expansion compensator in the point

rodding, which was moving on its support timbers when the levers were pulled. (Expansion compensators are provided in point rodding to cater for the expansion and contraction of the rodding caused by changes in temperature, and they are meant to ensure that the movement of the point blades is unaffected by such changes.)



**YOUR HELP  
IS NEEDED!**  
to re-lay 10 panels of  
track with concrete  
sleepers at the beginning of 1998  
to meet the start of operations  
next Spring

We require:

- 1 Chargehand . . . . .
- 1 Crane Driver . . . . .
- 1 Diesel Loco Driver . . . . .
- 2 Slingers/Banksmen . . . . .

& a large contingent of Groundsmen  
to pick up the old track on Saturday  
10th January, & thereafter at least 3  
Groundsmen for every Saturday up  
to the end of March

Please Contact: Douglas Lovely  
Telephone (0113) 266 7082

For the future, this winter is expected to see a continuation of the resleepering programme on the main line, using second hand concrete sleepers. It is planned to purchase a further 150 of these which, together with the ones we already have in stock, will enable us to resleeper a further ten lengths of track. The main obstacle to this work will be removal of the concrete that forms the disused 'Beatwaste' crossing. This work will have to be carried out by contractors as it is beyond our practical capacity.

### NEW CROSSING AT BALM RD.

Earlier this year, contractors demolished the remains of Clayton's Moor End Works. In its place is being built a retail park. Access to this retail park for service and delivery vehicles will be down Beza Road and, in order to gain access to the site, it is necessary to cross the railway at a point where the existing loop is. After much negotiation and discussion, an acceptable compromise has been worked out that will cater for our needs and also those of the retail park. The essence of the project is that the Balm Road loop will be relaid on its existing site but at a higher level, to allow for the installation of a concrete crossing over the two tracks. Gates will be provided that will normally be kept closed against the railway, and enable vehicular access. On the, presently, few occasions that we require to run trains, road traffic will be stopped. As this is likely to be at weekends in any case, this is not seen as a problem to either delivery vehicles or ourselves. The installation of the concrete crossing and re-laying of the loop is being carried out by the

developers, who have appointed Trackwork Ltd. to carry out the work.

### CARRIAGE AND WAGON

There is little to report on this subject, as the coaches are required for regular service.

The Norwegian coach was recently shunted to the back of the workshop, as we had an offer from a volunteer to sand down and revarnish it. However, this has turned out to be an unfortunate move for several reasons. Firstly, the volunteer's circumstances changed shortly after starting work, and he now feels unable to complete it. Secondly, its new position has brought it within range of stone throwing youths who have managed to break some of the windows which, in turn, means more work and money!

### END OF THE LINE FOR THE HUT

The author is long enough in the tooth to remember the early days of the then Middleton Railway Preservation Society, and our early existence. In those days there was no undercover accommodation whatsoever, and the obtaining of an old wooden site hut was the solution to this problem. After an abortive attempt to erect it approximately where the existing Moor Road platform is, it eventually found a home in Clayton's Dartmouth Yard. Initial ideas of a clubhouse and small relics museum soon evaporated, as it became the operational headquarters and workshops of the Railway.

In this role it survived to be transferred to Moor Road when Dartmouth Yard closed and we had to vacate the site, being initially erected opposite the newly built shop.

Completion of the workshop in 1985 meant that we no longer had to make do with what had by then become a rather draughty and leaky building. However, old habits die hard, and it was some time before we actually vacated the hut as a workshop. This was not the end though, as there was a need for undercover storage for many items, and the faithful old hut was re-erected at the south end of Moor Road, albeit in a shorter form than its original.

The hut continued to provide storage for such things as boiler tubes, timber, racking, etc. for several years, but its deteriorating condition and, more importantly, its use by glue sniffers, led to a decision being taken to demolish it, a task sadly accomplished over the summer. A significant piece of the Trust's past has gone. Adieu.

### SCRAP

Demolition of the old hut, and recent thefts of scrap (see last *Old Run*) effectively led to the decision to get rid of some of our not inconsiderable stock of scrap metal. Two skip loads of rail chairs were consigned to Robinson & Birdsell's during June, and a further two skips of general scrap have also been disposed of. This has certainly create a bit of space, but we still have much to go at. In particular, we have a considerable amount of old rail that is fit for no other purpose, which requires disposal. However, this requires cutting into reasonable lengths, and is not as easily disposable of as much of our scrap.

### IN THE WORKSHOP

There is perhaps little to report about the workshop in this *Old Run*,

that is not reported in the Loco Notes. There has been some movement of locomotives since the last *Old Run*, and the back road is now occupied by **67**, **Brookes** and **Carroll**, with **138C** currently occupying the shed road. The Sentinel, having had its firebox removed, has been shunted outside the back of the workshop.

The workshop itself is still something of a clutter, although we are trying to improve things. At least we are generally managing to keep the machine tool area free of unnecessary items. Our main problem is that we have too much equipment that really requires undercover or secure storage. It really needs some man hours devoting to building shelf space, and finding satisfactory locations for everything.

### FENCING

Following on from the installation of the palisade fencing last year, and the purpose built fencing and gates around the car park, your Council sanctioned the replacement of the last remaining piece of chain link fencing and gates over the line to Balm Road. This was erected by contractors during July. One of the reasons for doing this work has been to enable the original (and last) Saxby & Farmer gate to be removed. This gate had always been a potential hazard and a great concern due to its *cheval de frise* which, it was felt, posed a risk to passers by on the pavement of Moor Road. It was, however, a major link with the past heritage of the railway, and there has always been a considerable body of opinion that it should not be removed. However, safety has to come first, and the Council reluctantly agreed to its

removal, perhaps not before time as the contractors discovered that the cast iron support pillars carrying the *cheval de frise* were fractured, and it was only luck that had stopped it from falling on to someone! The *cheval de frise* has now been removed, and the gate will be removed, when time permits, for safe keeping and eventual display.

### CAR PARK IMPROVEMENTS

As reported last time, some improvements have been made to the car park. However, a large amount of spoil still occupied the southern end of the car park, this being the arisings from the excavation of the old Tunstall Road, and the trench dug for the new line into the back road of the workshops. We had avoided having this removed, as it was hoped that it could be disposed of within our boundaries, but it was decided that this was unlikely to happen and a contract was let for its removal.

Completion of this work now means that, with the exception of the sleeper buffer stop, yet to be built, the car park is effectively back to its full original size.

Editor/Historian's Note: all segments of the *cheval de frise* have been stored also, for display sometime in the future. Over the almost-a-century since the gate was erected, the level of the road and pavement alongside has gradually risen with each resurfacing, until the spikes were at eye level, and were especially dangerous if a passer-by paused and turned to look at our trains when they are working. I had hoped that it would be possible to turn the gate inwards on to our own premises and away from the footpath but, to be



honest, close examination shows that it really is in a very frail state due to many decades of neglect (not just by us).

A *cheval de frise*, in much larger form, was originally a military device, used to close off the entrances to an army camp, to fend off surprise attack. In a much smaller, plastic, form it is currently in use at a Rest Home opposite the Editorial Address, stretched across the windowsills as an effective method of preventing pigeons from roosting there; as soon as they try to land on it, the components spin around, some one way, some the other, and the pigeon departs in a hurry!

On our railway's level crossing gates, the *cheval de frise* made it virtually impossible for anyone to climb over the gate. It must have been especially useful on the next sections north of the present station site, as there it would prevent intruders getting into the Hunslet Moor Coal Staith. However, the only remaining gate, being south of the old Burton Road (now our car park entrance), did not really need this; the railings originally over at the *western* side of the track only extended to the boundary between Hunslet Moor and the Middleton manorial estate - i.e., near the boundary between our two sheds, and anyone could walk around the end of the railing and gain access to this section of track if they were minded so to do. Though it was, therefore, without purpose on this particular gate, and on its long-departed companion round the corner, the *cheval de frise*, did add a nice threatening look to them. It is fortunate that this last gate survived into an era when we have our own premises in which it can be stored, unlike its ill-fated neighbour round on

Burton Road, which went straight to the scrapyards back in the 1970's. I know more than one person who would say it is actually *unfortunate* that this last gate cannot follow its former neighbour, but if our railway is to have the benefits of becoming a museum, we must start behaving like museum keepers. There is very little left of pre-'preservation' Middleton and we cannot afford to discard any of it.

### SCHOOL DAYS 1997 Cedric Wood

There were three School Days arranged for 1996. The crew of the second day had an early finish, and the third day was not used. It seemed prudent to arrange only two days for 1997, but no regard had been taken for invoking Murphy's Law. The two days were soon filled; one school had a third day to themselves - paying a premium rate, and a fourth day was necessary to accommodate all those who wanted to use our services.

Anyone who saw the writer's nails a week before the first of these days, when over 500 youngsters were booked to pass through our portals, would have noticed that they were shorter than usual. Just seven days before the first School Day, in 'flaming June', weather records were being broken - for rainfall. Parts of the area had suffered constant rain for 24 hours, roads were under water, and the possibility of having 500+ soggy youngsters on our platform seemed a real possibility.

The writer awoke at 5a.m. on the first of the School Days, to be greeted

by the sound of weather of the wet lump variety lashing against the bedroom windows. Listening to the weather forecast during the drive to the railway did nothing to dispel fear. "Showers will extend to form longer periods of rain!" By 6a.m., the rain had stopped and the sun was shining.

The first party was due to arrive at 9.30, to go out at 9.40. Half past nine came and went, as did 9.40. Had we got the dates wrong? Had we got the times wrong? A coach appeared at 9.45 with the teacher in charge apologising profusely. Because of the flexibility in the timetabling, the trains were soon back on time. Apart from one party arriving at the Park Halt after their train had departed, and an extra train being run to collect them, there were no incidents reported to the organiser. Ian Smith arranged for publicity from the *Yorkshire Post* by having a photographer on hand to record the event.

24th June 1812 was the date when the world's first practical steam locomotive ran on the Middleton Railway. The sight and sound of the massed choirs of Leeds schools singing "Happy Birthday dear Middleton Railway" exactly 185 years later had to be seen and heard to be believed.

Several unsolicited reports have been received from teachers regarding the excellence of our service. The talks had been at exactly the right level and content for the children concerned.

**Problems** There have been problems in getting staff for mid-week trains. There had been a glut of last minute bookings in 1996, but only two in 1997.

Where do we 'entertain' up to 200 under-6 year olds if the weather should turn wet? The new engine shed had been requisitioned as a temporary measure for 1996, and fortunately was not needed in 1997, but what do we use in the future when the shed has engines and machinery in it? Two schools have been turned away. Both requested travel specifically on days when we were not running. They were directed to the days when we were running, but they had already booked coaches and were looking for somewhere to go.

We did have problems with a school on the 10th July. 180 youngsters were booked in 2 groups of 90 from Middleton Park. In reality, we had 35 starting from the Park and a bus full starting from Moor Road who should have been in the Park with the Ranger. Chaos reigned only momentarily. Our service to the school was appreciated so much that one teacher extended the visit for her group.

**CREDITS Operating Staff:** Nigel Crowther, Stanley Haigh, Keith Hartley, Dave Hebden, Paul Kittleson, Douglas Lovely, Steve Roberts, Mike Scargill.

**Guides:** Sheila Bye, Dennis Caton, Dorothy Hebden, Carol Holdsworth, Geoff Saunders, Ian Smith (who also drove).

**Others who had an input to the day:** Neil Bentley, Joan and Ken Hardy, Stanley Holdsworth, Renée Wiseman, the crew roster clerks, and everyone who had worked hard to make the shed and yard presentable.

**Footnote** We had 1142 children, plus unspecified adults over the four

days: 19th June - 436, 24th June - 338,  
4th July - 200, 10th July - 168.

**Editor's Note** - the credits should include Cedric, who put a tremendous amount of work into planning these events, and then modestly left himself off the lists.

"Unspecified adults" on one of the School Days was a small party of Russians, which included two lady curators from the St. Petersburg Transport Museum. A 'dossier' was compiled ready to present to them, detailing our railway's Russian connections - such as the visit of the

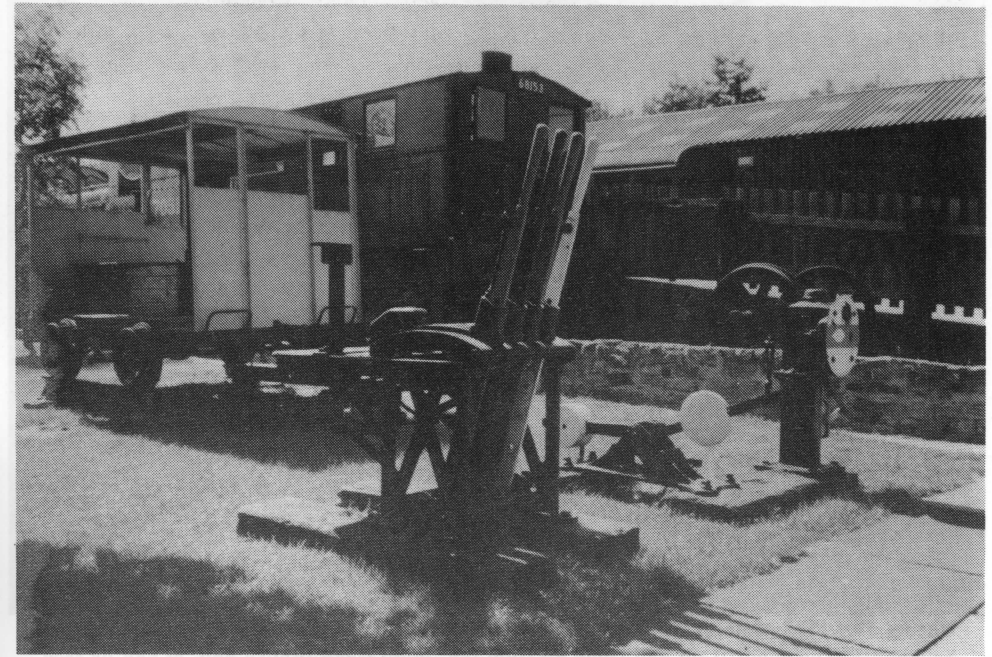
Grand Duke Nicholas and the emigration to Moscow of Matthew Murray's son, who set up an engineering business there.

We and the visitors had to communicate via an interpreter (apart from Dennis Caton knowing the Russian for "thank you" and "goodbye"!), but there were many smiles so it is reasonably safe to deduce that they enjoyed their visit to the Middleton Railway, just as the Grand Duke Nicholas and his entourage had done one summer's day a hundred and eighty one years earlier.

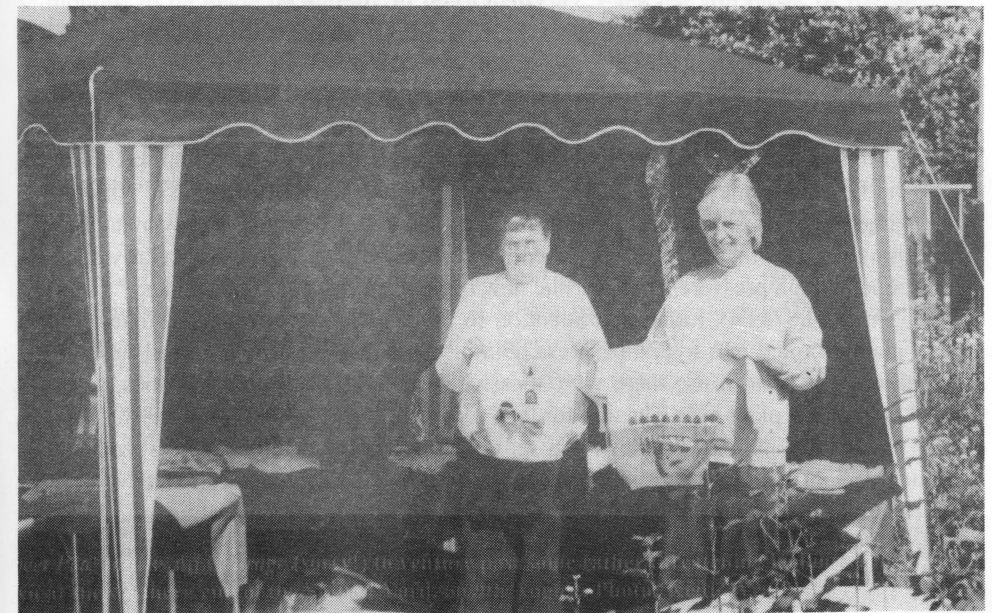


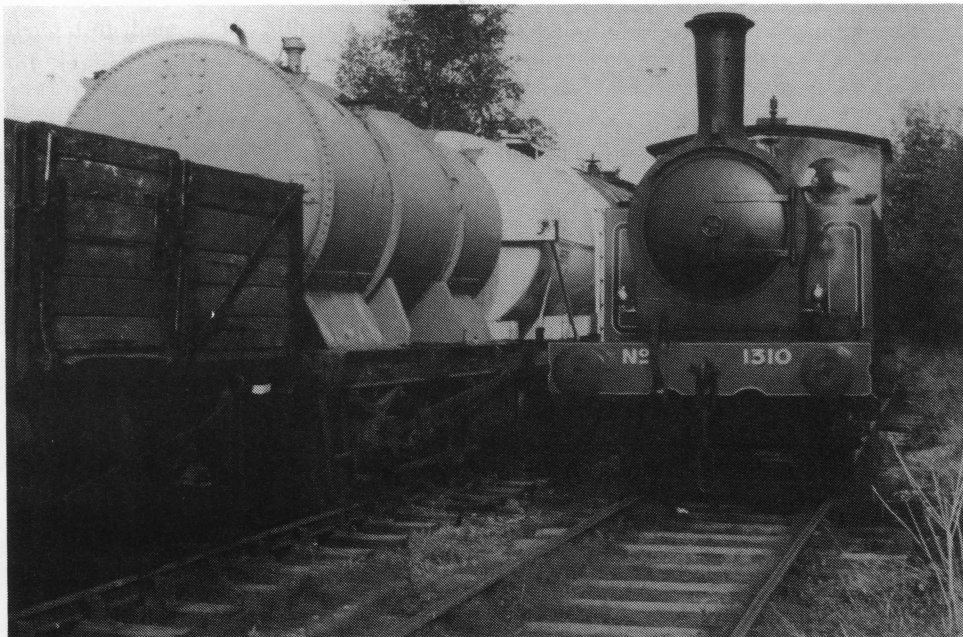
Nigel Crowther and Mike Scargill drive *Sir Berkeley* around the train on School Day 19th June.  
Photo: Keith Hartley

Off for a picnic in the Park, on School Day 19th June.  
Photo: Keith Hartley



Above: the Wickham trolley, points levers etc. add interest to the Station picnic area.  
Below: Clarice Saunders and Christine Nettleton display some of their creations in front of the Knitwear Shop. Jumper designs now include trains with knitted passengers waving from the coaches (excellent Christmas presents). Photos: upper - Keith Wear, lower - Keith Hartley.





During the 1997 Gala, 1310 runs past a Goods Special at Park Halt on Sunday 28th September. The goods train had come up from the Balm Road branch and, as can be seen, included the Leeds Forge Company tank wagon. Photo: Ian Dobson

### The LEEDS FORGE Co. Ltd. 1874 - 1929 - some further notes

After the last *Old Run* was distributed, containing material about the Leeds Forge tanker and its builders, and following the arrival at Middleton of the vehicle itself, Derek Plummer sent some photocopy clippings from his collection. The following article is based mainly on them and Derek's letter.

Members may remember that the Leeds Forge Company was set up in 1874 by Samson Fox, at Armley, Leeds, with production starting on 18 August 1875 - initially on high grade 'Yorkshire' wrought iron sections and boiler plates, and railway cranked and straight axles. In 1877, Fox patented his corrugated flue boiler, particularly suited to producing high pressure steam for the new triple expansion marine engines.

From 1887, Fox turned his attention to the production of railway bogies from steel plates formed in a hydraulic press. During a visit to the United States, he found that the bogies then in use there were massive assemblies with timber frames, and in 1889 he set up a plant near Chicago for the Fox Solid Pressed Steel Company.

In 1888, Charles T. Schoen had set up a small plant at Philadelphia, producing all steel freight box cars and gondolas. In 1899 these two firms amalgamated to form the Pressed Steel Car Company. Schoen became President, and Fox returned to Leeds to develop a world wide export trade in pressed steel rolling stock. Schoen had taken out a patent for a pressed steel wheel, and a works was set up at Newlay, on the

western outskirts of Leeds, to produce wheels for export. Leeds Forge was later taken over by Metro-Cammell, and the depression led to the closure of both works in 1929.

#### Derek's letter notes that:

"On the 27th July I went to the tail of Newlay Locks (a three rise) on the Leeds & Liverpool Canal, and photographed an SSWCo. boundary marker post No.7 dated 1909. Other posts exist if you know where to look. The Schoen Steel Wheel Co. works extended from Newlay Locks to Forge Locks, bounded by the canal, the river and the railway on three sides.

Some years ago, Mr. Will Hardy of Horsforth, who was a blacksmith and farrier during army service in the first world war, told me that during the recession in the 1920's, he sought employment at the carriage works at Newlay and, as he had done welding at night school, he was taken on to build sleeping cars for the International Sleeping Car Company. He recalled that the first one was heavy on one side, and workers stood in the corridor to temporarily balance the vehicle. After completion, the vehicles were shipped via Immingham Dock."

#### Derek enclosed a cutting from *The Railway Magazine*, quoting its news item of February 1923:

"A Number of steel sleeping cars, including special features of design, and constituting a great improvement upon any vehicles hitherto used for the Calais-Riviera express services, have been constructed by the Leeds Forge Co. Ltd. to the order of the International Sleeping Car & European Express Train Company. A sufficient number of the 40 cars ordered have now been delivered to enable not only the P. & O. Express, but also the Calais-Mediterranean Express, which runs daily in the winter months, to be made up entirely of these new cars. Each car still takes 16 passengers, but there are eight single-berth compartments, and four compartments containing two berths in each. They are 77 ft. in length and weigh about 53 tons. Five cars, apart from restaurant and baggage cars, comprise a set."

#### Derek's letter continues:

"The main works of the Leeds Forge Company were bounded by Armley Road and the Leeds & Liverpool Canal. Rail access from the N.E.R. was by an incline down to Armley N.E. Signal Box (some rails still can be seen from Harrogate line trains). A stone arch bridge (now removed) over the N.E.R. line enabled a railway track to go through what was at one time Wilson & Matthieson's Engineering Works, and drop down into the Midland Railway yard at Armley Canal Road.

On the Bowness & Kineil Railway, I recall seeing two bogie flat wagons of Caley origin, which had Leeds Forge plates on.

In the transport museum at Lucerne in Switzerland, is a beautifully cut away or part sectioned paddle steamer, with a **corrugated furnace**."

A further cutting was from *The Yorkshire Post* of 5th September 1978, and was of an article about the Rail Transport Museum at New Delhi, India (home of some Sentinel steam engines. photographs of which were sent to *The Old Run* a few years

ago by Wilhelm Wunderlich). The Museum has several Leeds-built vehicles, including two Kitson locomotives - *Fairy Queen* (built 1855) and *Lord Airedale* (built 1907), a Fowler diesel, and a mountain railway coach with a rack-and-pinion braking system underneath, built by Leeds Forge Company. The article was illustrated with a photograph of the coach, the caption for which added the details that Leeds Forge Company built the frames and that it was constructed in 1914, for the Nilgiri Mountain Railway.

Many thanks to Derek for the above information, and also for the newscutting which provided this issue's Times Past.

## TIMES PAST - AUTUMN 1965

*The Yorkshire Evening Post*, 7th October 1965 (picture caption):

**The last of a large order of 80h.p.p. diesel locomotives for the Bord Na Mona (Peat Board), Ireland, nears completion at the Hunslet Engine Works of the Hunslet Group of Companies.**

The Hunslet Engine Co., Ltd., one of the Group, has built 53 of these 3ft.-gauge locos which will be used to haul milled peat to power stations on the Bord Na Mona's light railway which covers several hundred miles of rail.

Each loco weighs over nine tons and has a maximum speed of 15 m.p.h.

The company has a large export trade - recent overseas shipments have gone to Thailand, Spain, Burma, Canada, India, Sudan, Nigeria, Sabah, Greece and Mauritius.

Those were the days, indeed,!

Following the short item about the demise of the Hunslet Engine Works, in the Spring/Summer issue, the Editor received a 'phonecall from Don Townesley, who worked for many years on the sales side at Hunslet Engine. He had read the Leeds Local History Library's copy of *The Old Run* and noticed Chris Nicholson's excellent photos of the Works, which accompanied the report. Mr. Townesley is putting the finishing touches to a new history of the Hunslet Engine Company, and wished to be put in contact with Chris with a view to using one or two of his photos in the book. He has promised to write an article for *The Old Run* when he has completed the book. It is very many years since L.C.T. Rolt's history of the works, *A Hunslet Hundred*, was written, and a great deal has happened between then and the final closing down of the works. I'm sure many members will look forward to seeing this new account, which should gain considerably from being written by someone with a long and close connection with the company. More on this later, naturally including a revue.

P.S. Apologies to Chris, by the way. Though he was mentioned in the report as having supplied the photos, the page-heading 'Hunslet Engine Works - A Photo Study by Chris Nicholson' was accidentally left out when it was necessary to do a last minute cut-and-paste to change the position of some other text.

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The Prize Draw will take place on Saturday 31st January 1998, probably at the Railway. You will be made very welcome if you wish to attend ('phone for full details during January). All Winners will be notified by 'phone or post, and a full List will appear in the Spring *Old Run*.

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