

OLD RUN NEWS

Newsletter of the Middleton Railway Trust

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SICK MARQUESS. We regret to tell readers that after the recent successful trip of 3442 to Derby, an ominous leak was discovered. After stripping all the lagging, it was discovered that the throat-plate was affected and could not be repaired. This means a major overhaul or replacement of the boiler. Great efforts are being made by all concerned to deal with the matter, especially the British Railways experts.

JOHN ALCOCK OVERHAUL COMPLETED. We are going all scientific in our repair work. A tendency for J.A.'s No. 5 cylinder to be hesitant on firing was investigated by X-Ray flaw-detecting methods on the cylinder head followed by hydraulic pressure leak detector tests. A clean-up of the surfaces and re-gasketting finally solved the problem. It is heard on reliable authority that the MacLaren-Ricardo diesel motors have a reputation for never wearing out, as they were built like battle-ships and had a slow operating speed. The prospect of our motor wearing out and replacement parts no longer being available is a little less of a nightmare than hitherto. Well-done the diesel maintenance squad. A re-assembled 1697 will be under the care of our diesel engineer for a few weeks operation to ensure that everything has settled down properly.

NOT-SO-PERMANENT. The perennial question of getting volunteers to help with track improvement and maintenance has taken a new turn. University members organised a squad of volunteers to work in the period between the examinations and the end of the session. Design, assembly and fitting together of the replacement bottom loop turnout is now going apace. A junction built in a manner right up to text-book standards is then in need only of standard inspection and maintenance, whereas some of our older "Middleton Specials" are highly non standard and a headache to all concerned with their care. An improvement of the gradient profile is being thought out. At the moment the Balm Road-Moor Road section varies between 1 in 58 and 1 in 217, many of the steeper parts being over short sections that can be eased without difficulty or major earthworks.

The Midland hand crane has been used to move the heavier parts of the new track into place, and this crane now has a regular maintenance engineer in charge of it. An outline of the types and classification of the more important permanent way materials is being prepared for distribution to all members. The P.W. Adviser and the Chairman / Ganger will be delighted to give further information, practical demonstrations and advice on this essential and valuable part of our activities. At long last the rubble and concrete next to the loop at Balm Road is being cleared away so that we can do permanent way work without being dangerously close to the obstruction.

TRAFFIC. Scrap steel traffic is doing well, up to 5 loaded wagons leaving the yard at a time. We noted 12 empties arriving from B.R. one afternoon. In the awkward period when "J.A." was being overhauled, and the University crews were suffering from examination-itis, operation was carried on efficiently by the faithful few. On a dry rail, the Bagnall amazed us by propelling 10 steel mineral wagons all the way into Robinson and Birdsell's yard on gradients worse than 1 in 50 without difficulty. Committee approval has been given to the provision of nameplates for her and a ceremonial fitting at the Open Day on September 2nd.

LORD MAYOR. The Hudswell Clarke veteran presented by Cohens of Stanningley is to be cared for by a Trust Fund organised by Ben Wade to whom we owe a lot of thanks for events leading to her appearance. Members interested in taking part in the Trust Fund for restoration and maintenance of this locomotive should contact Ben Wade at 46 Cottage Road, Leeds 6. Unfortunately Ben Wade Pipes are not the kind which will be suitable in Lord Mayor's boiler!

"THE UNDECIDED A ROW". The Leeds University Union Railway Society's newsletter takes its name (we understand) from the new British Rail(ways) symbol, certainly more inspiring than the original Half-Starved-Lion-on-the-Stationary-Wheel. One thinks rather wistfully of slogans and symbols used in railways of yesteryear: FORWARD, Nemo me impune lacessit, The Best Way, The London & Bristol coats of Arms, Russell's Rainbow Express, and many others. At any rate the new publication is now going strong and the first two issues are enclosed.

STEAM LOCOMOTIVES BY THE SCORE. Although the last Belgian steam locomotive was withdrawn from service some months ago, our Chairman (en route from a University conference in Switzerland) was delighted to see large numbers still in good condition at Leuven Sheds this month. Many were of course being dismantled, mostly of Belgian manufacture, with a few American types. One feels that Walschaerts and Belpaire will look approvingly down from Valhalla at a healthy and representative selection of their handiwork marked out for exhibition, museums or permanent display. The uncannily close resemblance to some older British Types (especially in the tidiness and absence of having everything-but-the-kitchen-sink hanging outside them) is rather startling, but then the ideas of these two Belgian engineers flourished among many British locomotive types.

EMERGENCY. In emergency, Mr. B.Ashurst has keys to our sheds and vans. His office is that of the Fish Friers' Review at the junction of Dewsbury Road and Garnef Road. Don't bother him unless you are really stuck!

INDIAN SUMMER OF STEAM IN THE WEST RIDING. The following trains are steam worked.
Bradford to Leeds 7.06 MX Low Moor, 7.15 S O Holbeck, 7.55 Low Moor, 9.00 MO Holbeck, 9.12 MX Holbeck Low Moor, 11.00 Low Moor, 11.55 Holbeck- 17.20 Low Moor, 21.24 SO Low Moor. Leeds to Bradford. 10.38 Holbeck SX, 12.43 SO Low Moor, 14.20 Low Moor, 16.52 Low Moor SO, 17.32 Holbeck SX Low Moor SO, 20.10 Low Moor, 20.46 Holbeck SO, 21.41 Holbeck, 22.33 Low Moor.
Sundays Leeds - Bradford, 13.24, 17.28, 21.37. Bradford to Leeds 1.25, 10.23, 14.18, 16.18. All 4 MT tanks.
Black 5 turns. 04.25 Manchester-Normanton Holbeck. 17.47 FO Manchester-York 5 MT. 03.32 Leeds-Halifax 5 MT Newton Heath. 7.06 Sheffield Leeds Holbeck Black 5. 4MT.T. 7.06 Normanton-York Normanton. 8.48 Halifax-Wakefield Wakefield. 22.04 Wakefield Bradford Low Moor. 03.10 Normanton - Halifax Low Moor.