

D. Wroe Esq

P.W.I. /- C. Eng's Office

Boulevard Station

7653/8

Replied to

5 Falconwood Court-

Montpelier Row

Blackheath

SE3

9th July 1983

Dear Mr Wroe

Re - Middlesex Plateway

Your letter of 29/6 has been forwarded to me for the more

specific points in it to be 'dealt' with! I hope I can.

First of all - may I say how gratifying it is to see that

there is indeed, some real interest in the M.P. & so I enclose a

piece which I wrote for Subterranea Britannica some 3 yrs ago

which should help re the tunnels - if not the whole alignment,

which can be traced from the refs given (r in Rely World, 39(458) &

my piece in the Dorset & Bath (any local library should have this)
of 1978 etc. (It's quite a easy line to follow unlike the Maiden/Newton).

Now then - it's v. interesting that your members plan to walk

the route in '84 (r if you can, I'd appreciate details of date etc

later on) but if you're minded on 'L' section (or whatever??) please

(no-one quite knows what it is) can I draw your attention to the
now long deferred excavation we plan to mount in BF1807 some
time soon to 'see' if a section or more of ^{tramway} ~~road~~ _{plate} remains. Perhaps
- if the 'walkers' could bring an motored spade or 2 - then you
could have your artefact - for a little bit of digging! [if we
could be there - it would be "official"].

Anyway - this would prob. be the best stab at the old plateway
but failing that, our chairman (of P.I.A.S.), Pat Henshaw, does
have another strong possibility 'site' which includes a turntable etc
etc (size reduced). So - if the tunnel idea does not appeal, perhaps
you'd write to me again & I'd send your letter on to Pat to
see what he can do --- protocol & all that.

Meanwhile - do keep me informed of all that's afoot --- &
also, if you will, ^{please send} full details of the Remembrance Way Institution
for I think, if we'll may, (P.I.A.S. or individuals like me) - would
wish to join?

You have my permission to quote (use the ENCLOSED, COPIED
TEXT VERBATIM IF YOU WISH BUT IF YOU PRINT IT - PLEASE
do acknowledge the source in full; as S. Britannica or in literature
if widely, partly to its first publication.

Source is; L - R, The TS of the M - P - , Subterranea Britannica
Bulletin, No 16, ^{ANSWER} 1982, p. 9.

all v. best for now
harvone Rappellwell

The Tunnels of the Middlebere Plateway, Purbeck, Dorset.

Lawrence Popplewell.

Bertram Baxter (1966) has divided the pre-railway age in Britain into three distinct phases these being (1) tramways connected with mines or quarries and whose operators were keen to gain better access to available waterways (the early Tyneside lines were of this kind): (2) those provided by canal companies to provide feeders for their system or to fill gaps: (3) those like the Surrey Iron Railway, a company incorporated by Act of Parliament, whose appearance as plateways for the general use of the public at large marked the final phase of tramway construction. Against this background, in which the three categories overlapped in time, Benjamin Fayle's Middlebere Plateway of 1806-7 lies in the first phase. The plateway was made to facilitate the passage of ball-clay traffic from the Norden area, near Corfe, (Norden Clay Mines are shown at SY.949 826 on O.S.1:25,000 map 'Purbeck') to the Middlebere quay on the shore of Poole harbour. Significantly, this was one of the earliest lines to be built in central southern England. And in Dorset it is by far the earliest, (the Merchants Tramway on Portland dates from the mid-1820s,) (Lucking, 1968).

Fortunately, many traces of this superbly engineered route, which was $3\frac{1}{2}$ miles long on gradients of 1 in 150 - 1 in 180 remain to this day - not least many of its grander embankments and formations. There are also several extant stone sleepers in the remoter heathland sections of its gently curving alignment. The sleepers weigh 60 - 70lb. each. The line was built at a cost of £2,000 per mile and in operation required three horses to draw 5 x 2 tons wagon trains.

Most interestingly, perhaps, this plateway has also two tunnels, which lie under the Corfe - Warham road close together at about SY.955 826, about a quarter of a mile north-west of Corfe village. They were both made in 1807. Another somewhat later tunnel, c.1850, lies under the Studland new road (approx. SY.963 826) just to the east of the London & South Western Railway's Corfe viaduct.. The two Middlebere tunnels, as evidenced by a recent field trip, remain in fairly good condition, with all four portals intact - one is marked 'BF 1807' and the other, though no doubt a contemporary, has a keystone proclaiming 'dated in 1848'. Their preservation is probably due to their well-concealed location preventing too easy discovery, at the base of a steep embankment thickly covered in bramble and blackthorn. It seems possible that parts of the original track, 3 foot tramway plates, may still lie in the mud, and indeed, the Purbeck Industrial Archaeology Group intends to excavate to establish this point. The gauge of the line was 3' 9" and both the tunnels are about 20 yards long. It is hoped that this research may lead to the taking of active steps to preserve these rare tunnel survivals. Documentation of these relics, not least in this present journal, should go a long way to ensure this.

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25th October
1983.

The Secretary,
Southampton Section,
c/o Area Civil Engineer's
Office,
Bournemouth Station,
Dorset

Dear Sir,

The Institution is celebrating its Centenary in 1984 and this Section has within its 'bounds' the course of the earliest waggonway in Dorset, the Middlebere Plateway of 1805. It was built to connect the Norden (Furzebrook) China Clay mines to Middlebere Creek on Poole Harbour.

I'm not sure whether the Norden site remains with your Company (which absorbed Pike Bros. in recent years). There are quite a few stone blocks remaining on the course, but no sign of any L-shaped rails.

We are holding an exhibition of permanent way, past and present, during 1984 and would be grateful if you could give us any help? Incidentally, I have looked at the Norden Farm sale of 1838 which shows the Plateway quite well. The tunnel under the Swanage Road, nearby, is still in-situ, and has 81806 carved in the stone

Yours sincerely,

Dr. Penderell-Church,
c/o Marketing - Advertising,
English Clays Lovering
Pochin Co. Ltd.,

David J. Wroe.

John Keay House,
St. Austell,
Cornwall.



ECC International

ST. AUSTELL

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JPC/SMP

1st November, 1983

David J. Wroe Esq.,
Secretary,
The Permanent Way Institution,
Southampton Section,
Area Civil Engineers Office,
Bournemouth Station,
BOURNEMOUTH,
Dorset.

Dear Mr. Wroe,

With regard to your letter of the 25th October, the Middlebere Plateway of 1805 was, I think, constructed on behalf of Benjamin Fayle & Co. Fayles had opened the first ball clay pit at Norden in 1797, and for the first ten years had had to cart all their clay to the Middlebere Wharf. The wagons were horse-drawn for over 50 years, but whether the original gauge of the Middlebere Plateway was 3' 9" I am not sure. Certainly the steam railway of Fayle & Co. which replaced the horse-drawn tramway ran on 3' 9" gauge track.

From 1866 onwards, Pike Brothers used steam locomotives to transport all their clay, but their trains ran on 2' 8" gauge track. Pikes had seven locomotives all told before they finished, beginning with Primus and finishing with Septimus. The locomotive Secundus is now in a museum in Birmingham.

In 1948, Benjamin Fayle & Co. converted its railway track from Norden to 2' 0" gauge and replaced its steam locomotives with five diesel locomotives and in 1949, the company was amalgamated with Pike Brothers to form Pike Brothers, Fayle & Co. Ltd. The amalgamation brought the two different railway systems under the same management, and there was a lot of confusion because of the difference of the gauges.

In 1954, the 2' 8" gauge railway of Pike Brothers was closed down and the track lifted. The locomotives were replaced by a fleet of lorries. The Norden 2' 0" gauge track continued until just a few years back. As far as I know, there is no track left in situ, although some of the stone rail sleepers are still there. In 1968 Pike Brothers Fayle & Co. was taken over by the English China Clays Division, ECC Ball Clays Ltd. Norden is still in our hands.

As I expect you know, the Dorset Clay Railways have always been a favourite subject with narrow gauge railway enthusiasts. There are two relevant publications - the first was written by S.W. Baker and entitled "Narrow Gauge Lines in the Isle of Purbeck". It was published in the July 1953 issue of "Railway World". Another very detailed paper by W.J.K. Davis was included in the published Handbook No. 1 of the Narrow Gauge Railways Society in 1957.

David J. Wroe Esq.,
Secretary, Southampton Section,
c/o Area Civil Engineer's Office,
Bournemouth Station,
Dorset.

8 November 1983.

Dear Dr. Church,

I was pleased to receive your prompt reply to my enquiries. We are, in fact, concentrating on the Middlebere Plateway and in particular:

- (1) Organising a ramble over the course in June 1984. Permission to this is forthcoming over the main part. The Norden end is much overgrown and swampy and would appeal only to stalwart members of the Section. Exploration would be subject to permission from your Company. As B.R. has association with you at Furzebrook, I can arrange this locally now you confirm Norden is E.C.C. property.
- (2) Are there any written records or plans from Pike Bros. Fayle & Co. which mention or show evidence of the Plateway? Some say it existed until quite late in the Century. The gauge was said to be 3' 9" as you say. When Fayles opened their new Furzebrook to Ridge Tramway in 1866, the Plateway seems to have been abandoned.
- (3) The Railway & Canal Historical Society Journal (July - September 1964) has an article by B. Baxter. He rather tantalisingly says 'As one proceeds along, ample evidence that the line was a plateway is afforded by the several and many stone blocks still to be seen in the ground and occasionally the remains of a plate rail have been unearthed in places' The Purbeck Industrial Archeology Society hint they know of a site where some might lay, but seem not to have done anything about it.

The Southampton Section would certainly like to display a length of this plate rail in their Exhibition in 1984. Consideration could be made for a joint search by mutual consent of all parties. The 'Tunnel' has been examined by people from time-to-time; this, and a second one farther south are presumably the property of the Dorset County Council as they are under a trunk road.

I enclose a sketch map of the vicinity. The lower end of the Plateway is taken from the map of the Norden Farm Sale document in Dorset County Record Office. Perhaps you could let me know your views on the exploration potentials at Norden? The Permanent Way Institution is separate from B.R. though it, of course, has a close link

Yours Sincerely,


David J. Wroe.



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Dec. 9th. 1983

Dear Mr. Wroe,

I am sorry over the delay in answering your second letter. I have today been speaking to our Wareham office - have finally found out who it is you should make contact with, regarding your projected ramble - abs. with regard to the possibility of pieces of plate rail still surviving. Andrew Hill, to whom I spoke, has walked the track himself but this was in summer, when there was fairly heavy undergrowth. This is the time of year when any finds might be made. He says that the plateway was not laid on proper rail sleepers but just on a bed of tamped stones and earth, originally.

I would suggest that you drop a line to Alistair Bury, Planning & Development Manager. He is, in addition, a railway enthusiast or 'nut' and has himself made a study of the clay works railway. We still have working for the company an old chap who drove the last loco on the last piece of track

2.
and will tell anyone, at the drop of a hat (or a pint beer pot) a great deal about the various gauges, locos, points, track, fishplates etc.

I do not think that there are any written records still surviving concerning the Plateway, but Mr. Berry may know of some that I have not come across - he is on the spot, whereas I am no longer resident in the vicinity (I knew the area as a boy.) His telephone number, I am told, is Wareham 6501.

I see your address is Bournemouth Station. Would that be what we used to call Bournemouth West?

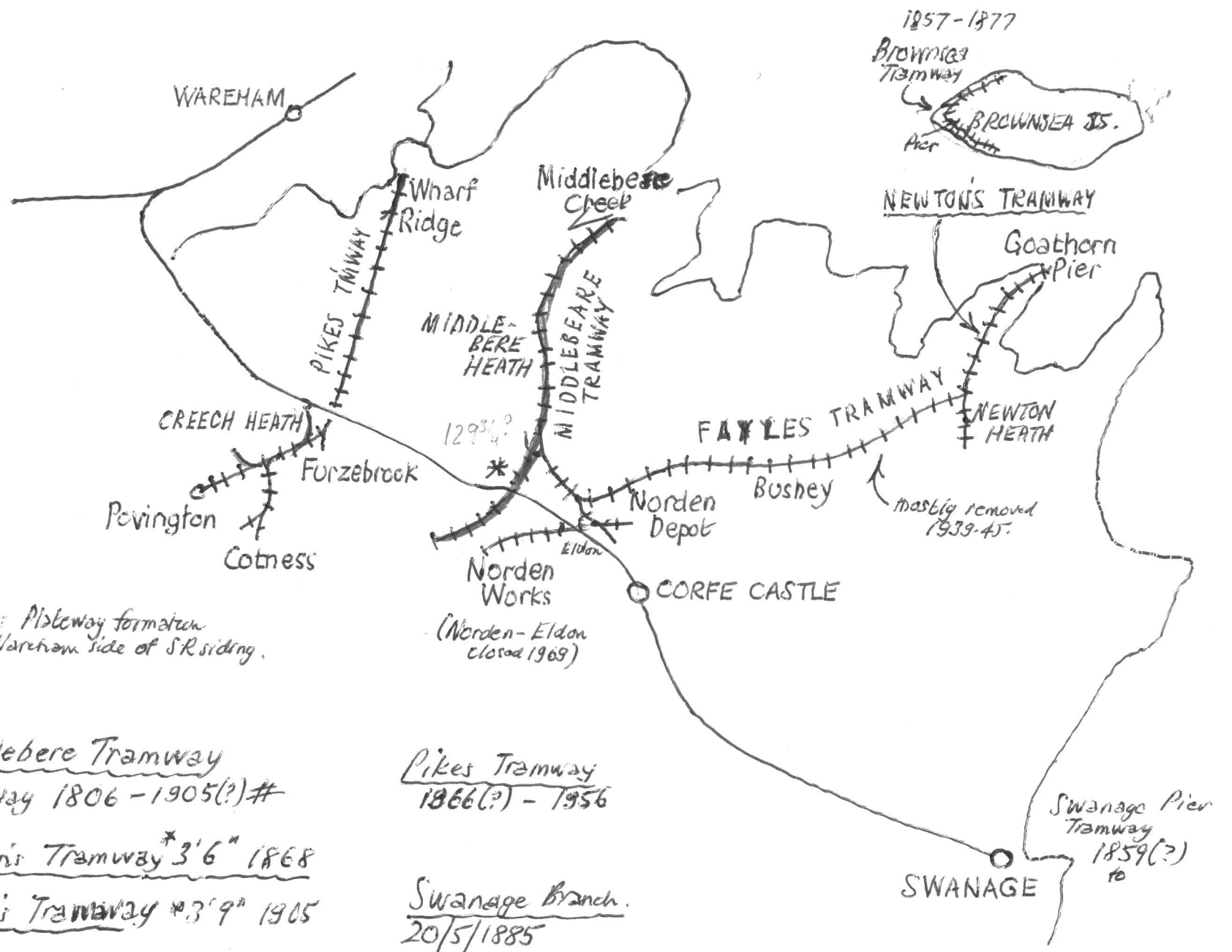
I remember there used to be a stuffed dog in a glass case there which had been a champion collector for charity. Being myself a dog lover, I remember this odd piece of information.

Yours sincerely

John Pendrill - Church (D.)

B.A., B.Sc., Ph.D.

56 2
 50 14
 " 10
 " 11



* Eldon: Plateway formation
 Wareham side of SR siding.

Middlebere Tramway
 (Plateway 1806 - 1905(?)#)

Newton's Tramway *3'6" 1868

Fawley Tramway *3'9" 1905

Pikes Tramway
 1866(?) - 1956

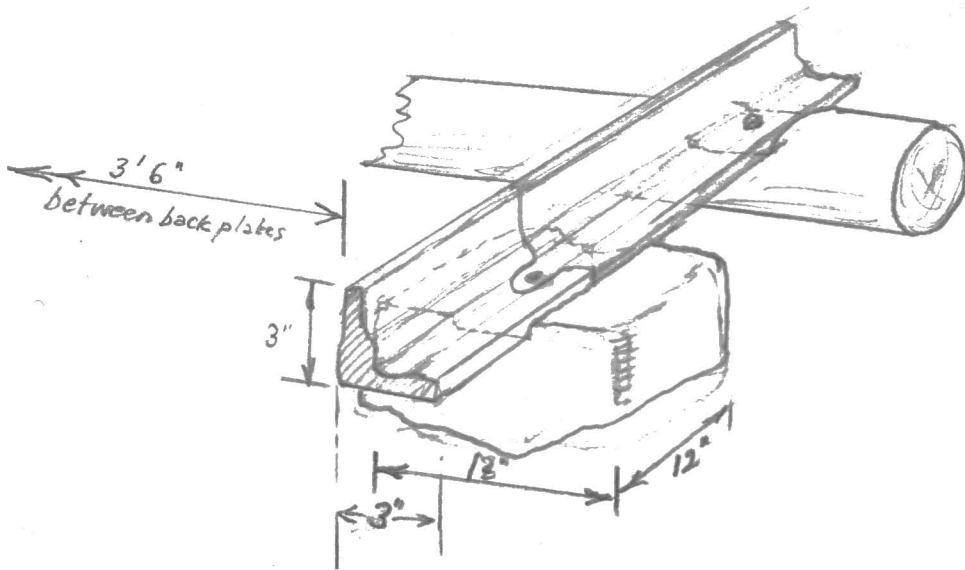
Swanage Branch.
 20/5/1885

Swanage Pier
 Tramway
 1859(?)
 to

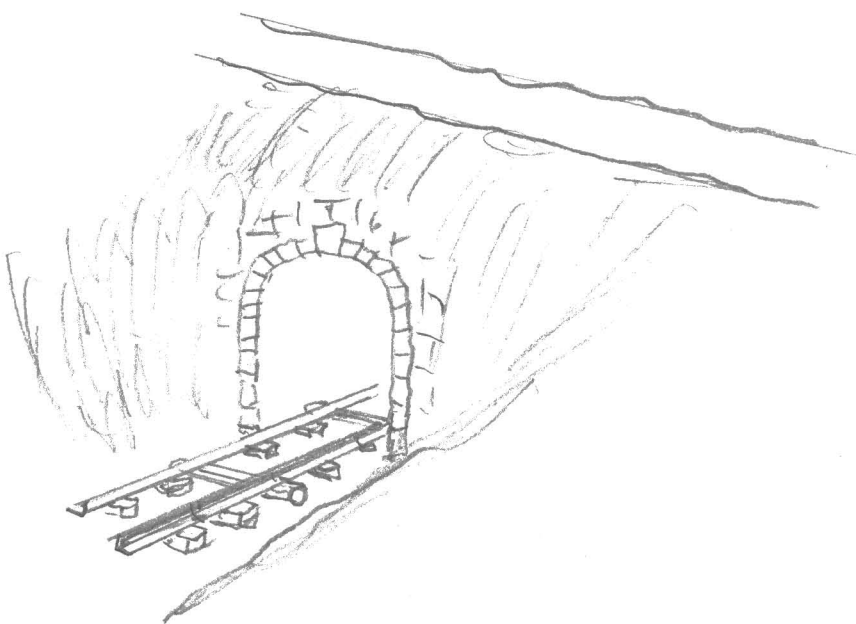
Plateway ^{stone} ~~cham~~ still in situ?

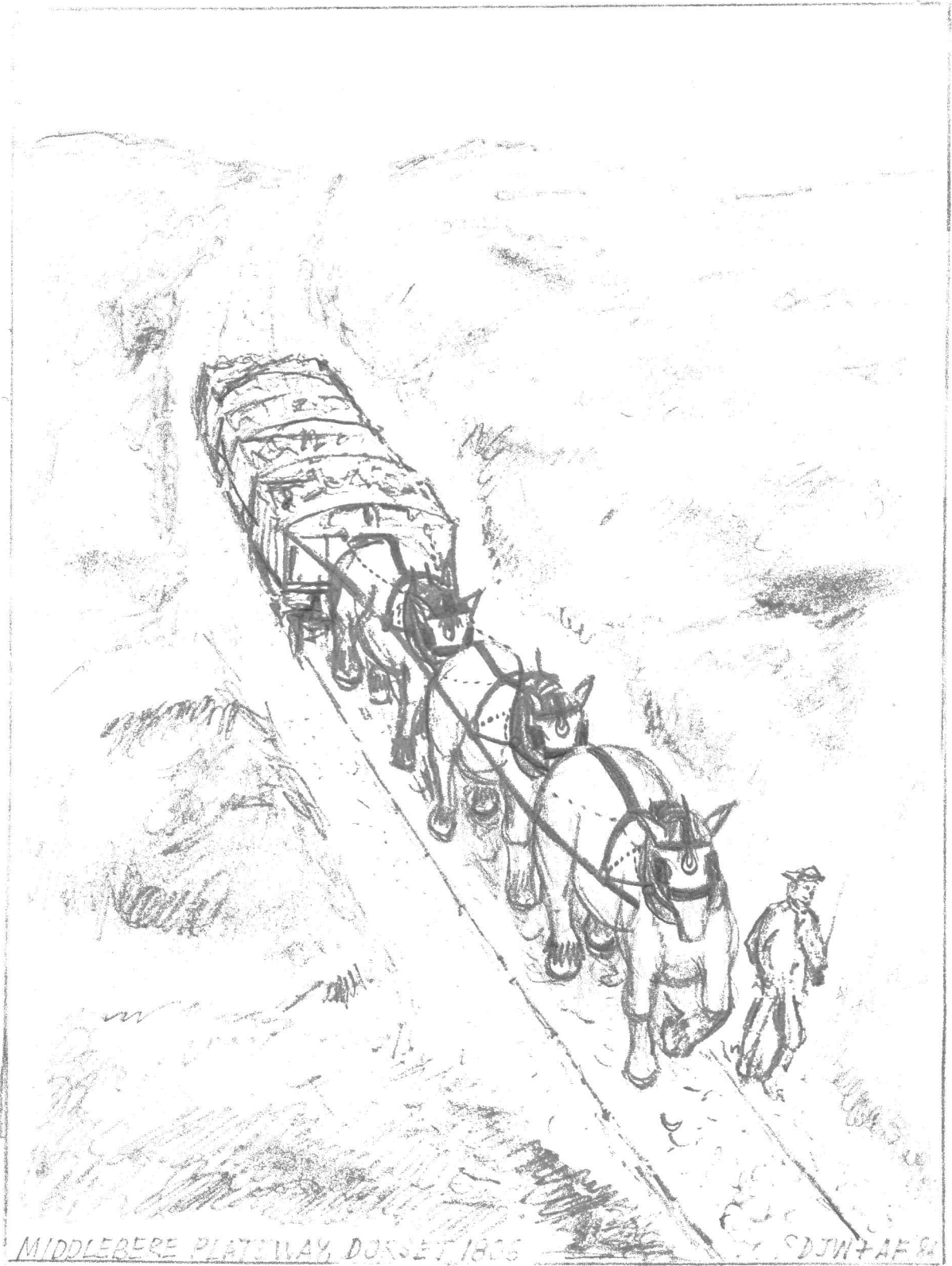
MIDDLEBERE PLATEWAY. DORSET

Possible reconstruction of wagonway
from *evidence on site



* 3'0" long tramplates based on contemporary examples found elsewhere in England and Wales



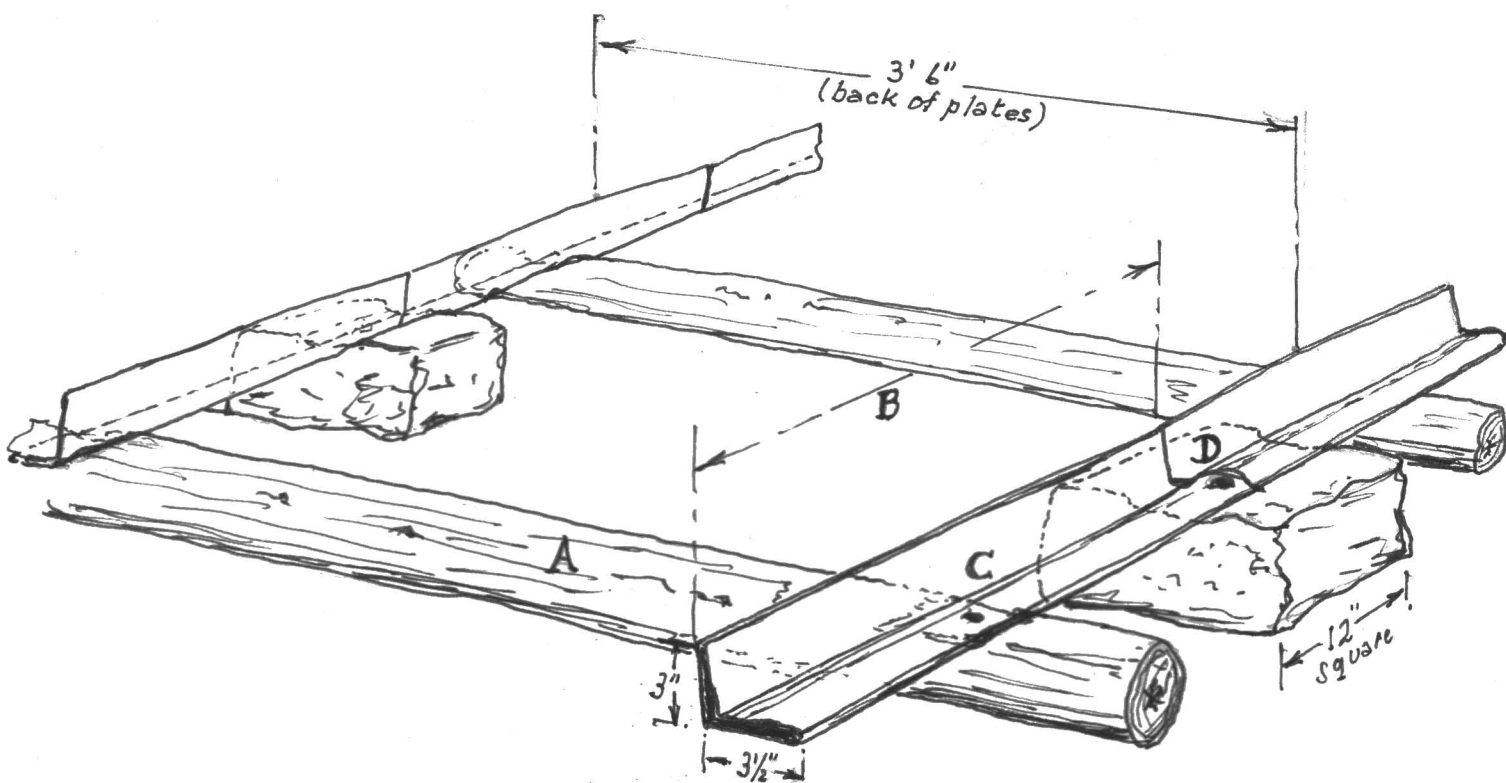


MIDDLEBERE PLATWAY, DORSET 1805

SDJW + AF 84

MIDDLEBERE PLATEWAY

DJW 1985



A: Wood sleeper
(3'0" centres
at Norden)

B: 3'0" long
tramplates
(shape based
on other sites)

C: Nail through
plate to adzed
flat surface
of sleeper.

D: Nail through plate
to oak plug
(with tar/bitumen.)

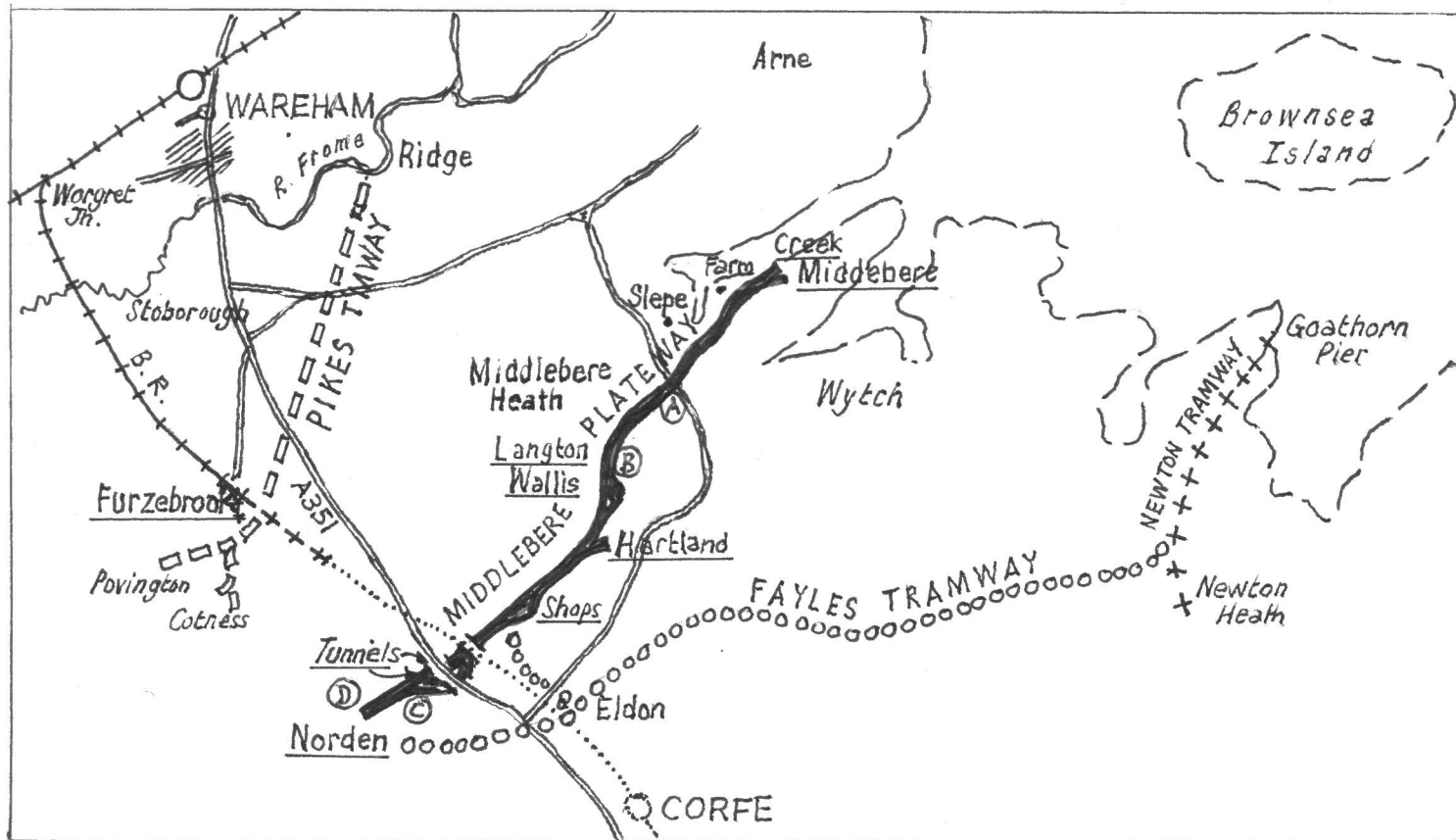
*Probable assembly 1806
(sleepers may be later additions)*

The best early description of the line is that given by Wm. Stevenson in his General View of the Agriculture of Dorset. Under the heading "Iron Railways" he states:

"A road of this kind $3\frac{1}{2}$ miles in length was made in 1806. It extends from the pits of Potters clay at Norden near Corfe Castle, to a place opposite Poole, where the clay is shipped for Liverpool.

The Iron Rails of which this road is composed are three feet long and five-eighths of an inch thick at the bottom, where the plate on which the carriage wheels run, is three and a half inches wide, with vertical edging three inches high on the side next to the horse path, and they weigh about 40 lbs each. The ends of the rails are supported on stones of 60-70 lbs weight in each of which is made a hole to receive an oak plug, to which the rails are fastened by means of a large headed nail driven between the contiguous ends, through a small cavity which is left for the purpose.

The declivity of the road is in some places four inches and in others five inches for every twenty yards, and the expense attending this work is stated by Mr Willis of Norden at about £2,000 a mile for new work. The clay is conveyed on small carriages with four iron wheels, carrying two tons each. Three horses draw ten tons to the seaside three times a day, at the expense of about six-pence a ton weight."



THE MIDDLEBERE PLATEWAY

Apart from a stone block or two, and rumours of 'rails' found in this Century, visitors to this former route from the china clay workings at Norden to Middlebere Creek will have to use their imagination to appreciate a plateway trod by horses and wagons. However, some interesting works survive and familiar cuttings and embankments are apparent. Benjamin Fayle (1751 - 1832) having acquired a lease at Norden caused the plateway to be laid down about 1807 to overcome the difficulties of transporting ball clay (possibly by pack horse) to the waterside. The plates were "L" shaped placed back-to-back on stone blocks to a gauge reputed to be 3' 9". They were 3' 0" long by about 3" x 3" in section. plain wheels ran along the flat iron surfaces, guided by uprights. By this means five wagons, totalling a loaded ten tons could be drawn by three horses. Under the Wareham to Corfe road lie two "tunnels", the southernmost appears to take a loop line to the 'main' line. The loop tunnel has an inscribed date 1848, while the 'main' tunnel shows "BF 1807" on its keystone. Unfortunately the formation has turned into a watercourse, but is traceable within the scrub and trees. The 'main' line continues under the former Swanage Branch (No. 13 "Clay Pit Bridge") and beyond lay, into this Century, siding and workshops. The course can be noted at Hartland Farm, but from here to the Nature Reserve fence on Middlebere Heath it is rather lost in the farmland. There is public access, back from the Corfe to Slepe road all along the Plateway to this fence. Embankments and cuttings are well apparent here. In the other direction (north east) from the Slepe Road the Plateway is now the Middlebere Farm road. Beyond the farm are the remains of Middlebere Creek jetty where the clay was shipped, one time directly to Liverpool, later to Poole Quay by barge. The building of a tramway (by Fayle & Pike) from Furzebrook to Ridge in 1866 overshadowed the Plateway and it is thought the latter had been taken up by 1900. The Fayle Tramway from Eldon (Corfe) to Newton and the Newton Tramway to Goathorn Pier are also of a later date. The clay taken by these lines passed to rail transport, now concentrated at Furzebrook and shared by road haulage.

P.W.I. (Southampton Section) 1984.

- (A)-(B) Walked June 1984
- (C) Tunnel (No.1) inspected 1984
- (D) Norden area proposed exploration 1985

had an unusual spindle which required a special windlass having a circle with an inset niche. This special windlass was kept at either the lock keeper's cottage or at Juxon Street Wharf in Oxford, and in consequence pleasure craft avoided passing through the Cut, but since a spindle which can be turned by a normal windlass has been installed pleasure craft have increased; in fact in 1962 over 700 power driven craft used the Cut.

The Duke's Cut Branch to the Mill Stream and Thames has a towing path, except under bridge 232 which carries that for the Oxford Canal. The stop lock is, actually, under the iron bridge built in 1848 by the Oxford & Rugby Railway and widened by the Great Western Railway in 1900. 100 yards further on is the Ministry of Transport's bridge built in 1933/4 which carries the A40 Oxford - Witney Road. Otherwise the Duke's Cut passes through a rural setting of trees and fields and on the side opposite the towing path along the branch there is now a lake of some 200 square yards which was formed in 1960 after earth had been excavated to form the embankment for Oxford's Western By-Pass.

The Author wishes to acknowledge the considerable assistance given by Mr C. Kingsley Belsten of Oxford and, in addition, the following: W.L. Murdock, Land Agent to the Duke of Marlborough, The Thames Conservancy Board, The British Museum, J.R. Henderson, Controller Wolvercote Paper Mill.

N.B. Mr Compton asks for any information on the Carrington Canal.

THE MIDDLEBERE PLATEWAY

By B. Baxter

In searching for relics of early railways, the student of railway history does not seek, nor will he find much material for his attention in the southern and south-eastern counties.

The industrial revolution which began in the closing years of the eighteenth, and developed rapidly in the first quarter of the nineteenth century, and as a result of which quite a network of tramroads sprang up in many parts of the country seems mostly to have been concentrated in the North and Midlands and also of course South Wales.

More probably the absence of coalfields or ironstone beds in most of the southern counties accounts for this. Sussex and Hants can produce nothing of interest, but the neighbouring county of Dorset had two examples. One of these, the Portland Railway, is well known. This railway, which obtained its Act of Parliament in 1825, was in part an inclined plane from the centre of the island to Castleton Quay and was still being worked by means of a winding drum cable as recently as 1939, when the line was abandoned.

The other line, which is the subject of this article, was older by about nineteen years. Dandy Marshall refers to it in his "History"² but refers to it as the "Corfe Castle Railway". This, in reality is rather a misleading title as, beyond the fact that it originated in the Purbeck Hills about a mile or so to the north-west of the village of Corfe Castle, this latter place had nothing whatever to do with the railway excepting that part of it lay within the parish of Corfe.

A more fitting and descriptive title would be the Middlebere Plateway. References are sometimes made to it as the Isle of Purbeck Railway but this was the title given to the narrow gauge mineral railway which succeeded it some sixty years later.

The district is an area of salt marshed and undulating heathland lying to the west of Studland Bay and to the south-west of Poole Harbour and bounded on the west side by the main road from Wareham to Swanage which passes through the village of Corfe Castle. On the western side of this road lie the Purbeck Hills and it is on a spur of these hills that Corfe Castle stands as an outstanding landmark which can be seen from afar and overlooking the whole area.

The best early description of the line is that given by Wm. Stevenson in his General View of the Agriculture of Dorset. Under the heading "Iron Railways" he states:

"A road of this kind $3\frac{1}{2}$ miles in length was made in 1806. It extends from the pits of Potters clay at Norden near Corfe Castle, to a place opposite Poole, where the clay is shipped for Liverpool.

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The declivity of the road is in some places four inches and in others five inches for every twenty yards, and the expense attending this work is stated by Mr Willis of Norden at about £2,000 a mile for new work. The clay is conveyed on small carriages with four iron wheels, carrying two tons each. Three horses draw ten tons to the seaside three times a day, at the expense of about six-pence a ton weight."

Other references to this railway are interesting and worthy of quoting. Thus, in Hutchinson's History of Dorset⁴:

"Plastic Clay - B. Fayle & Co. have works in Corfe Castle parish at Norden belonging to the Earl of Eldon. Clay raised here is

conveyed by a tramway, about three miles in length, laid with tram plates, which has been in existence for more than fifty years, to a wharf at Middlebere to be transferred in sailing barges of from 20 to 30 tons burthen for shipment at Poole."

Again, some twenty years later, C.E. Robinson writing of Middlebere says ⁵:

"Middlebere, whither runs one of the oldest tramways in England long used for the clay traffic from Norden."

The place at which the products of the clay pits were put on water was at Middlebere Quay, a point on a creek of Poole Harbour near Arne. The railway is shown on a map of Dorset contained in Hall's Travelling Atlas published by Chapman, Hall about 1847.

It will be noted that, according to Stevenson's account in 1812, ⁶ this was being shipped by seagoing vessels direct to Liverpool (whence, no doubt, much of it found its way to the Staffordshire Potteries) but, some fifty years later, Hutchins informs us ⁷ that shipment was being made to Poole (only) in small sailing vessels of 20/30 tons burthen whence presumably transshipment was made to larger ships. This appears to indicate that silting up of the Middlebere Creek was taking place and that the days of Middlebere Quay as a port of shipment were numbered.

In 1866, Fayles built and commenced to operate a new narrow gauge mineral line to a point on the River Frome at Ridge Wharf. The abandonment of the old Middlebere Quay would no doubt follow from about that date and with it of course went the old plateway.

This newer mineral railway, the Ridge line, was itself abandoned by the end of the second world war. By that time Fayles and Pikes (another neighbouring clay producing company) had amalgamated. Pikes' mineral line ran in an easterly direction straight to Goathorn Point. By about 1957 however, all transport of clay by rail had ceased in favour of road transport. Some time ago, the writer went over the course of the old plateway, the gauge of which had been given as 3 ft 9 ins. ⁸, and found much evidence of the existence of the route which can be traced for almost its entire distance of three and a half miles from Norden to the old quay at Middlebere. The general direction is north-easterly.

Commencing in the foothills on the west side of the main Wareham to Swanage Road at a point about half a mile away from the road, the old line ran in a cutting and passed under the road by a substantially built stone arch tunnel on which appears the inscription and date, B.F. 1807. The initials stand of course for the original owner of the line, Benjamin Fayle who first appeared in this district in 1795 and commenced his famous ball-clay pits, and the date on the stone, 1807, is an interesting confirmation of the date given by William Stevenson for the line. This part of the line, including the tunnel, is easily overlooked owing to dense foliage and undergrowth. Its actual position is about seven chains south of the present railway bridge on the Swanage line.

There is in existence at the Dorset County Records Office, a copy of a farm sale catalogue of Norden Farm dated 18 August 1838. A plan of the land included in this catalogue shows the "Rail-Road" from which it appears that there was originally a loop line at this point passing under the roadway by its own separate and individual tunnel. This tunnel, about four and a half chains to the south of the other one, can also still be seen. The purpose of this loop line is somewhat difficult to assess but, in view of the closeness to the claypits, it would seem to be that one road would be used for the despatch of loaded wagons down to the quay whilst, no doubt, the empty ones would be diverted to the lower, or southern branch of the loop to wait in a queue for their turn for reloading. At the present time, due to long years of disuse, both of the lines have developed into water courses.

At the eastern side of the road, the line curves towards the north and is crossed by the railway to Swanage. Near this point there was situated, according to the 1838 plan referred to above, the carpenters and smiths shops at Norden Heath. On the later six-inch Ordnance Survey map these are shown as "Clay Washing Pits".

North of the railway crossing, the plateway proceeds towards Langton Wallis and passes out on to the open heathlands. Near Langton Wallis the line crosses over a small stream, a tributary of the Corfe River, on a substantial embankment under which the watercourse was originally culverted. This has either been washed out or at some time removed to facilitate drainage and the point where the line originally crossed is now a ravine.

As one proceeds along, ample evidence that the line was a plateway is afforded by the several and many stone sleeper blocks still to be seen in the ground and occasionally the remains of a plate rail have been unearthed in places.

On Langton Wallis Heath slightly further north, the line makes a big sweeping curve eastwards passing through almost a right angle alongside the southern edge of Middlebere Heath, and in about half a mile further, curves slightly northwards again to resume its north-easterly course. This takes it to the eastern edge of Hartland Moor where there is a rock cutting of some importance extending several hundred yards and, upon emerging from this the line is crossed on a level by a lane leading to Slepe Farm.

Maintaining its north-easterly course the plateway skirts the salt marshes and upper reaches of the Arne Creek passing close by Middlebere Farm. This last portion of the route has now become merged into a roadway giving access to the farm. After passing the farm, the plateway turns once more to the east for the last quarter of a mile of its route before reaching the now derelict Middlebere Quay.

In the compilation of this article, the author gratefully acknowledges generous help and assistance afforded to him by Mr F.E.Dodman (Parkstone); Mr H.V.Johnstone (Reference Librarian, Poole Public Library); Miss M.Holmes

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8. Narrow gauge Railway Society Handbook No.1. W.J.Davies. 1957. *X Seen at Poole Library*

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PEAK FOREST CANAL AND TRAMWAY

by Brian Lamb

On a recent visit to Buxton Library and Museum to view the wheel, axle and sleeper stone from the Peak Forest Tramway, my attention was caught by the series of old maps of Derbyshire dating from 1805 to 1860.

In studying these I noted the routes of the Peak Forest Canal and Tramway; the Cromford & High Peak Railway and the Cromford Canal. The result of my observations, though by no means conclusive, are given below.

1805. E.W.Brayley. Engraved by G.Cole.

This shows and names the P.F.Canal and Tramway. The Cromford Canal is also shown but not named.

1805. Engraved by J.Cary

This shows the P.F. Railway only, though badly off the actual "as built" route. The route on the map is as shown on the attached sketch map from point 'B' (Bugsworth) to point 'D' due south of Peak Forest via north of Chinley, north of Chapel Milton to Sparrowpit at a point just north of the "Ebbing and Flowing Well".

The Cromford Canal is shown and named.

1818. Engraved by John Cary.

This shows the P.F.Canal terminating at Chapel Milton (point 'C' on sketch map) with the P.F.Tramway from Chapel

RCHS Taylor Collection:

Folder 7 - Poole & Purbeck Transport:

Documents in Dorset Record Office:

1829 Wareham Turnpike Trust (Corfe to Studland)

1858 Plans of Swanage (Pier & Tramway) - 1859 Act

Quotes Priestly quoting Portland Railway Act

"How the Railway came to Dorset" R D Brown, Dorset County Journal, v.1.p.214 Jan-Mar 1948:

"Cooks Topographical Guide to Dorset" 1825 described Middlebere line.

Refers to Portland Railway (had branches taken up in WW1)

"Poole & Dorsetshire Herald":

7.5.1846 Plea for Mrs Brunel to make a change at Gloucester after 7 o/

21.5.1846 Proposed tramway of 3 miles from near Worth to the waters of Poole Harbour, without delay of voyage from Swanage, for stone from Purbeck Quarries.

21.5.1846 Reference to Broad Gauge and 3'9" gauge of Belgium would serve Dorset and Devon better.

1.2.1849 Admiralty enquiry re proposed canal and dock at Wareham.

26.4.1849 Portland Railway paying 12%

26.7.1849 Portland Breakwater, description of railway (Poole & SW ~~Hera~~

1846 Table of clay shipment s from Poole

Herald?)

Railway on Branksea Island ?

Teesdale's Map of Dorset 1830 (3 $\frac{1}{2}$ m = 1") shows Middlebere

Admiralty Charts of Poole Bay:

1886 & 1902 Goathorn Point, no pier or tramway

1912, 1923, 1925, 1937 Pier & tramway to Newton, also Newton Clay Works

1"OS 1919 shows Norden - Goathorn line

"Poole Harbour surveyed by Captain Sheringham 1849" shows;

"Middlebere Quay
& Clay Shed"

@ Ridge
"Clay Depot"

Extracts from Rough Log Book Sept 1948:

Tom Stokksley 'elderly loco driver now decd

3'9" changed to 2' August 1948

'Thames' is sdrap. Loco without name but is 'Tiny' had a new boiler 1938 from Dorset Iron Foundry.

'Thames' 0-4-OST OC MW 1552/02 ex LCC 1911, was 3'6" - new tyres Railway to Harbour 2'8" - pulled up east of road, overgrown to west.

Tiny's original cylinders ~~xxxxxx~~ with 'Lewin' on covers in shed, present are by Dorset Foundry.

Railway originally 3'6" and worked by horses - altered to 3'9" when Tiny came.

Notes on Kimmeridge Oil

Letter 5.11.58 Poole Harbour Commissioners: Last cargo from Ridge c.194
Goathorn c.1929/33

Fayles Railway used to carry stone about 1928 for Training Bank in Poole Harbour

Folder 5 Pike family, and railway:

Collinge's Patent 1811, No 3410

Ref to Clay pit (shaft) accident 21.5.1859 (no rly)

"The Clay Mines of Dorset" worked by Pike Bros, Fayle & Co 1760 - 1960

Pike's railway to Ridge started 1837-42 (first man 1842)

It is suggested gauge was adopted with the loco but was the loco specially ordered ?

RCHS Taylor CollectionFolder 4 Fayle family, and railway

- Benjamin Fayle born 10.7.1851 in Ireland, died 1832
 Stationer and Merchant in London from at least 1788
 Reputed to have bought the Norden clay works ~~about~~ 1804
 Clay business passed to daughter, Charlotte, then S P Babbington
 then R E Pinney
- Hutchins "History ... of Dorset" 3rd Edn 1861
 Goathorn line $1\frac{1}{4}$ mile (recent apparently)
 Prior to 1881, probably not earlier than 1878 Fayles bought a very
 small Lewin loco built 1868 of 3'9" gauge and widened their's of 3'6".
 C E Robinson "A Royal Warren in Purbeck" 1882 refers to steam tramway.
 "The Locomotive" Nov 1934
- Farey "General View of the Agriculture of Derbyshire" 1817 refers to
 Colling's patent carriage ~~wheels~~ boxes and axle trees in use (1811 patent
 (Chronology and sources):
- 1889 G W Stockly; not working through tunnels, stopped long before.
 1892 do ; pulled ~~plates~~ out of tunnel, taking ~~trains~~ to
 Middlebere, trains of 5 pulled by two horses in tandem, 3 times
 daily. The wagons held two tons. Some were tipped at Middlebere
 but others shovelled. When the Goathorn line was built it
 replaced part of the plateway. Old wagons were scrapped.
- 1905-06 Loco' 34; Extension ~~Newton~~ to Eldon sidings constructed
 1907-08 do ; Middlebere plateway scrapped
 1916 School train starts when Fayle's private school closed
 1924 School train stopped
 c.1924 Goathorn worked out
 pre 1926 Fayles extended $\frac{1}{2}$ mile west from road
 1933 School train restarts, until 1936
 1934 One train a week, at least, Norden - Goathorn
 1938-39 Norden - Goathorn closed and dismantled
 1938 Rails under Wills Bridge (track alongside LSWR) lowered ~~for~~
 Thames to get to Norden
 1949 Fayles & Pikes amalgamate
- Dorset County Chronicle & Somerset Gazette:
 12.5.1859 p.805 Strike at Corfe
 p.824 deceased at Portland 12.5.1859 riding a trolley
 for stone to Breakwater