

A MODERN MINERAL RAILWAY.

(THE EAST AND WEST YORKSHIRE UNION RAILWAY.)

DURING the past few years, and with increasing frequency, railway wagons, on which the initials E & W.Y.U.R. appear, have been seen on railways all over the country. In consequence, much interest has been excited in the East and West Yorkshire Union Railway, which is a short, independent line of railway in the suburbs of Leeds, about $9\frac{1}{2}$ miles in length. The railway has connections with the Methley Joint Railway, near Stanley, with the Great Northern Railway at Loft-house, and with the Midland Railway near Woodlesford. The East and West Yorkshire Union Railway was opened for merchandise and mineral traffic in 1890, and has since been worked as an independent railway, but on perfectly friendly terms with the trunk lines which

equal the mileage of the railway. The principal traffic arising on the East and West Yorkshire Union Railway is coal and stone. The traffic is derived from seven collieries, and a number of quarries, working the well-known Robin Hood stone, which is sent all over England for windowsills and stone work of that description. The line has physical

connections with the collieries and quarries. The railway is in a very flourishing condition, financially, having paid 4 per cent. dividend on its Ordinary Stock for several years past, and as the mineral wealth of the district through which it passes is extremely great, and its resources are only now being developed by the railway, the outlook is in every way roseate, from the shareholders' point of view. There is a large working-class population in the district served by



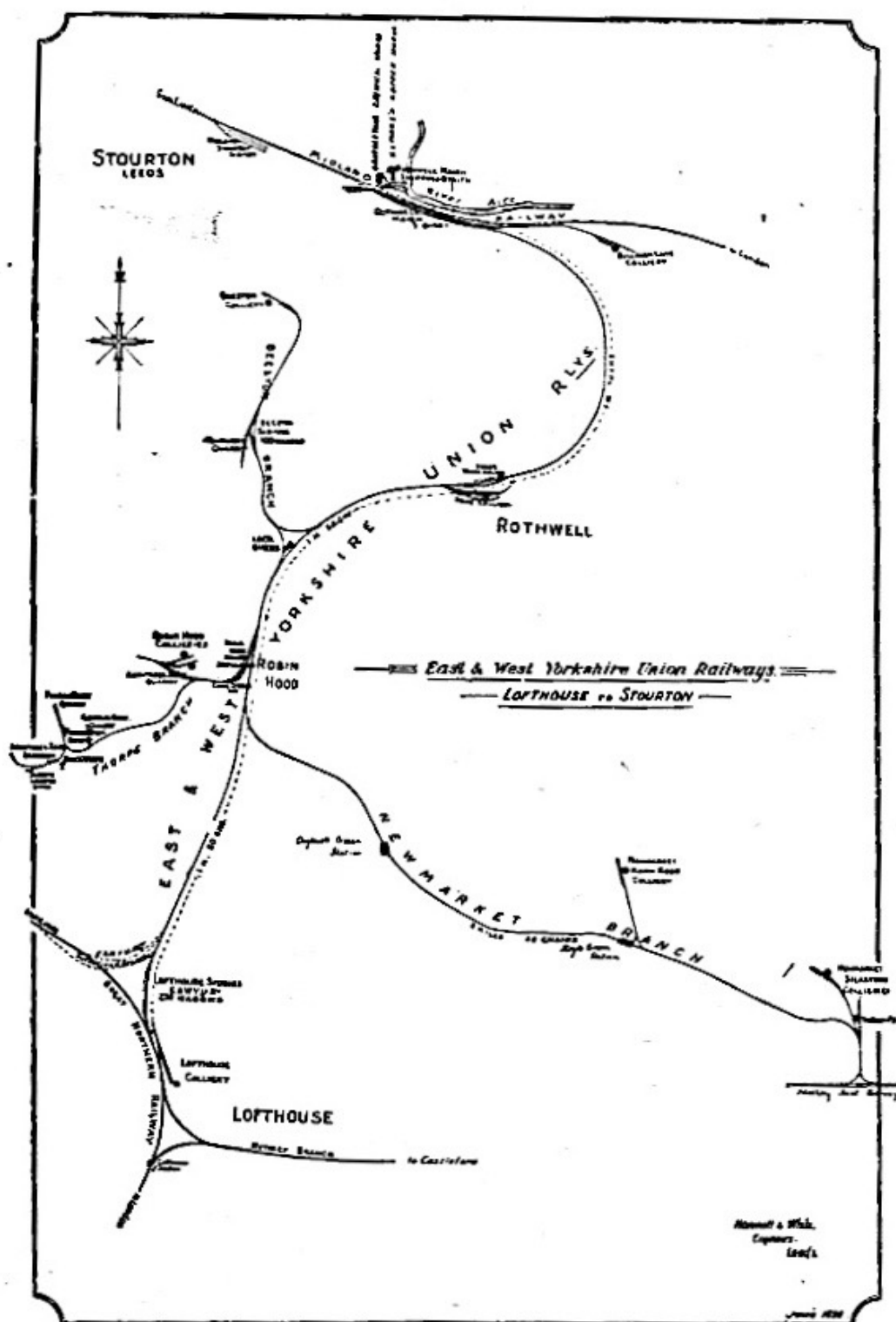
MR. F. W. MEYER,
General Manager, East and West Yorkshire Union
Railway.

the East and West Yorkshire Union Railway, principally engaged upon the local industries, and both Rothwell and Robin Hood are busy, industrial centres.

It is interesting to note that before the railway was made, the stone and mineral traffic of the district was served by a number of crude surface tramways, worked by stationary engines and wire ropes, some of

these ancient tramways and engines having been in existence from the earliest days of mineral railways. The country through which the line passes being extremely undulating, the working of these tramways

East and West Yorkshire Union Railway has altered all this for the better, but the old wagon-ways may still be seen on the ground, relics of a past age. The East and West Yorkshire Union Railway's main line



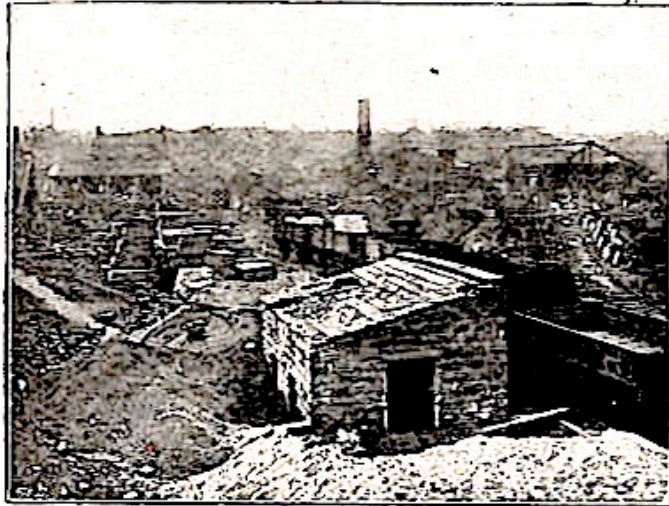
MAP OF THE EAST AND WEST YORKSHIRE UNION RAILWAY.

up and down steep inclines was not unfraught with danger, and, of course, the conveyance of heavy traffic was very much hampered and delayed in the process, the train load in those days being confined to two or three wagons. The advent of the

is about 5 miles in length, and constructed in a substantial manner, as a modern, first-class line should be.

The permanent way consists of 95lb. bull-headed rails, with the usual chairs and fastenings. There is at present no electric

block signalling on the line, the different branches being worked independently, but it is contemplated to adopt the electric tablet system very shortly. This, indeed, will be inevitable when the line is opened for passenger traffic.

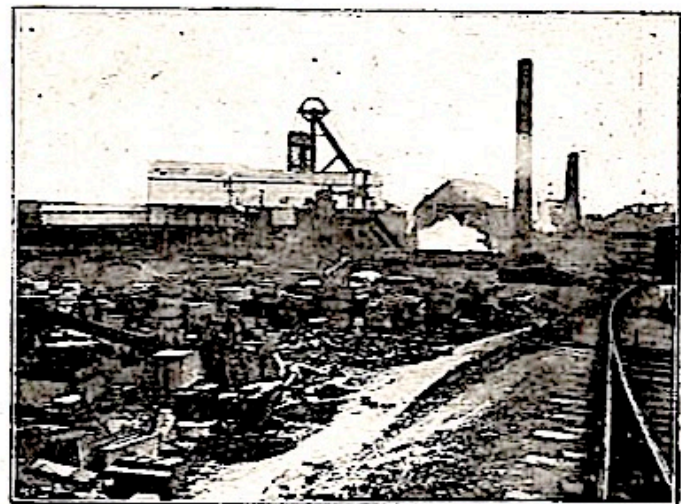


THORPE QUARRIES, EAST AND WEST YORKSHIRE UNION RAILWAY.

The main line connects the Great Northern Railway with the Midland Railway, and from this line various branches diverge at Robin Hood—one to Thorpe Quarries, a second to Beeston Colliery and Quarries, while a third goes to Newmarket Collieries and the Methley Joint Railway. These are shown on the map on Page 114. The centre of the East and West Yorkshire Union Railway system is, therefore, Robin Hood, and the engine sheds are erected there. The company owns about 200 wagons, and six locomotive engines, besides various brake vans, etc. The engines are all saddle tank locomotives, but they are of two types; three of them have 17in. cylinders, 24in. stroke, and six coupled wheels, 4ft. diameter; the other three have six coupled wheels and a pair of trailing wheels, with a smaller rigid wheel base. The dimensions of these engines are: cylinders, 17in.; stroke, 24in.; diameter of driving wheel, 4ft. The latter class have a greater hauling power, but are not quite so steady on the down grades. There are some very heavy gradients and sharp curves on the branch lines, and on these lines it is found that engines, with a

small wheel base like the last three, are very suitable for working the traffic. The maximum train load on the main line is eighteen to twenty loaded 10-ton wagons, but on one of the branches the train load is reduced to six or eight wagons, according to the weather.

One of the problems which confronts a small railway company like the East and West Yorkshire Union Railway is the necessity of acquiring skilled assistance in almost every department of railway work, without having the revenue to pay for it, or, indeed, without having sufficient work of any particular class to justify the employment of skilled officers in each department. Such intricate problems as permanent way maintenance, signalling, train running, locomotive superintendence, and wagon maintenance, are of the same kind on a little railway as on a big one; but for the reasons stated above, the little company has to rely a good deal upon the services of the large ones for many aids, which the experience and organisation of the large railways enable them to give. In the case of the East and West Yorkshire Union Railway this help has been given by its neighbours without



ROBIN HOOD QUARRY AND COLLIERY.

any stint. The question of rates is also one of some complexity, and one which a small railway company feels a good deal of hesitation in handling. The East and West Yorkshire Union Railway is a party to the Railway

Clearing House, and any rates which affect their system they, of course, have the right to be consulted about, but in practice the

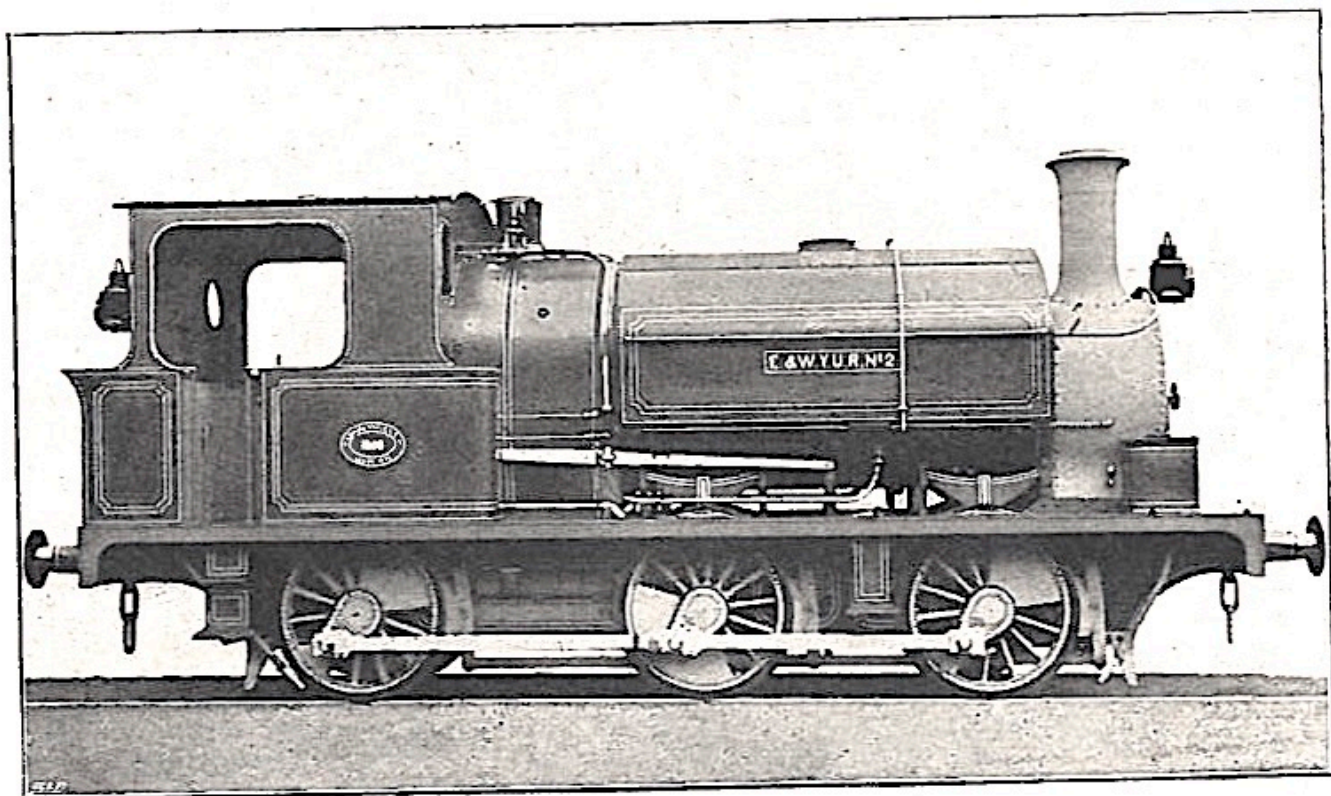


THORPE LANE BRIDGE AND LOFTHOUSE CUTTING, EAST AND WEST YORKSHIRE UNION RAILWAY.

rates are made up by the surrounding large railways, and the competition between the latter for the traffic of the East and West Yorkshire Union Railway readily insures a reasonable rate being obtained so that this

the company, occupying the position it does, is able to live independently, is the fact that almost the whole of the traffic from which its revenue is obtained arises upon its own territory, and the surrounding railways are eager to receive the traffic which only the East and West Yorkshire Union Railway can give to them, and to which one of them it chooses. The independent position of the East and West Yorkshire Union Railway is strengthened by the fact that its line practically competes with no other railway. It simply serves a local want, and it has been, and continues to be, an immense benefit to the locality through which it passes.

One of the questions which is agitating the district just now is the suggestion that passengers should be carried on this railway, and in order to enable the line to accommodate passengers the directors are applying for powers to construct an extension to Leeds. When these powers are obtained, and the extension is constructed, passenger trains will be run, and the single line worked



NO. 2 LOCOMOTIVE, EAST AND WEST YORKSHIRE UNION RAILWAY.

little company occupies the pleasing position of having numerous suitors in competition for its favours. One reason, perhaps, why

on the electric tablet system. It is interesting to observe that, despite the small mileage, there are 102 sets of switches in

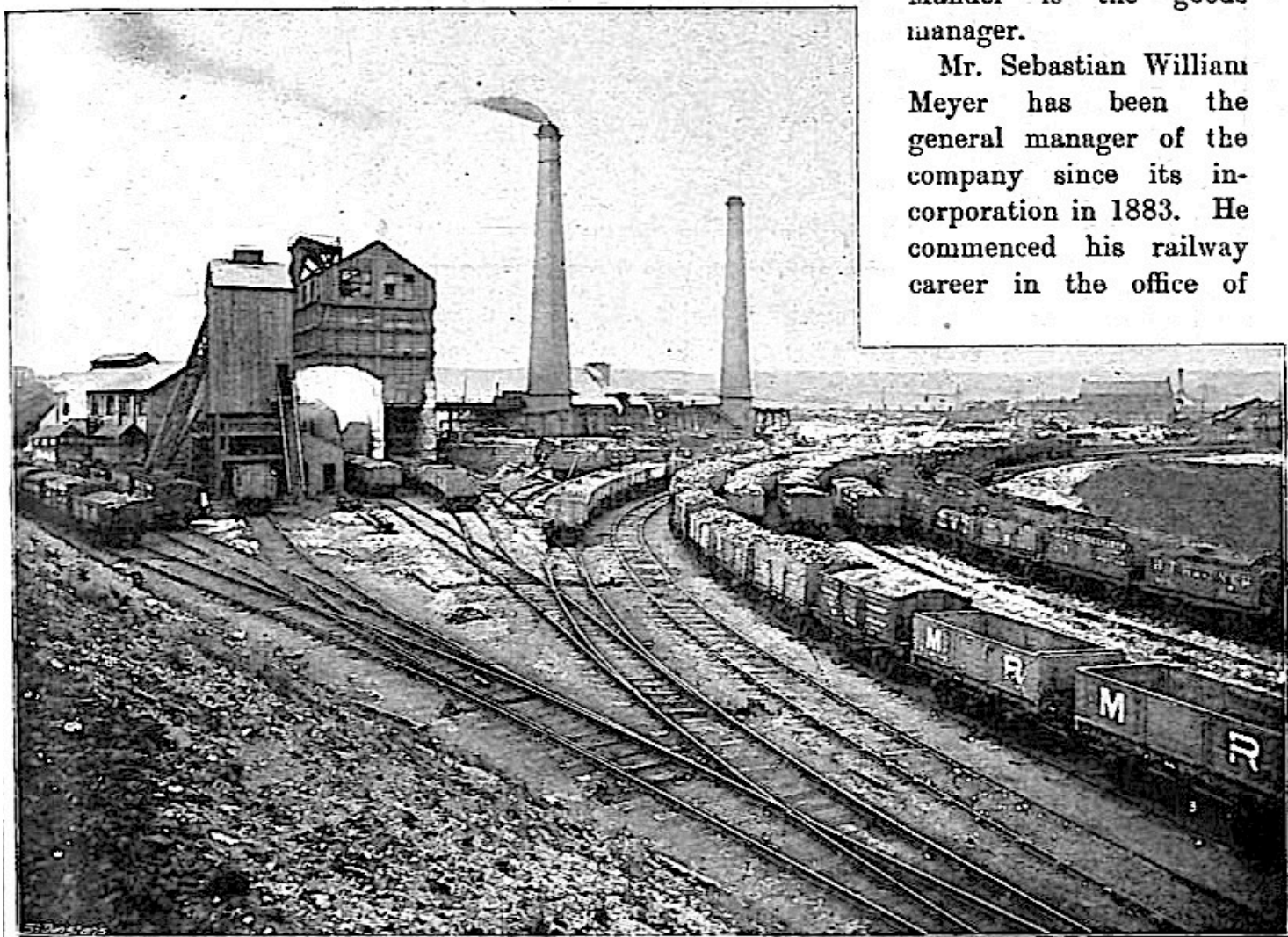
use on the East and West Yorkshire Union Railway, which is a large number compared with its length. About 100 men are employed by the railway, and the company owns a number of workmen's cottages to enable their men to live near their work.

It is greatly to the credit of the management that, during the ten years that the line has been opened, although

Messrs. Mammatt and White were the engineers.

The chairman of the company is Mr. Joseph Charlesworth, Glenapp Castle, Ballantrae, and the general manager, under whose energy the line has been so remarkably developed, is Mr. S. W. Meyer. Mr. D. S. Hartmann is in charge of the locomotives and permanent way, and Mr. T. C. Mander is the goods manager.

Mr. Sebastian William Meyer has been the general manager of the company since its incorporation in 1883. He commenced his railway career in the office of



ROBIN HOOD SIDINGS, EAST AND WEST YORKSHIRE UNION RAILWAY.

3,273,757 tons of traffic have been carried over it during that period, there has been no accident upon the railway involving loss of life or serious injury to any of the company's servants. The builders of the company's locomotives are Messrs. Manning, Wardle & Co., of Leeds. The Birmingham Railway Carriage and Wagon Company are the builders of the wagons, and the contractors for the line were Messrs. Whitaker Brothers, of Horsforth. Mr. George Hopkins and

Mr. Frederick Saunders, the then secretary of the Great Western Railway, in 1873, and he remained with Mr. Saunders for eight years, after which he went to Hull to enter the service of the Hull and Barnsley Railway for a period of two years, and from thence he took his present position. He is connected with a number of local railway enterprises in the North of England, and he has taken a prominent part, particularly in the develop-



ROBIN HOOD ENGINE SHED, EAST AND WEST YORKSHIRE UNION RAILWAY.

ment of light railways in Yorkshire and Lincolnshire. The Cawood, Wistow, and Selby Light Railway, North Sunderland Light Railway, Royd's Green Light Railway, Goole and Marshland Light Railway, and Isle of Axholme Light Railway, have been

organised under his superintendence, the first three of which are open for traffic, and the last two are under construction. He is also secretary of the Dearne Valley Railway, now under construction, and he is interested in other local railways of a similar nature.



COTTAGES BUILT BY THE EAST AND WEST YORKSHIRE UNION RAILWAY FOR THEIR WORKMEN