

ACT TWO

Scene 2 : James McConnell, new Locomotive Superintendent

(ENTER AN APPRENTICE CARRYING A HOLLOW AXLE. HE BLOWS PEAS THROUGH IT. ENTER MCCONNELL)

MCCONNELL: That's not a peashooter lad. That's a railway axle. Do you know why it is hollow, boy?

LAD: No sir

MCCONNELL: Have you ever seen them solid? They used to be solid. The safety of life and property for all who use railways rests on the design of an axle. Did you go to school boy?

LAD: Yes sir

MCCONNELL: Good (LOOKS AT LAD FOR A LONG TIME) I used to wonder why railway axles would so often break short at the back of the wheel