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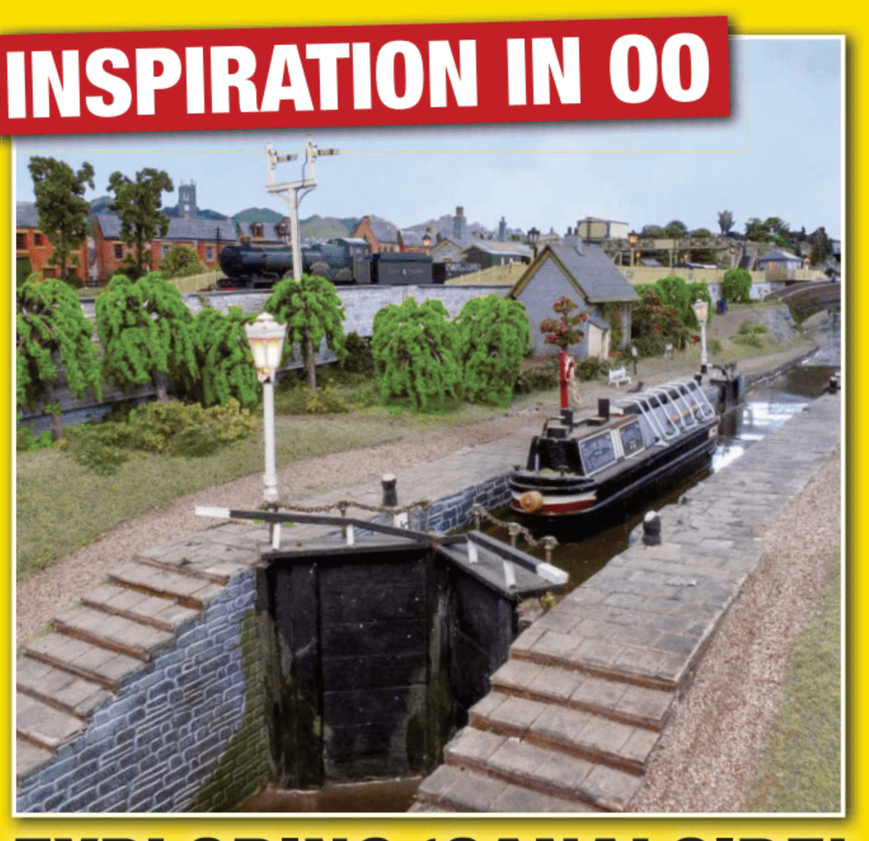

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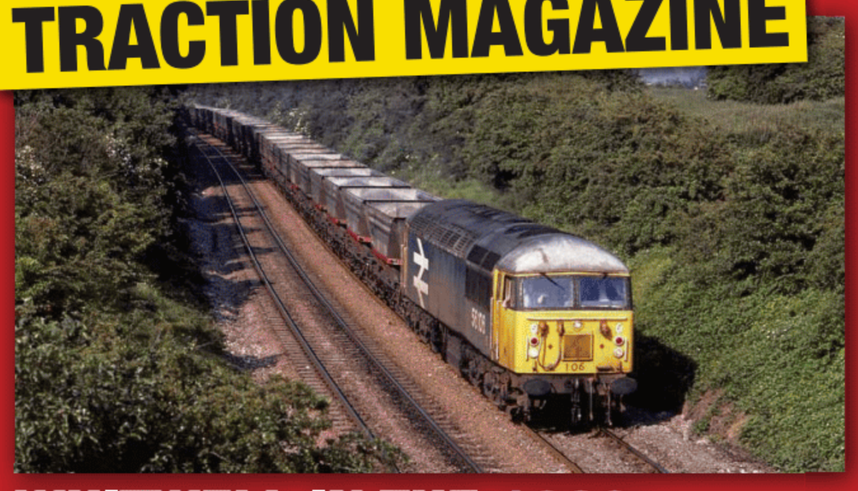

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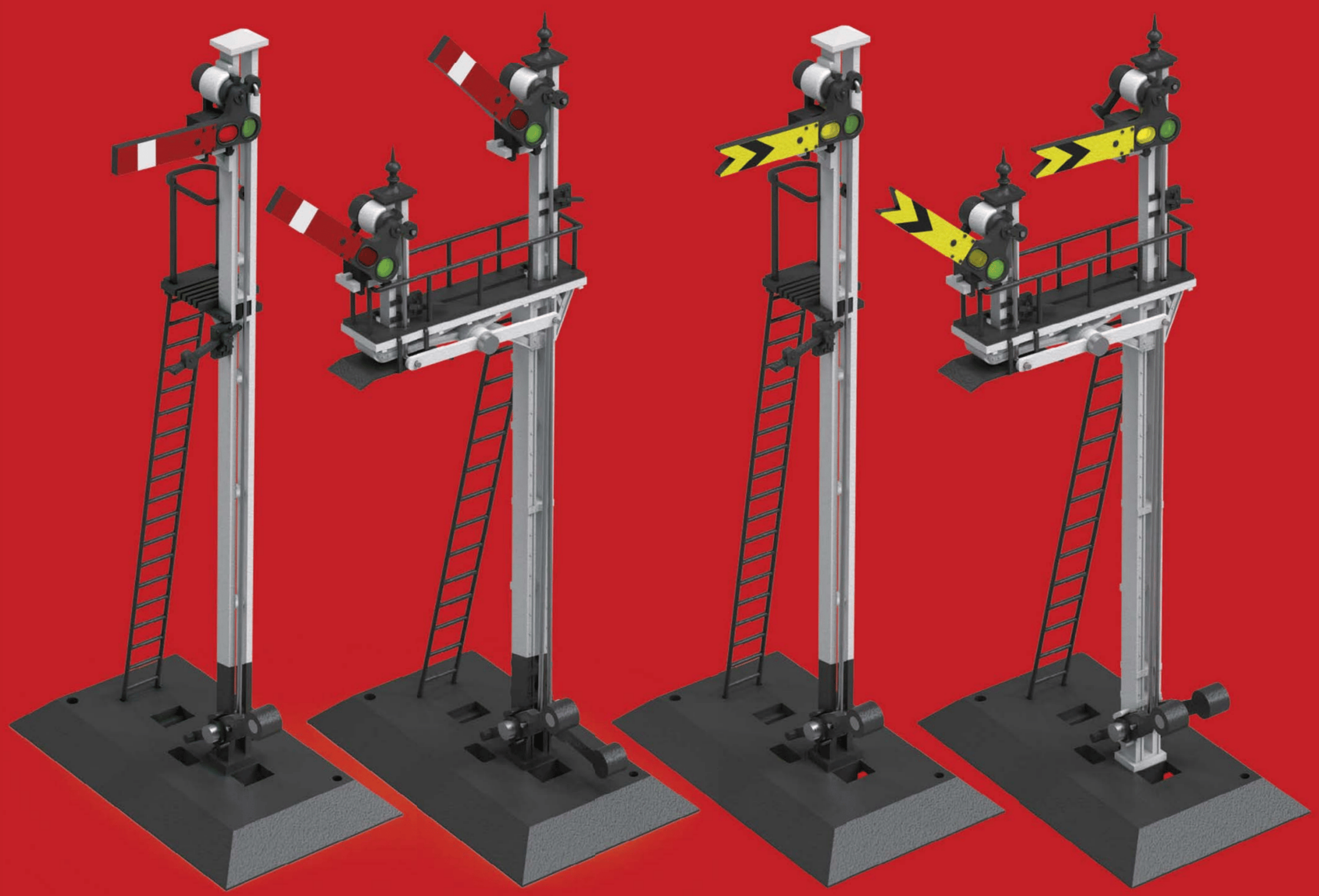

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INSIDE SPRING 26 BRM

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p48 How to paint an etched brass hut
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INSPIRING LAYOUTS

p92 Barnwood (N)
This busy fictional port, set in the North, provides plenty of operational opportunities and comes packed with exciting details.





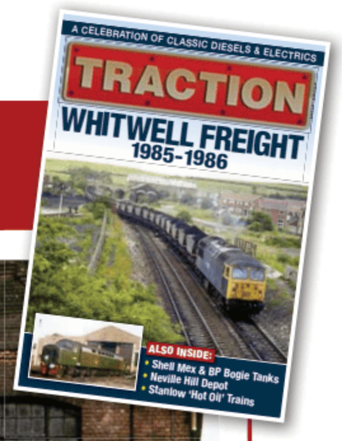
p20 Canalside (OO)
Action is the priority with this club layout, which is a playground for running members' stock, where you should expect the unexpected.





p34 Clyre Valley Railway (OO9)
Combining a love for narrow gauge railways and Irish 3ft lines, Tim Couling serves up challenging movements and landscaped vistas.

TRACTION





p72 Exploring Whitwell in 1985 and 1986
p78 Classic wagons: Shell Mex & BP bogie tanks
p84 Stanlow to Teesport 'Hot Oil' trains
p86 Travel to the north and look back at 60 years of Neville Hill Depot in Leeds

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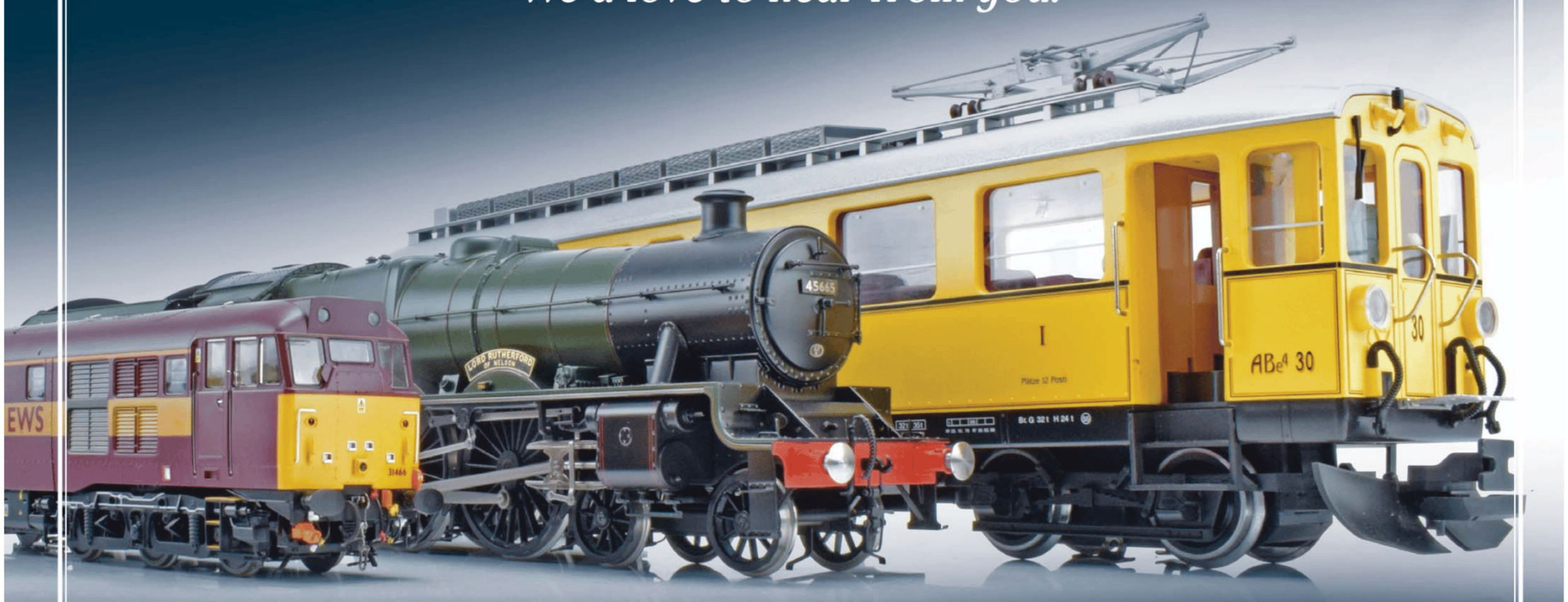

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T. Smart ★★★★★

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All went very smoothly - once I'd packaged the items up, it was collected free of charge and I got a good price that was transferred direct to my bank a day after they received the items.

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R. Smalley ★★★★★

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D. Ager ★★★★★

I'm an international buyer, and particularly a fan of British N Gauge, my orders have always been fulfilled and packed above and beyond my expectations. The prices even factoring in the current exchange rate of the AUD to GDP and postage are often cheaper than what I can source here in Australia. A wide selection of manufacturers and models. I'd highly recommend this store.

D. ★★★★★

I've been a satisfied customer of Rails for a long time with my previous online orders. I'm happy to say that my first visit to the store today did not disappoint, as I expected! The service was outstanding, the staff know exactly what they're doing and are more than competent enough to help you get exactly what you're looking for. Would recommend to anyone looking for anything to try them first!



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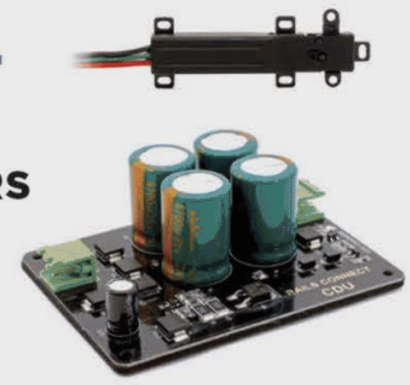

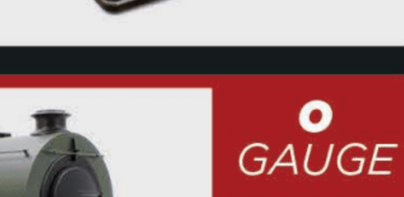

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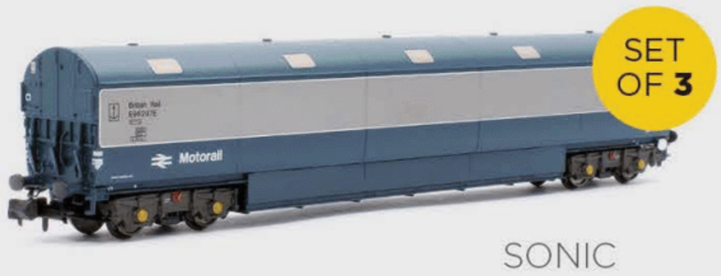

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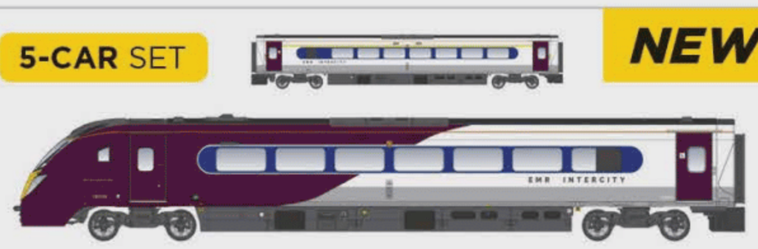

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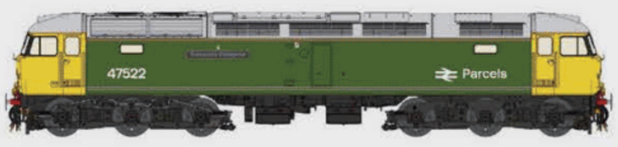

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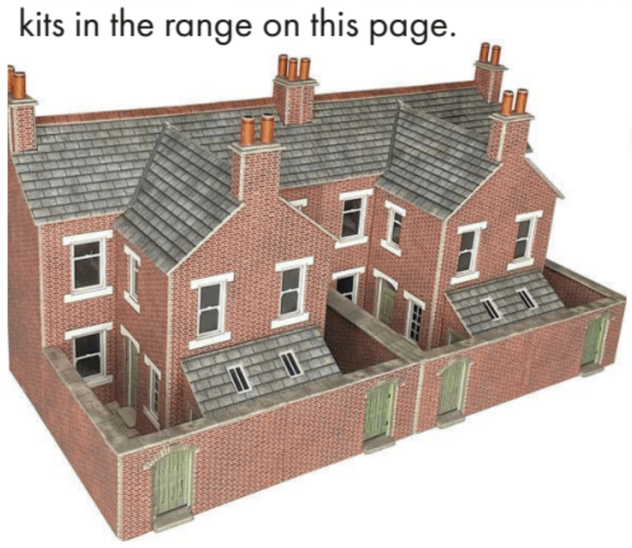





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PO309 CORNER SHOP/PUB - STONE £19.00

PO304 TERRACED HOUSE BACKS BRICK £19.00

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PN116 CORNER SHOP BRICK £12.00



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PN175 TERRACED HOUSE FRONTS STONE £9.00

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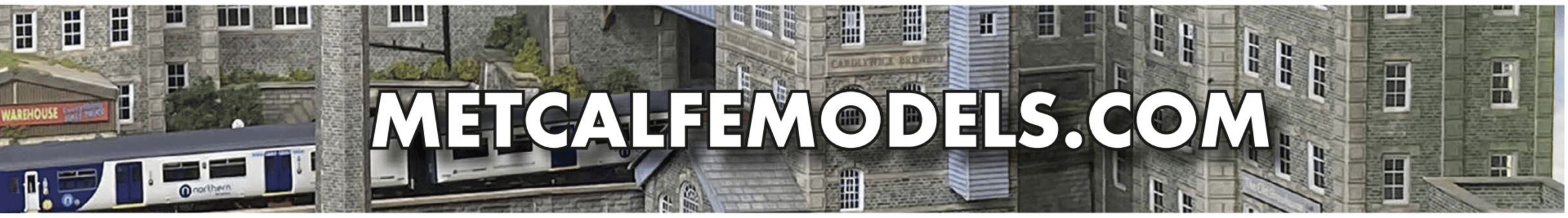

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A goods working has been held awaiting a fast passenger train to overtake on the through road - the signals are both on, so perhaps the express is running late.

TAIL CHASER

Action is the priority with this clubroom layout, which is a playground for running members' stock, where you should expect the unexpected.

Words: Julian Tominey **Photography:** Phil Parker

FACTFILE

LAYOUT NAME: Canalside
SCALE/GAUGE: 4mm:1ft/16.5mm/OO
SIZE: 18ft x 18ft 5in
ERA/REGION: BR (WR)/GWR
LAYOUT TYPE: Continous run

TOP RIGHT: A *Star* accelerates after taking the through road.

MIDDLE RIGHT: A D1000 series *Western* rumbles in as the porter waits to load luggage 'sent ahead' - it must be 1962 as the diesel has yet to receive a yellow warning panel.



BELOW: A *King* on a stopping service (must be a 'running in' turn) waits in the up platform. Canalside is on a busy route - the through road starter is off for another train to pass.



'Canalside' is a 'tail-chaser' with extensive storage loops on the rear baseboards. The layout is a permanent feature of the South Coast MRC clubroom and is kept available for members' use at any time.

Located on a busy double-track main line with both platform and through lines in the up and down directions, Canalside station is located (no surprise!) next to a canal between two hills, with tunnels at either end. No goods facilities are available at the station as these are assumed to be located in the town beyond the tunnel on the left-hand side of the layout.

West Country

The layout is set in Great Western territory, and that company's locomotives and stock can usually be seen in operation during the regular club meetings. That said, the OO gauge members have very varied interests and, for normal running sessions, no rules are enforced – so an HST set could well be spotted passing the Titfield Thunderbolt!

'Canalside' was not built at our club; it was originally built by members of the Burnham & District MRC, then spotted for sale by some of our club members at a West Country exhibition. The layout was taken on by our club with the intention of exhibiting, but it is very heavy and very solidly

"...for normal running sessions, no rules are enforced – so an HST set could well be spotted passing the Titfield Thunderbolt!"

constructed, so after a short time, it was decided to leave it permanently set up in the clubroom.

The layout now occupies a central space surrounded on three sides by 'St Stephen's' - our extensive O gauge layout.

Detailed look

Inspection of the layout plan will quickly show that there is no scope for shunting, but this matters little. The members, especially those without an extensive home layout, really value having a simple layout with a decent length of run that they can quickly get trains running. Multiple trains can be made up and held in the storage loops while the main lines are used and trains are easily swapped, and a good variety of services paraded through the station.

'Canalside' is visually a very attractive layout. The viewer will immediately see the canal and the eye follows this along past the locks to a thriving public house at the right-hand of the layout. To the left of the station, there are busy canal basins, wharfs and warehouses located beneath the sweeping railway viaduct.



ABOVE: As a *King* arrives on an up passenger service, the local spotters have missed the unusual sight of a *Castle* on goods duty. The crew must have left the footplate to check something out of sight on the far side of the engine.

LEFT: The canal wharves are quiet today as a *Western* emerges from the tunnel on a up working.

A panoramic view of the station. The outputs of a well-known manufacturer of lineside plastic kits are much in evidence - and still available after getting on for 70 years!



ABOVE: An atmospheric view of the canal warves under the railway viaduct.

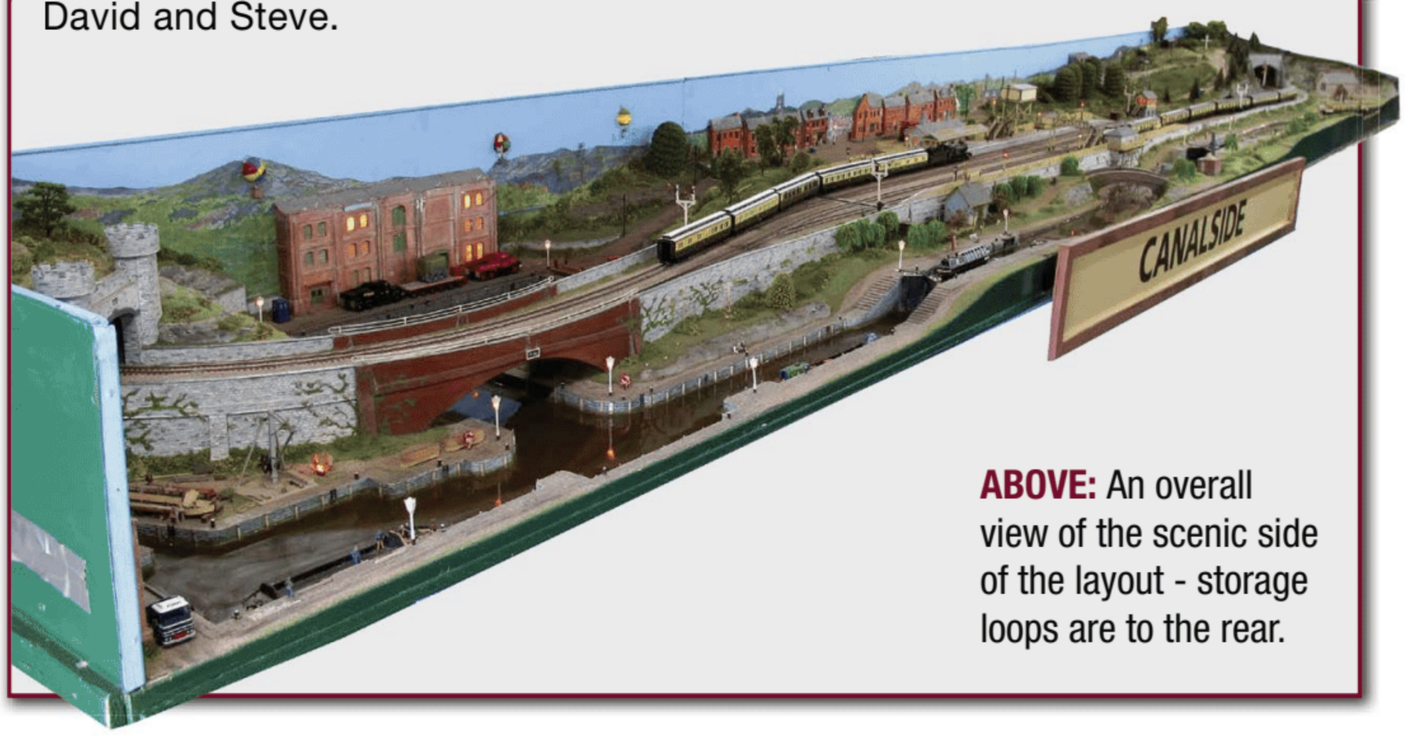


ABOVE: The warves are quiet today - most traffic goes by rail nowadays.



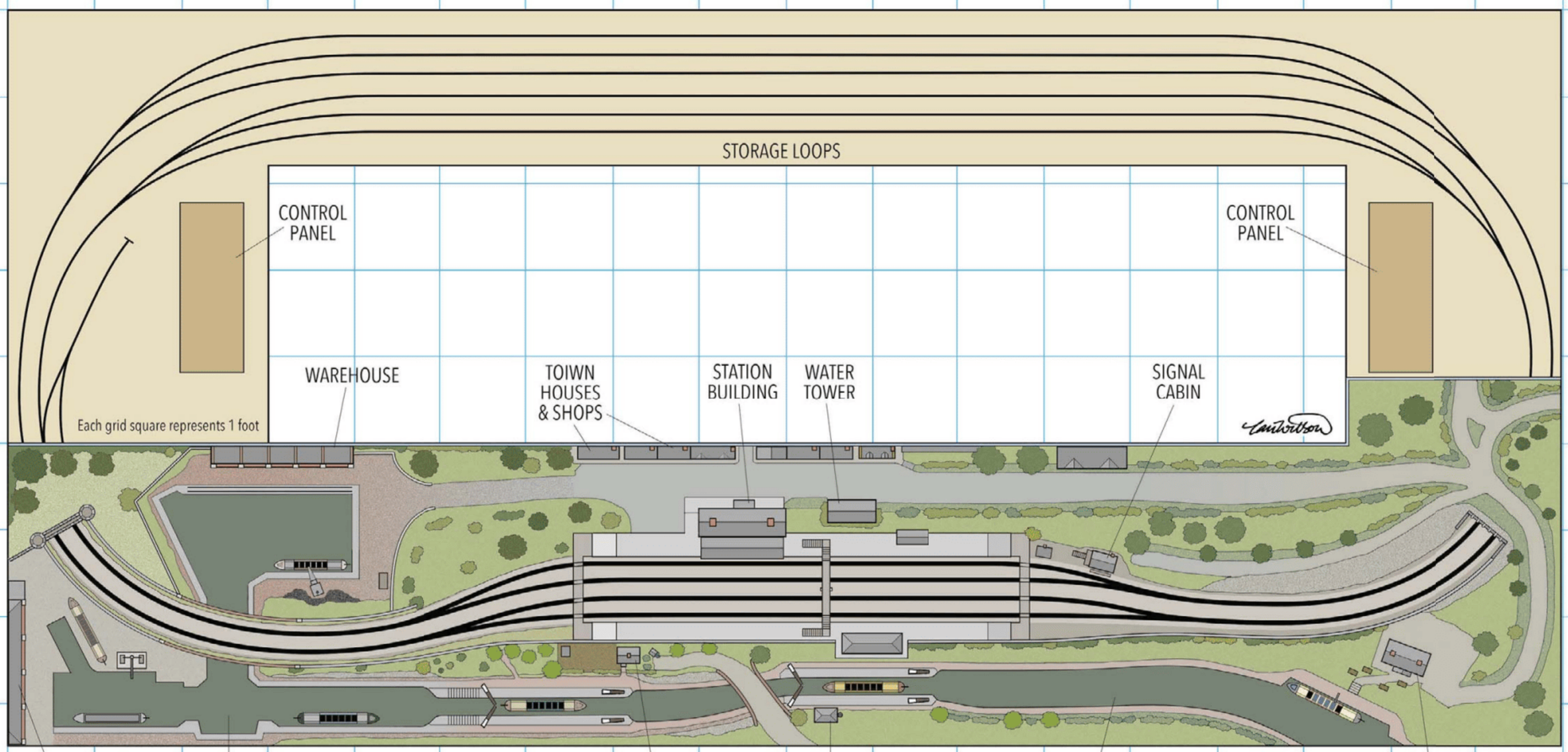
The Team

Just some of the OO gauge section members of The South Coast Model Railway Club. Left to right: Brian, Bill, Julian, David, Dennis, David and Steve.



ABOVE: An overall view of the scenic side of the layout - storage loops are to the rear.

TRACKPLAN



A road climbs uphill from the canal basin to reach the station forecourt, with rows of houses and shops opposite the station. An integrated transport system is clearly provided for the residents of Canalside as several companies' buses can be seen at and around the station.

'Canalside' is not set in a particular historic period, but the scenery and fittings are most appropriate for trains running in timescales from the 1930s to the 1960s.

A feature of 'Canalside' is lighting – the extensive station, road and canalside lights remain on as long as power to the layout is switched on. The eagle-eyed viewer will notice the flickering burners of several hot air balloons.

Operational fun

There are separate control panels for each running line and its associated storage loops at each end of the layout. There is a large operating well in the centre of the layout, but members usually prefer to avoid ducking under as each set of controls is easily reached from outside the baseboards. Both the up and down lines and their respective storage routes can be operated in isolation as either DCC or analogue, there being selector switches on each control panel.



ABOVE: Patrons of the Bell Inn enjoy the fine weather and a pint while parcels railcar no 34 hums past on an up working.

MIDDLE RIGHT: Behind the signal box is a quiet lane - a gentleman out for a stroll takes no notice as another stopping train pulls away from the up platform.



BOTTOM RIGHT: The down lines, platform and waiting room seen through the footbridge.

That heavy transformer will need both tractor units to climb away from the wharves. On the viaduct, railcar No. 4 arrives to pick up urgent parcels while a down goods train leaves the station.

MIDDLE NEAR RIGHT:
Steam on the road - a traction engine awaits its next haulage job.



MIDDLE FAR RIGHT:
Is that *Bessie* parked on the station forecourt? No sign of the 3rd Doctor though - or the Brigadier...



BOTTOM NEAR RIGHT:
A canal pleasure boat is ready to take passengers for a gentle cruise - they could be arriving on the train just pulling in.



BOTTOM FAR RIGHT:
A good view of the through lines with diesel hydraulic power, ready to depart.



Track is Peco code 100 for maximum flexibility in running the wide variety of stock our members possess. Points are all electrically-operated, and isolation switches are provided for the storage loops for analogue control. Analogue train operation is by hand-held controllers with wander leads, DCC control is by wireless handset.

Signals are manual at present, and it would appear that the local S&T engineer has erroneously installed the upper quadrant signals of another company! Currently, the signals are venerable metal Hornby Dublo and Crescent models purely for practicality. We have found that more detailed plastic signals are very vulnerable to damage on a layout with open access to all members.

Future Plans

The layout is essentially complete with little scope for major enhancements, but we do have plans to add a narrow-gauge feed system to the canal wharfs. This will entail installing a fiddle yard behind and below the standard gauge running lines at the left side of the layout, with a line exiting from a tunnel onto the canal wharfs. The other main development would be appropriate GWR signals working simultaneously with the points – assuming that we can construct robust models, of course. ■



TOP LEFT: Timber on the wharf has arrived by barge - the crane lorry will provide the lift, but the flatbed is overdue - a puncture en route perhaps?

MIDDLE LEFT: Ah, here comes that flatbed. The bargemen have finished uploading - and are glad it's not a long walk over to the Bell Inn.



BELOW: The canal lock is peaceful while the railway is busy as ever. In the distance, balloonists have taken to the air.

> “The viewer will immediately see the canal and the eye follows this along past the locks to a thriving public house at the right hand of the layout.”



COMMUNITY

EDITOR'S COMMENT

As this issue heads to the printers, we are once again getting ready to open our doors for the British Festival of Railway Modelling at Doncaster. Although we have a number of key exhibitions throughout the year, our Doncaster show is one of the editorial team's favourite. We are biased, of course, but as the name suggests, it's something of a celebration of the magazine, with many layouts in attendance having graced these pages over the years.

And there is no respite for us here, hot on Doncaster's heels is our London show, The London Festival of Railway Modelling, which will take place over the weekend of March 21-22nd. Amazingly, we are also celebrating 25 years of hosting the event at Alexandra Palace, a number which seems hard to grasp – it certainly doesn't feel like it has been 25 years.

Time does have a habit of running away and nobody knows this better than railway modellers, with months slipping into years dedicated to working on new layouts. The three layouts inside this issue are no exception and all are inspired by various eras within the UK's rail history.

It is inspiring to see these creations now complete (or as complete as a model railway can be), and they all offer their own take on well-known locations. 'Canalside', the first layout in this issue, was originally acquired as a testbed to run trains, but took a life of its own. The lighting in particular is impressive on this layout.

Next up is the scenically masterful 'Clyre Valley Railway', which blew us away at Rapido Railex in September last year. You will also be able to see it in action at our NEC show in November.

Finally, 'Barnwood' in N gauge. This busy fictional port, set in the North of England, provides plenty of operational opportunities for this builder and comes packed with exciting details, including some clever modelling of rail, road and sea operations.

Enjoy the issue and, hopefully, we will see you at one of our shows soon.

Happy Modelling

Debbie Wood

BRAKING PERFORMANCE

In last month's BRM, I sent in a response to John Cherry about the additional B after the 5F power classification as an indication of the braking performance of the K Class.

Following this, I posted a query on RMweb concerning this topic and forum member @WT85 came up with an extract from a 1954 BR Freight Train operation notice, which explains the system better than I could. It would appear that the B classification was considerably inferior to the A in braking performance, the load tables showing the difference, and emphasising that maximum loadings were specified for all routes, in both directions and for all classes of loco that might be running on each line. It would seem that the system was specific to the Southern Region, although a number of ex-LMS and BR Standard classes are included.

Nick Holliday

WEEKEND PLANS...

ABRAIL 2026

Organised by Abingdon & District MRC, this large two-day show plays host to over 50 layouts, in a variety of scales and gauges, at the Abingdon & Witney College, in Abingdon. Entry costs £13.00 for an adult if pre-booked and benefits from free parking and regular bus services from Didcot and Oxford.

DATE: March 7-8th, 2026

Sodbury Vale MRC Anniversary Exhibition

In celebration of the club's 50th anniversary, Sodbury Vale MRC will be hosting an exhibition at the Concorde Hangar at Aerospace Bristol. Visitors can expect over 50 layouts, 20 trade stands, vintage buses and traction engines, plus much more, all under the wings of Concorde.

DATE: Saturday, March 14th, 2026

Basingstoke Model Railway Show

Basingstoke and North Hants Model Railway Society will once again be hosting this popular exhibition, which will be held at Blue Coat School (formerly Aldworth), Western Way, in Basingstoke. Admission costs £10, with accompanied children free to enter.

DATE: March 14-15th, 2026

The London Festival of Railway Modelling

Celebrating 25 years at Alexandra Palace, London's leading model railway event is back again, promising more layouts, trade stands and family fun than ever before. This two-day event will offer over 40 layouts, big trade names and manufacturers, plus booking early can help you save and gain early access to the show – find out more at www.world-of-railways.co.uk/shows.

DATE: March 21-22nd, 2026

Royston and District Model Railway Club exhibition

Held at the Bassingbourn Village College, near Royston, this one-day event promises a great day out for all. With around 20 layouts in attendance, trade support and societies and demonstrations, there will be plenty to see on the day and good value for the £5 entry fee.

DATE: Saturday, March 28th, 2026

RAPIDO PROJECT UPDATES

N Gauge Class 45 and 46: arrived at the Rapido warehouse and are undergoing final checks

Evolution Batch 1 part 1 (SECR, LBSC and Longmoor), GWR Open C and LMS Hoppers: Rapido hopes to have them in its warehouse this month

GN Vans: painted samples received

LNWR opens: painted samples received

N Gauge LNER Dyno Car: painted samples received

S160: now to be delivered in the first part of Q2.

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WIN A TT:120 J50 WITH BRM



Fancy winning the TT:120 J50, currently reviewed on pages 124-125? TT3026M BR (Late) J50 Class, 0-6-0T No.68965, worth £149.99, is up for grabs for one lucky reader.

For your chance to win, simply answer the question below and head to **www.world-of-railways.co.uk/Competitions.**

What was the nickname given to the J50 by its crew?

A: Submersibles
B: Submarines
C: Vessels
D: Warships

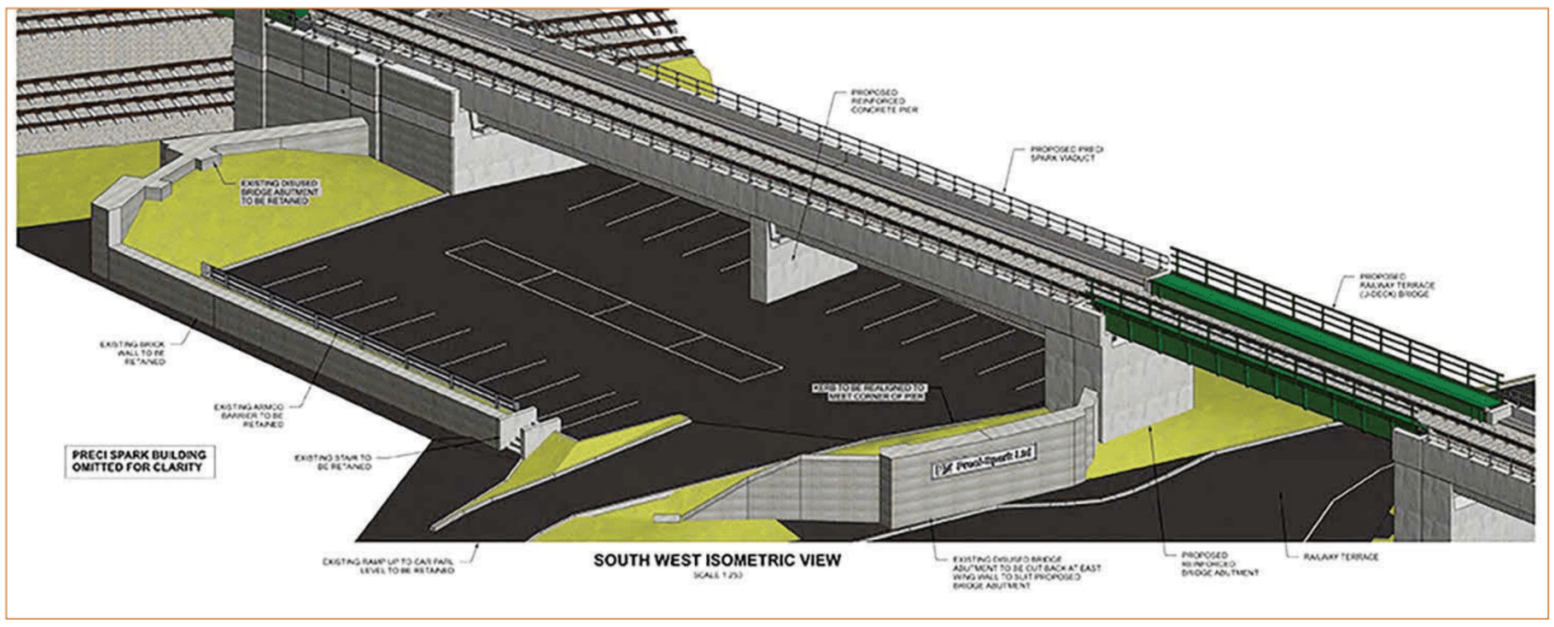
The competition will close on March 31st, 2026.

GCR EXPANSION PLANS

The Great Central Railway expects to take two further steps forward with its long-running Reunification project in 2026, with construction planned on a new road bridge and a short section of viaduct in Loughborough. The work is currently costed at around £3.5 million.

Reunification aims to reconnect the railway's Leicestershire and Nottinghamshire sections, restoring continuity to what would become an 18-mile heritage line. The project is intended to re-establish a historic main-line route while linking existing visitor destinations across the East Midlands.

Three major elements of the scheme have already been completed, following several years of fundraising and preparatory work. Planning permission is now in place for the remaining sections, ground investigations have been carried out, and detailed design work is progressing. Subject to funding, construction activity is expected to resume on site in summer 2026.

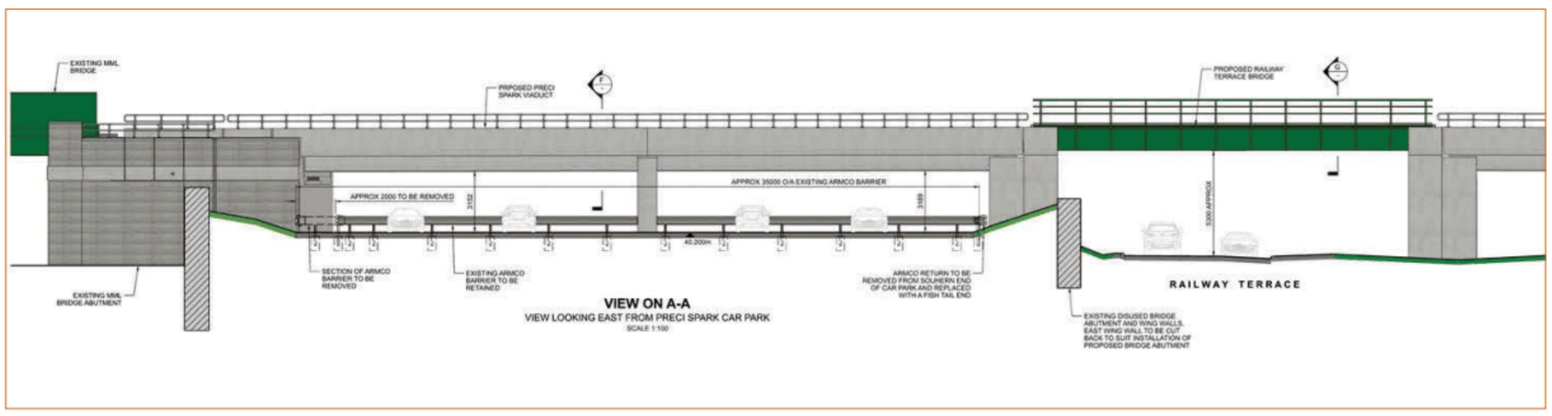


The next phase will replace a further 60 metres of the approximately 500-metre gap that currently separates the two halves of the railway. This gap dates back to the removal of track in the 1970s.

Earlier stages of the project included the construction of a new bridge over the Midland Main Line at Loughborough, a significant and highly visible piece of engineering.

More than £2.5 million has been raised towards the next stage of works, with donations coming from supporters both in the UK and overseas. Around 75% of the funding required for the upcoming construction is now in place.

Alongside physical works, the railway continues preparatory and organisational activity ahead of eventual reconnection. Fundraising remains ongoing, with further progress dependent on securing the remaining balance needed to proceed.



COMMUNITY

A SAD LOSS TO OUR COMMUNITY

I'm very sorry to have to say that Martin Finney, creator of 'Semley' in P4, arguably the best model of a pre-grouping railway, died on January 26th, 2026, after a short illness.

As well as being a superb modeller, Martin was a lovely man who generously shared his knowledge and skills. Many modellers left an operating session of 'Semley' inspired to up their game.

It was Martin's wish, shared by his family, that 'Semley' should live on after his death. The core operating team, which includes some of the UK's leading modellers, as well as at least one also-ran, is committed to making this happen. But 'Semley' is a big layout, some 40'x15', and so will be difficult to rehouse. Any suggestions will be gratefully received.

Colin Divall

BRM Says: We are saddened to hear of Martin's death and pass on our heartfelt condolences to his family and friends. Martin was a fantastic modeller and a wonderful personality to have in the hobby, providing inspiration and help to anyone who asked for it. He will be missed.



NOSTALGIC FUN IN MAY

Following the rousing success of VE Day 80 last May at Hopetown Darlington, the visitor attraction has released details on an upcoming 1940s-themed Vintage Weekend. It is a three-day celebration this late May Bank Holiday weekend from Saturday, May 23rd, to Monday, May 25th, 2026.

Over the course of this free-to-attend weekend, Hopetown Darlington will transform into a vibrant celebration of vintage culture, capturing the spirit of yesteryear with a programme packed full of engaging events and attractions. On Monday, visitors are encouraged to come dressed in their favourite 1940s attire.





Saturday, May 23rd – Classic and Vintage Vehicle Rally - Enjoy an impressive display of vintage and classic cars, motorcycles and more as enthusiasts bring their gleaming machines to this historic site.

Sunday, May 24th – Vintage Wares & Wonders Day - A market atmosphere awaits with an array of vintage-inspired stalls. Visitors can explore curiosities, collectibles and handcrafted goods that evoke the style and spirit of days gone by.

Monday, May 25th – 1940s Day - Immerse yourself in the sights and sounds of the 1940s with themed entertainment and activities. Highlights include talks and fashion showcases that bring the wartime era vividly to life across the Hopetown site. There will be live music and dancing, a community tea party, games and activities and one or two more surprises.

Inspirational modelling with RMweb

Get involved and visit rmweb.co.uk – under topic 'Show us Yours – Realistic Modelling' - and post your pictures!



'East Road' is an O gauge exhibition layout that was built in 2024. It is a fictional Scottish-themed layout modelling the BR Blue TOPS era. **RMweb user: MP40058**



14-inch special Peckett 0-4-0ST during a pause in shunting at Hadleigh's Sevastopol Works in autumn 1959. **RMweb user: Ruston**



Newly allocated, a B1 awaits the next fish train to London, once the pallets have been loaded! **RMweb user: Carl L**



A scene from the early 1900s; a Jones-designed 'Big Goods' (No. 113) hauls a mixed rake of goods up the long climb to Druimuachdar while the sun sets on this fantastic Highland landscape. **RMweb user: JonathonAG**



This station was inspired by Bakewell on the old Midland main line and was scratch-built, among many other models on the layout. **RMweb user: Gavdownunder**



Dunthorne's Brewery at Elmleigh Market has a day under the sunny Essex sky before starting its working life on the layout. **RMweb user: Robock**



Commercial British OHLE has come a long way since my clumsy, handmade stuff on my 2018 'Perry Barr' layout. Pictured is a Vitrains Class 37 and Bachmann Mk. 1 coaches. **RMweb user: PaternosterRow**



With the GM takeover in full swing at Baggies TMD, are the Crompton's days numbered? **RMweb user: hammy**

BANKING SUCCESS

A love for narrow gauge railways and inspired by Irish 3ft lines, this second layout from Tim Couling serves up challenging movements and landscaped vistas.

Words: Tim Couling **Photography:** Phil Parker

FACTFILE

LAYOUT NAME: Clyre Valley Railway
SCALE/GAUGE: 4mm/ft, 9mm gauge (009)
SIZE: 14ft x 14ft 7in (U-shape)
ERA/REGION: Cornwall, 1920s/30s, fictitious
LAYOUT TYPE: End-to-end

The goods shed is a hive of activity as Pacific *St Blaise*, built by Paul Windle, arrives at St Breock station with a Bodmin-bound passenger train. The signals are cut-down Dapol products modified to use servos.

TOP RIGHT: A Peckett 0-6-0 saddle tank shunts wagons at the goods shed in St Breock. The PO coal wagon, *St Breward,* has the name of a real local coal merchant using dry print lettering by POW Sides.

MIDDLE RIGHT: The station forecourt at St Breock. The cars are by Oxford Diecast and the building is a kit-bash from two Wills wayside station kits. Motor Carriage No. 1 lurks in the bay platform, ready for its next trip.

BELOW: Having left St Breock, Pacific *St Blaise* rolls over the viaduct (partly inspired by Lispole Viaduct on the Tralee & Dingle line in Ireland) heading up the line.





The 'Clyre Valley' has grown and expanded from a seed idea, which occurred when I built my first exhibition layout, 'Port St George', back in the early-1990s. 'Port St George' was set in Cornwall, being based on Padstow, as the terminus of a common carrier narrow gauge line to Wadebridge & Bodmin.

I've always been interested in narrow gauge railways, but what really lit the fire was discovering the Irish 3ft NG lines, in particular, the County Donegal, Londonderry & Lough Swilly and the Cork, Blackrock & Passage. I was interested in the way that Ireland had developed its railway network, using Irish standard gauge to link larger towns, supported by a network of narrow gauge lines for less populated areas. As I finished 'Port St George', I asked myself what would have happened if the same premise had occurred on the UK mainland. That it didn't happen was largely down to the Gauge Act of 1846, but, I asked, what might have happened if there had been a more flexible approach to railway building outside the main trunk routes?

With family commitments reducing modelling to an armchair exercise, I developed the theme and did some research. Fast forward to 2012, when I could start a new layout and had pretty much fully formed the concept.

> "The 'Clyre Valley' would be a common carrier with a freight backbone of china clay together with some seasonal holiday passenger traffic."



The two banking locos, No 7 *Hercules* and No 8 *Samson*, rest between duties at St Breock. The fire devil stops the water supply freezing, but there is as yet no such luxury for the crews. In the background, Motor Carriage No 1 has the signal to leave the loop.

First steps

Further strength to the backstory comes from the story of the real North Cornwall Railway, which took the LSWR 17 years to build and was split into multiple separate companies to enable fundraising. Add to this the wild and sparsely-populated terrain of the area, tight curvature and slow speeds, and it seemed a likely candidate to have been built as narrow gauge. Thus, the 'Clyre Valley' I visualised had grown up to be a narrow gauge secondary railway of 2'6" gauge, bringing together what was, in real life, the LSWR Bodmin & Wadebridge with their North Cornwall line from Launceston to Padstow. The 'Clyre Valley' would be a common carrier with a freight backbone of china clay, together with some seasonal holiday passenger traffic. Stock would be of a larger NG outline, more in keeping with the major Irish NG lines and the overall feel would be more "main line" NG.

Having fully thought through and reworked the background, I now worked out the route on a map. While I used the standard gauge trackbed for the North Cornwall, I realised that a narrow gauge line between Wadebridge and Bodmin wouldn't need to be constrained so much by geography and could be allowed to climb up to Bodmin from outside Wadebridge rather than stick to the river valley as the standard gauge line had. The model that emerged, therefore, covers that part of the line from St Breock, just outside Wadebridge, to an imaginary moorland junction at Buckland Newton, where a branch diverges to Blissland Abbey (near Wenford Bridge).

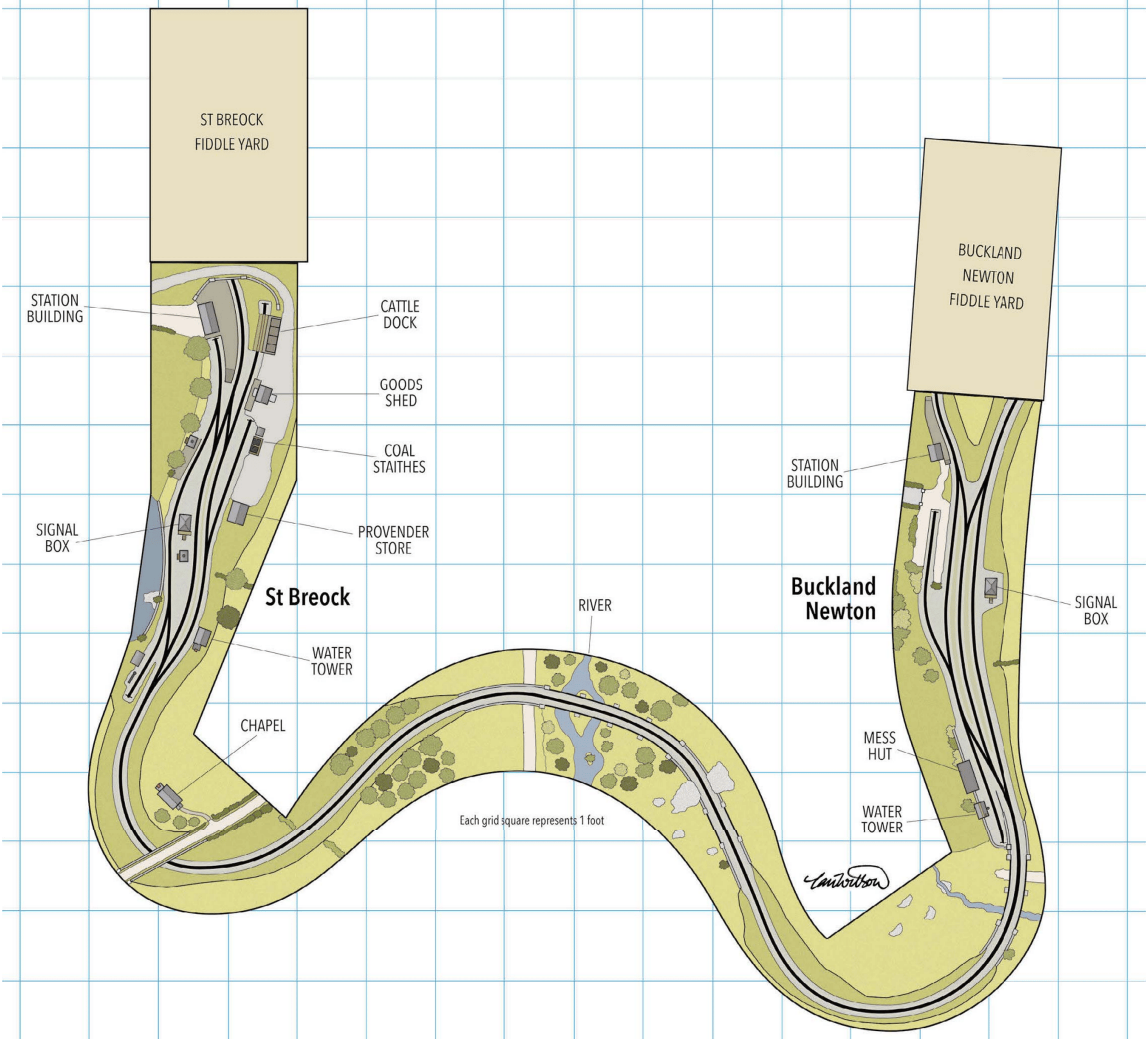




MIDDLE LEFT: The sheep are unmoved as *Hercules* banks a heavy china clay train up over the moors. The wagon tarpaulins are strips of masking tape painted and weathered with acrylics. There was just enough stickiness left to attach them to the wagons.

BOTTOM LEFT: Another Pacific, this time Black-liveried *St Piran*, rounds the curve by the chapel and starts up the bank with the daily mail and newspaper train. Lineside vegetation is mostly Woodland Scenics materials, aided by layers of static grass.

TRACKPLAN



RIGHT:
Modern image, 1920s' style, in the form of Jerry Oakey's Alco/ GE 250hp diesel electric, allegedly on trial. This is a 3D print, produced by Tom Bell, based on the Ingersol-Rand demonstrator loco of 1924, but for narrow gauge. It's seen here rolling through St Breock on ballast train duties.



The layout lives in a modern double garage, which it (just) fits, but that was the only constraint I put on the design. I sketched out the trackplan on plain paper, roughed out a size grid and then added the baseboard edges. The overall design of the layout is intended to prevent seeing both stations simultaneously; the viewer has to walk around the layout to see all of it. Initially, I planned to have the station boards as mirrored pairs, which would bolt together with end formers, but very quickly, as the odd shapes of the nine scenic boards were firmed up, I opted to have carrying cases, which each hold three scenic boards. The two fiddle yards remain separate for transport. The design of each station and the scenic journey between them is based on their supposed real location just to the west of Bodmin Moor.

In the landscape

The lower station, St Breock, is nestled in a fold in the hills by a small river, at the base of a steep climb up to the Junction. The station has all the facilities you would expect, but to service the County Showground, there is a reasonably large station building and a dedicated loading dock (we'll gloss over the fact that the railway is set in the 1920s/'30s and the County Showground didn't set up home in the village until 1960…). Branch passenger trains terminate in a bay platform and there is also a siding for the banking locos, which help heavy freight trains up the bank; there being a water crane for the locos and grounded van body to shelter the crews.

Leaving St Breock, the line climbs through a cutting lined with vegetation, passing a tin chapel at the edge of a field near an overbridge. Continuing the climb through a small wood, the line then passes over the main engineering work on the railway, the 4-span viaduct over the infant river Clyre. The viaduct marks the transition between the lush lower valley and the more open windswept moorland. After a couple of rock cuttings and an occupation bridge, the line rumbles across a 2-span viaduct over a moorland stream to enter Buckland Newton.

Buckland Newton is set up on the edge of Bodmin Moor and exists only for railway purposes and to serve a few scattered farms in the vicinity. The branch to Blissland Abbey leaves the main line here and there are interchange sidings for branch freight traffic. A small loading bank and the halt at the start of the branch cater for any local traffic. Passengers change trains down at St Breock, so the junction mostly comes alive when freight trains arrive, shunting wagons to and from the branch sidings. The trackplan at Buckland Newton is closely based on that at Boscarne Junction on the real Bodmin & Wadebridge, but with the addition of a loco servicing siding for the banking locos. Again, there are watering facilities and usually there is a wagon full of loco coal at the end of the siding. A substantial stone bothy serves as both crew room and PW shelter and is the principal building other than the signal box.



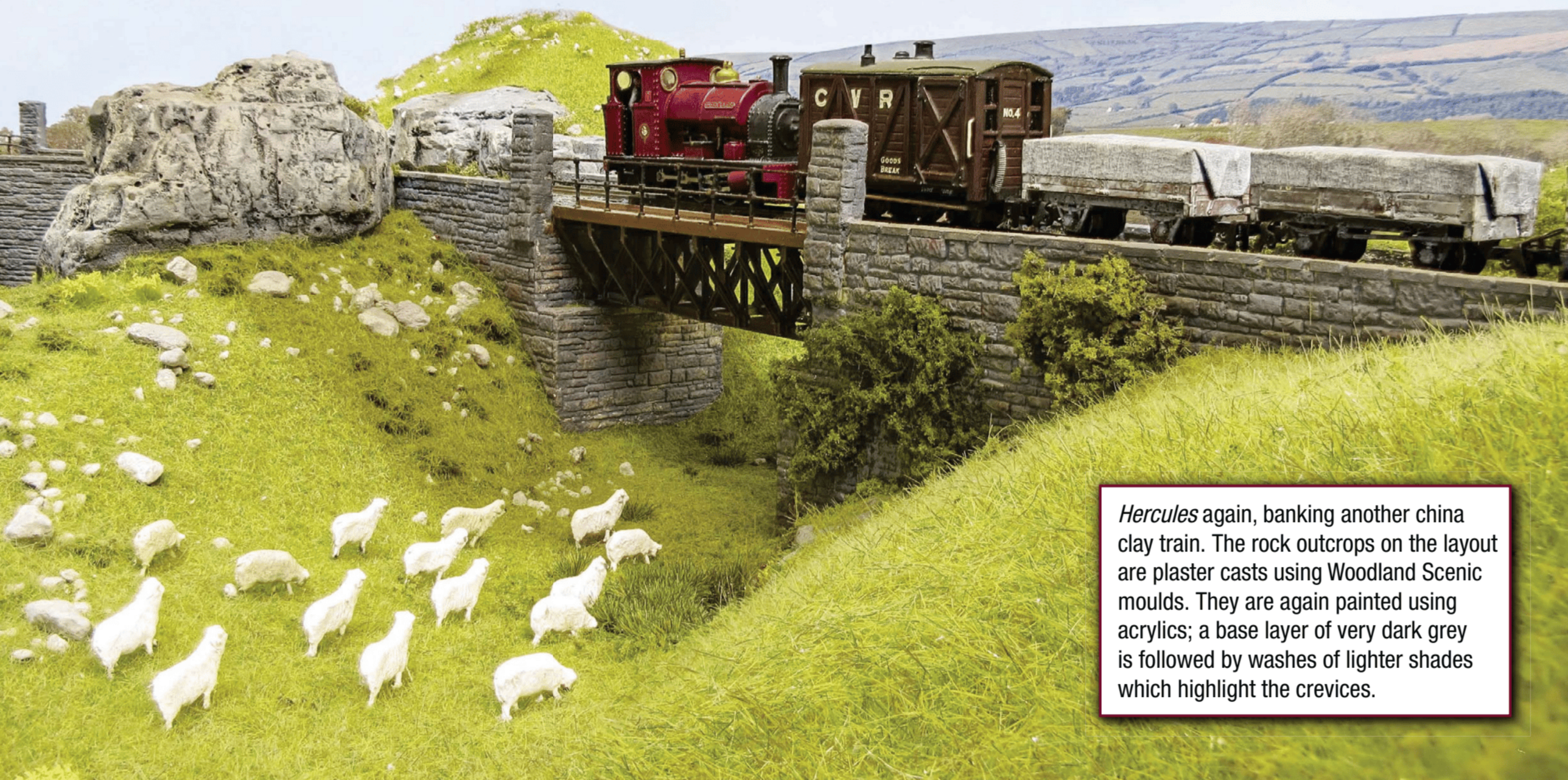
ABOVE: The layout couldn't be shown without a great operating team. Here are some of them:(left to right) Jerry, Steve, Stuart, yours truly, Ian, Ben & Alan. Thank you for all your help!

About the modeller

Name: Tim Couling
Age: 61
Number of years modelling: 45 years
Name of your first layout: 'Port St George', 009
Favourite era/region: Irish Narrow Gauge (County Donegal, Londonderry & Lough Swilly, Cork, Blackrock & Passage) have been a big influence and also British pre-grouping lines (Midland, Highland, Somerset & Dorset, Midland & Great Northern, Great Western)
Favourite locomotive: Russell, Welsh Highland Heritage Railway
I'm based in Dorset and have modelled narrow gauge railways since a teenager. I'm a long standing member of the 009 Society, the world's largest small-scale narrow gauge modelling group and a member of Wessex Narrow Gauge Modellers (WNGM) where I'm also exhibition manager. I'm currently organising WNGMs next exhibition "Narrow Gauge South 2026" on Saturday, April 25th.



LEFT: At St Breock, the coalman is deep in discussion with a customer. The Peco 'mainline 009' track is painted with a Brown Tamya acrylic. I used less ballast in the siding than for the main line and then added acrylic washes to simulate years of coal dust and grime.



Hercules again, banking another china clay train. The rock outcrops on the layout are plaster casts using Woodland Scenic moulds. They are again painted using acrylics; a base layer of very dark grey is followed by washes of lighter shades which highlight the crevices.

ABOVE No 6 *Excalibur,* one of the large 2-8-0 tanks based on the Dundas Models Sierra Leone Railway (SLR) No 85 kit, waits with a china clay train in the loop at St Breock. Like most of the locos, it sits on a Farish 08 chassis.

MIDDLE RIGHT: Pacific tank No 1 *Bodmin* rolls into St Breock with a down passenger train. Also by Paul Windle, this loco is a tank engine version of the Pacific tender locos, partly based on a design used in South Africa.

BOTTOM RIGHT: At Buckland Newton, the branch loco, 0-6-0 Peckett No 15 *Achilles*, pushes a wagon towards the loading bank. Like *Hercules* and *Samson*, this a Fourdees product with as much extra weight onboard as possible.





Summer scenery

The baseboards are solid top with the actual trackbed supported above this. Once the track was laid and tested, the scenery was formed using sheets of expanded polystyrene of the type used for roof insulation. This was cut to shape and then rocky outcrops were positioned (made from plaster using Woodland Scenics moulds). This shell was then covered in plaster bandage, making sure that the rockwork was incorporated in a realistic way.

Once dry, the plaster was then painted an earth brown using a DIY emulsion, excluding the rock outcrops. Rocks were painted a "granite grey" using artists' acrylics, and for consistency, these were also used for all the stone engineering structures on the model, including the viaduct piers and approaches, platform edges and stone buildings.

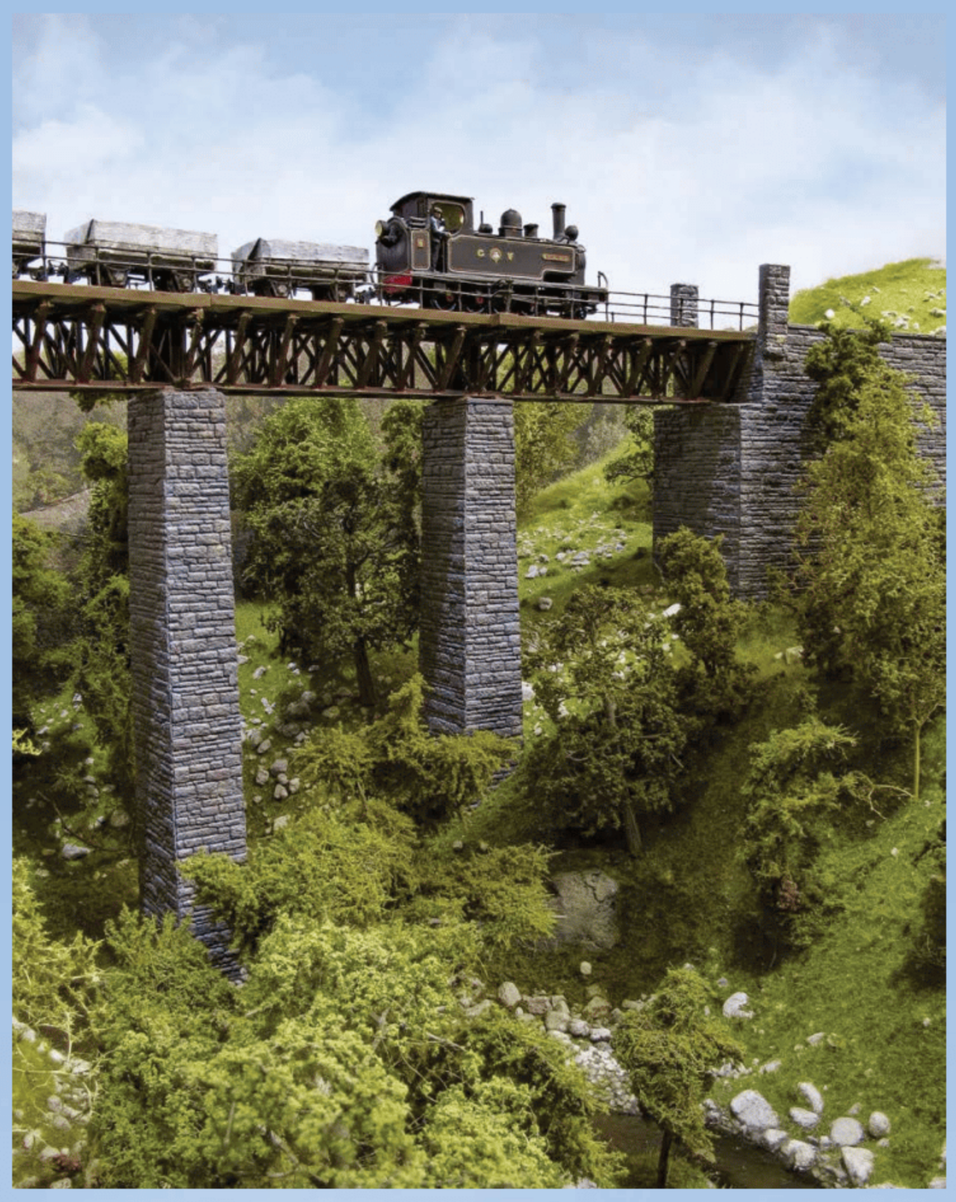
Onto this shell, I added the grass and ground cover. All the ground cover uses static grass as a base. I blend multiple packs from different manufacturers, mostly 4mm and 6mm, but with some 2mm in places. The layout is set in summer and the colours reflect that. Highlights in lighter colours on the moorland suggest that possibly the summer is drawing to a close, with some grass now dying back. Water is also by Woodland Scenics, using its Realistic Water, poured in thin layers.

The aim is to give an image of a railway in the landscape despite no board having a depth greater than 20in. Most are considerably less than this and I've used the Peco photo backscenes, which luckily are of a similar colour palette, to give greater depth to the scene.

In action

The layout is DC and is operated to a move-based sequence designed to showcase as much variety of stock as possible, as well as how a real railway of this nature might operate. The sequence lasts about 1¼ hours; at the end of which all stock is back to its starting point. The operating team usually changes over at this point and any stock rotation takes place at the same time. A good operating team who know the layout and have a sense of what I'm trying to achieve is essential. I'm very lucky to have a great team supporting the layout at shows. You know who you are – thank you!

In real terms, however, the key operational challenge is the steep gradient between the stations. The track rises about 6in, with real gradients of 1:30 to the viaduct and 1:60 after. The layout is DC and, initially, I was going to double-head heavier trains, the sections being set out to allow that. However, a chance trial when the layout was being tested showed that banking trains was a possibility. After some intensive tests, this rapidly became the accepted way of operation for all freight trains and the sequence used at exhibitions is built around this. Passenger trains are not banked but are occasionally double-headed.



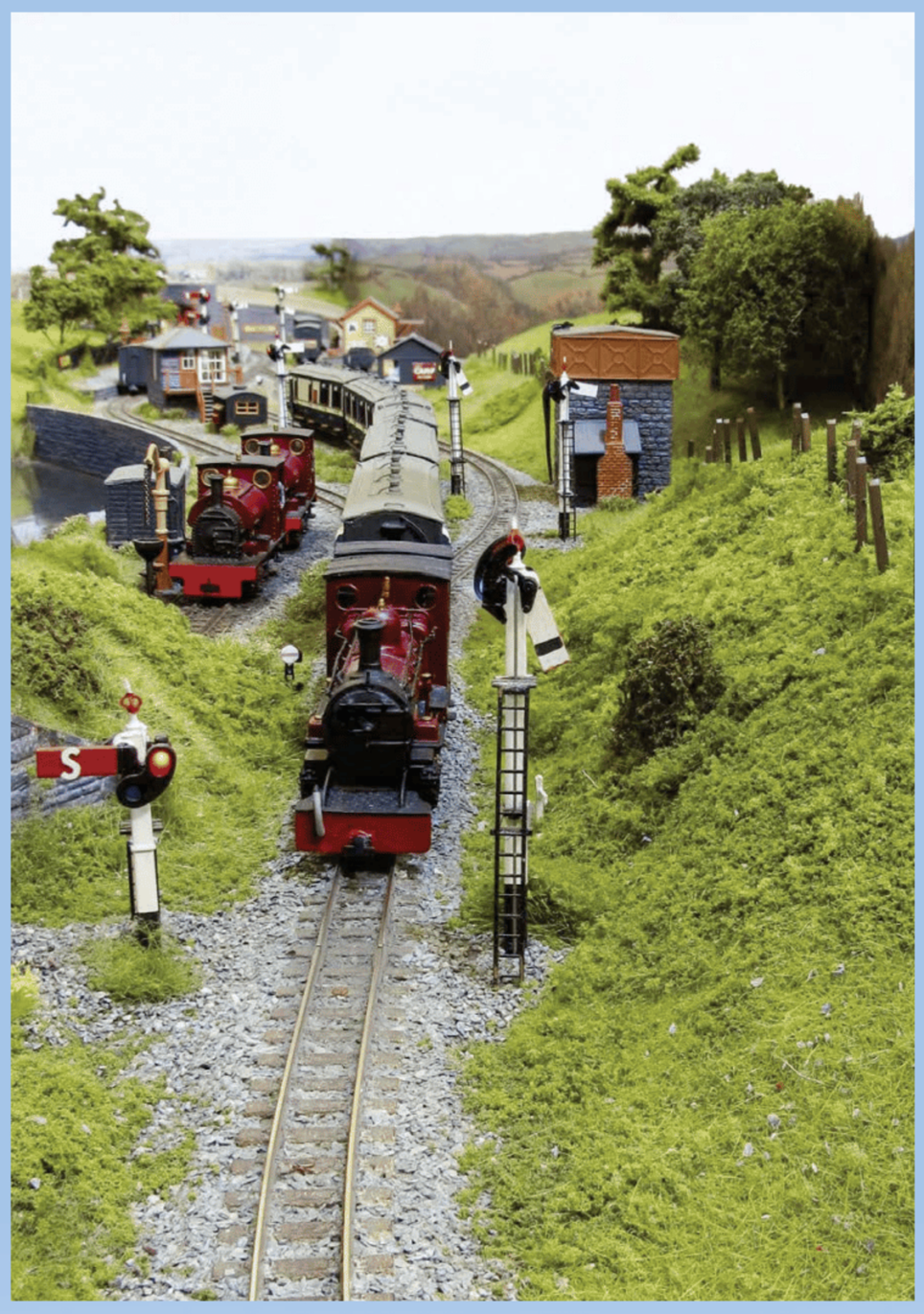
TOP LEFT: The viaduct is the centrepiece of the layout, a passing train always adding a bit of drama. I'm always adding trees to the valley, which come from a number of sources, including some made from Sea Foam as well as some ready-made purchases.

BOTTOM: Pacific *St Blaise* makes it to the top of the bank and crosses the final girder bridge approaching Buckland Newton. The stonework uses Wills Coarse Stone sheets; they are also painted with acrylics with some stones picked out in darker colours.

> "After a couple of rock cuttings and an occupation bridge, the line rumbles across a two span viaduct over a moorland stream to enter Buckland Newton."

RIGHT: One of the Pacifics takes a passenger train out of St Breock and is just about to start the climb to Buckland Newton.

BELOW: The Water Tank behind *Excalibur* is a Wills SS34 kit, the D 1879 F indicating the year it was made by the Dragon Foundry at Port St George. This is one of the little details that helps bring the backstory alive and adds a link to my original layout.



Banking locos are stationed at St Breock and attach to the rear of the train, usually in the loop. The train is then taken up the hill with the banking loco taking the weight of the rear half of the train, though the precise point varies with the gradient. At Buckland Newton, the banking loco is detached and takes water. Naturally, at various points in the sequence, the two banking locos end up at the top of the hill and need to run back down to St Breock to start the process again. Banking trains is mostly trouble-free and largely possible by using only Bachmann mechanisms for the locomotives. This gives consistent speeds across the power range and ensures that the banking loco doesn't "overtake" the train loco, potentially derailing the train.

Freight traffic is made up of china clay workings, together with more general freight trains. Passenger trains intermingle with these and there are occasional "specials" to make a bit of a difference. As in a real railway, freight takes second place to passengers and freight shunting at stations makes way for passing passenger trains. The branch passengers are served with railcars, described by the railway as "Motor Carriages", which add further variety.

Naturally, the level of activity is much more in keeping with a busier narrow gauge system. Thus, the line is fully-signalled, in keeping with the traffic; the section modelled being a block section with signal

"As in a real railway, freight takes second place to passengers and freight shunting at stations makes way for passing passenger trains."

Hunslet 2-6-2 tank No 3 *Merlin* rolls down grade out of Buckland Newton with a freight train. Again, a reworking of the popular Dundas SLR No 85 kit, the loco is painted with Phoenix Precision paints lined out with Fox Transfers.

boxes at the stations. The signals themselves are cut-down Dapol GW lower-quadrant models, the early version with built-in motors. I've replaced the supplied motors with servos controlled by a Megapoints control board, which has proved easy to set up and reliable in use. The signaling scheme is based on GW practice, but is adapted to the needs of the railway and does not completely follow it. Shunting signals are also modelled but are not operational.

Locomotives and stock are mostly kit-bashed. I cannot usually build a loco kit as intended by the manufacturer, though it has been known for the freight stock.

Locomotives include a number of tank locos based on the Dundas Models Sierra Leone/W&L No 14. This is a sturdy Hunslet design and I have nine in service, including four built as 2-6-2 tanks and four built as 2-8-0 tanks. The basic kit has been heavily modified in all cases, but it is versatile and lends itself easily to modification. Other locomotives include three rather nice 0-6-0 saddle tanks by Peckett, which do duty as the banking locos. These are 3D-printed bodies from Fourdees and really look the part. Passenger traffic is in the hands of a brace of 4-6-2 Pacific locos built by Paul Windle and based on the Darjeeling C class but "selectively enlarged" to bring them more in line with a 2'6" loading gauge. A pair of Pacific tank locos, based on the tender locos, also do duty on passenger trains.





MIDDLE LEFT:
The track on the viaduct is about 23cm above the river and this view from the river bank below is probably my favourite. The Peco Countryside Landscape photo backscene adds depth to the view, which is only 18 inches (45cm) deep.

BOTTOM LEFT:
The normal operator view of the viaduct shows the massive stone approach embankment and gives a sense of the scale of the whole construction. In reality, the embankment hides the trackbed, which has been significantly strengthened at this point to firmly anchor the viaduct close to a baseboard joint.

Trains pass at St Breock. The carriages are scratch-built around the Ratio Midland clerestory carriage sides. These are cut and shut to create a suitable selection of carriages for the line and the spare luggage ends are used to create some passenger-liveried vans.

MIDDLE RIGHT:
The small halt at Buckland Newton is at the start of the branch. The Wills SS75 bus shelter kit makes a useful building at this location. At the platform is Motor Carriage No 3, a scratch-built petrol-electric railcar based on the preserved standard gauge North Eastern example. It is seen here with a lightweight "Red" van in tow, so it's probably market day at Wadebridge.



BOTTOM RIGHT:
The chapel just outside St Breock is another Wills kit, SS70. The vicar has parked his MG in the lane. Hedges are rubberised horsehair teased out and covered with flock. Static grass was used for the verges.



Most recently, a pair of 2-8-0 tender locos have arrived based on a long out-of-production Chivers Finelines kit for an Australian/Fijian Hudswell Clarke cane loco. All these locos are powered by the Bachmann N gauge 08 chassis, which has proven to be a reliable and trouble-free unit. I have enough locos to cover the sequence, with spares in case of failure, however, further locomotives are in the pipeline.

Locomotive liveries are mostly Midland Maroon; however, some freight locos are black, though the two Pacific tank locos are in Marsh Umber. Most locos are lined-out, but I've yet to do the entire fleet.

Carriages and passenger-liveried vans are mostly scratch-built using Ratio Midland carriage sides as the base. There are over 30 in service now, covering all the needs of the full railway, and include a wide range of carriage types, as fitting for a common carrier. All these are painted in S&DJR Prussian Blue with off-white panels.

The freight stock is based around a core of 40+ Ninelines Welshpool & Llanfair (W&L) 4-wheel opens. 24 of these are dedicated to the china clay trains (12 loaded, 12 empty), with the remainder in general service and loaded accordingly. These are supplemented by some private owner wagons. The 20 or so vans are a combination of much-modified Ninelines W&L kits and some modified Std gauge 4-wheel van kits built as short bogie vans. There are

also cattle vans, timber bolster pairs and some bogie open wagons in service. Brake vans are also W&L-based, but there are also some hacked out of Ratio GWR Toad sides built as 6-wheel heavy-duty vans for the china clay trains. Examples of all these types of freight stock appear in the sequence at various times.

Future Projects

I've always envisaged this section of the 'Clyre Valley' would be the first of a trilogy of layouts. The next section, which will extend from the Buckland Newton end of the layout, will be Bodmin and its approaches, including the start of the extension to Fowey. This will make the whole layout into a rough rectangle, closing off the open end of the layout. 'Bodmin' is under construction now, trackwork is complete and wiring up well advanced. The final section of the trilogy will be a return to 'Port St George', this will connect to the St Breock end of the layout and, although I've thought through the general plan, nothing is on paper, let alone constructed. I'll take on one project at a time I think!

The layout has been well received at exhibitions, winning Best Layout in Show at the Alton FebEx in 2019 and the David Glascott trophy for Best Narrow Gauge Layout at the NEC Warley Exhibition in 2023. The 'Clyre Valley' will be on tour in 2026 at Model Rail Scotland (27-29 March) and at York Model Railway Show (4-6 April). ■

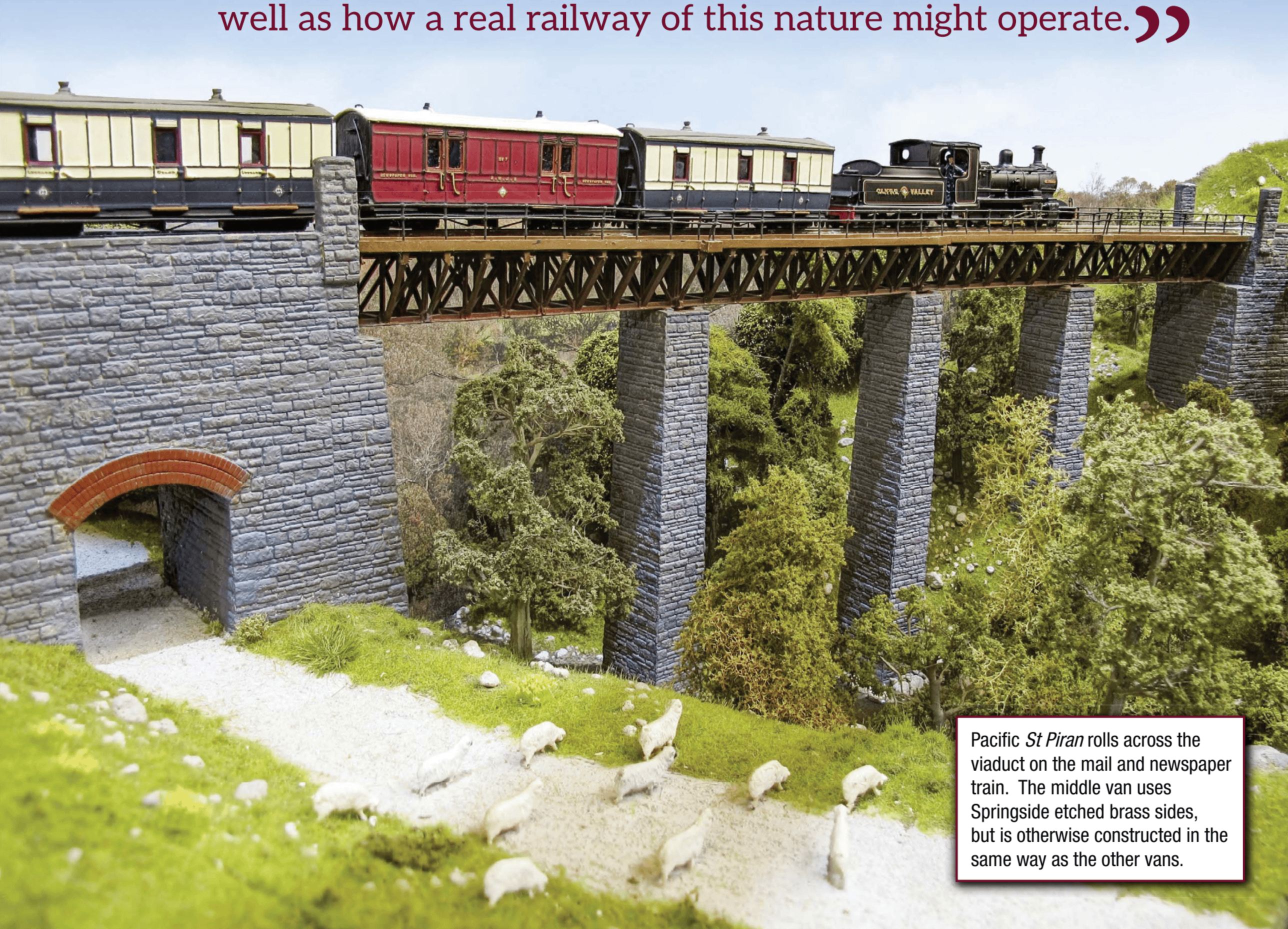


TOP LEFT:
Hudswell Clarke 2-8-0 No 12 *Brigand* works an empty china clay train down grade through the rock cutting on the moor. Lineside vegetation includes some gorse "tufts" from The Army Painter Battlefields series. From a scenic perspective, I think there is a lot we railway modellers can learn from the war-gaming community.



MIDDLE LEFT:
The store shed at St Breock is simply a Wills SS13 Domestic Garage. It is a refugee from my previous layout, 'Port St George', having served there as the goods shed. The enamel advertising signs used on it and elsewhere on the layout are by Tiny Signs.

> "The layout is DC and is operated to a move-based sequence designed to showcase as much variety of stock as possible as well as how a real railway of this nature might operate."



Pacific *St Piran* rolls across the viaduct on the mail and newspaper train. The middle van uses Springside etched brass sides, but is otherwise constructed in the same way as the other vans.

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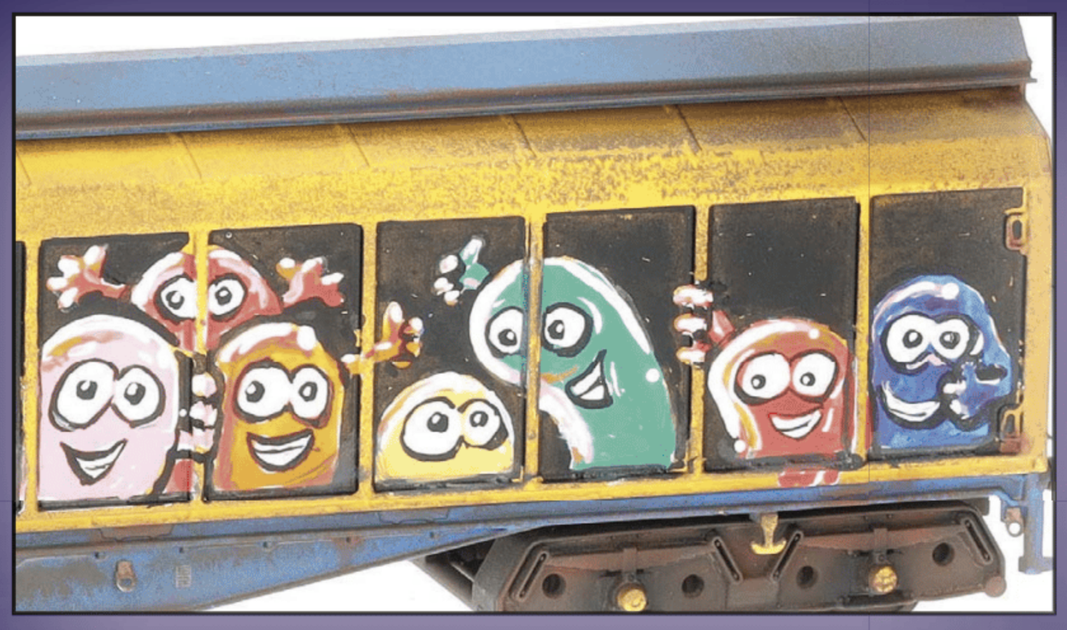







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Getting Practical with...

TOOL of the MONTH



Heavy-duty side cutters

Buying quality tools, at least for the ones you use a lot, pays off. These heavy-duty side cutters are over 30 years old! I purchased them from an old-fashioned hardware shop, and despite much cable cutting, along with a good few snips at Peco point motor operating rods, and even a few motor shafts, they still work perfectly well. A quick search online shows Zebra Würth still seems to be in business, good news for those who like tools that last.

Got a practical question?
Get in touch. Email: BRM@warnersgroup.co.uk



Ask Phil

Why do layouts at exhibitions look so much better than mine?

Partly, because you always spot faults with your own model, but don't see them on other people's - ask an exhibitor, and I'm sure they will point out imperfections in their own layout! The biggest difference, though, is light. Throw a lot of light at any model and for some reason, it always looks a lot better. That's why serious exhibitors spend time and money illuminating their scenes. Try a few spotlights at home, and you'll be pleasantly surprised at the difference it makes.

New on the workbench

Farm Animals

Looking outside the model railway world, I found these really nicely detailed sets of animals at a plastic modeller's show. Produced by The Tabletop Workshop (thetabletopworkshop.co.uk), they are slightly over-scale for OO, 1/72 instead of 1/76.2. I don't think this matters; animals come in different sizes. There are 40 models in a pack, including cows, sheep, pigs, goats, donkeys, cats, dogs, ducks and chickens.




Chris Mead


Michael Russell


Phil Parker


Ben Bucki

Painting an etched brass hut

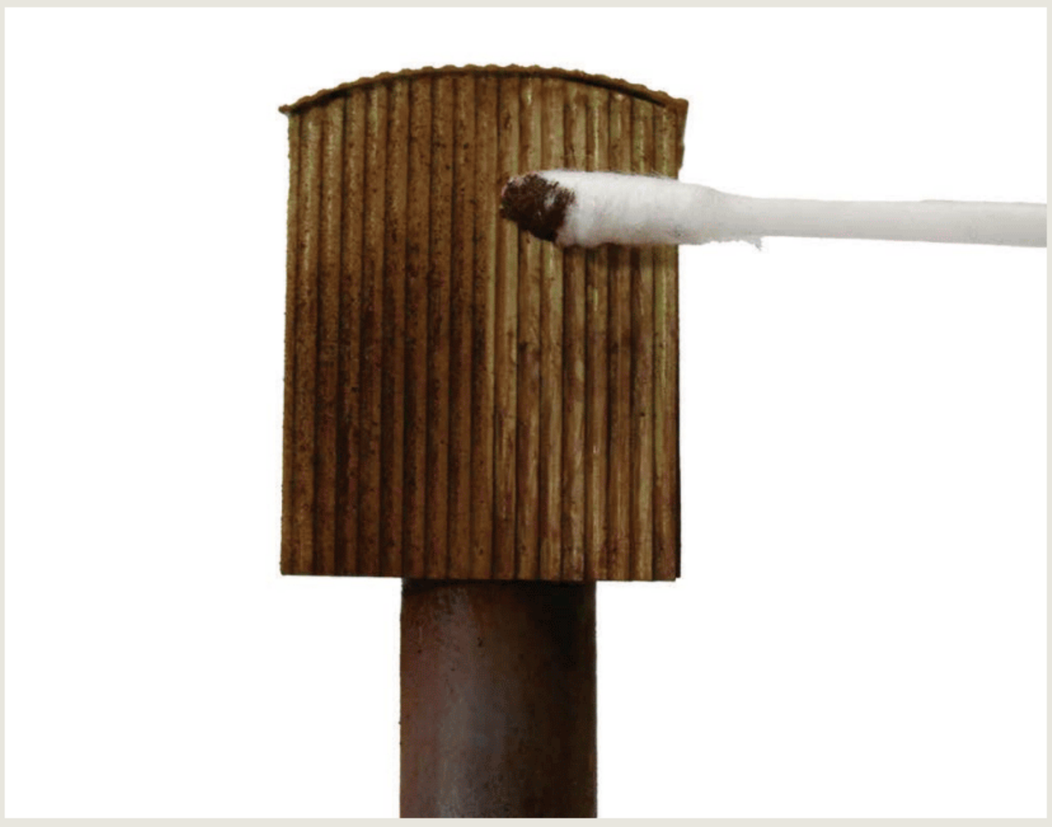
Last month, we built a lamp hut from Severn Models (Kit D31). Now, it's time to paint and weather it using techniques that will work in any scale and on any model that has surface texture, including resin ready-to-plant, buildings.



1 Metal needs to be primed. Skip this step, and the paint won't key to the surface; it could even flake off! Spray car primer is perfect. Ideally, use an etching primer, but if the model isn't going to be handled a lot, standard primer will do the job and is a bit cheaper.



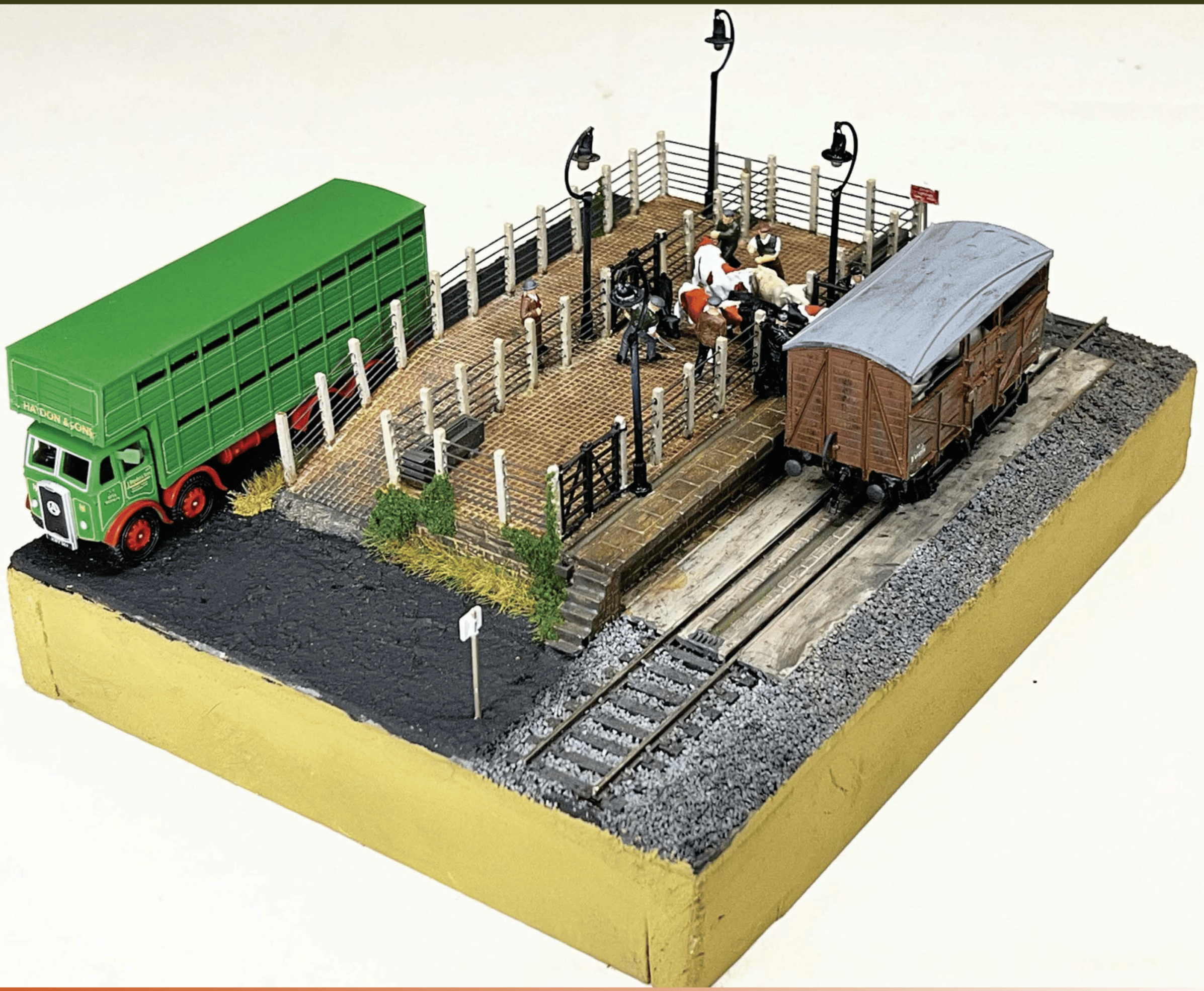
2 Left overnight, the primer is fully dry, so I paint it with Humbrol Matt Cream (103) and then dry-brush with Pale Stone (121) to emphasise the ridged corrugated iron. You could just use the cream with a little pale grey or even white added if you don't have Pale Stone to hand.



3 Another night drying and it's time for weathering. Dust dark brown and rust powders on the side, then use a damp (not wet) cotton bud, wiping from top to bottom to blend the colours and leave a nice, patchy finish.



4 The finishing touch is a piece of clear plastic fixed behind the window. The beauty of etched brass is that the glazing bars are the right thickness, so the "glass" is just the right place in the frame.



Building a Cattle Dock Scene



Chris Mead

RAILWAYS CARRIED livestock from their earliest days, with the volume peaking in the 1930s. After that, the improving road network and a move to transporting meat rather than live animals led to a steady decline in trade. Small, rural movements of cattle ended in the late-1960s, with the last ever train carrying imported Irish cattle running in 1975. The Ratio Cattle Dock kit is a good representation of the kind of thing that could be found anywhere around the railway network before Beeching.

WHAT YOU NEED

Dapol
Cattle Wagon
Railway Workmen pack

Javis
Static grass strip

Kytes Lights
Street Lamp pack

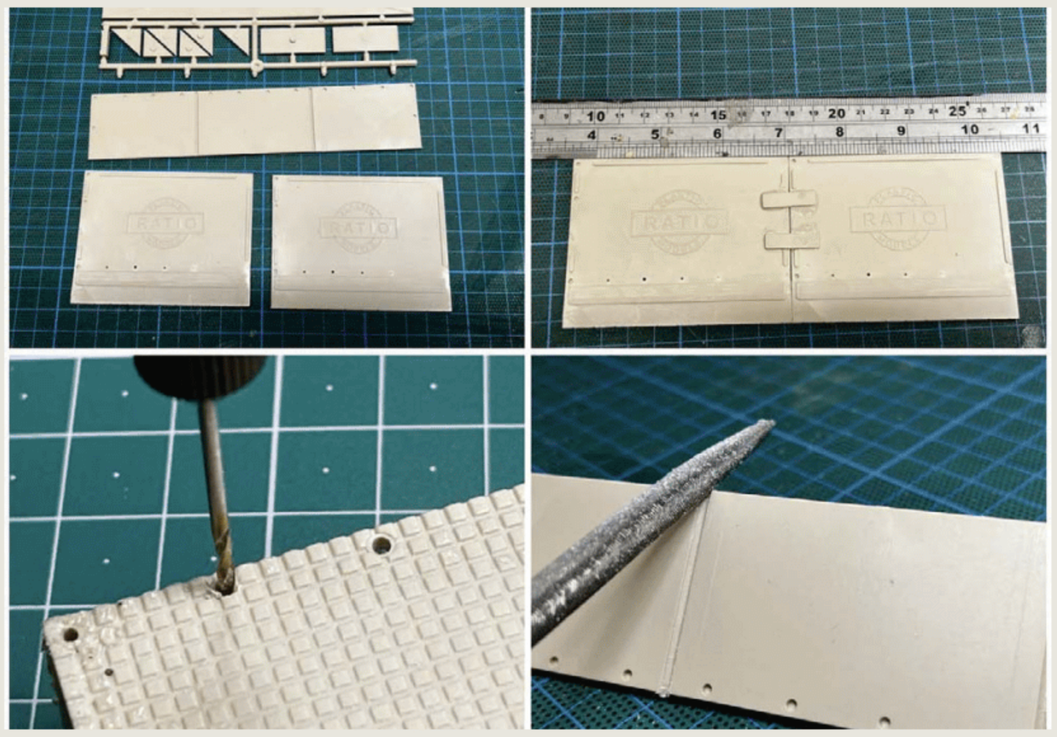
Oxford Models
Livestock Lorry

Ratio
Cattle Dock

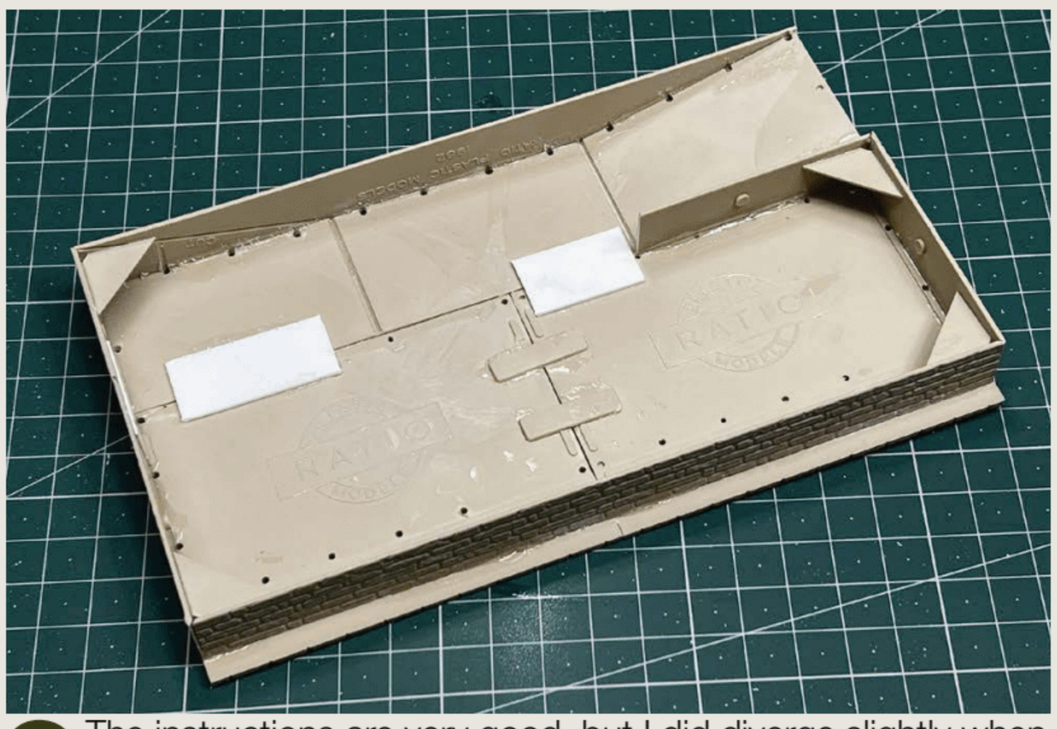
Other
Modelling knife, wire cutters, assorted files, assorted brushes, acrylic paints, plastic filler, superglue, contact, 50/50 water/PVA glue mix, on/off switch, red & black electrical wire, quick release connectors, 9v battery & holder, small tie wraps, coarse green foliage scatter and track ballast.



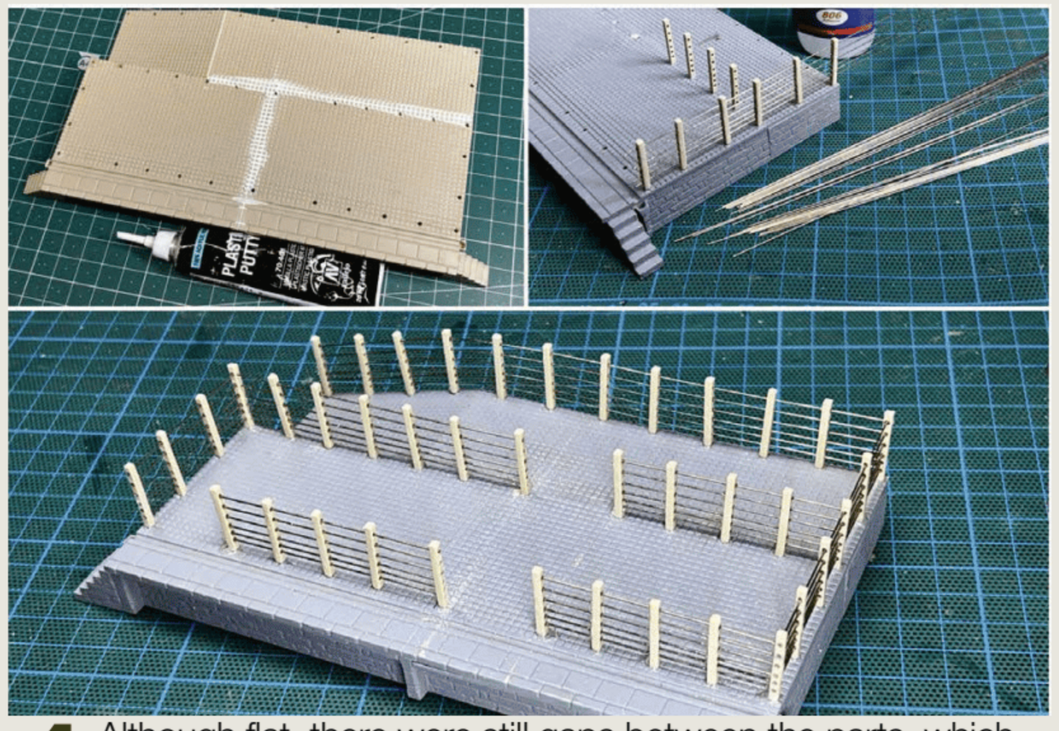
1 The scene consists of three 'vintage' but still readily available kits; the Ratio Cattle Dock, first released in the 1980s, along with the Cattle Wagon and Railway Workmen packs, both of which date back to the early-1960s, but are still produced as part of the Dapol 'Kitmaster' range.



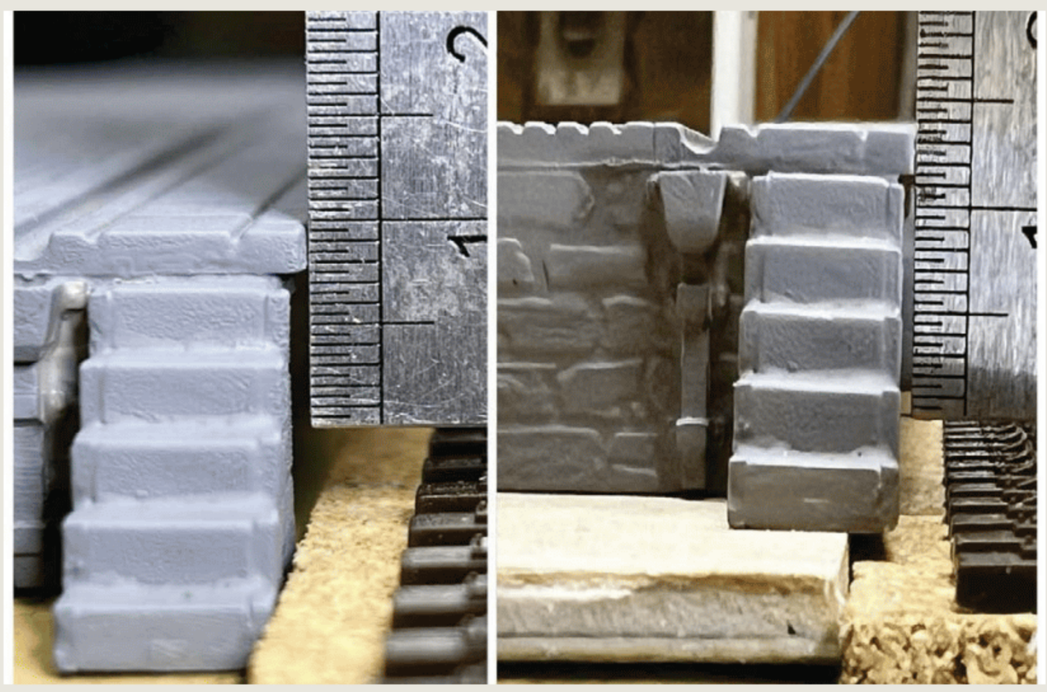
2 The Ratio kit allows for many variations. The cattle pen area halves were glued together with the plastic pieces provided; the edge of a steel rule keeping them in line. The back wall was cut to shape and the ramp notched-filed through and bent down. Fence post holes were also opened out with a 1.5mm drill.



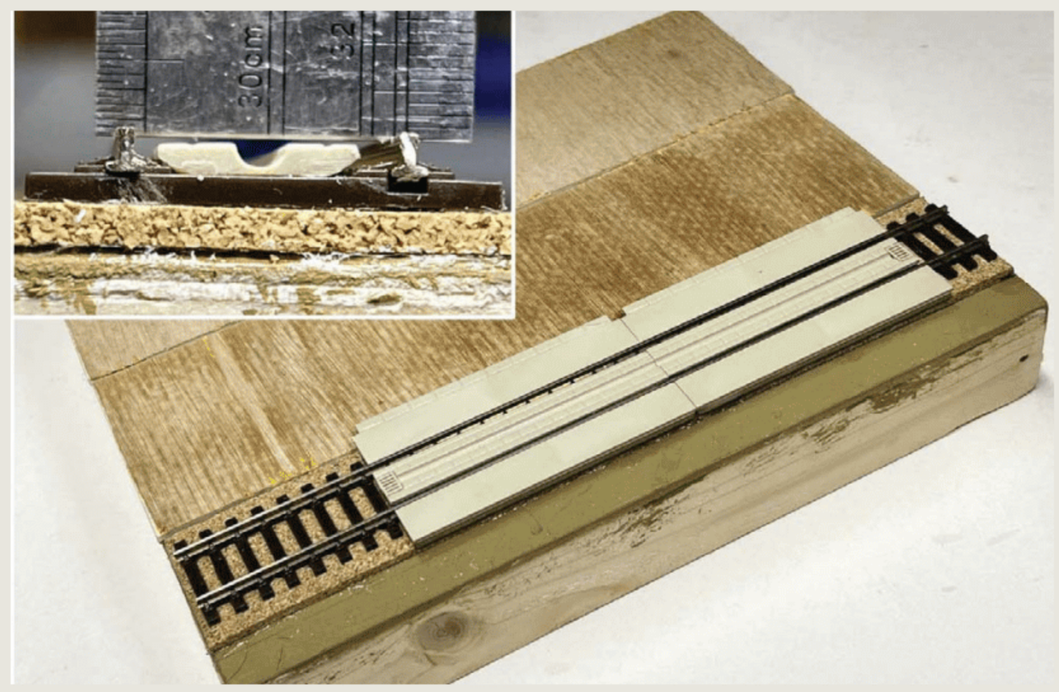
3 The instructions are very good, but I did diverge slightly when gluing together the pen and ramp sections. Using only a third of the wall section allowed me to join the two halves and ensure they were flush using pieces of Plastikard as before. I also cut out the corners of the triangular strengtheners to make them easier to fit.



4 Although flat, there were still gaps between the parts, which were filled with plastic putty, along with unused post holes. The excess was scraped away when dry. The fence posts and rails were added using superglue to fix in place, making a section at a time, adding the wire oversize and cutting back to the correct length when solid.



5 Getting the correct dock height is obviously important. A good rule of thumb is no higher than the buffer centreline, normally 3ft 6in from the rail top, or 14mm in OO gauge. I used a piece of Peco code 100 rail on a cork base, leaving the dock too low, but this was remedied by adding 4mm ply to the base.



6 Positioning the platform the correct distance away from the track is also critical, but the kit's concrete deck pieces do this for you (although it is still wise to double-check with your widest wagon or locomotive). I also checked that they were not above the rail top, and found the centre guttering bottom edges needed filing to clear the chair mouldings.

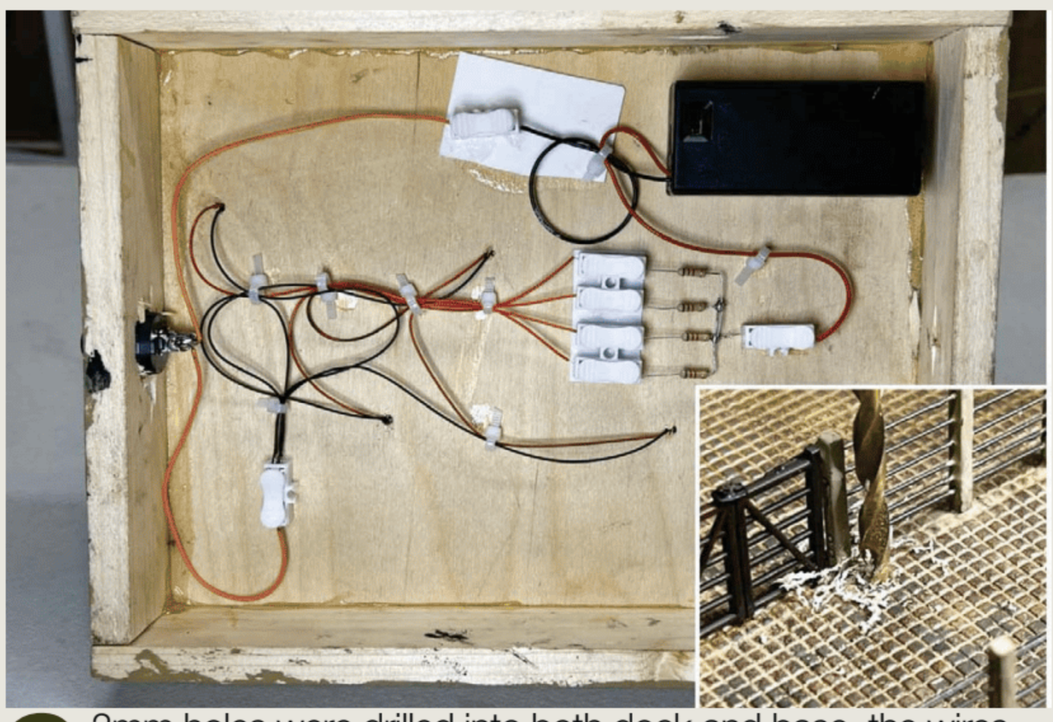
Getting Practical



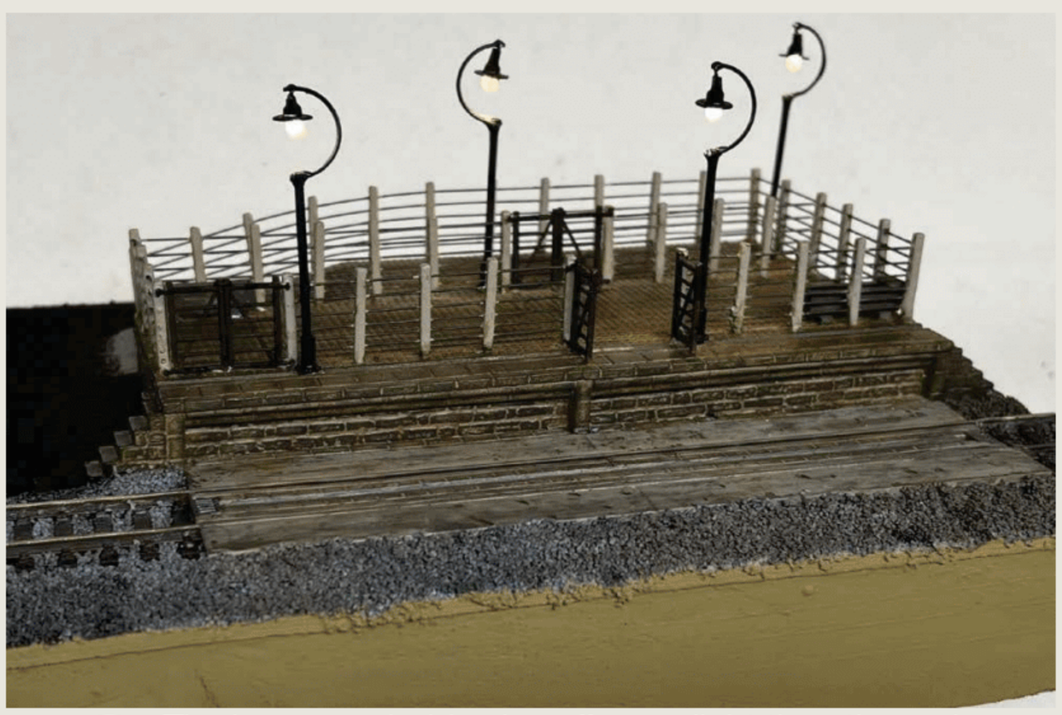
7 Next, the completed dock was painted. It was first given a coat of a light grey and dark yellow mix for an overall mortar/concrete colour, and then dry-brush layers of several different browns, blacks, reds and drab greens to bring out the stonework. It was then stuck to the base and textured paint applied for the yard surface.



8 I replaced the somewhat flimsy yard lamps in the kit with LED ones from Kytes Lights. They require separate resistors, but these are included in the pack. The remaining parts needed for the circuit were similar to those in an earlier bonfire scene project (January BRM 2026), namely a 9v battery pack, a button switch and some quick-release connectors.



9 2mm holes were drilled into both dock and base, the wires threaded through and the lamps glued in place. Small tie-wraps glued to the base helped tidy the routing a little, as I did not want to shorten any wires to allow re-use on future projects.



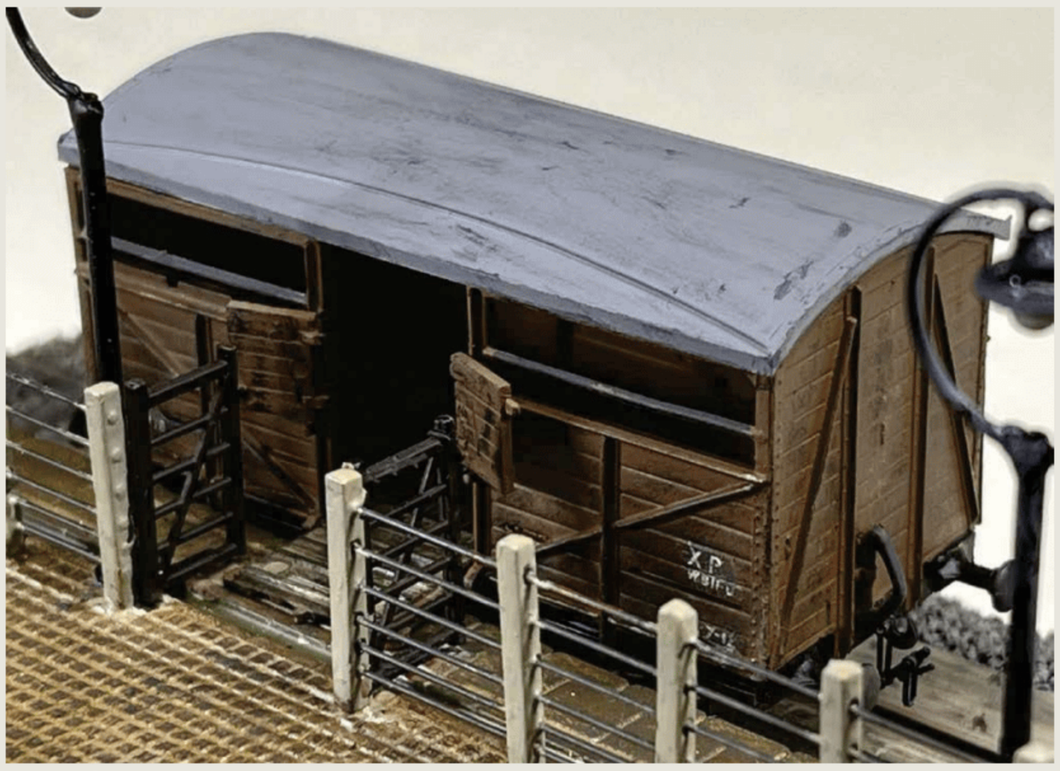
10 The lamps probably give off more light than the real ones ever did, but they do look effective. With the main pieces in place, the track was ballasted using watered-down PVA glue, followed by some washes of grime for its final weathering.



11 I chose the Dapol Cattle Wagon kit as it has opening doors, so could show cattle being loaded. Second-hand kits may only have plastic wheels, but new ones come with metal sets and a selection of different couplings. As it was to be just a static model, I replaced the plastic screw link couplings with a metal pair from Hornby.



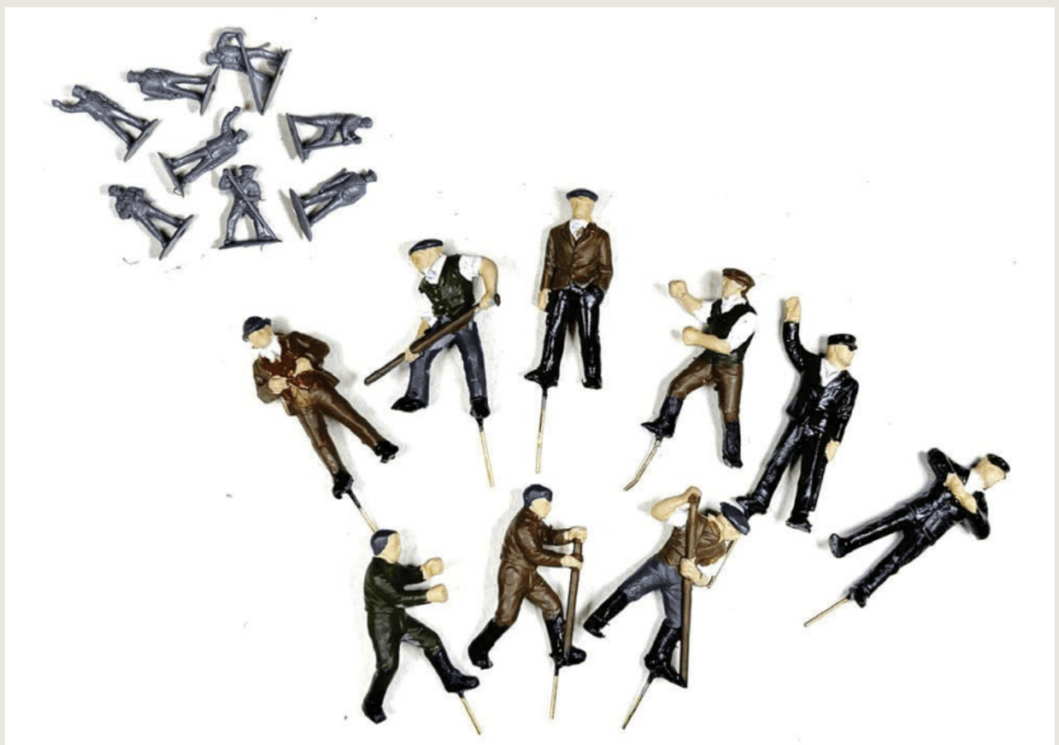
12 Primed cattle wagon: Assembly was fairly straightforward and the instructions easy to follow with just the openings for the door hinges needing clearing out a little. A spray of primer helped highlight any areas that needed a bit more rework, such as the tooling marks on the doors that would normally be hidden if modelled shut.



13 Being a British Railways era wagon, the chassis was painted black, the body bauxite brown, and the roof a mid-grey. After adding the decals, it was given some dry-brushed weathering, a final coat of matt varnish, and then stuck in position opposite the open gate.



14 I wanted quite a few animals for the scene (cattle wagons held up to a dozen), but the available ready-to-use models appeared to be more dairy than meat livestock. However, I found a modestly priced pack of 30 on the internet, and although not the best quality, enough of them eventually fitted the bill after painting.



15 With over 50 figures in the Dapol Workmen pack, there is plenty of opportunity to experiment with stances and clothing styles. The mouldings were cleaned up, removed from their bases, mounted on wire and then painted.



16 The cattle and figures were set in place. As the farmer watches over proceedings, a pair of station staff stand guard by the gates while the farmhands herd the last of the reluctant passengers into the wagon.



17 The finishing touches were applied, adding the kit's water troughs, standpipes and signs, with Javis Static Grass strips along the base of the cattle dock wall, and coarse dark green foliage spreading along the walls and up the fenceposts.



18 Finally, a 1:76 scale Seddon Atkinson Livestock lorry from Oxford Models completed the scene. It is liveried in the green and red colour scheme of Staffordshire-based J Haydon & Sons of Biddulph.



Repair a second-hand loco



Michael Russell

WITH NEW models appearing all the time, there is a cascade effect leading to plenty of second-hand bargains, often of good specification models, to be had. I found an early decoder-fitted Bachmann Class 37 at the Doncaster show last year for less than £60. It was obvious that the locomotive had been subject to a number of unsuccessful modifications and had been grossly over-lubricated (a common fault). However, I could see the potential. Some damaged paintwork could be covered by modelling a variant in green with full yellow ends.

In these situations, first download the OEM manual from the website to have some idea of how the model goes together. Power the locomotive to check that it works, or not, and make a list of faults that need correcting.

It is possible to have quality models without spending large sums of money if you are prepared to put the time and effort into refurbishing older ones. This model is far from perfect, but that was never the goal of this exercise. It is now fit to be used again rather than destined for landfill. This model can be improved a great deal further and this will be the subject of a follow-on article.

The printer files used in the production of this model are available for download at: **www.printables.com/@MJRrailway_3705112.**

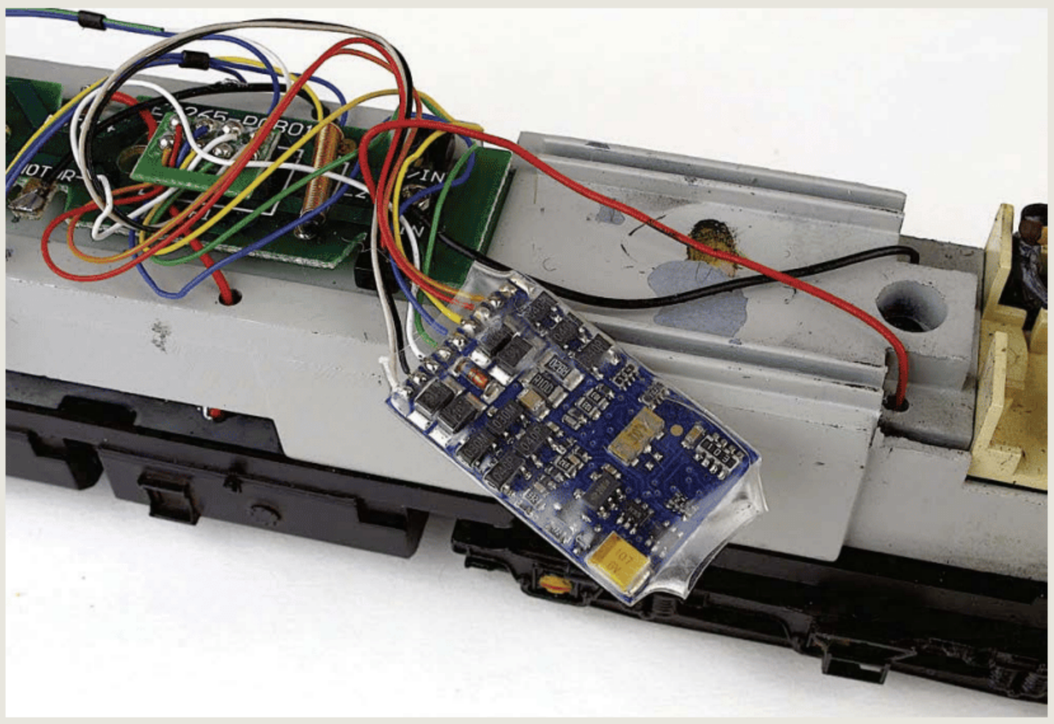
WHAT YOU NEED

Bachmann
Class 37 (2008) version

Fox transfers
Transfers F4214 and F4361

YouChoos
Blak tak

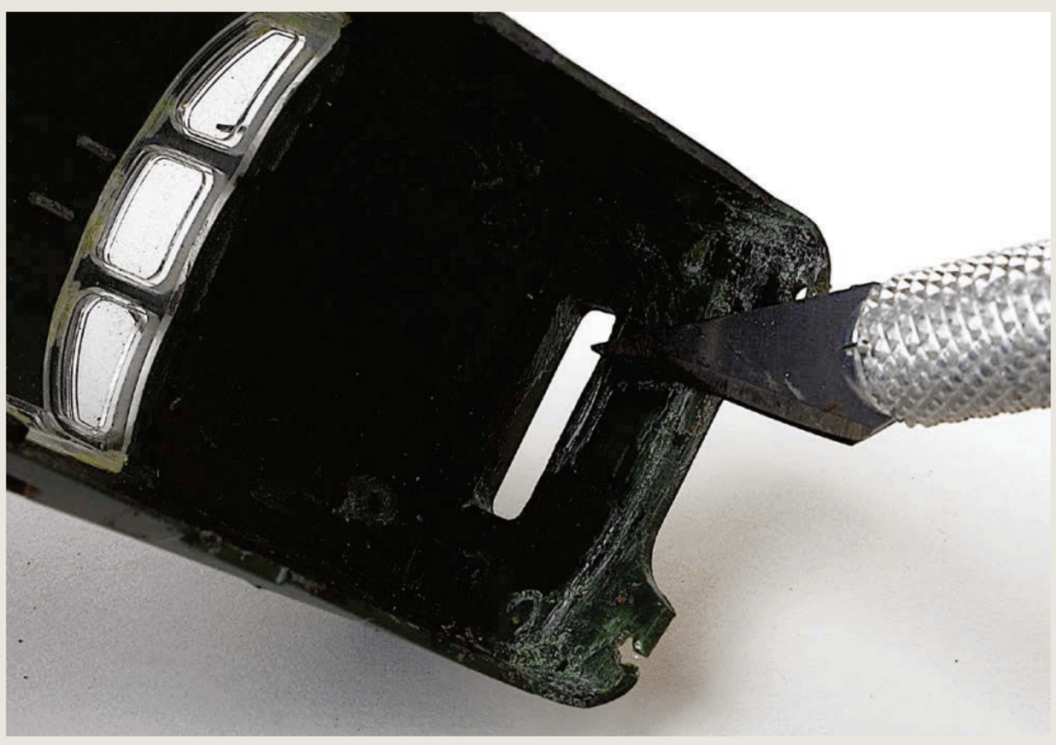
Other
Black Milliput, superglue, white primer, Lifecolor UA826 BR Warning Panel yellow (early), washing soda, masking tape, plastic rod, model filler, 0.4mm brass rod, overhead projection film, thinners to match paint used, gloss varnish, rotary craft tool with milling bit, pliers, PC with DTP software and printer, FDM 3D printer with PLA filament, hand drill and bits up to 1mm, flat-bladed screwdriver, small cross point screwdriver, tweezers, small paint brushes, airbrush.



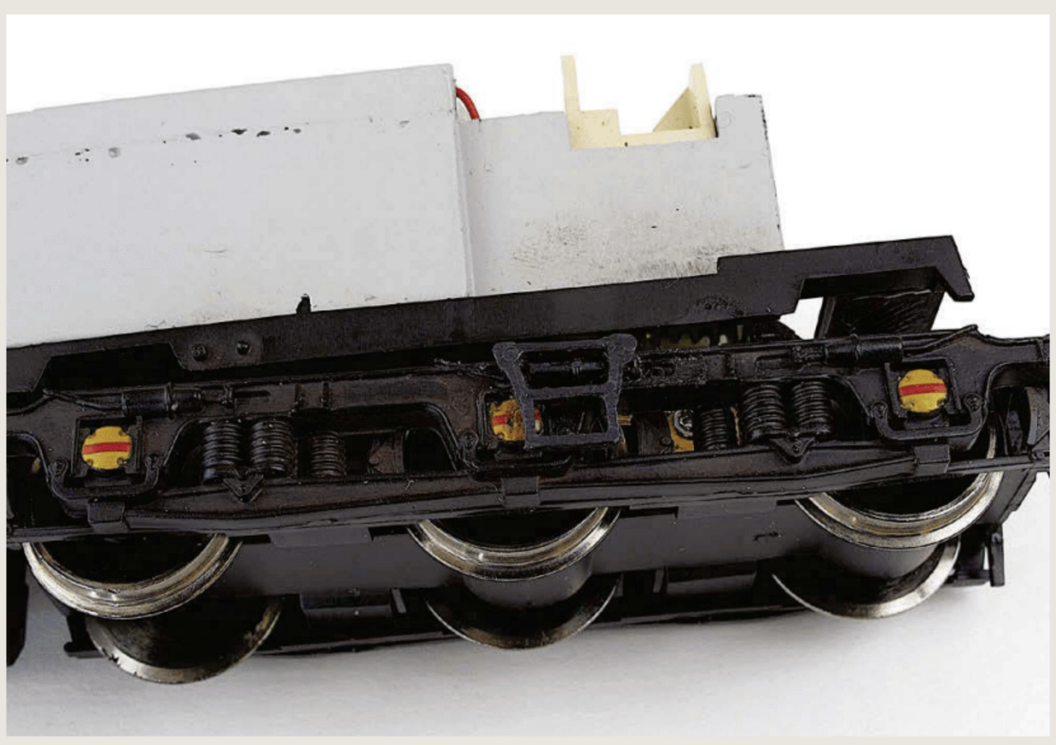
1 The decoder was unknown to me, but was soon identified by taking a photograph and using Google Lens to find the make and model, in this case an ESU Lokpilot Basic v1.0. This information was then used to download the original manual.



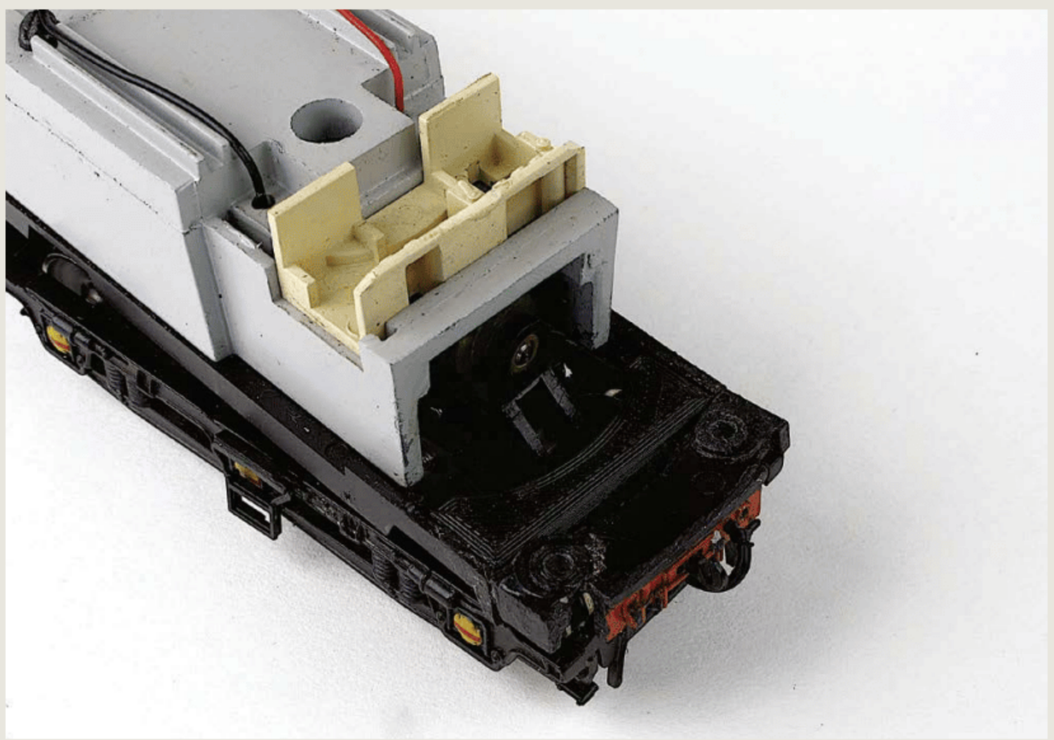
2 The model was stripped back to remove any poor upgrades or modifications, including wonky, damaged and loose-fitting parts. Where items are glued, these can often be removed by wiggling the part with pliers or by using a glue dissolver such as Deluxe Materials Glue Buster.



3 A cutting disc had been used to remove the front mounting points when fitting lights, but this had severely scored and even pierced the bodyshell! I used black Miliput to repair the holes and to form a backstop for the addition of a softer filler from the outside.



4 You may be able to buy OEM parts online, but if not, design your own. A missing step was modelled in Tinkercad and printed on an FDM 3D printer using black PLA. FDM has the advantage of being more robust for items like this.



5 The front of the mainframes had been cut away, leaving the front of the model in a weak condition. 3D print new frame stretchers and fix these in place with superglue and then reattach the bufferbeams.



6 Remove bogie frames by levering the front with a flat-bladed screwdriver. Pull out the wheels and remove debris with tweezers. Clean surfaces with IPA, including the wheel rims, wheels backs and pick-ups where they meet the wheel.

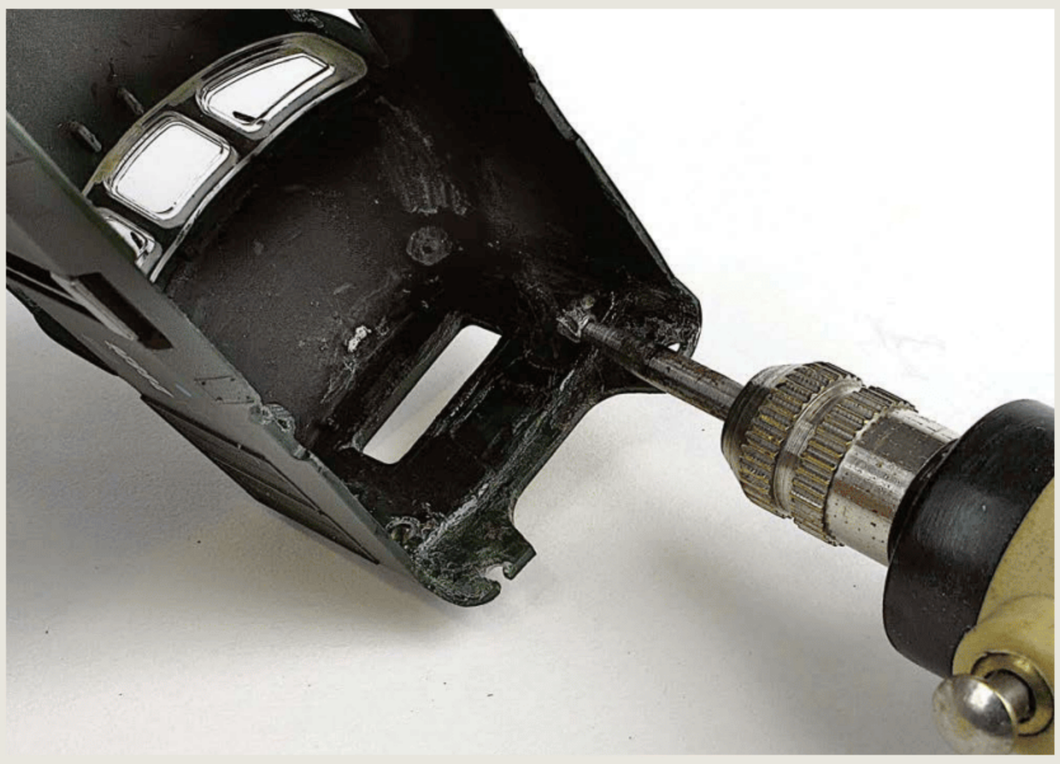
Getting Practical



7 Replacement buffers were fitted as the originals were lost. I 3D-printed my own in two parts and used filler to smooth the buffer face. Use a round file to open out the holes in the body to accept the buffer shank.



8 If there are unwanted holes in the bodywork, drill these out to match the size of the plastic rod that you have and then glue a piece in place and cut/file when dry. Keep the use of filler to a minimum.



9 I had to refit the handrails, ensuring they were vertical. New lamp irons were made from 0.4mm wire crushed with pliers where I wanted flat areas. Fix in place with superglue and, when dry, use a rotary milling tool to remove excess inside.



10 Wash the body and bogie frames in a washing soda solution to remove contaminants such as grease and poor-quality weathering. A soft brush will help reach the nooks and crannies.



11 Once completely dry, new headcodes were designed in Libre Office Draw, size 16 characters and use a mono-spaced, non-serif font such as Ubuntu mono. Print onto overhead projection film and spray the printed side white. When dry, cut to size and fit in place with Blak Tak.



12 Finally, mask the locomotive front, starting with a small strip across the bonnet first. Use matt white as a primer before adding the final coat of yellow. When dry, spray with gloss varnish, add any decals and then spray with matt or satin varnish before removing the masking tape.

ALL SKILL LEVELS



Construct a Wills Coal Office



Chris Ford

THE WILLS Scenic Series kits have been around since the late-1970s and the range has gradually expanded ever since (now under the Peco banner). One of the early kits was the SS15 coal office and coal bins. It is a very basic kit, with only a few simple parts and so is ideal for the beginner. That said, it can be easily upgraded with a few extra materials, lifting it out of ubiquity, and believe you me, there are a lot of these kits out there. The extra bits will essentially double the kit price, but they are generic parts and the sizable remainder can be used for other conversions. You may find that once you have this project under your belt, similar upgrades become a standard way of approaching both other kits in this range, and those from other manufacturers such as Dapol/Kitmaster, which will also take a similar amount of polish.

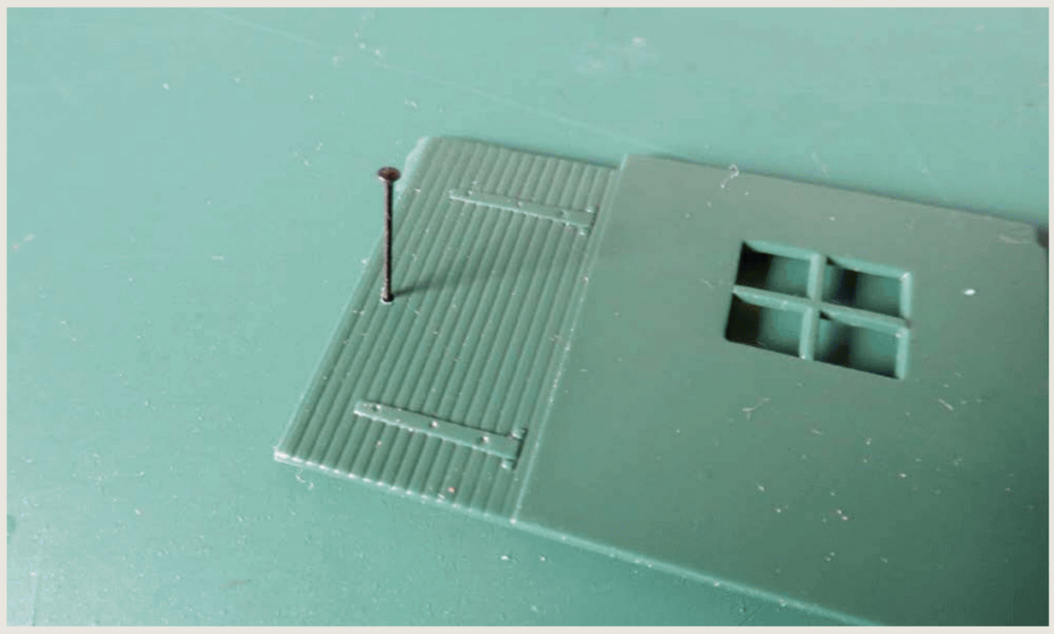
Taking a simple and relatively cheap kit and adding detail is great fun and lifts the model away from all the other similar kits on layouts. The extra parts are easily obtained and it is sensible to keep a few of these additional detail parts in stock. Most of the other bits and bobs were from exhibition rummage boxes, making the whole project remarkably good value.

WHAT YOU NEED

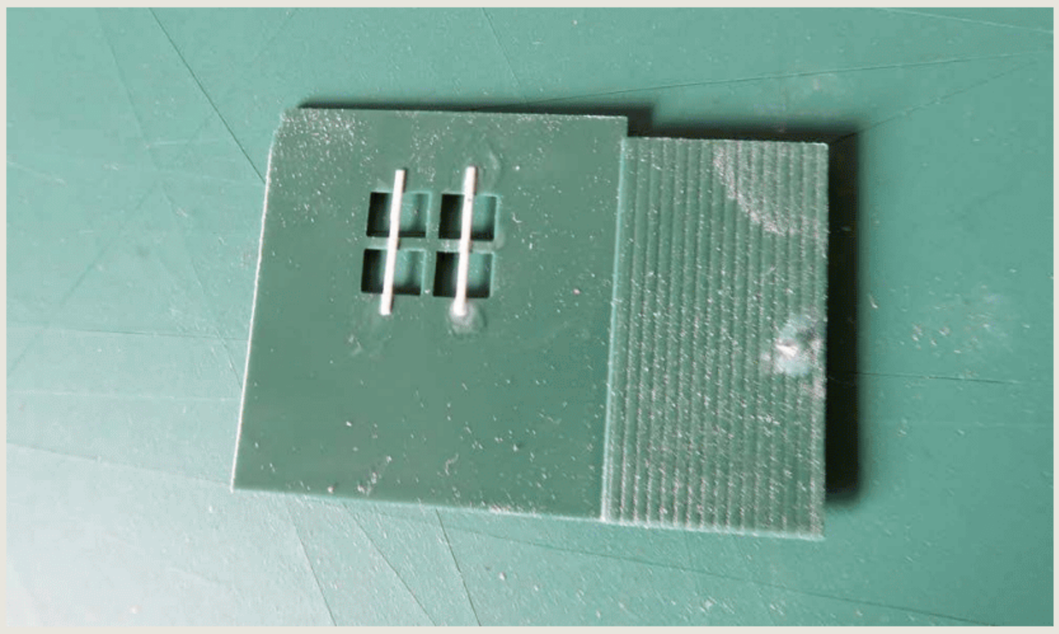
Peco
NB 40 Grey Stone walling sheet

Wills
SS15 Coal Office kit
SS46 Building details pack

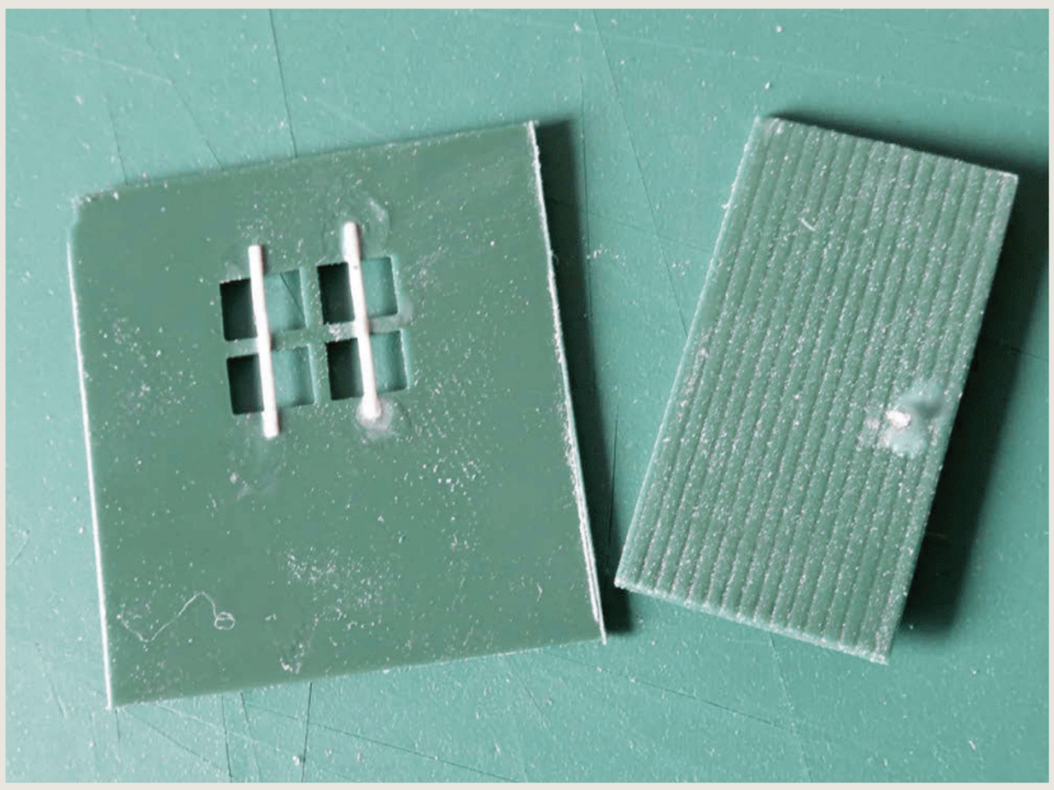
Other
Scrap plastic, 20 thou plastic strip, craft knife, sandpaper, small files, liquid solvent, paint and scenic materials to suit.



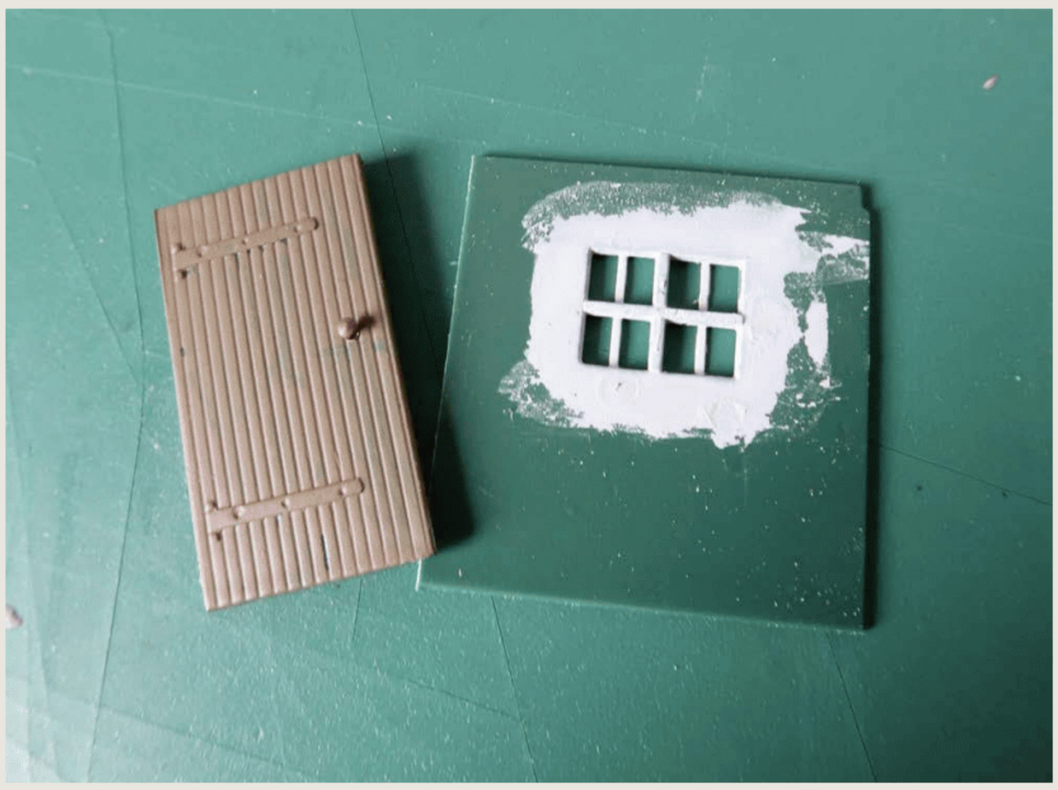
1 One of the simplest upgrades is to add a door handle. I drilled a small hole, threaded a track pin through and super-glued from the rear.



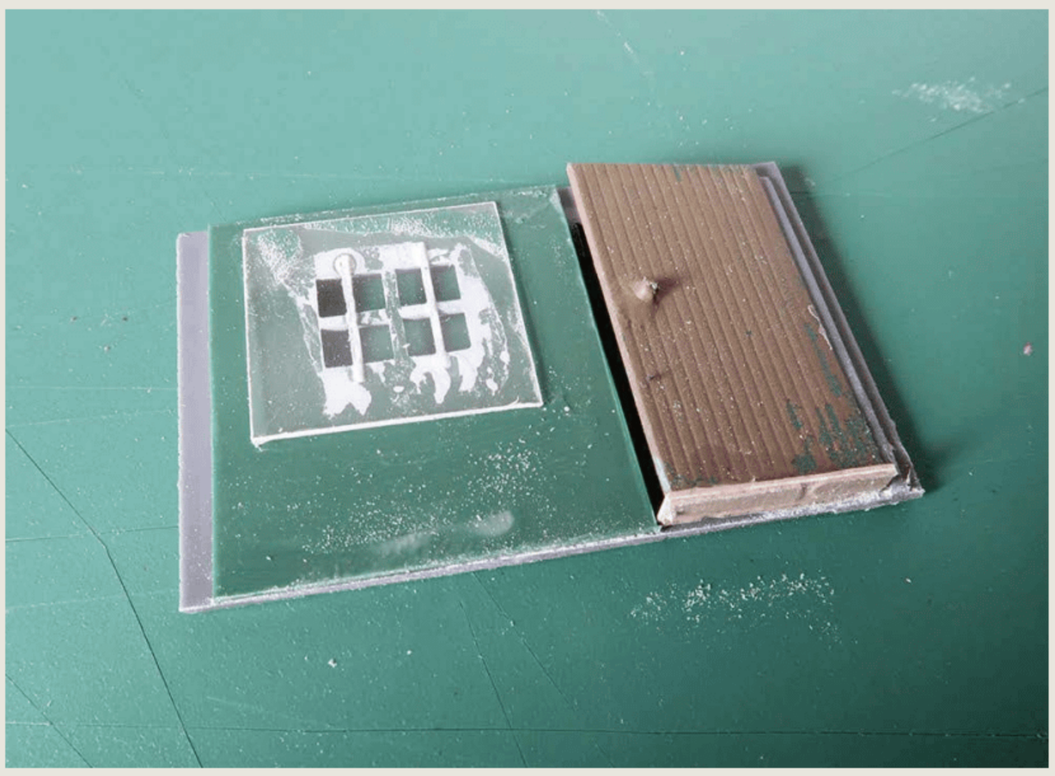
2 With the track pin fixed, the point was cut off flush with side cutters. The rather simplistic window was improved by adding strips of 20thou, creating an eight-pane frame.



3 Setting the door in an open position creates a more lived-in human feel, so the door section was sliced off from the inner wall moulding.



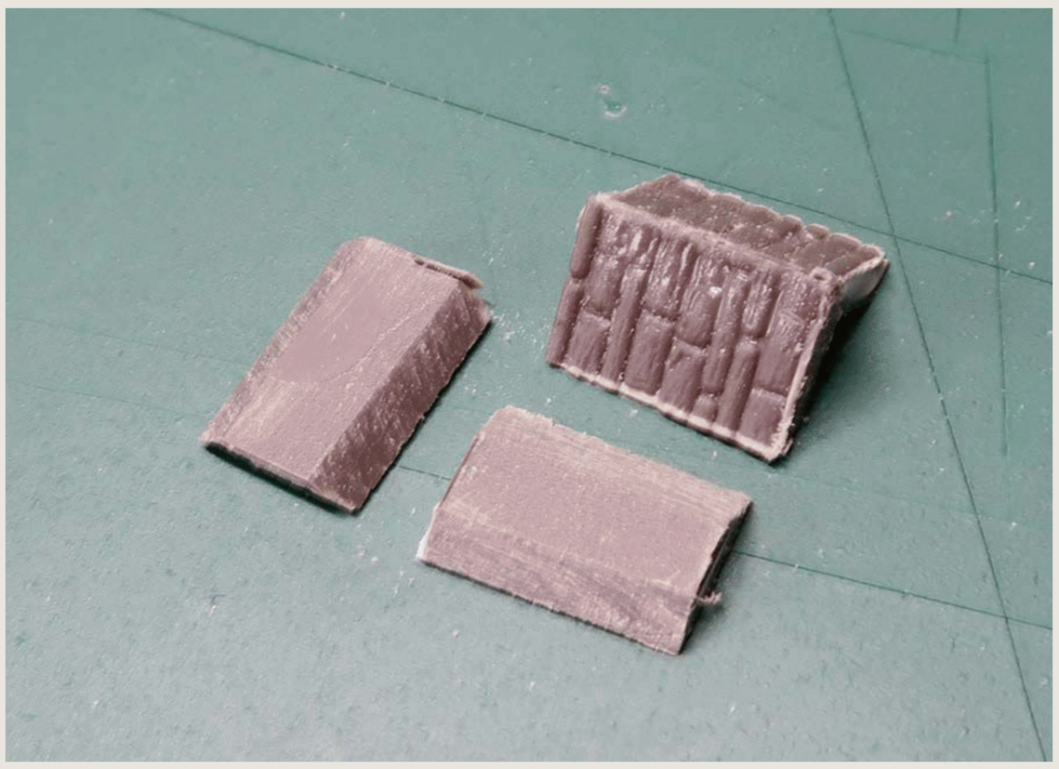
4 Some preliminary painting was carried out. Giving the window area a coat of grey/white at this point saves the fiddle of getting a brush into the corners post-assembly.



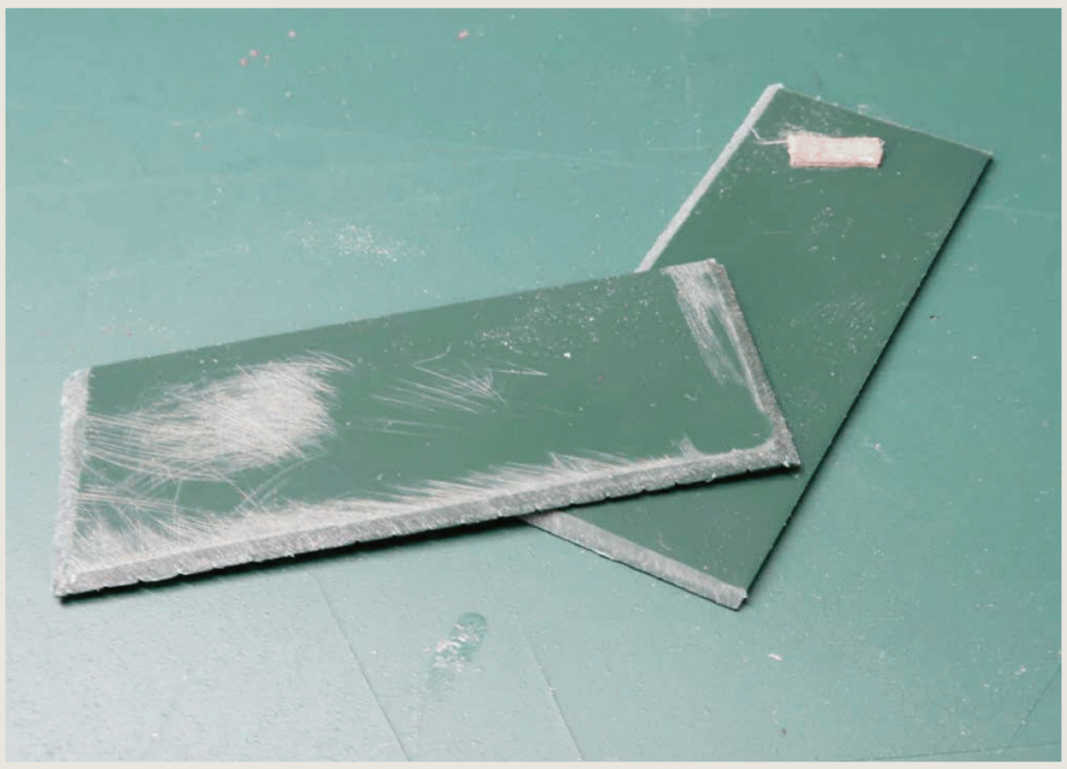
5 The inner wall was added as per the instructions and the door fixed at a jaunty angle. To make this more secure, I added a scrap of plastic to both represent the floor and to fix the angle. Then, I added some clear plastic to the inside of the window.



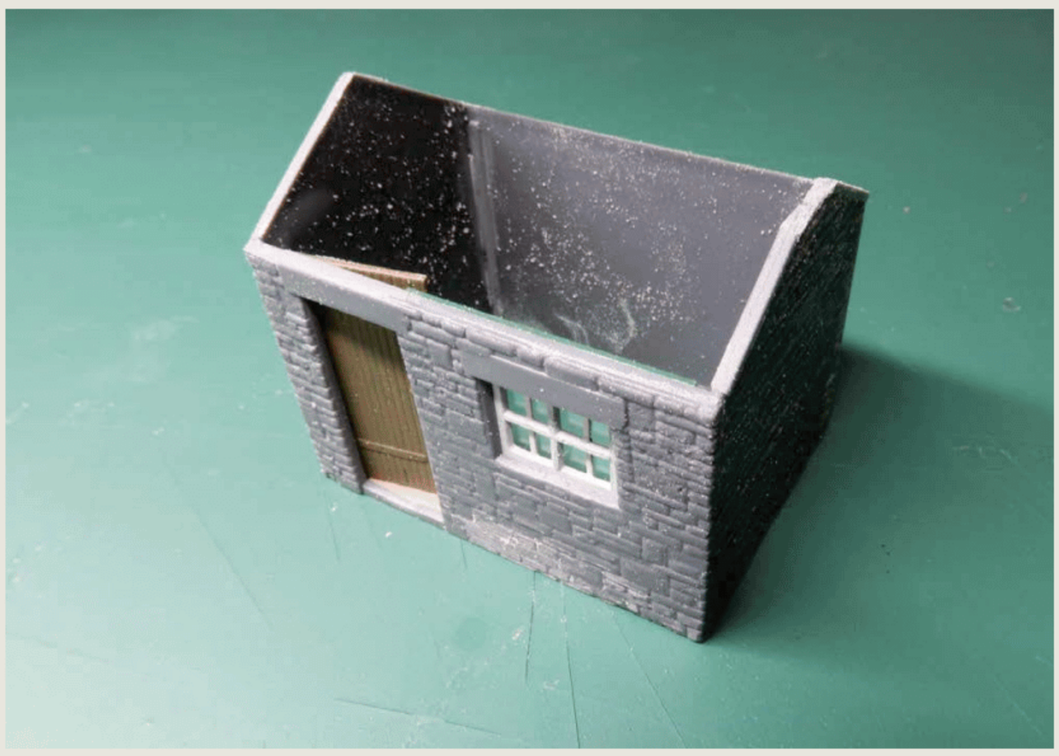
6 The kit comes with a stovepipe chimney, but here I added something more substantial: Four pieces of Peco N gauge stone sheet (which nearly matches the kit walls) were cut to 11mm high x 8mm wide. These were given a 45-degree mitre edge by rubbing the parts on a piece of sandpaper.



7 Here, the chimney parts were assembled and the whole lot cleaned up with a small file and the mortar courses taken around the corners.



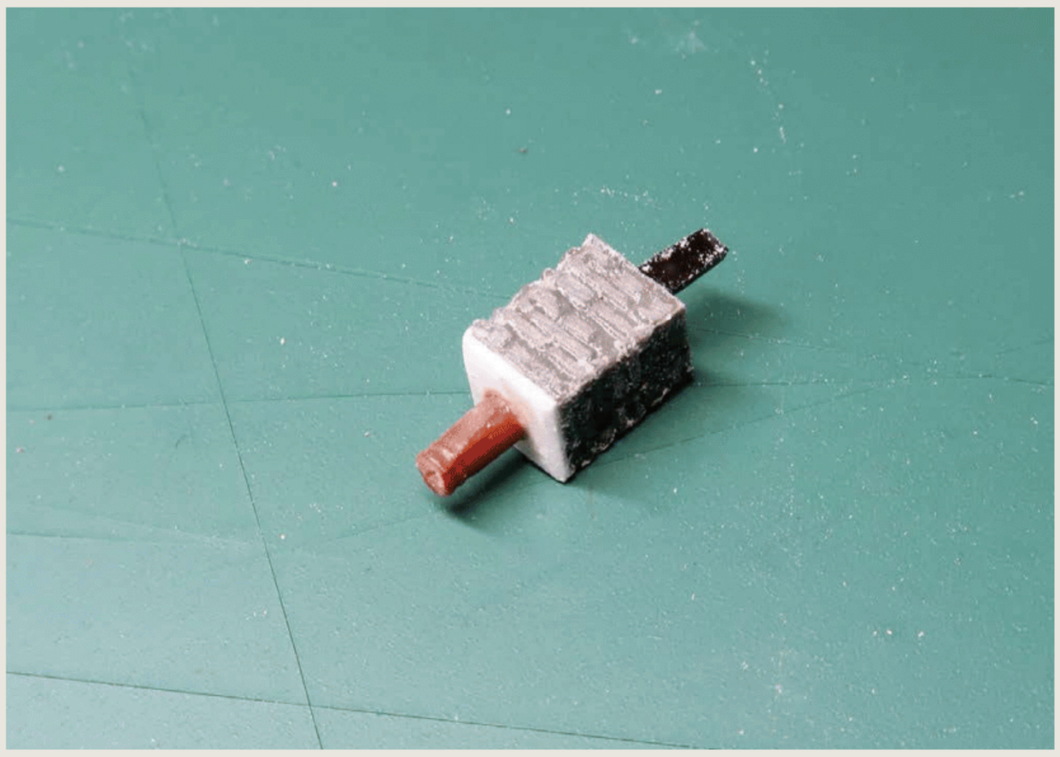
8 The hole in the roof part was first backed with a piece of plastic and then filled with model filler from the top. The roof parts were then ‘feathered’ to show a thinner edge.



9 The main walls were assembled, and using the chimney as a guide, one of the gable ends was filed down by a couple of stone courses to match the width of the chimney stack.



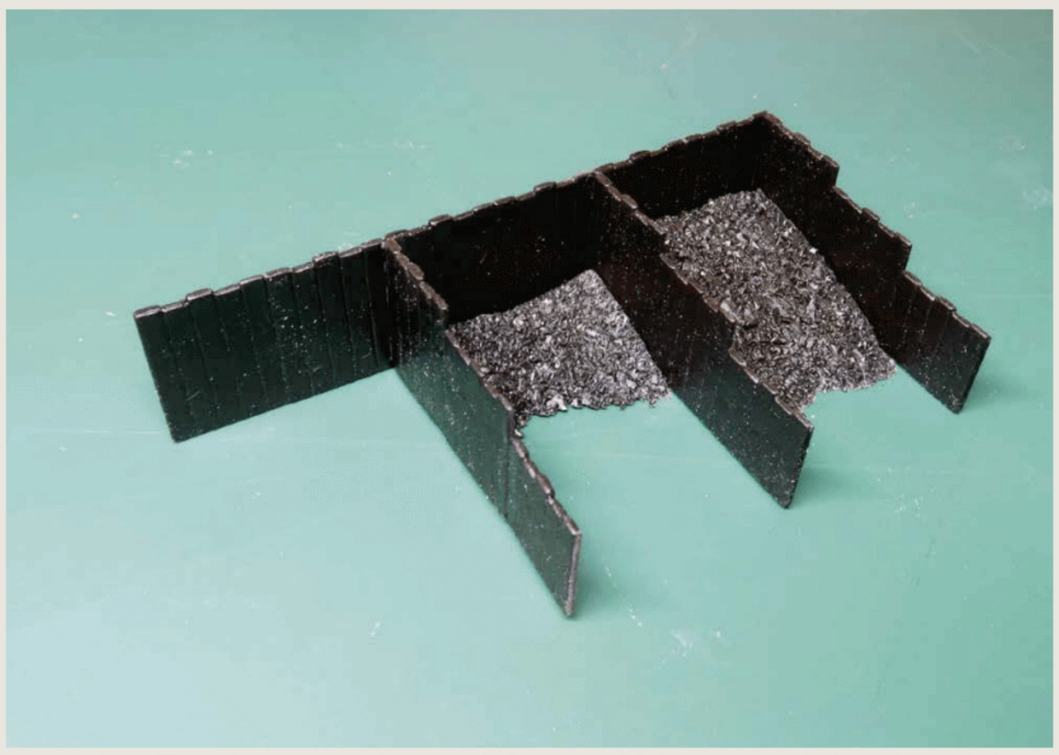
10 The building's pack also contains flat strip section and this was cut at an angle to match the roof line and added under the overhang. Note the small 'peg' to attach the chimney to the top of the wall.



11 The top of the stack was closed off using a scrap of 30thou plastic and a pot was added from the Wills building parts pack. This was later drilled with a 2mm drill to represent the opening and the roof sections had been cut to wrap around the chimney



12 To finish, a paper flashing was applied to fill the gaps. Gutters were added using 30thou sheet with the leading edge rounded off. A length of downpipe was added, again from the buildings pack, which really adds that final bit of realism.



13 The long sections of the coal bins were joined and the joint reinforced with plastic scrap. With some not-so-subtle cutting and joining, the other sections were added, giving three long walls. The hut acts as the closure wall.



14 With the hut and bins painted with various acrylic colours, the two parts were joined together on a piece of MDF and the whole area covered with various grades of coal dust and chippings.



Weather a Class 50



Michael Russell

MANY EARLY diesel designs have a loyal and dedicated following, meaning lots have been rescued for preservation, indicating the affection they are held in. You have only to look at the number of models produced of these designs to realise their popularity, the Class 47 being a good example - Lima, Heljan, Bachmann, Hornby, ViTrains, and shortly Accurascle and Cavalex. There will no doubt be others in the future.

The Class 50 is no exception and is a close relative of the Class 47. They had long and varied careers and there is a good choice of liveries for you to choose from. There are lots of pictures of these locomotives online that you can use as reference material.

In this instance, a Hornby TT:120 Class 50 is used, but the principles apply to whatever the scale of your model. The method I describe here is a quick and of general application, which is better suited to smaller gauges.

Fit Hornby supplied extras before you begin the weathering process - you may want to do this just at one end so you can retain the model coupling at the other end; in which case, leave the latter in place so it is incorporated into the weathering process.

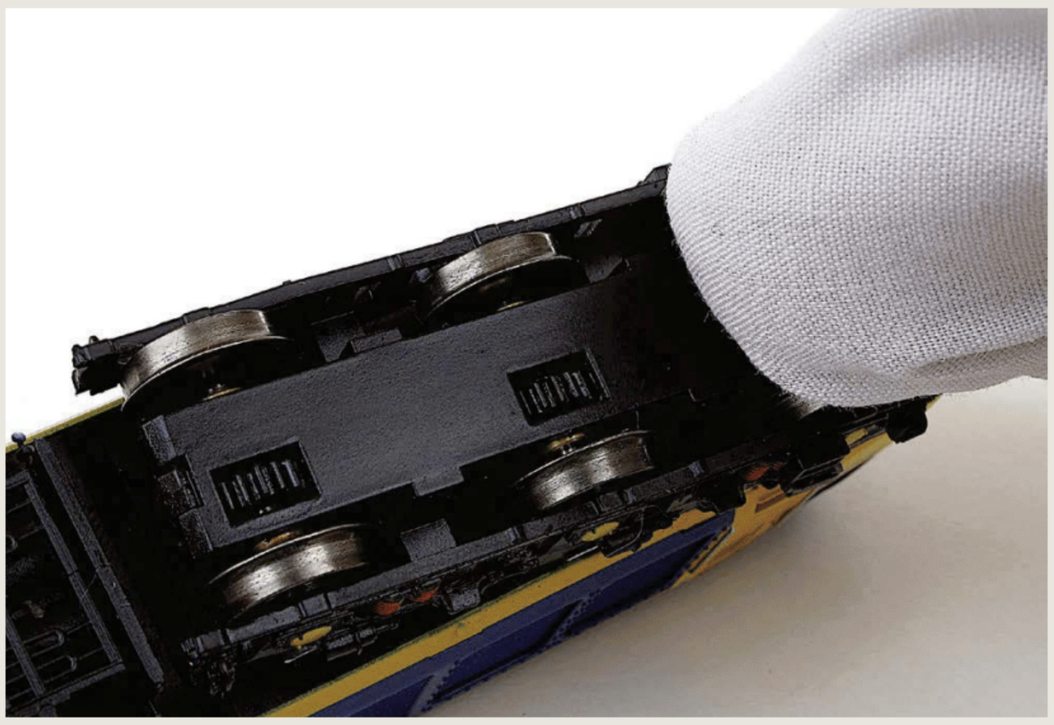
WHAT YOU NEED

Hornby

TT3013TXSM BR Class 50 *Sir Edward Elgar* No 50007

Other

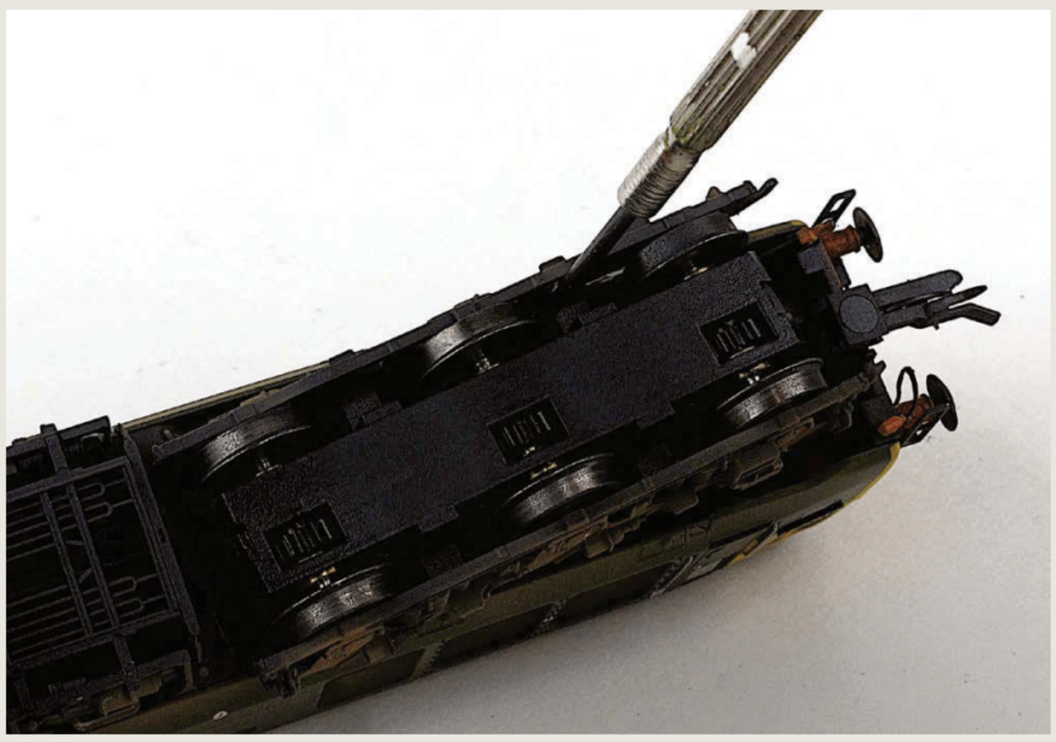
Black, white, rust enamel or acrylic paint, satin varnish, thinners to match paint type, tweezers, superglue, small paintbrush, flat brush, airbrush, rag, small cross-point screwdriver, small piece of card, small piece of sponge.



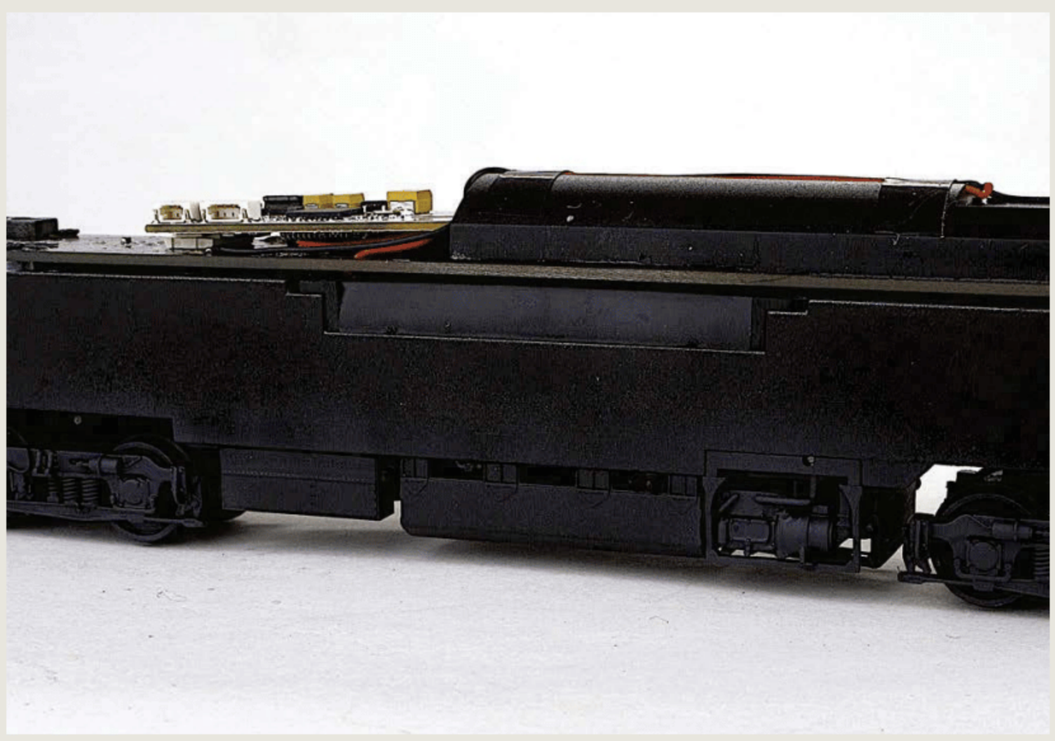
1 Use a rag to remove oil/grease from the keeper plate beneath each bogie. It is very easy to pick this up on your hands and transfer it to the paintwork, where it will ruin your weathering. Even after this, you will still need to be careful because the gearwheels are exposed.



2 There is a grille next to the bogie that was loose on the two models I inspected. If left in that condition, it will interfere with the bogie swing. Glue it to the rest of the cage-work using a spot of superglue.



3 To save masking, I chose to remove the body. There are four screws hidden beneath the bogies that can be seen if the latter are rotated. Be careful to remove the ETH jumper cables with tweezers from below the bufferbeam before lifting the body away.



4 Spray dark grey on the bogies, wheels and underframe. Rotate the wheels as necessary to cover all the wheel faces using an appropriate controller or 9v battery.



5 Spray a dark grey on the roof. If you are careful, you do not need to mask apart from using a small piece of card around the windows at each end. Clean the marker lights in the indicator boxes with a little thinner on a rag.

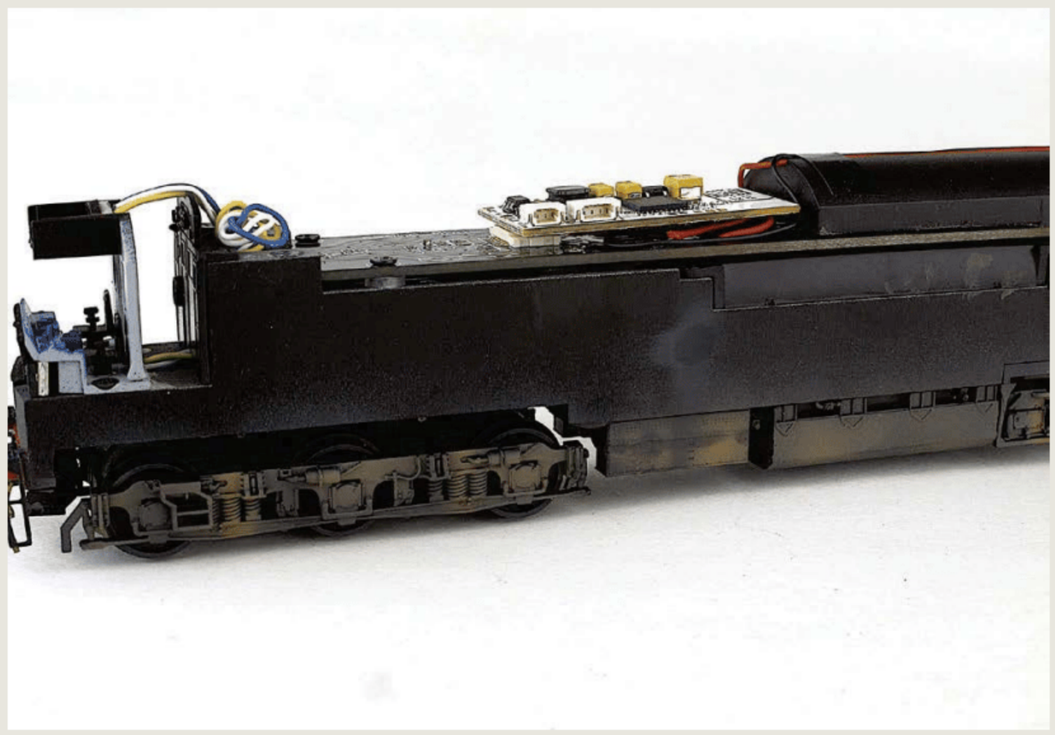


6 Spray matt black, to represent soot, around the four exhaust ports and around the edges of roof panels and vents. Blend the edges of the grey and black paint down along the bodysides using a broad brush moistened in thinners.

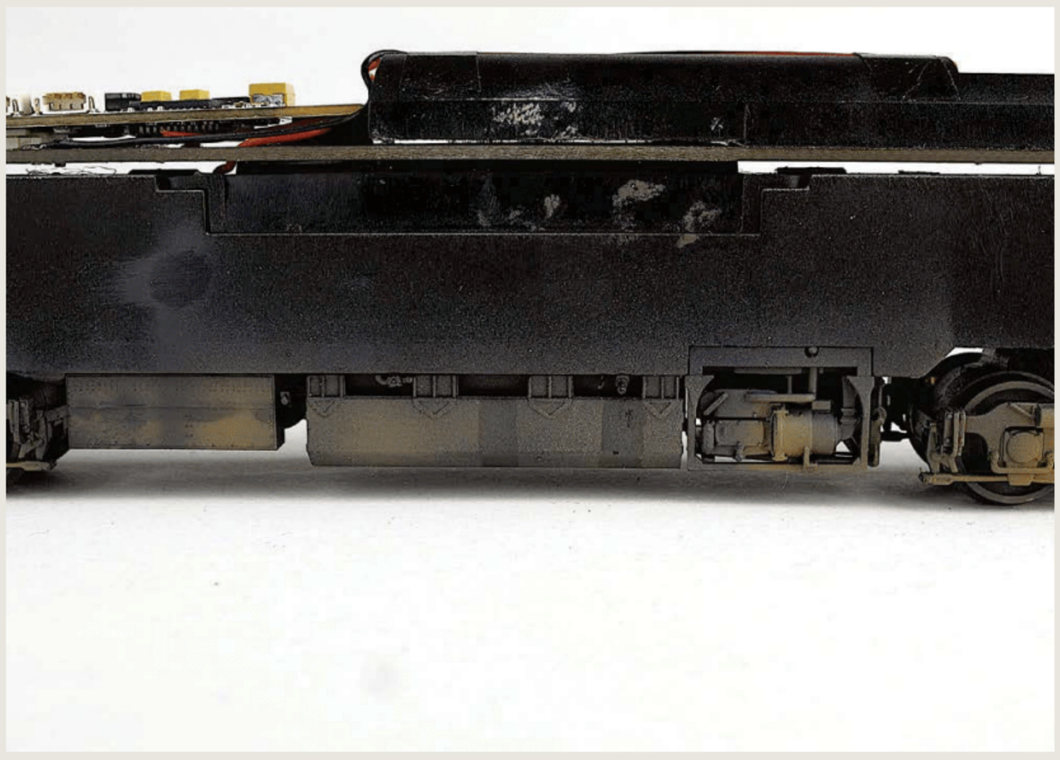
Getting Practical



7 Choose a mid-rust colour and mix a little white in to lighten it. Spray this on the bottom of the bodysides. Use the same mix on the bodyside grilles, three on one side and five on the other.



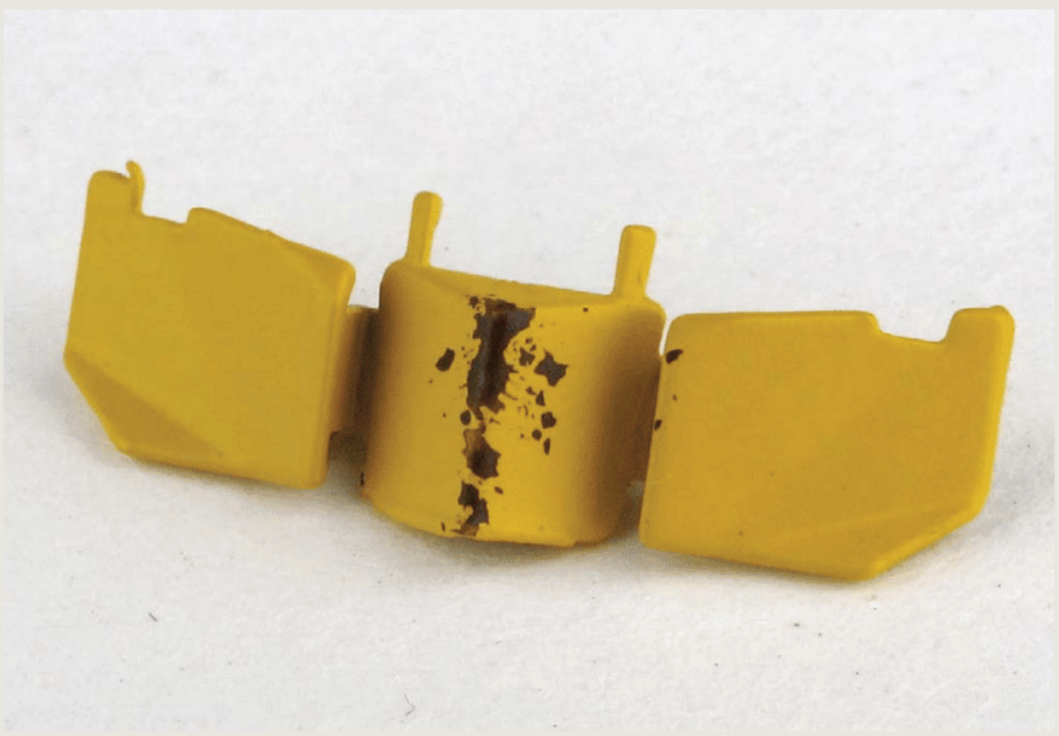
8 Use the same rust mix from the previous step and spray this on the bogie sides, the battery boxes and fuel tanks. Spray thinner and heavier patches to create contrast and interest.



9 Fuel spillage on the fuel tanks can be represented by brushing satin varnish with a little black mixed in. Since I used enamel for the other steps, I could use acrylic on this stage without fear of interfering with the lower layers.



10 Grease on the buffer faces is represented by using a negative painting method. Mix a grey with a little rust and add this as a randomly-shaped edge on the outside of the buffer faces.



11 Rust on the snowplough is caused by the coupling banging upon it. Create this by adding a little rust colour with a piece of sponge. If you want to fit the snowplough, then do so before adding the pipework.

CONCLUSION

Although weathering is principally about observation, some knowledge of diesel locomotives is helpful. The principal emissions from a diesel are soot from the exhaust and dust from the brakes, the former affecting the roof and the latter the bogies. If the brake dust isn't cleaned off, then it will accumulate in heavier deposits that are likely to work their way further up the bodysides. The motion of the locomotive will cause deposits similar to those found on the front of a road vehicle. If cleaning is minimal, it is likely to be confined to the 'face' of the locomotive (windscreens, indicator boxes, lights, yellow warning areas, bufferbeam), names and numbers. Hard-to-reach and less observable areas, such as the roof and bonnet tops, are the least likely to be cleaned. As the paint ages, it will fade and is likely to suffer damage, revealing undercoat or bare metal. Many locomotive types weather in distinct patterns that are signatures of the class or body shape and it is important to spot and replicate these.

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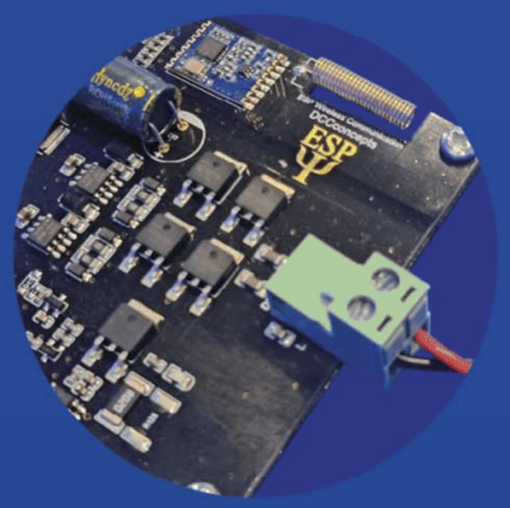

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Lower Gornal St. James station; a modernised building on a rationalised single-track branch line, sometime in the early 2010s, somewhere in the suburbs of Dudley, and inspired by the likes of Stourbridge Town.

Modernising steam-era buildings



Ben Bucki

RAILWAYS HERE in the UK exhibit a surprising variety of architectural styles, from modernised steel and glass, to concrete brutalism, to traditional steam-age buildings modernised for the needs of the contemporary traveller. Sometimes it's the bigger stations that get this treatment; London St. Pancras, or Birmingham Moor Street, being excellent examples of sympathetically updated and modernised older structures. Penhelig, on the Cambrian Coast line, is a good example of the smaller stops brought up to date while maintaining the original building. Here, the traditional Great Western Railway 'Pagoda' shelter has been upgraded with replacement windows and a re-felted roof, better lighting, and new signage, and sits on a platform covered in a modern non-slip surface and backed with steel railings. From a modelling point of view, this sort of thing is quite handy; there tend to be more kits of steam-era buildings on the market than modern buildings, but with a few modifications and little details, you can make these venerable structures suitable for a railway in the present day.

WHAT YOU NEED

Citadel Acrylics
Abaddon Black, Altdorf Guard Blue, Celestra Grey, Contrast Garaghak's Sewer, Contrast Ork Flesh, Leadbelcher, Mournfang Brown, Nuln Oil, Technical Nihilakh Oxide, Warboss Green, White Scar

Hornby
Platform Fences

Peco
Platform Accessories Modern Era 5053

Slaters
Plastikard Evergreen and Plastruct Channel, Tubes U and I-section beams (various offcuts and scraps upcycled into this project)

West Hill Wagon Works
Modern Station CCTV Cameras

Woodland Scenics
Bus Stop People

Wills
SS60 Station Platform Shelter

Other
'Sharpie' permanent markers (brown, grey, black), UHU wood glue, superglue, scrap Plastikard, Offcuts from Hornby resin Retaining Walls (Engineers' Blue Brick), platforms of unknown manufacture, a craft knife, Swann-Morton Scalpel (sizes 10 and 22 blades), scissors, steel rule, engineer's square, razor saw, coping saw, cutting mat and hot glue gun.



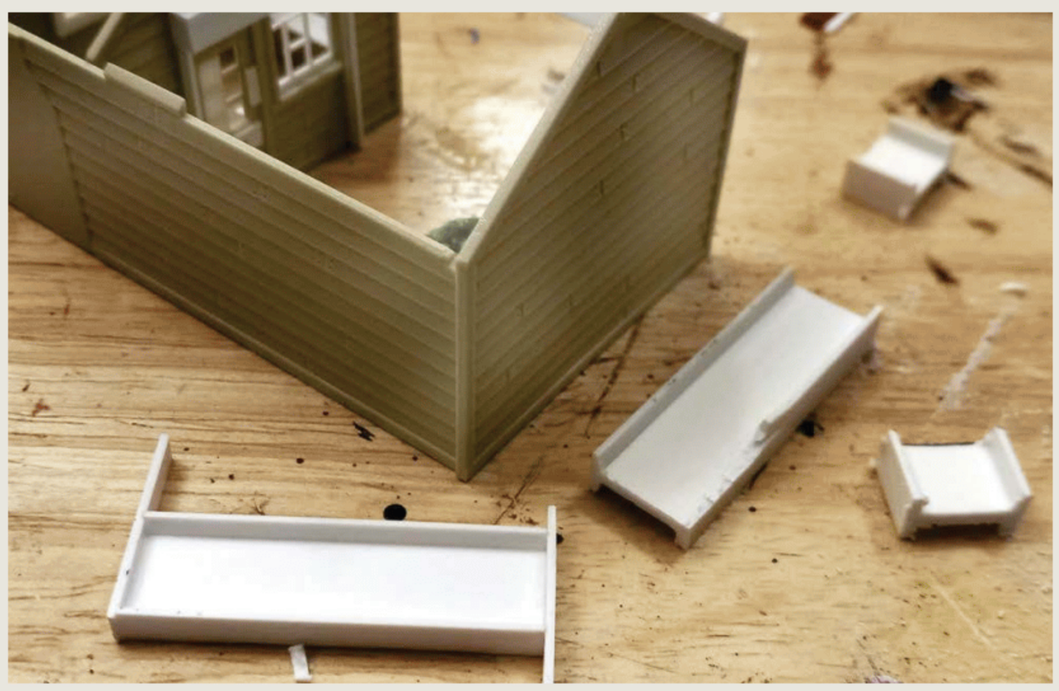
1 The kit components and somewhat rudimentary instructions from this era of its issue. I gather some newer versions of the kit have a different roof; also worth noting, there are parts for other buildings on the sprues, which does at least provide fodder for converting and personalising the structure.



2 The first bit of detailing I undertook was to add some indents of nail-holes in the planks. A bit overscale, perhaps, but I thought they'd show up nicely once some weathering had been done on the walls.



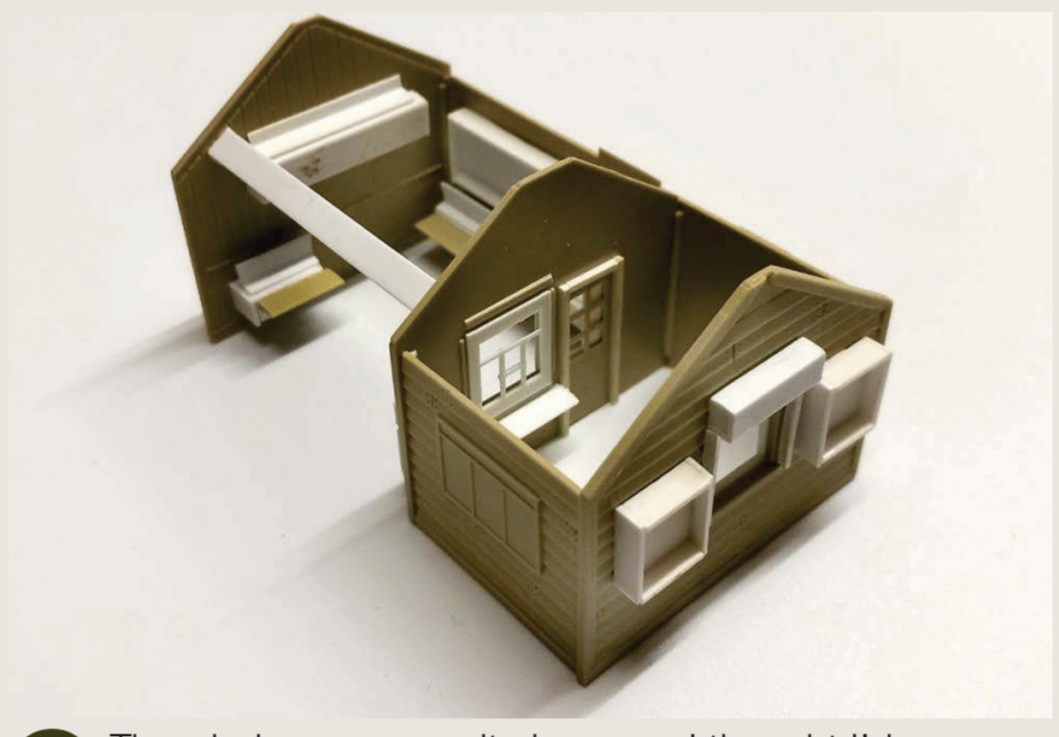
3 To bring the building a bit more into the modern day, I thought I'd add security features, like a representation of roller-shutters for the windows. I also modified the internal door to make it look more modern with kick-plates and a smaller window, then changed the office window to something more like a ticket hatch.



4 I wanted some new poster boards as well, to add some interest to the otherwise rather plain expanses of woodwork. I ended up using some Plastikard channel and strips to make a pair of long matching frames, then some smaller ones for the office wall.



5 Yet more Plastikard was used for some other details around the shelter, and an offcut of channel was used to add a bit of structural stability while I worked (as I was leaving the roof and a floor off to aid the painting).

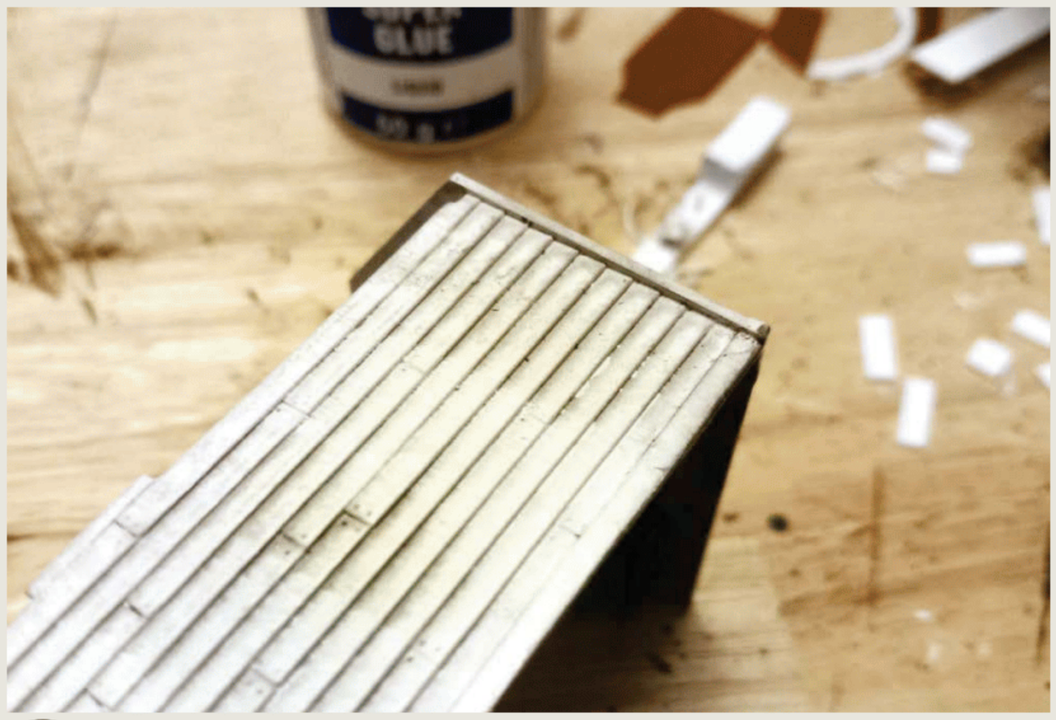


6 The windows were quite large, so I thought I'd add some rudimentary detailing inside the ticket office, to liven up the otherwise flat and plain walls of the interior.

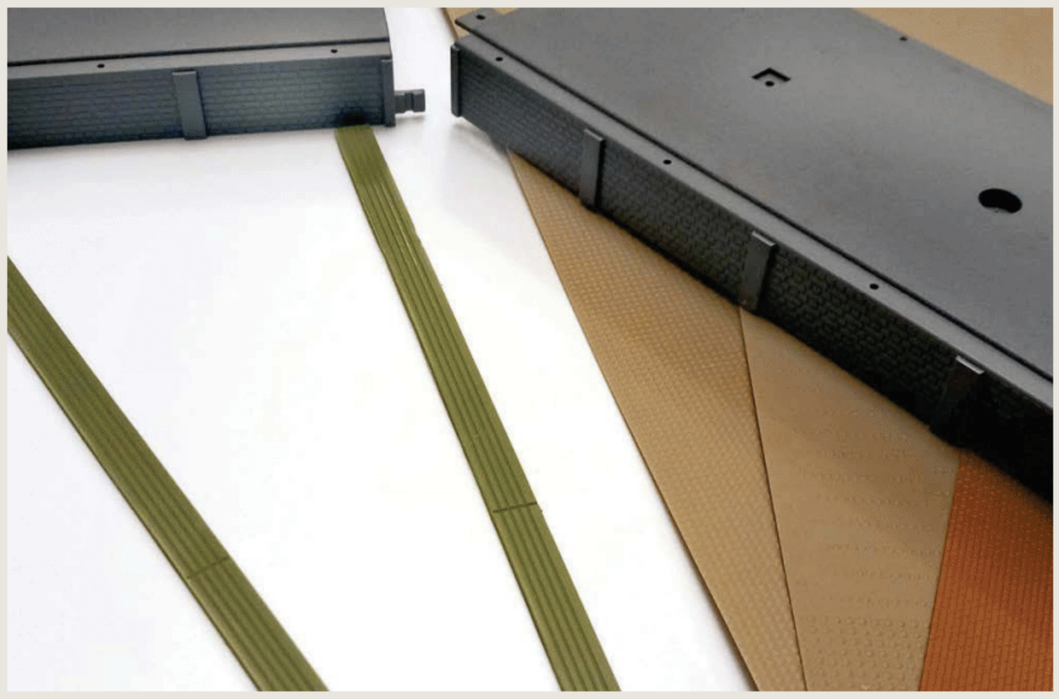
Getting Practical



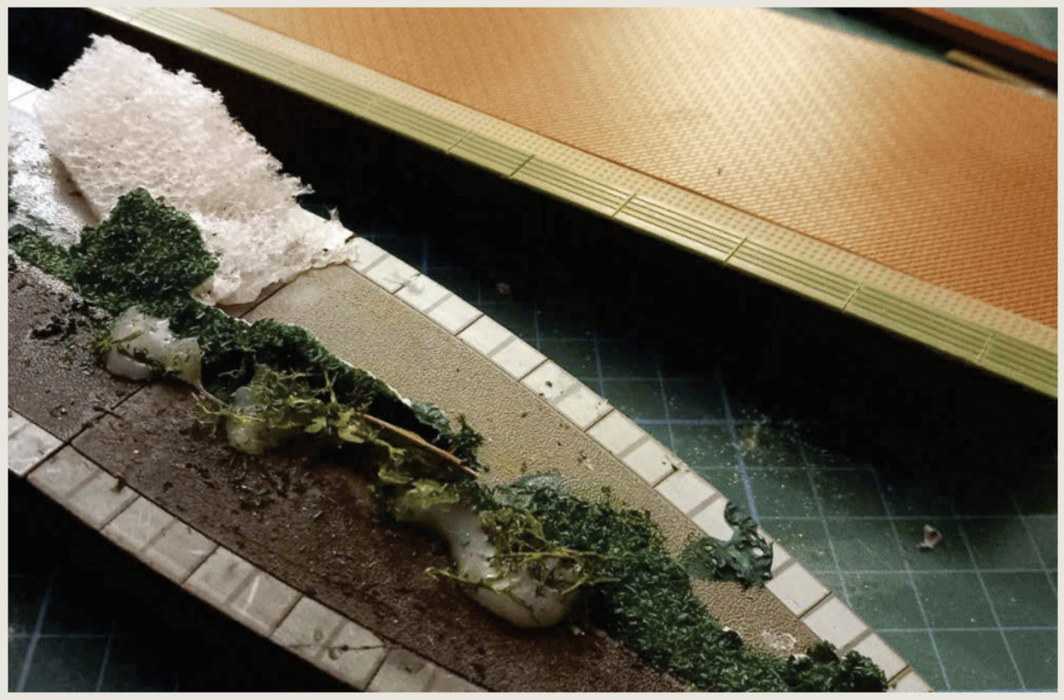
7 A first coat of paint; with the setting being the 2010s in the West Midlands, I chose to go with the blues and greens used by the Train Operating Company at the time. They'd need two or three coats apiece to provide a reasonably flat coat.



8 I wanted a representation of a building that was in reasonable condition, but suffering a bit of neglect in the austerity years of the 2010s, so I gave the building some grimy washes of earth and oil shades to bring out the relief details.



9 For the platform, I was trying to convey an old structure that had been re-clad and modernised at some point, using as a starting point two sections of unknown vintage. The brick surface was Plastikard, and some more embossed pieces were used for the tactile strip. The edging came from a scrap decking piece of an old Airfix Pontoon Bridge kit.



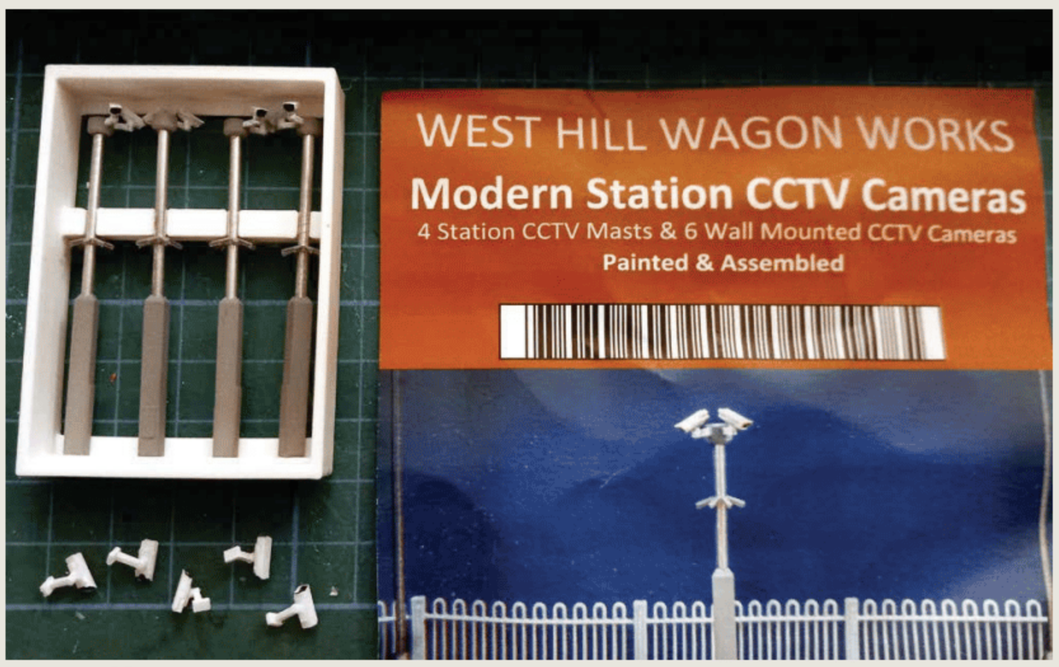
10 Inspired by Bingley Station, I wanted to show the remains of the original platform still there under the new cladding, poking out the end. I had some very scruffy bits of a Hornby platform salvaged from an old project, and thought I'd incorporate them.



11 Modern stations are covered in advertising and the corporate image of the owners. I custom-made some posters and logos (with the exception of a faded logo from the old TOC, Centro, scanned from a leaflet), and modified some old maps and timetables I found online.



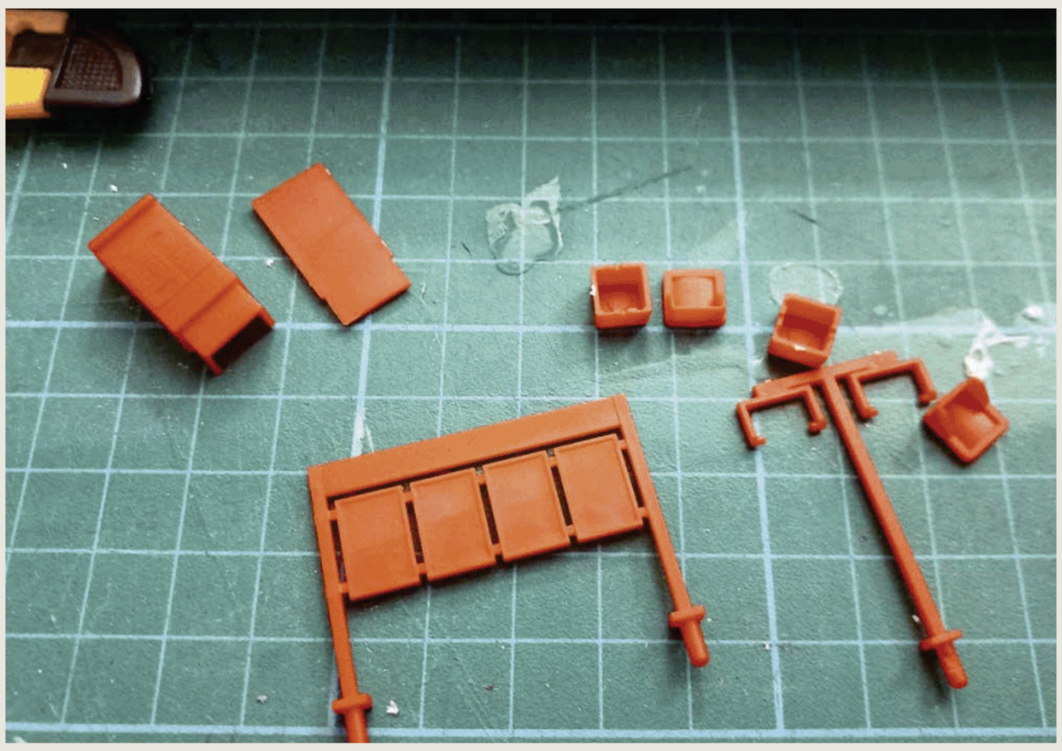
12 With the posters and signs on, the roof was glued in place, then more weathering added to try and lightly blend it in. In hindsight, I probably shouldn't have included the bin, as it probably wouldn't be there in the paranoid, security-conscious days of the 2010s.



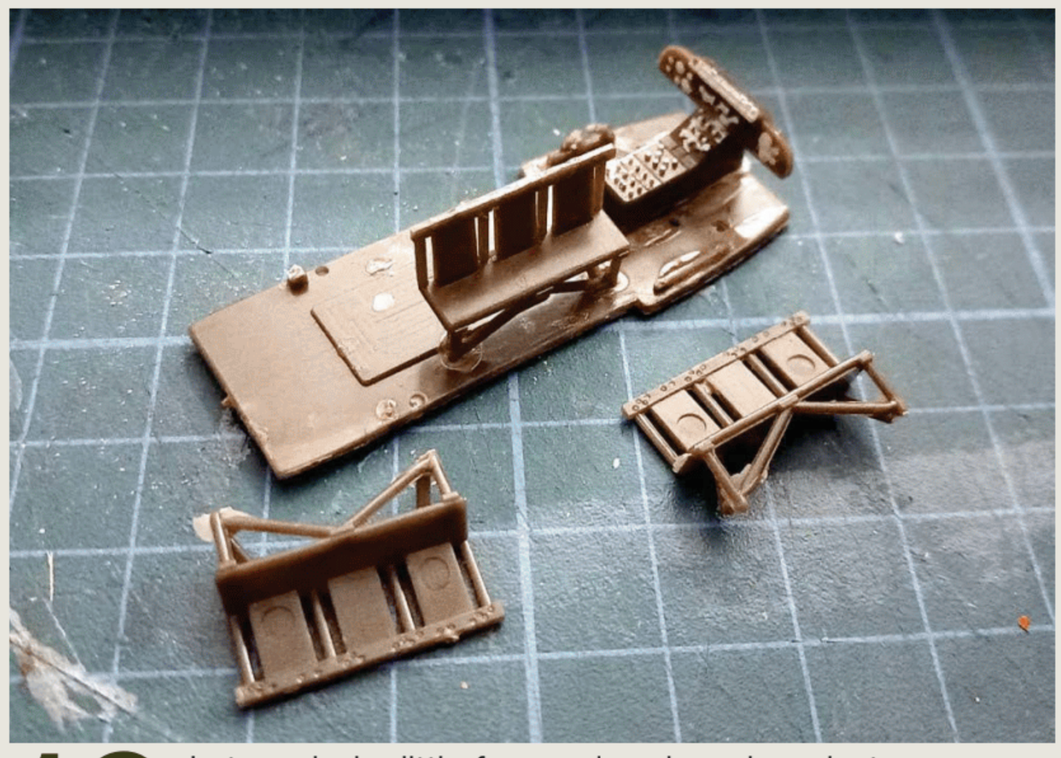
13 Speaking of which, I added some hints at the surveillance culture of the time. These rather nice mouldings of CCTV cameras from West Hill Wagon Works would provide a nice, subtle bit of set dressing and detailing.



14 I thought the roof would be the least-cleaned and maintained bit of the structure, so I went a bit heavier on the weathering, with more washes of browns, greys, and blacks, and just a touch of green to represent algae deposits near the gutters.



15 Some more modern platform accessories came from the Peco 5053 kit, the 'modern-era platform accessories' pack. Though not quite 'modern' in the 2026 sense, the big boxy telescreens would still plausibly have been in use in the early 2010s, so were included.



16 I struggled a little for modern benches, but remembered I had a very broken Airfix Lynx Helicopter kit in the spares box (honestly, never throw anything away!). The seats from the troop bay made for perfect, modern-looking platform benches.



17 Ready to install on the diorama; a final touch was experimenting with adding some working lighting to the interior, as it was a bit gloomy. Extra posters along the walls add a bit more interest, and finally, some modern street lamps and a couple more CCTV cameras help set the scene.

CONCLUSION

It's been a fun exercise in modifying this venerable kit, with a nice element of research to it, looking at old stations that have been gradually modernised and spotting the details to see what can be included; modern lighting, signage and posters, vandal-proofing, and other security measures. My diorama is set some 10-15 years ago, and even more changes would be needed to bring it up to 2026 levels, from the bigger things like energy-efficient modifications (solar panels on the roof), more digital signage and flat-screen display boards, to smaller things like defibrillators and corporate branding. It does, hopefully, show the scope for personalising and modifying a commonplace model kit, and how, with a few details here and there, you can create a unique variant of a building for your layout.

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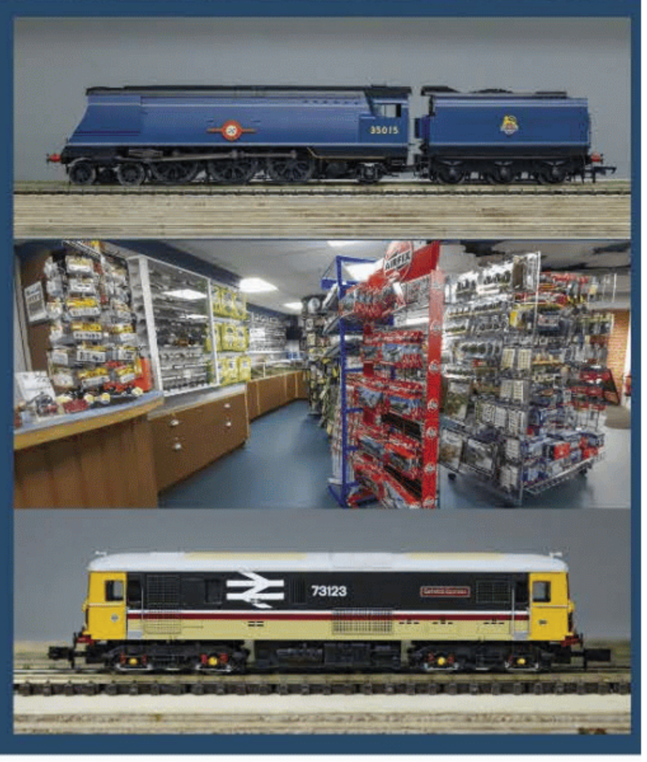

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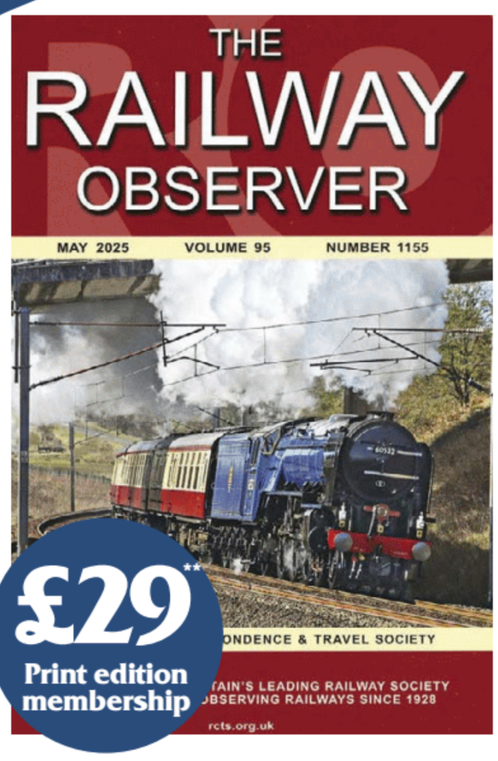

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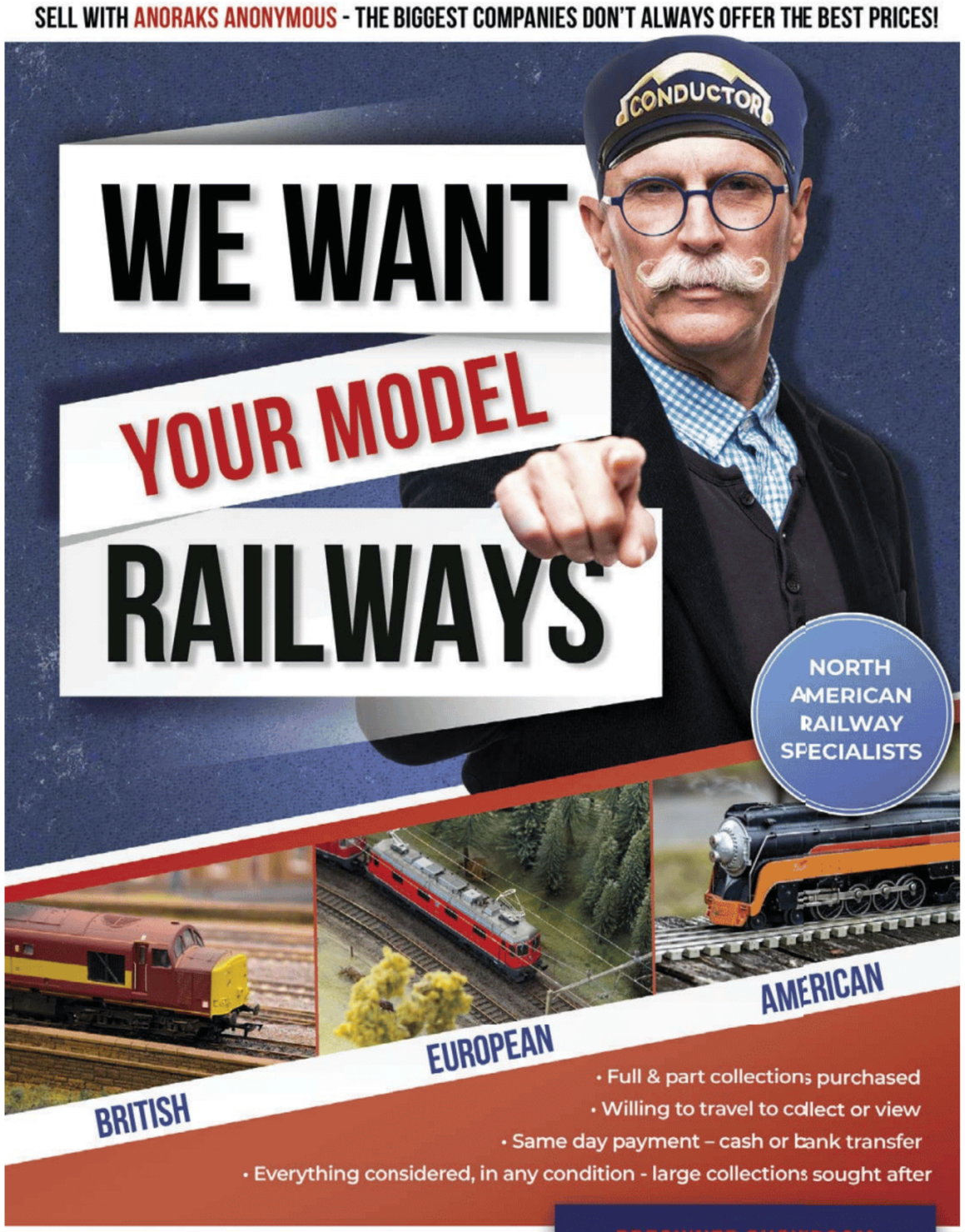

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TRACTION

ISSUE 307 | SPRING 2026

WHITWELL FREIGHT 1985-1986



ALSO INSIDE:

- Shell Mex & BP Bogie Tanks
- Neville Hill Depot
- Stanlow ‘Hot Oil’ Trains

WHITWELL 1985 AND 1986

By John Dedman



In the summer of 1985, two of us decided to head north from the south coast to explore the freight lines around the East Midlands and South Yorkshire. Our obvious targets were Toton, Shirebrook, Barrow Hill and, hopefully, some interesting lineside locations amongst all the red freight-only lines in the Rail Atlas. On July 3rd, we spent the afternoon around Shirebrook and moved north to find a lineside spot for the early evening. We discovered Whitwell on the route to Worksop: this looked like an interesting location with its signal box and loop behind it, which gave access to the colliery at the north end and a branch off at the south end to a quarry.

56115 is heading north past Whitwell with a loaded MGR, 37106 is waiting in the loop next to the signal box with a single HAA wagon and a brake van and will follow the MGR north. July 4th, 1985.

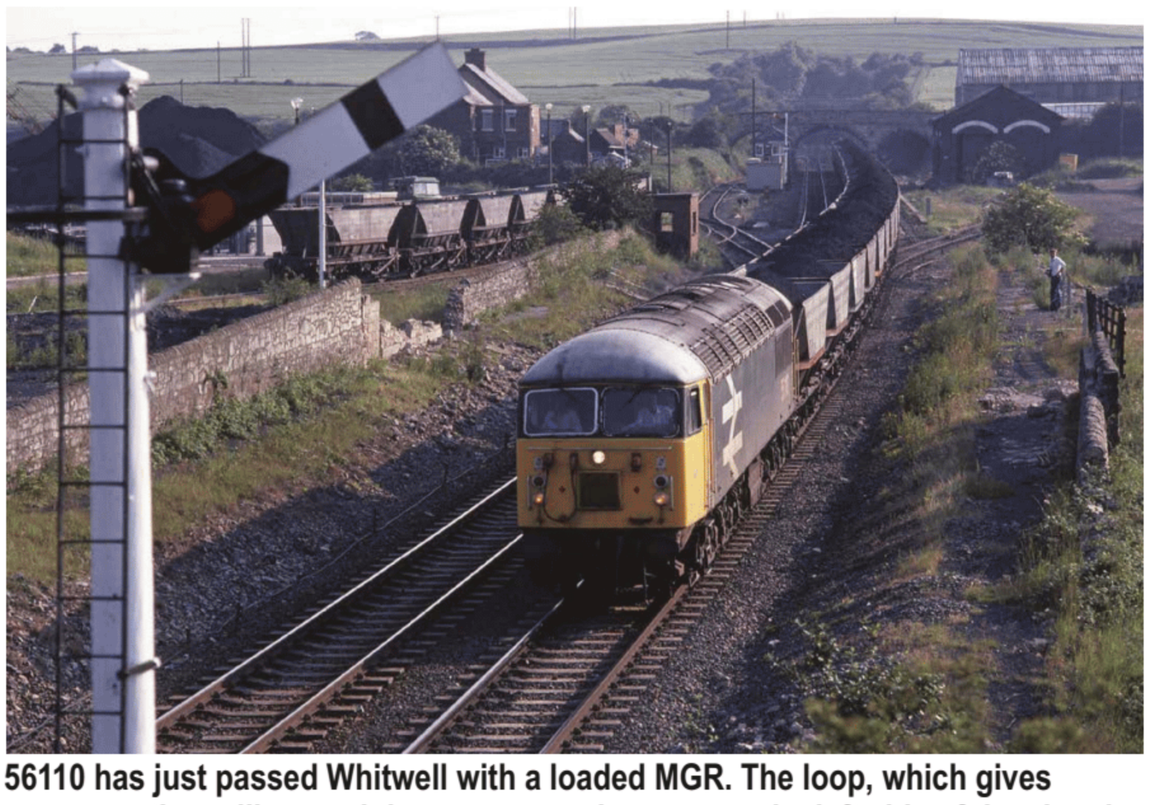
COVER IMAGE CAPTION: 56019 is departing Whitwell with a loaded MGR from the colliery. July 15th, 1986.



56106, approaching Whitwell from the north with an empty MGR. In the early 2000s, 56106 was part of the Fertis fleet and used in France. After returning to the UK, it was stored by UK Rail Leasing until 2022, when it was scrapped after donating some parts to the Class 69 conversion program. July 3rd, 1985.



37046 and 37106 are seen at 18:00 with 6M70 17:30 Worksop to Toton Speedlink. The train includes two loaded HEA coal hoppers, two continental 4-wheeled ferry vans, a single black TTA tank and around 15 loaded HAA coal hoppers. July 3rd, 1985.



56110 has just passed Whitwell with a loaded MGR. The loop, which gives access to the colliery and the quarry, can be seen on the left side of the signal box. There are 10 empty HAA coal hoppers in the colliery siding.
July 4th, 1985.



56019 is departing Whitwell with a loaded MGR from the colliery. July 15th, 1986.



20107 and 20144 have just passed Dinnington Colliery signal box at 15:00 with a southbound loaded MGR on 15 July 1986. Just beyond the signal box the line changes from double track to single track . 15th July 1986.

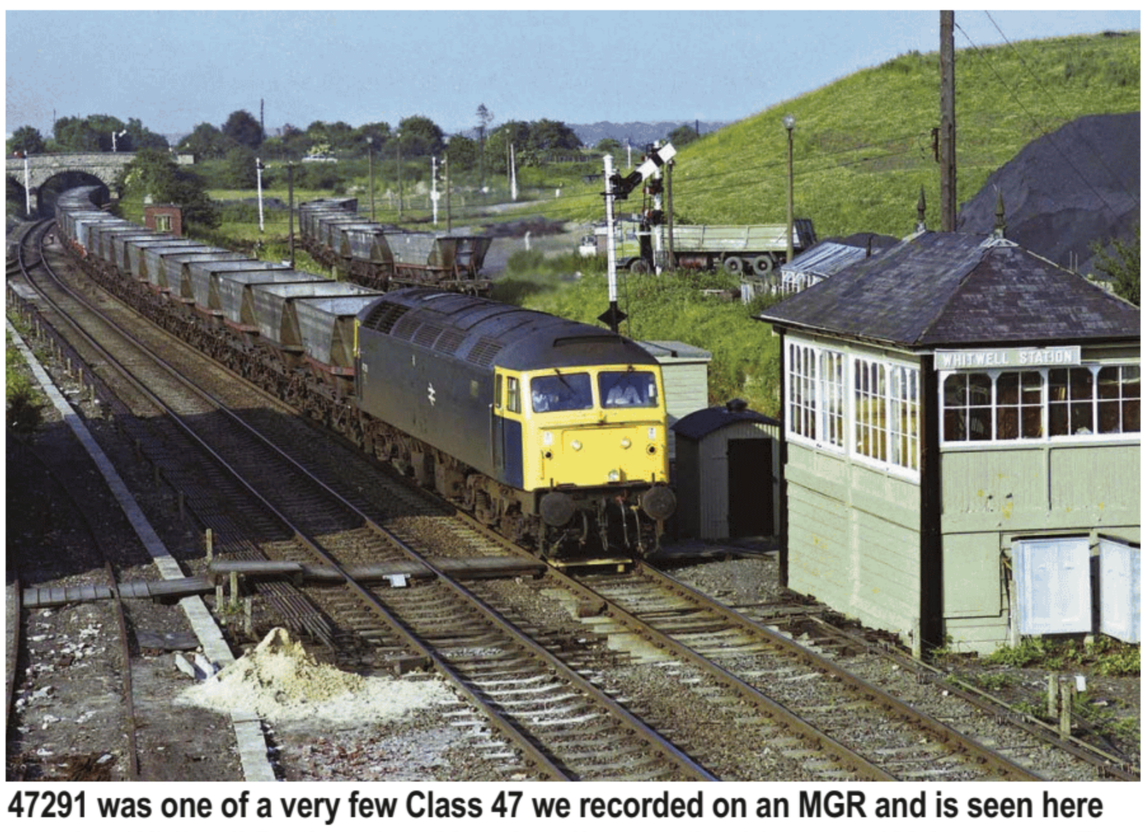
We only found out about the quarry the following day when a train went there. Whilst there, we recorded the passing of six MGR trains, one hauled by 47291 and the others by Class 56s. A welcome sight was the Worksop to Toton Speedlink hauled by 37046 and 37106, which was made up of mostly loaded coal in HEA and HAA wagons with a couple of vans and a fuel oil tank. This was quite a productive short session, so we decided to return the next morning.

We had already planned any early morning at Clay Cross Junction, so we got back to Whitwell around 10.00am. It turned out to be a busy morning with mostly MGR trains all hauled by Class 56 locos. The exceptions were a pair of Class 20s light engine heading south and 47379 heading north with a rake of 100-ton bogie oil tanks.

One interesting move was the arrival of 37106 from the north with two bogie hoppers and a brake van. The hoppers were taken to the nearby quarry, where the access line branched off to the south of our location. 37106 eventually returned from



56107 has emerged from the tunnel at the southern end of Whitwell with yet another loaded MGR on July 4th, 1985.



47291 was one of a very few Class 47 we recorded on an MGR and is seen here passing Whitwell Station signal box heading south with empty HAA wagons. The original Midland Railway station was closed in 1964 and removed. A new station was opened when passenger services were reinstated in 1998. 3rd July 1985.

Romanian-built BR Blue 56023 is heading north with a loaded MGR, as a loaded MGR from Whitwell Colliery is being manoeuvred ready for departure. 56023 went into service in 1977 and was withdrawn from service at Toton in 1993 and finally scrapped in 2004. July 4th, 1985.



37106 is arriving with 2 hoppers and a brake van. It will then unhitch the wagons in the loop behind the signal box and run round ready to push them down to the quarry. 4th July 1985



37106 has run round its wagons and is proceeding to propel them into the quarry. The HAA, which the loco will collect later, is visible at the end of the headshunt to the left of the bridge. July 4th, 1985.



37106 has detached its brake van and collected a single HAA coal hopper from the headshunt. It will then reverse back to the quarry line to attach the brake van before heading north. July 4th, 1985.



37106 is returning from the quarry with its brake van after delivering two stone hoppers. July 4th, 1985.



37106 has now got the road and is heading north from Whitwell with a single HAA loaded coal hopper and a brake van. July 4th, 1985.

Whitwell: Wednesday, July 3rd, 1985		
56106	S	Empty MGR
56115	N	Loaded MGR
37046 + 37106	S	6M70 17:30 Worksop - Toton Speedlink
56110	N	Loaded MGR
56112	S	MGR
56xxx	N	MGR
47291	S	MGR
Whitwell: Thursday, July 4th, 1985		
56128	S	Empty MGR
56024	N	Loaded MGR
56094	S	Empty MGR
20210 + 20128	S	LE
37080	S	S LE
56101		MGR to/from colliery
56107	N	Loaded MGR
56023	N	Loaded MGR
37106	S	2 Hoppers + Brake Van to quarry
56015	S	MGR
47276	S	Empty MGR
47379	N	Oil, 100t tks
37106	N	1 HAA + Brake van
56115	N	MGR
56024	S	Empty MGR
Whitwell: Tuesday, July 15th, 1986		
56020	N	MGR
56019	N	MGR from colliery
58xxx	N	Speedlink to Worksop
Worksop to Dinnington Line: Tuesday, July 15th, 1986		
37xxx	S	5 HEAs loaded coal
20153 + 20096	S	Speedlink, 2 HAA and Ferry van
20107 + 20144	S	MGR
56071	N	Empty MGR
56022	N	Empty MGR



47379 is heading north past Whitwell with around 10 100-ton bogie oil tanks. On the left is 37106, sitting in the line from the quarry. July 4th, 1985.

the quarry and proceeded to collect a single loaded HAA coal hopper from the siding at the south of our location. The HAA was attached to the brake van and the train departed north. We also witnessed 56101 arrive with an empty MGR train, which it proceeded to reverse into the colliery.

The following year, we were around the same area again and had a brief visit to Whitwell on July 15th. 56019 was in the loop with a loaded MGR from the colliery waiting to head north, 56020 passed through with a loaded MGR and 56019 pulled out and followed it. An unidentified Class 58 also passed through northwards with 11 loaded HEA wagons and two TTA fuel oil tanks. After this, we moved a bit further north to Dinnington on the line to Worksop. As we arrived, a Class 37 passed with five loaded HEA coal wagons followed by 20153 and 20096 with a trip working to Worksop consisting of two HAA wagons and a single ferry van.

We did return north again in 1987, but did not visit the Whitwell area ,as we were exploring other parts of the country.

At 14:45, 20153 and 20096 are heading south at Dinnington with two HAA wagons and a continental ferry van. This route changes to single track as can be seen in the distance beyond the next bridge. July 15th, 1986.

CLASSIC WAGONS:
SHELL MEX & BP BOGIE TANKS

By David Ratcliffe

37708 is seen at Middlesbrough with the weekly train of fuel oil from Stanlow to the Cleveland Potash mine at Boulby on October 18th, 1993.
TREVOR MANN



Lagged and coiled Shell Class B tank SUKO 83626 still retained its original livery, albeit heavily work-stained, when spotted at Crewe Gresty Rd. in September 1990, over 20 years after being built by Metro-Cammell of Birmingham. DAVID RATCLIFFE



During the 1970s and 1980s, plain black was the normal look for most of the SM&BP bogie Class B tanks, although after 1976 some did gain a company logo, as with BPO 83175 pictured at Stoke wagon shops in May 1989. DAVID RATCLIFFE

Although a handful of bogie tank wagons had been built in Britain during the early years of the Twentieth Century, including solitary examples for the tar distillers Major & Co. Ltd of Wolverhampton and Anglo-American Oil Company's Pratts motor oil brand, it would not be until SM&BP, the joint marketing arm of Shell and British Petroleum, introduced its first bogie tank in 1965 that the type would become widespread.

Unlike the earlier bogie tanks, those built for SM&BP dispensed with continuous solebars, the barrel only being secured to short sections situated over each bogie. The solebars then angled down and inwards to join two steel members running along the underside of the tanks, to which were attached the brake gear and discharge pipes. End ladders and full-length catwalks gave access to the filling hatches on top of the barrel.

The first batches, which were ordered by SM&BP from Metro Cammell in 1965/'66, comprised 20 Class A tanks, for the carriage of petroleum products with a flashpoint below 23°C, such as motor spirit and naphtha, and 20 Class B tanks, these fitted with 2in thick insulation to the barrel for the carriage of light fuel oil. This resulted in a reduction in the outside diameter of the Class B tank barrel from 8ft 9¼ to 8ft 5in. In 1967, SM&BP ordered a further 204 Class B bogie tanks, 136 of which were fitted with internal steam-heating coils as well as being insulated, so as to enable them to carry the more viscous heavy fuel oil.

Overall length of the new tanks was 58ft 3in over buffers running on English Steel Type ESC1 bogies, centred at 41ft 9in and with a gross laden weight of 102 tons when operating over approved major routes. All were air-braked with a through vacuum pipe fitted, so that when TOPS was later introduced, they would be coded TEB, although most would lose their through vacuum pipes in later years to be recoded TEA.

British Petroleum Class A tank BPO 87566 had also kept much of its original livery when seen at Stoke wagon shops in March 1990. DAVID RATCLIFFE.



56089 pauses on the up goods line at Warrington Bank Quay while heading a Leeds to Stanlow block train of discharged Shell bogie Class A tanks in September 1985. DAVID RATCLIFFE



As for the Class A SM&BP bogie tanks, their most common livery during the 1980s was plain grey, although some were adorned with a company badge, such as SUKO 87103 seen at Manchester Victoria in September 1987. DAVID RATCLIFFE



Over the years, a small number of SM&BP bogie tanks were fitted with GPS bogies, including BPO 80574, recorded at Stoke in April 1990. This sports the later BP badge, although at this date it was one of the two BPO TEAs that saw brief use in urea-formaldehyde resin traffic to Stirling. DAVID RATCLIFFE



The Class A SM&BP bogie tanks normally ran in block trains but they could be spotted in smaller numbers when running to and from repair. In April 1985, 31301 passes Ashburys station with two Shell Class A TEAs, SUKO 87156 and SUKO 87537, which it had recently collected from the Standard Wagon Co. at Heywood. DAVID RATCLIFFE



During the 1990s, over a dozen lagged and coiled BP Class B bogie tanks were leased by Mobil for the carriage of bitumen from Coryton Refinery at Thames Haven to the Croda Hydrocarbons works at Kilnhurst. BPO 83589 is pictured at Longport, when waiting to return to Thames Haven, after undergoing repairs at Stoke in March 1995. DAVID RATCLIFFE



Shell added a revised badge design to a number of its bogie tanks in early 1990, with lagged and coiled Class B SUKO 83653 pictured at Ellesmere Port in February 1993. DAVID RATCLIFFE

Workings

From their introduction, these tank wagons operated from the Shell refineries at Stanlow, Shellhaven and Teesport and the BP refinery at Llandarcy, serving expanded or newly opened oil terminals situated predominantly in Lancashire, the Midlands, Yorkshire and the Home Counties. However, as the number of new tank wagons increased, they also began working from BP's Grangemouth and Isle of Grain refineries and soon became a common sight as well in southern Scotland and Lincolnshire.

With the ending of the joint marketing arrangement on January 1st, 1976, the SM&BP wagon fleet was divided, with Shell receiving 60% and British Petroleum 40%. This split was reflected in the TOPS numbers, then being allocated by BR to all privately-owned wagons, with Shell tanks taking the 00 to 59 range and those of BP the 60 to 99 range.

Furthermore, the five-digit TOPS numbers given to these tanks provided an additional demarcation so that bogie tanks numbered 80xxx were Class A tanks fitted with an Epicote barrel lining for the carriage of aviation fuel, with the 83xxx covering all the Class B tanks. The rest of the Class A tanks were numbered in the 87xxx range. As well as fitting Epicote lining to around 100 Class A tanks, other modifications to the SM&BP fleet were limited, although some would be experimentally fitted with GPS or Schlieren bogies.

Liveries

The design would prove a great success, with SM&BP eventually purchasing over 1,000 bogie tanks, these being built not only by Metro Cammell but also C. Roberts, R.Y. Pickering and Powell Duffryn. However, during the 1990s, a reduction in



In the 1990s, both Shell and BP revived the application of waist-level stripes. SUKO 87234 illustrates the new Shell look at Stoke in May 1992. DAVID RATCLIFFE



The first BP bogie tank to be repainted in green and yellow was BPO 87566, which, having been recorded in almost original livery four months earlier, is pictured again now fresh out of the paint shop at Stoke wagon works in July 1990. DAVID RATCLIFFE

In contrast to Shell's red and yellow stripes, British Petroleum chose green and yellow. BPO 87686 was in crude oil traffic when spotted at Immingham Yard during September 1990. DAVID RATCLIFFE

BP's refining capacity saw some of their bogie tanks leased to other companies including Carless Solvents, for the carriage of petroleum distillates from Harwich, and Curran Oil, for the movement of imported fuel oil from Cardiff Docks.

A number of BP Class B tanks were also leased by Mobil and Total for the carriage of bitumen to Kilnhurst and Preston respectively, while two of the BP Epicote-lined Class A tanks found further use carrying urea-formaldehyde resin from Cambridgeshire to a chipboard manufacturer in Stirling, although this proved to be relatively short-lived as the resin movement ended shortly before the demise of the Speedlink wagonload freight network in 1991.

Following the end of refining at Grain and Llandarcy, a number of British Petroleum bogie Class A tanks were transferred to the movement of on-shore crude oil from Gainsborough and Welton to Immingham during the 1990s, as well as a similar flow from Holybourne to Fawley. In contrast, the Shell fleet remained in-house, although by the mid-1990s, they were confined to the block petroleum train workings from Stanlow in Cheshire, with these finally coming to an end in 1997.

66058 heads discharged bogie Class A BPO forming a return working from Fawley Refinery to Holybourne on August 15th, 2002. TREVOR MANN

STANLOW TO TEESPORT 'HOT OIL' TRAINS

Photographs by **Jeff Nicholls**

For a few months in 1984, a heavy 'hot oil' (bitumen) train ran from Stanlow oil refinery across the Pennines to the refinery at Teesport while the latter plant was being upgraded. This brought the sight of double-headed Class 56s heading east each evening with the 6E49 19:16 from Stanlow. The train was often loaded to 18 100-ton bogie tankers. The photographer commented that the locomotives certainly made the ground shake. Many Class 56s were spare at the time due to the miners' strike. As well as the images shown here, there is also photographic evidence on the internet of occasional pairs of Class 40s working this service, such as on April 28th, when 40174 and 40035 hauled the train, while on May 24th, 40044 and 40057 put in an appearance.



56018 and 56108 are seen on the West Coast Main Line at Winwick Quay shortly before diverging on the line towards Earlestown on May 31st, 1984.

A rather grubby 56018 and what appears to be ex-works 56131 are seen near Winwick Junction on May 15th, 1984.

56131 and 56018 storm past Newchurch, just east of Newton-le-Willows, heading towards Manchester on May 18th, 1984.

56085 and 56080 are seen on the slow lines at Winwick Quay on May 29th, 1984.

NEVILLE HILL DEPOT

Over the years, **Gavin Morrison** has had many opportunities to visit and take photographs at Neville Hill depot in Leeds. Here, we present a small selection of photos taken over the last 60 years.



D284 is seen on March 8th, 1961, at Neville Hill in its original condition with the steps on the front of the bonnet and no yellow warning panel. The locomotive had been delivered to York shed (50A) on July 11th, 1960, and would remain there until re-allocated to Gateshead in March 1967. York's steam-age shedplate can be seen on the side of the rear cab. Neville Hill's diesel locomotive allocation at this time was limited to Drewry shunters D2242/3/4/6 and 'Peaks' D11-D17. The depot was, of course, still very much a busy steam shed and was also responsible for a large number of diesel multiple units.



D1505 was delivered new to Finsbury Park on January 11th, 1963, but was sent in the same month to Neville Hill shed on loan for crew training, probably being the first Brush Type 4 to visit Neville Hill. It is seen here on March 24th, 1963. Later that year, the Brush Type 4s took over many of the Leeds to King's Cross workings: the editor saw D1505 on one such working. The headcode 4N09 was for the 20:50 King's Cross Good Station to the yard, just outside of Leeds, at Ardsley. Presumably, the locomotive has worked this as part of the crew training schedule. By 1963, Neville Hill's diesel locomotive allocation has been reduced, with the 'Peaks' having been reallocated to other sheds. One of Neville Hill's Drewry (later Class 04) shunters can just be seen on the left.



Seen in the first Midland Mainline livery, 43083 and another HST power car are inside the depot for maintenance, on September 8th, 2002. The upper bodies of the power cars and carriages were painted in a teal green above a beige stripe and separated by a narrow white stripe. Three tangerine orange bands ran along the bottom of the teal green and wrapped around the lower part of the power car's nose cone. Clearly, this example needs a trip through the washing plant! Neville Hill was responsible for maintaining HSTs for many years, including those used on trains on both the East Coast and Midland Main Lines.



The days of GNER's dark blue and red livery are recalled here with 91113 County of North Yorkshire seen stabled between trips to and from King's Cross. The date is May 22nd, 2005.



Neville Hill is one of those places where Class 08 shunters are still in service in 2026. Here we see 08950 in Maintrain livery on May 22nd, 2005. Today, it carries a red and blue livery and is lettered 'EMT'.

The first of the three-car CAF-built Class 333s, made for the Airedale and Wharfedale lines, has just arrived at Neville Hill on March 22nd, 2000, and is being prepared for testing and crew training. The units later received additional trailer cars, making all the units four carriages. A quarter of a century later, the Class 333s continue to ply the route for which they were built.



47805, in Virgin livery but with the lettering removed, is seen in the yard at Neville Hill on April 23rd, 2006. The locomotive was built in 1966 and entered service as D1935. It subsequently carried the numbers 47257 and 47650 before becoming 47805 in 1989. It remains in service with Locomotive Services Limited and is a frequent performer on charter trains. In the background is a Class 321 in Silverlink livery. Some of these units were transferred on loan to Neville Hill and used on the Leeds to Doncaster line alongside the small fleet of West Yorkshire PTE's Class 321s while these were undergoing refurbishment.



Typifying Neville Hill's allocation from the 1980s onwards, we see Regional Railways liveried 150258 and 142078 stabled between duties in the yard on September 13th, 1987. To the left is an HST, lettered Inter City Pullman Restaurant.



155345 and 333013 are seen inside one of the servicing sheds on January 25th, 2003. Both are in the livery of the West Yorkshire PTE but are also carrying Arriva branding. The former WYPTE Class 155s are still in service, frequently operating trains on the route between York, Hull and Bridlington.



Wearing Virgin Trains East Coast's livery, 43296 is on the jacks at Neville Hill receiving attention on August 8th, 2018. Two months earlier, Virgin Trains East Coast had ceased operations and LNER had assumed responsibility for East Coast Main Line services.

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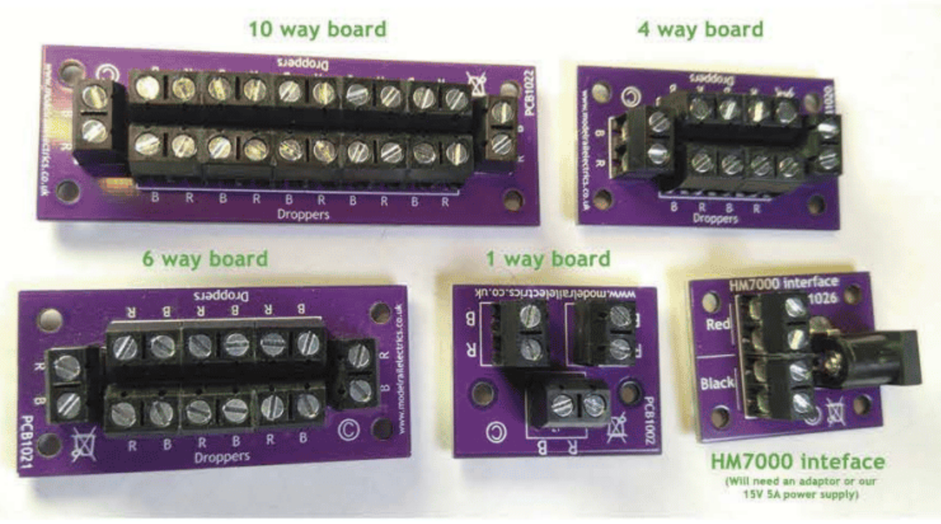

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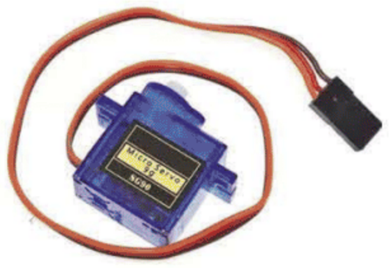

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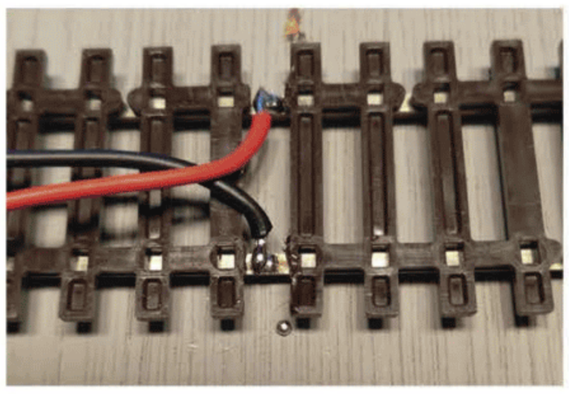

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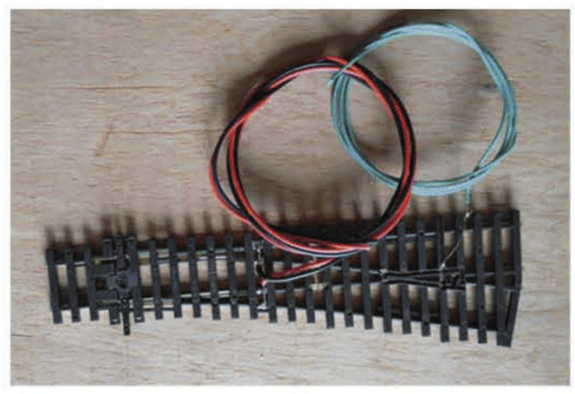

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LAYOUT | N | BARNWOOD

Ship *Velvet Touch* sits at the quayside waiting for the Cawoods coal containers to be loaded before sailing to Northern Ireland. Cawoods shipped coal using these distinctive yellow containers during the 1980s through to the mid-1990s.

FACTFILE

LAYOUT NAME: Barnwood
SCALE/GAUGE: 2mm:1ft/9mm/N
SIZE: 12ft 8in x 4ft
ERA/REGION: Early 1990s, North West England
LAYOUT TYPE: Continuous run

QUAYSIDE ACTION

This busy fictional port, set in the North of England, provides plenty of operational opportunities for this builder and comes packed with exciting details that pushed his modelling skills to the limit.

Words: Andrew Fardell **Photography:** Phil Parker



TOP RIGHT:
Here we see logs have been loaded onto wagons after being harvested in the Forest of Bowland. Four of the OTA log-carrying wagons are Chivers Finelines kit and one is my own adaptation of a VDA van that was converted for this purpose in the '80s.



MIDDLE RIGHT:
A Class 60 has just arrived at the oil terminal to collect the discharged tanks. All wagons and locos have been weathered and oil spills down the tank wagons from the top-loading hatches can be clearly seen.



My main interest has always been the freight side of railway operations, so I wanted an excuse to run lots of freight, therefore, I created the fictional town of Barnwood, located on a secondary route off the West Coast Main Line between Preston and Lancaster, thus relieving pressure on this two-track section, hence it is busy with freight.

The town is located on the coast and has a port with a small container terminal, grain terminal and steel terminal with appropriate ships at the quayside. The town is also home to an oil terminal, a large warehouse, cement terminal and a siding for the transhipment of logs and a Royal Mail terminal. There is also a small loco depot.

A freight-only branch line leads to a power station, coal mine and quarry. Passenger services aren't totally neglected, with Regional Railways operating services connecting Manchester and Preston to Barrow in Furness, passing through. There is also a short branch line with a passenger service to Glasson, located on the estuary of the River Lune.

> "Microswitches are used on the servo motors so that point blade contact is not relied on for electrical contact."



Steel and aluminium for local distribution are waiting to be unloaded, meanwhile, steel coils for export to Ireland are being loaded onto the waiting ship. This scratch-built crane was one of my most satisfying builds.

Construction highlights

I previously had a fixed non-portable layout that I salvaged a lot of the trackwork and some of the scratch-built models from. The control is 12v DC analogue using both H & M Duettes and Gaugemaster controllers.

The trackwork is Peco code 80 using servo motors driven by the Megapoints system. Points are both electrofrog for the slow-running areas, docks and sidings and insulfrog for the main lines and the off-scenic storage loops. Microswitches are used on the servo motors, so that point-blade contact is not relied upon for electrical contact.

Off-scenic, there are five storage roads in each direction, plus two bi-directional roads. Each road can hold two trains. Selecting the appropriate storage road is by a push button and all points change as required. This again is the Megapoints system. Colour light signalling uses N Brass frets with LEDs to create working signals, including position lights and route feathers.





ABOVE: The Chipmans' weedkiller train is seen passing through. This train is top and tail, with the rear Class 20 being a dummy. Both locos have Railtec transfers applied before weathering.

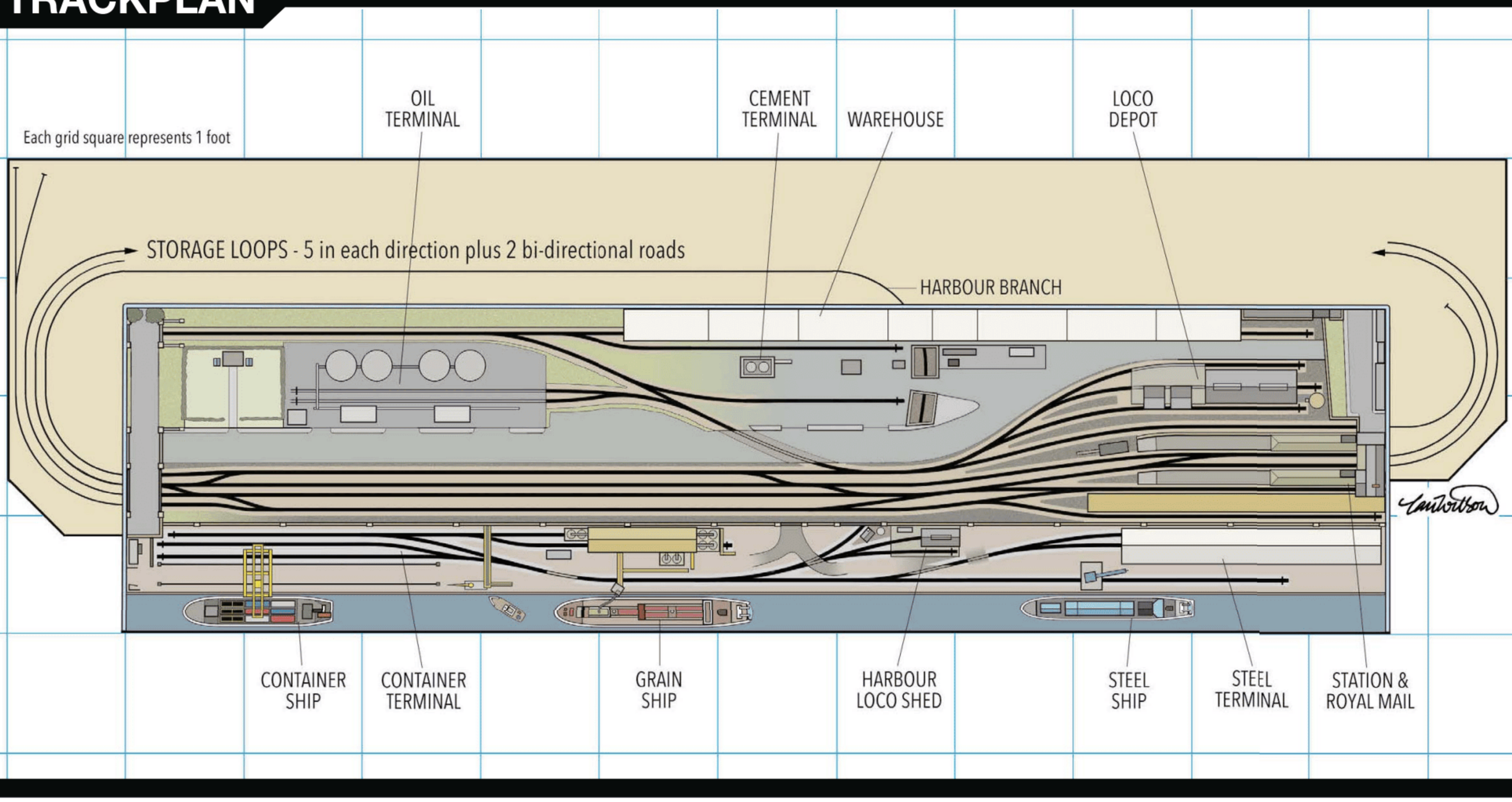
MIDDLE LEFT: A Class 47 gets the signal to rejoin the main line. The route feather is made using a brass fret with a string of 0.7mm white LED lamps soldered together, then glued to the fret with modelling clay used to cover the rear of the LED lamps, and then painted black to ensure no light leakage.

BOTTOM LEFT: Regional Railways Class 142 Pacer waits to depart with the shuttle to Glasson.



ABOVE: Here we see a close-up of the Chipmans' weedkiller train spray coach. This is scratch-built using the chassis of a Lima Mk. 1 coach with the body made to represent a Southern Region GUV that was converted to the purpose of spray coach. An operator can be seen at the opening of the spray nozzle.

TRACKPLAN





ABOVE: A Class 37 can be seen being refueled at the small servicing depot. Heavy weathering of the track here represents the typical diesel spillages that would happen around the depot area.



ABOVE: The station approach road can be seen with the taxi rank, bus stop and multi-storey car park behind. Road markings have been applied using Fusion paint pens.

About the modeller



Name: Andrew Fardell
Age: 62
Number of years modelling: 55 years
Name of your first layout: It didn't have one
Favourite era/region: 1980s/90s
Favourite locomotive: Speedlink and freight sectorisation

I first got into railways at the age of about seven, when my father took my elder brother and me to an open day at Tyseley. We bought a loco-spotting book and stopped on the way home by the West Coast Main Line, spotting class 86s (AL6 as we knew them in 1970) on expresses and an AL5 on a freight.

The modelling side soon followed, with my brother taking the lead with an OO gauge layout in the garden shed. I ventured into N gauge in about 1975, when the family home was extended, giving me a bedroom of my own. In adulthood, after working for 23 years as a maintenance engineer, I joined EWS as a driver in 2002, based at Leicester.

In 2013, I joined Melton Mowbray Model Railway Club, where I met John Spence and Steve Weston, the builders of Melton Mowbray North. They invited me to join them in exhibiting their layout at shows, which I thoroughly enjoyed, inspiring me to create my own layout for exhibiting. My area of interest was freight, so 'Barnwood' was created.

> "The loco shed is from Bachmann Scenecraft range that they based on the shed at Peterborough. Having driven locos in and out of the real thing, I just had to have one."

Barnwood Harbour Dock Company Class 04 positions a wagon of aluminium for unloading. The wagon is from Revolution Trains. The aluminium is real aluminium on flat container modules. The water in the harbour is a Woodland Scenics product.

A Class 37 has just arrived at the docks with empty grain wagons. The Class 37 will detach and park to one side while the Dock Company's Hunslet shunter puts the wagons under the grain silos. This shunter is the N Gauge Society ready-to-run model.

MIDDLE RIGHT:
A Class 37 is just leaving the docks with the empty Cawoods Coal containers. In the background, the grain terminal can be seen. A vacuum unit sucks the grain from the boat into the grain silos. Passing on the main line is a loaded stone train.



BOTTOM RIGHT:
Regional Railways Class 31 is just arriving at Barnwood with the Barrow in Furness to Manchester Victoria service as the Pacer arrives from Glasson. The signal box is another scratch-build; the relief signalman can be seen just arriving to start his shift.



The three ships at the quayside use kits in 1:400 scale from Imex Model Company for the hulls, with the tops scratch-built to suit the ship's role. The container crane is a scratch-build and is based loosely on the crane that used to be at Birmingham's Lawley Street Freightliner terminal. The container lift carriage can travel the full length of the gantry and rotate through 360 degrees. A challenging build, although motorising it would be a challenge too far!

The second crane at the steel terminal is also a scratch-build and I am particularly pleased with the jib on this. It uses two brass fret four-track overhead line gantries glued back-to-back. The grain terminal storage tanks are made from wood and were made on my dad's wood-turning lathe. The oil terminal is a Kibri kit with additional features added. Pipes can be seen heading underground and emerging on the dockside for the ship refuelling point. A small trawler is just approaching the fuel point.

The cement terminal is an adaptation of a PD Marsh white metal kit. The signal box, station and canopies are all scratch-built. The loco shed is from the Bachmann Scenecraft range, which is based on the shed at Peterborough. Having driven locos in and out of the real thing, I just had to have one.

Busy operations

There are 32 locomotives and five diesel multiple units used to run the layout. Two locos are dummies, a Class 31 on the double-headed nuclear train and a Class 20 on the top-and-tail weedkiller train. Freight stock is a mixture of ready-to-run from the main manufacturers, plus items from the N Gauge Society and Revolution Trains, plus kit-builds and my own scratch-built examples. All locomotives, coaches and wagons are weathered. Dapol easy shunt couplings are used where shunting operations happen.

Final thoughts

One can easily find faults with one's own work, but generally, I am fairly pleased with what I have built, and at exhibitions, have received plenty of positive comments.

I have, at the time of writing, attended nine shows, ironically all in the Midlands and south of England, with a layout based in the North West! I will continue to exhibit the layout, probably no more than five or six times a year. Considering other commitments and always ensuring that an operating team is available, this feels about right. ■





TOP LEFT: Another view of the fueling point sees a Class 56 between duties and a Class 37 receiving light servicing in the shed.

MIDDLE LEFT: The Class 20-hauled S&T (Signal and Telecommunications) train is about to pass through Barnwood station. The bogie cable drum wagon is a scratch-build using the chassis and bogies of an old Lima Freightliner wagon.

BELOW: A hot dog van keeps the local workforce fed as an Mk. 2 Ford Escort drives by. Finding the correct vehicles of the '80s and '90s has always been a bit tricky, but it is getting easier with Oxford Diecast releasing cars from the Ford range recently, plus the growth in 3D printing suppliers.

> "The container crane is a scratch-build and is based loosely on the crane that used to be at Birmingham's Lawley Street Freightliner terminal."



RIBBLEHEAD: AN ENGINEERING MASTERPIECE BY THE MIDLAND RAILWAY

By Clive Baker



To satisfy its aim of extending a network to the north of England and reach Scotland, the Midland Railway (MR) had to lay rails through the most challenging landscape – the Derbyshire Peak District and the Yorkshire/ Cumbrian Fells. Due to the nature of the terrain, the MR can also be associated with the longest tunnels and viaducts in Britain.

Built between 1870-1875, also known as Batty Moss Viaduct, it carries the MR Settle & Carlisle line across Batty Moss, a dry valley, close to where the infant river Ribble gushes out of the limestone rock, hence the area is known as Ribblehead. Now a Grade II listed building, the viaduct is the longest on the route at 400m (440 yds), 32m (104ft) above the valley floor and consists of 24 spans with a buttress at each end. In 1923, ownership passed to the London Midland Scottish Rly. (LMS), prior to Nationalisation (BR) in 1948. Currently, Network Rail takes responsibility for its maintenance.

At 300m (980ft) above sea level, situated on open moorland, the viaduct must withstand the prevailing westerly winds. It follows a lateral curve of radius 1.37km (0.85 mile). Ribblehead station is less than 0.5 mile to the south and Blea Moor tunnel, a short distance to the north.

One source of reference describes the first survey for a route linking the North Yorkshire town of Settle with Carlisle as 'A gateway to Scotland'. An Australian pioneer named William Sharland surveyed the land and planned a route with a ruling gradient of 1 in 100. 20 miles maintaining that gradient would be, at best, challenging. The Gearstones Inn, 11 miles north of Settle, became one of the Australians' bases; such is the nature of the weather at this location, Sharland became marooned there by heavy snow for three weeks.

By 1978, steam power had returned to haul special workings on the main line with the S&C route a firm favourite. On September 30th, 1978, BR Class 9 locomotive, no. 92220 *Evening Star* hauled a 'Bishop Eric Treacy Memorial' special on the Appleby-Armathwaite section of a round trip starting and finishing at London Euston. Note one of the three 'king' piers, located just forward of the locomotive; these were 50% thicker than the others to give stability to the structure. Also, there appears to be scaffold erected around the second to most southerly pier.
Photograph by Phil Waterfield.

Undeterred, he plotted a route through the carboniferous limestone of North Yorkshire by Pen-y-Ghent, the table mountains of Ingleborough and Wild Boar Fell. The navvies following in his tracks had to contend with boulder clay that resembled slurry when wet and set like concrete when dry.

On July 16th, 1866, the Midland Railway (Settle to Carlisle) Act achieved assent in Parliament authorising the company 'to construct Railways from Settle to Hawes, Appleby, and Carlisle; and for other purposes'.

With the act passed, the MR then came to an agreement with the London & North Western Railway (LNWR) to run services on that company's line via Shap. Having applied for a bill of abandonment for its original plan, due to Parliament rejecting the bill in April 1869, the MR became compelled to build the Settle to Carlisle line.

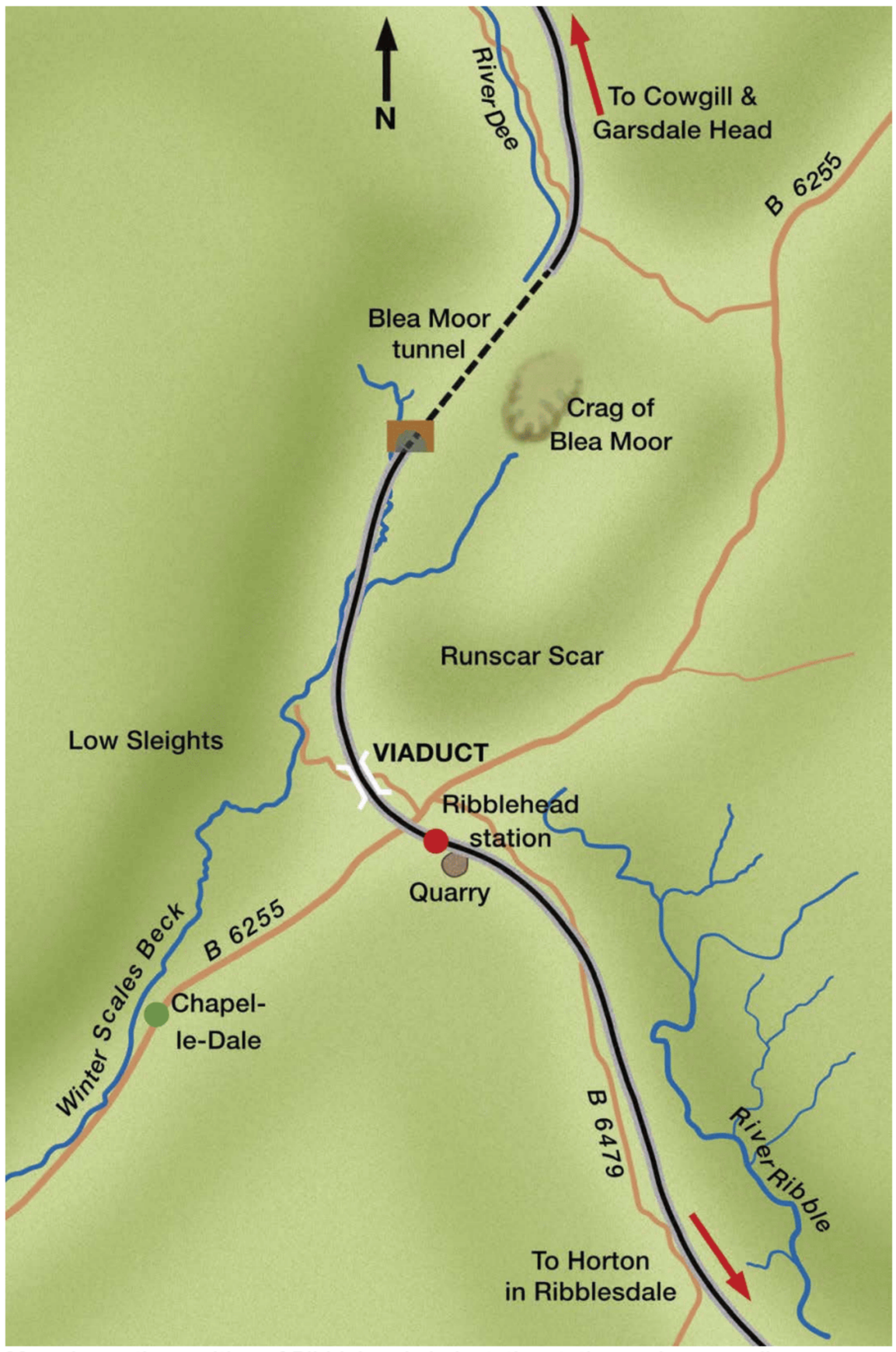
At an estimated cost of £343,318.00, the contractor John Ashwell was commissioned to construct the line from Settle Junction to Dent Head in November 1869. This included a viaduct to cross Batty Moss - Ribblehead Viaduct. The MR expected completion by May 1873.

Following a survey of the 72-mile-long route by general manager James Sydney Allport and chief engineer John Sydney Crossley, Crossley designed and handled the construction of all major builds on the line, including the Ribblehead viaduct. All such structures have a solid and corporate appearance; their architectural style is known as 'Derby Gothic', and the buildings, stations, cottages, water towers, etc, still exist in good order. The work began in 1870; requiring 2,300 navies who laboured in atrocious conditions, living in shanty-style accommodation, often with their families, it claimed the lives of over 100 men involved in construction-related accidents as well as outbreaks of smallpox and cholera.

The victims were laid to rest in the nearby churchyard of St. Leonard at Chapel le Dale. Such was the demand for plots that the Church Authority had to apply for financial assistance from the MR. A 2,000-strong community made this bleak area their home. Apart from stone masons and general labourers, a priest, schoolmasters and other tradesmen braved the often-Arctic conditions.

Construction

With foundations prepared ready for the laying of the first stone by the contractor's agent, William Henry Ashwell, in October 1870, John Ashwell became concerned about financial difficulties. This resulted in the cancellation of the contract in October 1871. Construction continued by the MR working on a semi-contractual basis, overseen by William Ashwell.



Map shows the position of Ribblehead viaduct, the station and surrounding geographical features, including Chapel-le-Dale, the resting place of so many railway builders. **Illustration by Clive Baker.**

Although the design of the viaduct changed by increasing the number of arches from 18 to 24, each spanning 13.7m (45ft), in December 1872, the first train was able to traverse the completed build, on a single track, by the end of 1874.

On August 3rd, 1875, the viaduct opened for freight traffic, followed by the opening of the complete line on May 1st, 1876, having received approval from Colonel F. H. Rich of the Board of Trade.

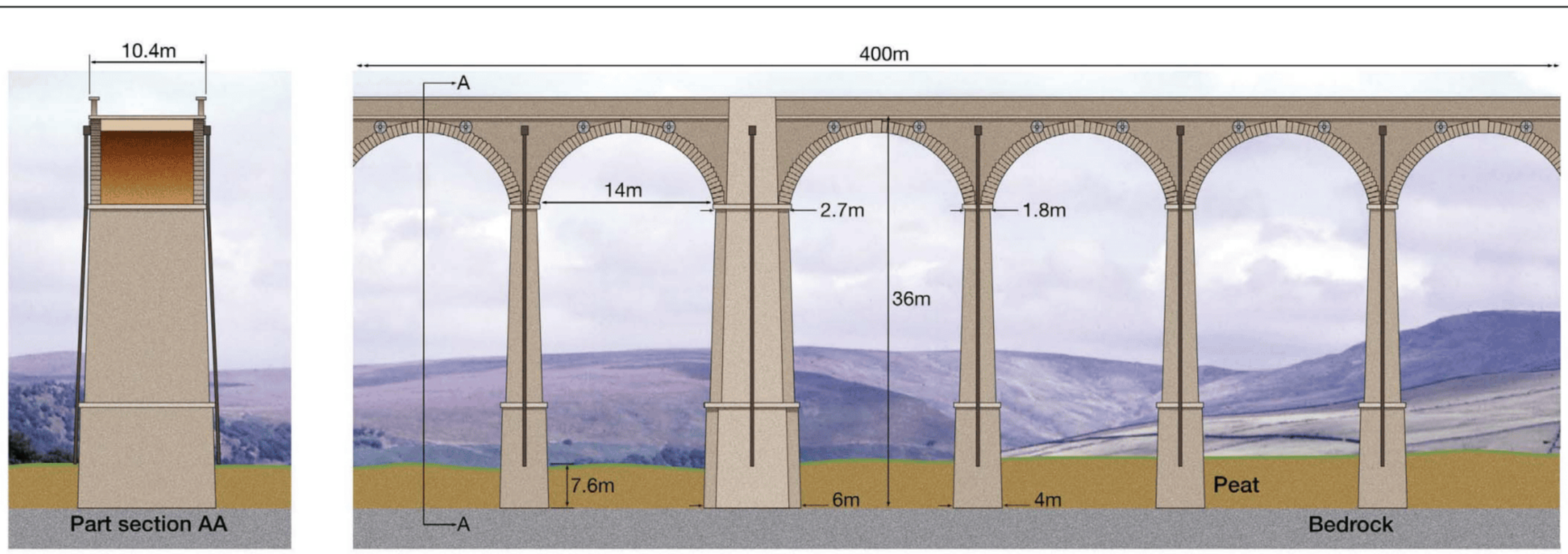


Illustration showing a part side view and part section of the viaduct. Included is one of three larger piers, known as 'king piers', which added stability to the structure. The dimensions, referenced from various sources, are approximate. **Illustration by Clive Baker.**

The viaduct's design entailed a pair of tracks aligned over the sleeper walls with the pier foundations 7.6m (25ft) deep, into the ground; tapered roughly 4m (13ft) across at the base and 1.8m (5ft 11in) thick at arch level, the core of each is filled with loosely-packed rubble. Every sixth pier, known as a 'king pier', is 50% thicker, a mitigating measure against collapse should any piers fail. The north end is 4m (13ft) higher in elevation than that of the south, matching the line's ruling gradient of 1:100.

The facing masonry is limestone sourced from a local quarry and set in hydraulic lime mortar. The arches consist of red brick constructed in five separate rings with stone voussoirs. The sleeper walls, supporting the stone slabs forming the deck and parapets, rise from the arches.

Records reveal that 1.5 million bricks were laid and some of the limestone blocks weigh as much as eight tons. The Settle & Carlisle railway is considered to be the last, constructed initially by manual labour.

A direct link between London St. Pancras, Carlisle, Glasgow, or Edinburgh

Giving passenger comfort on its newly introduced Anglo-Scottish expresses, the MR commissioned special rolling stock of high specification. One would expect the main motive power for these prestigious trains would have been the Compound 4-4-0s, but Chief Mechanical Engineer, Richard Deeley introduced the 999 Class, 4-4-0s, with the undulating Leeds-Carlisle route in mind. With smaller 6ft 6in diameter driving wheels, these simple, inside cylinder type locomotives were rarely observed on any other routes and would have made a fine spectacle crossing the viaduct, particularly heading north, tackling the 1 in 100 gradient from Settle to Blea Moor tunnel.

1927 witnessed the introduction by the LMS of the 'Thames Clyde' and Thames Forth' expresses; running between St Pancras and Glasgow St. Enoch and Edinburgh Waverley respectively, both services crossed Ribblehead viaduct. Members of the Jubilee class became regular motive power on these services until displaced by diesel locomotives from the early-1960s until 1968, when the service ceased.

On summer Saturdays in 1967, two relief trains were required on the Leeds-Carlisle section, those turns falling to the two remaining members of the Jubilee class. 45593, *Kolhapur* and 45562, Alberta. On September 30th, the two locomotives hauled the last regular steam hauled expresses across the viaduct.

Freight workings would, in MR days, have served the goods yards on the line - coal delivery and collection of limestone from the quarries as well as general goods. During post-WW2 years, the Water Orton-Glasgow, Class C fitted freight headed north across the viaduct each weekday evening, its load often seasonal fruit from the south-west.

The section as far as Carlisle was the longest crew turn in the country, the final section to Carlisle being the most exhausting for the fireman. The locomotives, originally Stanier Class 5s, replaced by Standard class 9, 2-10-0 types, were shedded at Saltley. Three such Class 9s were fitted with Berkley mechanical stokers, an advantage on these long runs if fuelled with suitable coal.

In the early-diesel era, when British Railways introduced containerised freight workings, a service named the 'Condor', working between London and Glasgow, crossed the viaduct each night, often hauled by a pair of Metrovick type 2, Co-Bo diesel locomotives.

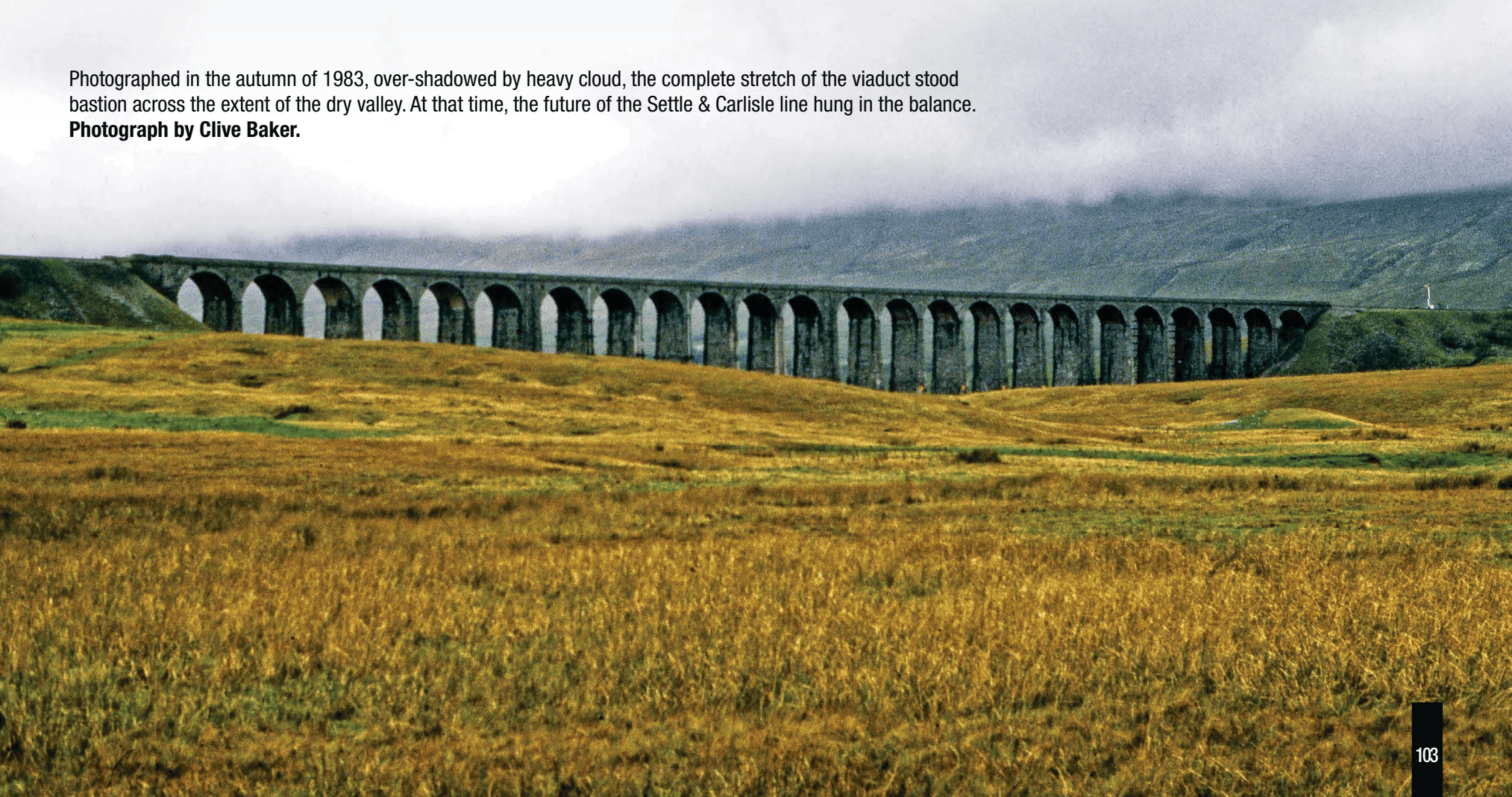
Heritage times

The viaduct became a favoured location by many enthusiasts to bid farewell to steam-hauled trains. On August 11th, 1968, Batty Moss ceased to be a lonely place as hundreds gathered to witness Britannia Class 70013 *Oliver Cromwell* head the 'final steam-hauled passenger train' across the viaduct.

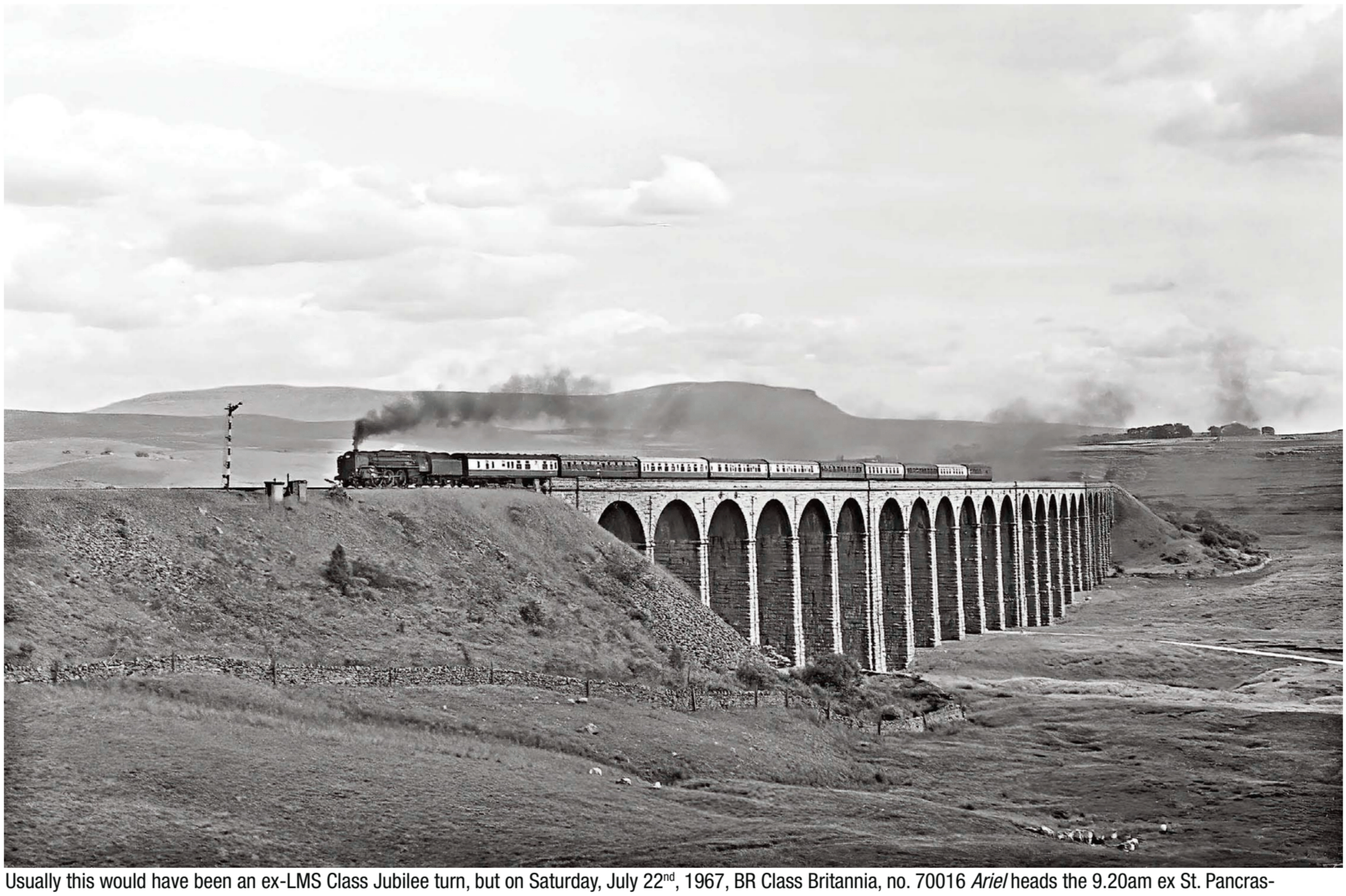
Of course, that is what they all thought at the time, but the viaduct continues to bear the weight of steam- and diesel-hauled excursions, with a variety of heritage locomotives that could never have previously been imagined on the S&C, but not without a battle!

Wear and tear

However well-built in Victorian times, the viaduct had stood up to the prevailing westerly wind for over a century. In the days of open wagons, loads were known to be blown from the wagons landing on the ground below. One commentator recalled the wind lifting off the superstructure of a goods guard's van one night, leaving a terrified guard clinging to the brake standard.



Photographed in the autumn of 1983, over-shadowed by heavy cloud, the complete stretch of the viaduct stood bastion across the extent of the dry valley. At that time, the future of the Settle & Carlisle line hung in the balance.
Photograph by Clive Baker.



Usually this would have been an ex-LMS Class Jubilee turn, but on Saturday, July 22nd, 1967, BR Class Britannia, no. 70016 *Ariel* heads the 9.20am ex St. Pancras-Glasgow express across Batty Moss. **Photograph by Phil Waterfield.**

By the 1980s, water ingress had weakened the piers, requiring remedial work – strengthening the piers with steel rail and applying concrete cladding, between 1981 and 1984, at a cost of £100,000. Work continued in 1988, when engineers inserted trial bores into the piers and later, between 1990-2, further work continued stabilising the whole structure.

To level out weight distribution, the track across the viaduct has been single since 1985, aligning the rails with the centre of the deck, thus preventing two trains being on the viaduct at the same time. Since that time, a speed restriction of 20mph (some references state 30mph) has been imposed.

To further the stability of the structure and prevent water ingress, in 1988, engineers installed a weatherproof membrane prior to carrying out a major restoration programme; commencing 2020, it involved re-pointing mortar joints and replacing broken stones at a cost of £2.1 million.

Saving a vital rail route to the north

On arrival at Birmingham New Street station one evening, following a trip from Inverness by the West Coast route, a person asked me to sign a petition in support of saving the Settle & Carlisle line from closure. I understood that British Rail sited the cost of maintaining Ribblehead viaduct as a reason to close the line. I signed the petition, feeling the cause lost.

The threat of closure looming heavily over the line led to the formation of 'Friends of the Settle-Carlisle Line' (FoSCL) in 1981; playing a pivotal role in changing public opinion and attracting political support for the preservation of the line, resulting in the Settle to Carlisle railway line being saved from closure in 1989.

A prehistoric site

Apart from the viaduct's Grade II listing, the remains of the construction sites and a prehistoric field system can be traced. The surrounding area became a scheduled monument in 1976.

A stone-built cairn, constructed in 1992, commemorates the building and restoration of the viaduct. Positioned at the foot of one of the arches, the cairn bears a stainless-steel plaque depicting a 19th-century navvy shaking hands with a modern-day engineer.

Apart from serving as a seat, viewing point and information panel, it also carries a warning that, due to the flaky nature of the stone, one must be mindful of falling masonry.

A vital link to the north

Together with both the West and East Coast Routes, the S&C line continues to be a vital link to the north, offering regular passenger workings between Leeds and Carlisle operated by Northern; its accommodation for heavy freight trains relieves congestion on the West Coast route.

Media

Since that Sunday in 1968 when many railway enthusiasts believed that they had witnessed the final steam locomotive to cross the viaduct, excursions of all types have been photographed at the site and published. Ribblehead has become a must-see feature, bringing countless visitors to the Fells. Batty Moss featured as the fictitious location for period television drama 'Jericho' and formed a backdrop for a modern drama 'Sightseers'.

Network Rail produced a time-lapse presentation featuring the 2012 restoration; showing the various stages of the project, it enabled a viewer to appreciate the skills involved when carrying out such a complex operation.

Close to the highest point on the line at Aisgill, this smaller viaduct crosses the Mallerstang Valley at 356m (1,169ft) above sea level. This image, circa 1981, showing a 'slight dusting' of snow for this part of England, demonstrates the bleakness of the Fells. The diesel multiple units consist of a 3-car set with body by Metro Cammel in early blue livery and a two-car set of unknown origin wearing the colour scheme applied to re-furbished stock at that time. **Photograph by Clive Baker.**

Ribblehead the model

A model railway featuring a viaduct never fails to impress, particularly when a train passes over. Space is an issue – to include such a structure on my home layout, the limit is just a five-arch bridge (the general opinion seems to be that a minimum of six arches denotes a viaduct).

To model Ribblehead, buttress to buttress, in 7mm scale would require a space of approximately 9.2m (30ft) in length, 4mm scale 5.3m (17.4ft) and 2mm scale 2.6m (8.5ft).

Apart from ever-changing types of rolling stock crossing the valley since the line's inception, from graceful Midland Railway 4-4-0s hauling clerestory-roofed carriages to the current aerodynamic-fronted DMUs, the viaduct appears unchanged, as does the surrounding area.

In model form, the clock could be set to any number of time periods; signals may require attention. ■

Under threatening clouds in August 2021, Merchant Navy Class Pacific, no. 35018 *British India Line* climbs towards Ais Gill summit, while crossing Ribblehead, hauling a special working 'the Waverley', running between York and Carlisle via Leeds. In recent times, the viaduct has carried all manner of heritage motive power from all regions that one would not have envisaged prior to 1968. **Photograph by Phil Waterfield.**

WIN BIG WITH BRM

Two great prizes are up for grabs this month, both reviewed in this issue!



WIN Port of Par Bagnall set

These exciting locomotives from Rapido may be small, but they are guaranteed to make a BIG impression on your layout! We are giving away this fantastic box set, which includes both Judy and *Alfred* locomotives.



Worth £279.95!



For your chance to win, answer the question below to enter the prize draw.

In which county is Par Docks, where these infamous locomotives spent their working lives?

A: Devon
B: Lancashire
C: Lincolnshire
D: Cornwall

For your chance to win head to: world-of-railways.co.uk/Competitions

Both competitions will close on March 31st, 2026.

Ello ello ello - what's BRM giving away now!?

This Class 37 from the Railroad range comes packed with additional features, including DCC as standard and TXS sound! This new fun model from Hornby could be yours if you can answer the following question…





What is this locomotive's number?

A: 37093

B: 37800

C: 37000

D: 37418

Worth £149.99!





Cavalex and Ultimate Model Railways to release Class 56 exclusives

Following a significant number of requests from customers, Ultimate Model Railways expressed an initial interest in producing 56301 and, following the renumbering back to 56045, as well as the fitting of the original horn grille and repainting into BR blue, it was agreed to develop the model in partnership with Cavalex Models.

The models will encompass the same specification incorporated in the second production run of Cavalex's popular Class 56, with the models also featuring unique tooling required to replicate 56301 and 56045, including;

- Cut-away bufferbeam
- Different horn grille types for 56301 and 56045, respectively
- The lighting has been tailored to each loco to include incandescent bulbs and modern LED specific to the individual model, as per the prototype

Available liveries

- 56301 - unbranded Ex-Fastline livery
- 56045 - current BR blue livery, operating with DCRail.
- 56301 – unbranded Fastline livery
- 56045 – BR Blue (DCRail)

Due to the additional bespoke tooling required specifically for these two models, the RRP of 56301/56045 has been increased. DCC-Ready models are priced at £199.95, with DCC-Sound variants costing £299.95. Both 56301 and 56045 are available to pre-order now from the Ultimate Model Railways website.

These models are due to arrive in the UK next month as part of the second production run of the Cavalex Class 56 project. This model is exclusive to Ultimate Model Railways and cannot be ordered through any other retailer.



Rapido expands pre-grouping wagon fleet

Rapido Trains has revealed a new range of OO GCR wagons, including Dia. 17B Covered Vans, Dia. 9A/9B 6-Plank Opens, and Dia. 6C 3-Plank Opens.

The new range includes a selection of GCR, CLC and WD liveries that represent earlier renditions of the wagons. For the grouping era modeller, there are several to choose from that were split between the LMS and LNER. As some survived into nationalisation, BR-liveried examples have been included, too.

All models feature split-spoked or disc wheels, NEM coupling pockets, and are finished off with brass bearings and a high-quality livery application.

The order book is open and you can pre-order directly from the Rapido website or from its official stockists.

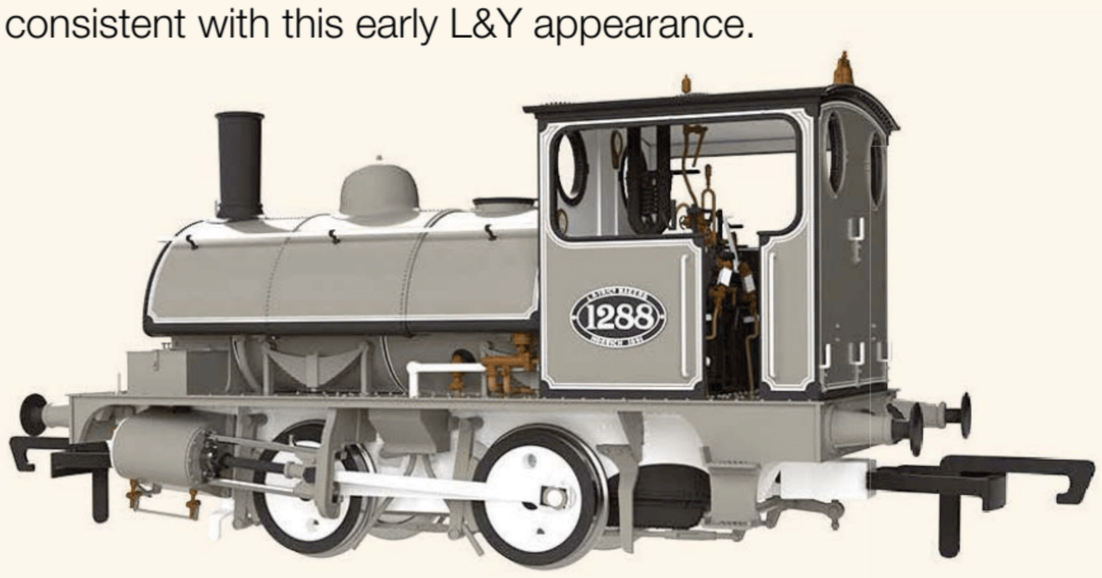
Prices

- £34.95 - GCR Dia. 17B Covered Van
- £32.95 - GCR Dia. 9A / 9B 6-Plank Open Wagon
- £32.95 - GCR Dia. 6C 3-Plank Open Wagon

Rails announces exclusive Ellis Clark Pugs

A new model of the Lancashire & Yorkshire Railway Class 21 'Pug' 0-4-0 saddle tank locomotive, No. 1288, in both OO and O gauge, has been announced as an exclusive commission for Rails of Sheffield, in collaboration with Ellis Clark Trains. The model represents one of the L&Y's distinctive industrial shunting locomotives and is scheduled for release in 2026, subject to the manufacturer's production programme.

Locomotive No. 1288 is presented as outshopped from Horwich Works in 1895, finished in fully-lined Workshop Photographic Grey. This livery reflects the locomotive's as-built condition and highlights the clean lines and compact proportions of Aspinall's 0-4-0 saddle tank design. The model includes era-appropriate fittings and fine exterior detailing consistent with this early L&Y appearance.



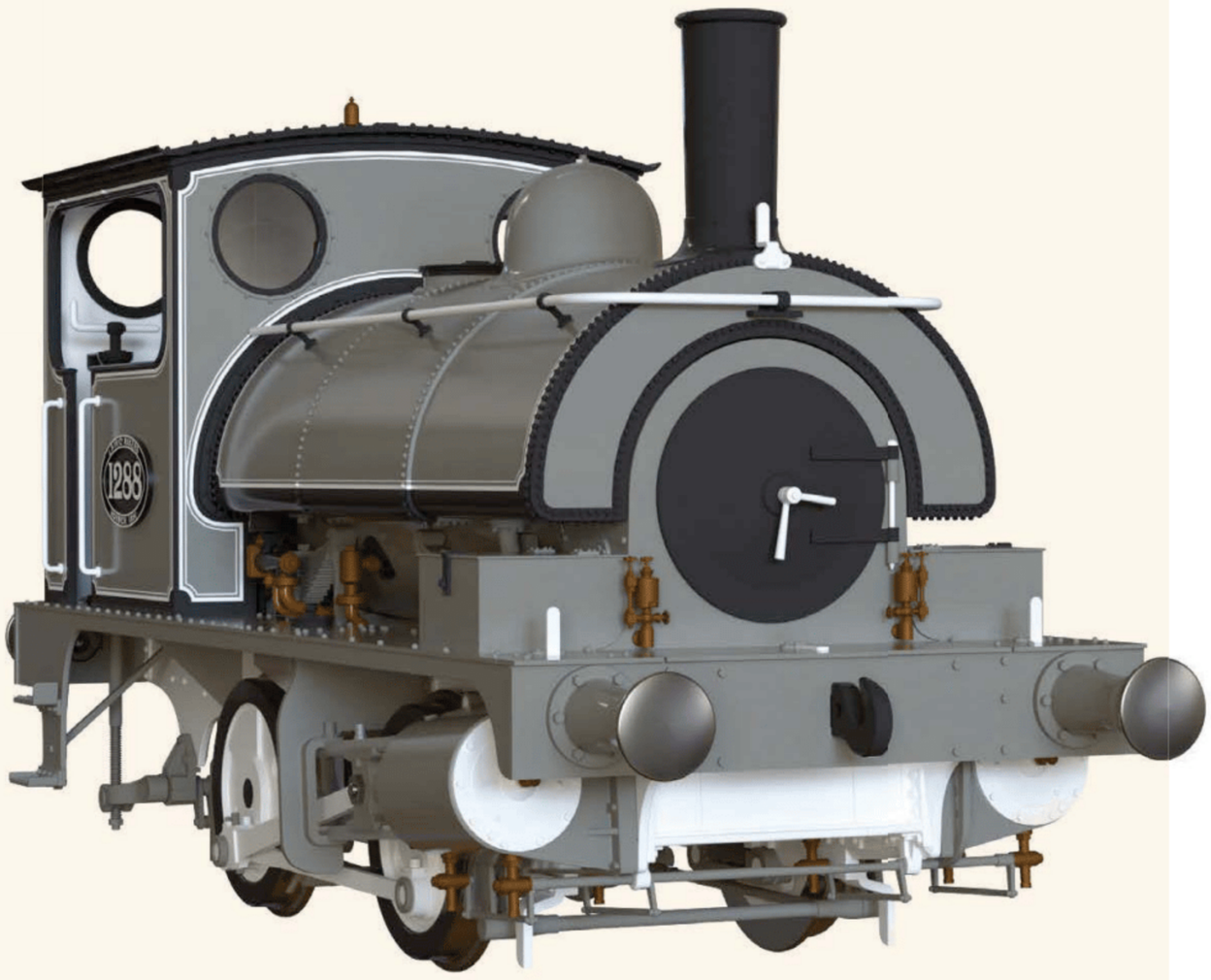
Specification in O

- Opening smokebox door with fully-detailed interior
- Full inside working motion
- Highly detailed cab interior with backhead detail
- Predominantly die-cast construction
- Correct tank and cab variations
- Removable cab roof
- Removable slide bar covers
- Coreless high-power motor with quality gearbox
- Firebox and ashpan glow
- Sprung buffers where appropriate
- Supplied detailing pack
- PluX22 socket fitted to DCC-ready models
- Coverage of all major Pug operating eras

Specification in OO

- Sprung buffers where appropriate
- Mostly die-cast construction
- Semi-open die-cast chassis
- Tank and cab variations
- Highly detailed backhead and cab
- Removable NEM coupling and pocket
- Space for EM/P4 conversion
- Firebox glow
- Full detailing pack
- Etched plates and separately-fitted detail
- Plux12 socket in 'DCC Ready' models
- Coreless motor with a superior quality gearbox

The LYR Class 21 'Pug' No. 1288 model is exclusive to Rails of Sheffield. The current expected delivery is Q3 2026, priced at £150.00 for OO models and £325.00 for O gauge.



TT:120 Aggregate Range from True to Scale

True to Scale has introduced a new range of ballast and wagon load materials developed specifically for the TT:120 (1:120 scale, 12mm gauge) market. The aggregates are produced using real crushed rock and granite, rather than synthetic materials. According to the manufacturer, the particle sizes correspond to a real-world equivalent of approximately 30–50mm, aligning more closely with full-size railway ballast and bulk materials than many generic scenic products currently available.

The range includes ballast suitable for track laying, as well as loose materials and pre-formed wagon loads for open wagons. Some products are described as being inspired by specific British railway locations, including granite associated with quarries such as Meldon, though they are not presented as exclusive replicas.

Packaging options range from 250g to 1kg, allowing for use on small layouts or larger scenic projects. The materials are designed for use with 12mm gauge TT:120 track, including systems produced by Peco and Hornby.

Distribution and support for the range is provided by The Model Centre, and the products are available via Amazon from the True to Scale website and other model railway stockists. Pricing starts from £8.99.



TMC unveils NER Diagram V4 brake vans

The Model Centre (TMC) has revealed a new exclusive range of North Eastern Railway (NER) Diagram V4 brake vans in 4mm:1ft scale (OO gauge). Tooling has been undertaken by manufacturing partner, EFE Rail, with an initial programme comprising eight individually-numbered and specified models.

The announcement marks the start of a wider TMC-exclusive wagon range focused on the NER, with the Diagram V4 brake van selected as the inaugural subject.



The range spans liveries from the North Eastern Railway, the London and North Eastern Railway, and early British Railways periods, allowing the models to be used across several operating eras.

TMC states that detailed archive research identified a number of subtle differences between Diagram V4 vehicles constructed in different batches. These differences have been incorporated into the tooling rather than presenting a single standardised body.

All eight models in the Diagram V4 range are priced at £45.95 each. Delivery is currently forecast for late 2026, with pre-orders now open.

Across the eight releases, the range includes:

- Seven different body variants
- Two chassis designs
- Alternative lamp positions on body sides and ends
- High and low handrail configurations
- Variations in roof rain strips, including straight, curved, full-length, or omitted
- Presence or absence of document clips
- Differences in body planking above the solebar

Two GWR wagon kits join Chivers' Range

Chivers has expanded its OO gauge line with two closely related GWR coal wagons – the long-awaited N23 "Felix Pole" and its later N28 conversion.

The modern, injection moulded kits will appeal equally to GWR specialists and anyone building a representative inter-war or early BR goods train.

RC457 – GWR N28 Loco Coal Wagon

The kit is designed around standard 12mm wagon wheels on 26mm axles, making it suitable for OO, EM, or P4 without modification. A NEM coupling mounting block is provided, intended for Bachmann 36027 Mk. 2 cranked couplings, so it will sit happily in modern rakes.

Priced at £10.00, plus postage, the new wagon is available direct from Chivers.



RC458 – GWR N23 "Felix Pole" Coal Wagon

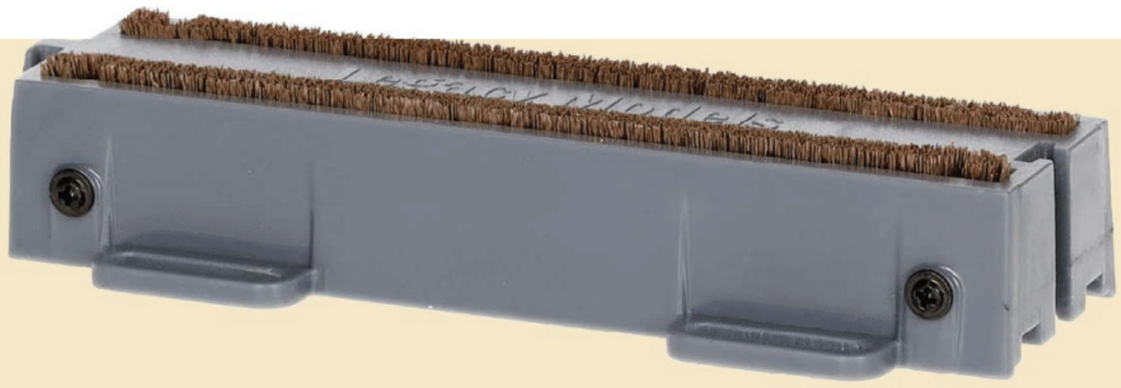
As with RC457, the kit uses injection-moulded polystyrene with whitemetal buffers and is designed for 12mm wheels on 2mm axles, supporting OO, EM and P4 standards. Coupling provision is again via a NEM pocket suited to Bachmann Mk. 2 couplings.

Both of the new wagons are priced at £10.00 each, plus postage, and available direct from Chivers. Note that wheels are not included.

Osborn's Models reveals more TT:120 figures



Devon-based model shop, Osborn's Models, continues to expand its range of TT:120 products with two hand-painted figure packs. Bring vintage charm to your layout with OSBFTT034 – the TT:120 Milkman, priced at £7.50. The second pack is OSBFTT082 *Jack the Shepherd and Hank* (pictured). Whether positioned on a hillside, near a barn, or beside a flock of sheep, this duo brings a touch of rural life, priced at £8.85.



New wheel cleaner range

A new modular powered wheel-cleaning system from TMC aims to simplify routine locomotive maintenance across N to O gauge, with all items available now.

The Powered Wheel Cleaner operates by allowing a locomotive's wheels to rotate against conductive brushes while power is applied. This enables dirt to be removed quickly without manual scrubbing or chemical cleaners. Pricing starts at £22.75 for N and TT:120 cleaners, rising to £39.95 for O.

Accurascale reintroduces PCA Cement Wagons in Classic 1980s Liveries

Accurascale has announced the reintroduction of its PCA bulk cement wagons, one of the earliest and most successful models in its 4mm scale, OO gauge rolling stock range. First released during the manufacturer's formative years, the PCA has remained popular with modellers, though several original liveries have been unavailable for an extended period.

The new production run restores these options while maintaining the specification and pricing that helped establish the model's reputation.

The latest release includes the PCA wagons in their as-delivered STS grey livery, representing the condition in which the prototype wagons entered service from 1982. Selected packs also feature the distinctive "Sulfecrete" branding applied to the walkways, a detail associated with specific traffic flows and time periods.





Also returning is the Rugby Cement livery, a scheme closely associated with Southern Region cement traffic during the 1980s. These wagons are intended to allow the formation of complete and authentic block trains, as well as mixed consists suitable for Speedlink operations.

Accurascale has confirmed that the PCA wagons will be priced at £69.95 per triple pack, matching the price of the original 2018 release despite increased production costs.

Pre-orders are now open and the models will be available exclusively direct from the Accurascale website and will qualify for the company's bundle rake deals.

Dapol supports World Book Day with charity wagons

Dapol has announced a new range of OO and O gauge wagons to support World Book Day 2026, with book-themed liveries celebrating independent booksellers and publishers, and will be making a donation to the charity for every model sold. Each livery is offered in clean and weathered versions. The range is scheduled to reach retailers in time for World Book Day 2026.

Available liveries

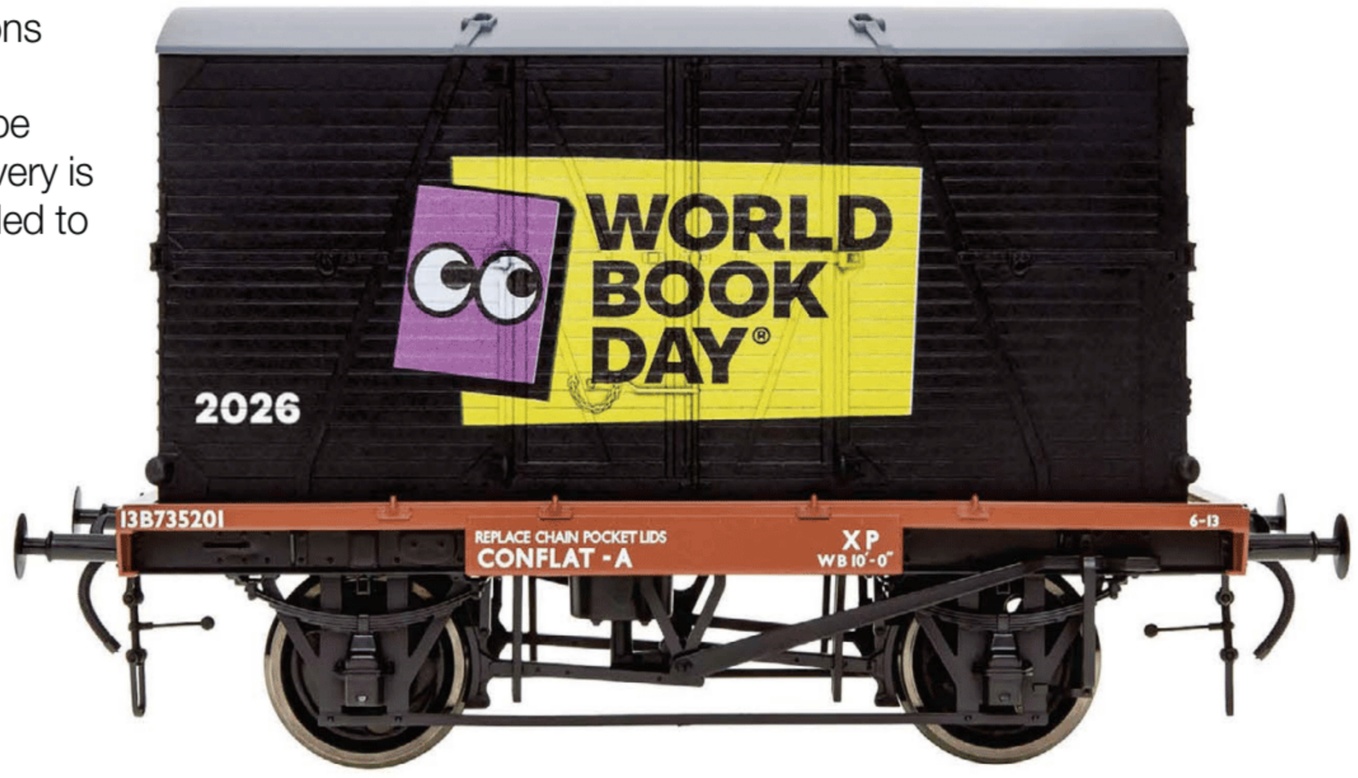
- Browsers Bookshop
- Book Law Publications
- World Book Day

OO Gauge – Ventilated Van

- £15.20 – Pristine • £16.40 – Weathered

O Gauge – Conflat & Container

- £77.00 – Pristine • £78.20 – Weathered



Rails announces Mercedes Sprinter Van

Rails has revealed a new 1:76 scale model of the second-generation Mercedes-Benz Sprinter, with delivery currently expected in Q3 2026, subject to change. The limited-edition model is finished in Rails of Sheffield branding and will be supplied in a display case.



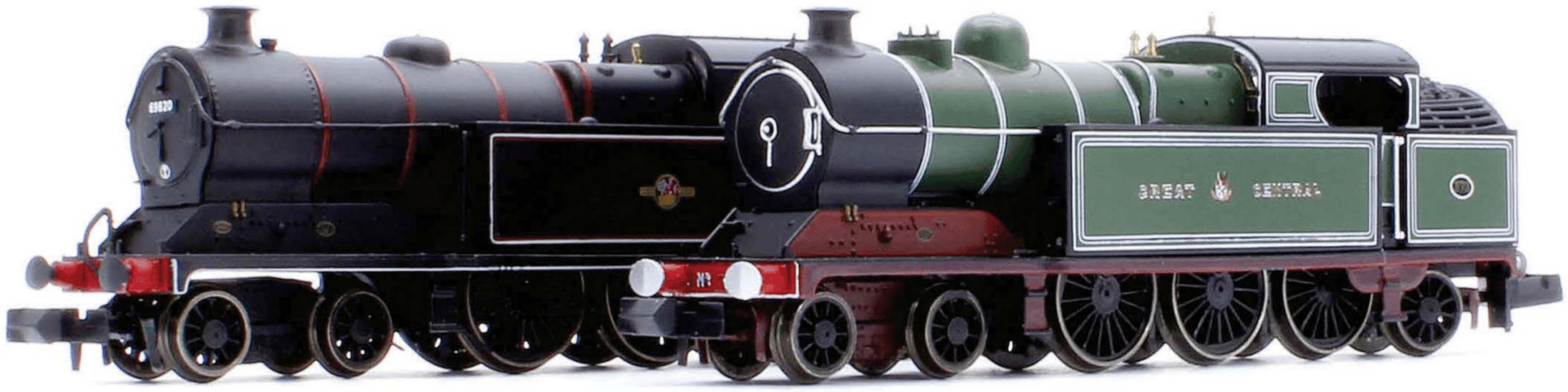
Allowing modellers to recreate their latest Rails deliveries, the OO gauge, limited-edition Mercedes-Benz Sprinter van is being produced in partnership with Oxford Diecast.

Modelu announces new minifigures

This month's new releases include a very useful pack of five modern everyday pedestrians in casual and business attire, captured in dynamic walking and running poses to represent contemporary urban life, commuting, and leisure walking scenes.

There are also new packs ideal for BR steam and early diesel layouts, one of which captures a 1950s–'60s domestic woman and boy carrying out traditional household chores, including hand-drying clothes using a mangle.





Rails updates on exclusive Robinson A5

Rails has received decorated engineering prototype samples of its exclusive Sonic Models Robinson Class A5 4-6-2T tank locomotives in N gauge, with the range scheduled for release in Q2 2026.

While these samples are not final production models, they provide an early indication of overall appearance and livery execution. The range will represent the Robinson-designed A5 tank locomotive in Great Central Railway, LNER and British Railways condition.

Eight individually numbered versions are planned, covering the class's working life across multiple periods:

- GCR Green – No. 373
- LNER Black (Lined) – No. 5045
- LNER GCR Green – No. 5167
- LNER Black (Red Lining) – No. 5024
- BR Black (Early Emblem) – Nos. 69804 and 69827
- BR Black (Late Crest) – Nos. 69820 and 69814

Rails advises that production models will feature refinements not present on the decorated samples, including revised lining brightness on the GCR example, improved lining application around the rear bunker, and updated BR crest artwork on British Railways versions.

Features and specifications

The Robinson A5 is being developed to the same high specification as other Sonic Models releases in OO and N gauge. Planned features include a powered chassis with electrical pick-up from driving wheels and rear pony truck, a 6-pin right-angled decoder socket for DCC operation, working firebox flicker glow effect and NEM standard N gauge couplings.

The Sonic Models Robinson A5 range is priced at £139.95 per locomotive, with a £30 deposit required at the time of pre-order. The balance will be taken upon arrival into stock. Delivery is currently scheduled for Q2 2026.

Exclusive N Gauge DB Maritime Class 66 Fleet Announced



The Model Centre (TMC) has revealed an exclusive collaboration with Rainbow Railways and Revolution Trains to produce an all-new N gauge range of DB Maritime Intermodal Class 66 locomotives.

The project recreates every member of the real-world Maritime fleet operated by DB Cargo UK, a small and visually distinctive sub-class within the wider Class 66 fleet.

The DB Maritime Intermodal livery is notable for its departure from DB Cargo's standard red, instead featuring a deep blue base with prominent "Maritime Intermodal" branding. Only a limited number of Class 66s ever carried this scheme, applied to locomotives dedicated to high-profile container traffic.

The N gauge range covers all seven locomotives that received the Maritime branding and carries individual numbering and nameplates appropriate to the prototype.

The models are based on Revolution Trains' Class 66 tooling, which was first released in N gauge in 2024 and is already well established among modern-outline modellers.

Pricing for the exclusive N gauge range is as follows:

- DCC Ready: £169.95
- DCC Fitted: £214.95
- DCC Sound Fitted: £349.95

Orders are open now via TMC and Rainbow Railways. Production quantities are strictly limited, with availability expected to be short once models reach stock.

Hornby Railroad Class 37: BR Police Livery



Steven Draper



FACTFILE

Factfile (Review item in bold):
R30435TXS - RailRoad Class 37 BR Police Livery 37093 - HM7000 DCC sound fitted only
R30436/TXS - RailRoad Class 37 Lorum 37418 *An Comunn Gaidhealach*
R30437/TXS - RailRoad Class 37 DRS 37419 *Carl Haviland*
Construction: Mostly plastic body
Weight: 240g
Era: 1982 - 1994
Price: £149.99
Minimum curves: Radius 2
Accessories: DCC instructions

During the 1980s, British Rail was on a mission. Britain was choking on traffic jams, and BR wanted us to know there was a better way. Their message was simple: take the train and you won't be stuck in traffic. Their delivery, however, was anything but subtle.

Enter advertising agency J. Walter Thompson and the now-legendary *Train Jam* TV advert. In it, a Class 37, painted like a police car and complete with a flashing blue light, charges after a speeding InterCity 125 as if it were a joyriding hot hatch. It made absolutely no sense, but was completely brilliant; and nobody who saw it ever forgot it.

The RailRoad Class 37 has its roots in the old Lima tooling, from which an earlier 1990s Police 37 can still be found lurking on eBay. But don't be fooled into thinking this is a simple rerun. Far from it. While ultra-detailed Class 37s exist, the shape here is more than close enough, with crisp moulded panel lines, grilles, and handrails. The simpler construction keeps costs down and, crucially, makes the model reassuringly easy to handle.

The white-and-stripe police livery, the classic "jam sandwich", is applied with impressive modern precision, and thanks to a vastly improved motor over the original Lima versions, it runs smoothly straight from the box.

Factory-fitted with DCC and TXS sound, when used with an appropriate controller or Hornby's HM7000 system, things get properly entertaining. Sound, thrash mode, playful horns…and then there's F20. One press activates the flashing blue light, two-tone sirens, and the inner child of just about any operator. Suddenly, you're chasing wagons, policing derailments, and grinning like it's the end of term all over again.

This model doesn't ask to be taken seriously. It simply reminds us that sometimes, the whole point of a hobby is to have fun.



The livery was worn in the infamous *1980s Train Jam* advert.

WHAT WE LIKE

- ✓ Superb fun
- ✓ Police blue flashing light and two-tones
- ✓ Livery application



Speed your way to fun and smiles.



Hello ello ello - what's going on here?



Acceptable detail and excellent decoration.

00 | 1902-1953 | £££ 234.99

Hornby GWR ‘Saint’ Class 4-6-0s



Tony Wright



The new-build ‘lady’, and very beautiful, too.

The latest pair of locos in OO from Hornby represents the famous ‘Saint’ Class 4-6-0s. At first glance, both look identical, but there are subtle differences, of which more later. Both are excellent models at source.

The prototypes, according to J. H. Russell (an expert on anything GWR), “*were the finest express engines ever produced by the Great Western. The ‘Stars’, ‘Castles’, ‘Kings’ and ‘Counties”were, after all, only derivatives and enlargements of this, the original design, and they all stemmed from the original design of 1902*”(my paraphrasing). At the time, the type was certainly the most efficient and advanced express passenger design in the realm, but half a century later, its GWR-designed successors had been overtaken in steam locomotive development. Taking the basic principle of a two-cylinder, big-wheeled passenger loco, Churchward, while still assistant to William Dean at Swindon to begin with, had three prototype 4-6-0s built between 1902 (when Dean retired) and 1905. The third, No. 171, was chosen, and eventually 77 were built, though 13 were originally erected as Atlantics because Churchward was unsure which would be better, based on his observations of the superlative de Glenn compound 4-4-2s (when he had one dismantled at Swindon, Churchward is quoted as saying *“This is watch-maker’s work!”*). The greater adhesion of the 4-6-0 won the day, and the Atlantics were altered in 1912/13.

For 50 years, the 2901 Class (the official designation) did all that was asked of them, the final ones being withdrawn by BR in 1953, by then in lined black. The epithet ‘Saints’ represented only part of the class, others being named after characters from Walter Scott’s novels, GWR directors, historical ladies and famous courts. With none surviving into preservation, in 1974 the Great Western Society purchased 4942 *Maindy Hall* from Barry scrapyard, the intention being to rebuild it as a ‘Saint’ (which is ironic because the prototype of the Hall Class, *Saint Martin*, was a conversion from a ‘Saint’). Work got underway in 1995, with completion in 2019, when 2999 *Lady of Legend* ran for the first time. On a purely personal level, I would have preferred to see her with the more elegant curved valance ahead of the cylinders and with the full-depth cabsides, a development on the later ‘Saints’.

The models presented for review represent the new build and *Lord Palmer.* The



Lord Palmer in mid-’30s condition. Note the differences - larger covers on valve guides and no portholes in the spectacle plate.

prototype of this latter loco was built in 1905, and by 1907, was named *Viscount Churchill*. It was renamed *Sir Ernest Palmer* in 1924 and, with his peerage in 1933, it became *Lord Palmer*. As mentioned, the two locos look very similar, but *Lord Palmer* (correctly) has larger covers over the ends of the valve spindles (making it represent the period 1933-1936) and no portholes in the spectacle plate (full marks to Hornby for detail authenticity). The prototype was withdrawn in 1944.

On first inspection (and most subsequent ones), this pair is simply stunning, presenting as beautiful an appearance as any recent RTR loco it's been my privilege to review. On checking against the drawings and photographs in the GWR section of my 'library' (admittedly small), the locos check out exactly in all principal and detail dimensions. Speaking of detail, it's all there as far as I can see, much separately-fitted - the cab interior is a manufacturing 'work of art', with detail items picked out in the correct colours. There's even a firebox glow! The livery application is exquisite – definitely as 'perfect' as anything I've seen on an RTR locomotive, with no blurring of lining or branding. Names and numberplates are printed on, but there are replacement numberplates (which aren't etched) supplied. These are supplied in the 'extras' bag, along with items such as a scale coupling for the front end, cylinder drain cocks, lamps and brake rigging for the loco. Other than the numberplates, I added the extra bits on *Lady of Legend* (having to enlarge the slot in the buffer beam to fit the coupling).

Running is, as expected, impeccable (with just a couple of problems), aided by all-round pick-ups. Both are quiet, silky-smooth and powerful (as will be seen on the WoR video). All wheels are true-round, have consistent back-to-backs and run perfectly through 'train set' and 'scale' OO points and crossings. Provision for DCC is inside the tender, current between the two units being passed through the flexible drawbar. It's this drawbar that can cause one of the problems because it's a bit stiff as it swings, presenting a 'clicking' action in operation, which can derail the tender on tighter curves. On tighter curves, the greater problem is caused by the fallplate. It's hinged, and with it 'down' it catches on detail on the front of the tender. On anything less than 30" radius curves (much greater than any set-track radii), it has to be lifted, which is a pity because it's a nice detail. The irony is, had Hornby put a slot in the footplate (which the prototype has, and as the firm has on other models), then the problem would be solved. As expected, running on 'Little Bytham' (with a minimum radius of 3') was incredible to observe.

In conclusion, a pair of brilliant new models, but with a couple of 'mechanical' issues, which need to be resolved in my view.

FACTFILE

Factfile (Review item in bold):
R30403 BR - Saint Class -2920 *Saint David*
R30404 GWR - Saint Class - 2999 *Lady of Legend*
R30405 GWR - Saint Class - 2975 *Lord Palmer*
Construction: Plastic with diecast footplate and chassis
Weight: 375g
Era: 1902-1953
Price: £234.99
Minimum curves: Radius 2 (with fallplate raised)
Accessories: Coupling, lamps, cylinder drain cocks, brake rigging

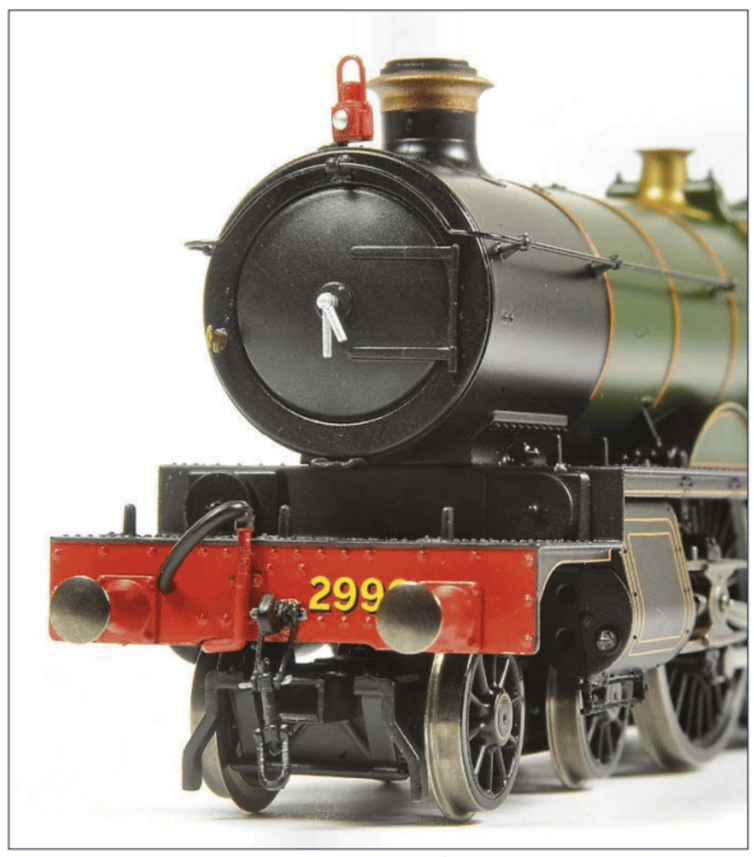
WHAT WE LIKE

✓ Overall accuracy
✓ Standard of detail
✓ Quality of finish



The potentially troublesome drawbar.


These crew members look a little short in the leg!



Adding the detail improves the front end considerably.



The full-sized 'Saints' could fly, as can the models!

00 | 1956 - 1968 | £££ 139.95 – 499.95

Port of Par Bagnalls



Steven Draper



The Port of Par twins were never meant to be famous. They spent their working lives shuffling wagons around a Cornish harbour, labouring beneath a bridge so low it dictated almost every aspect of their design. Tall chimneys were out, elegance was cancelled, and every inch of metal was a compromise made simply to pass underneath without scraping the paint. They were awkward, rugged, and relentlessly practical.

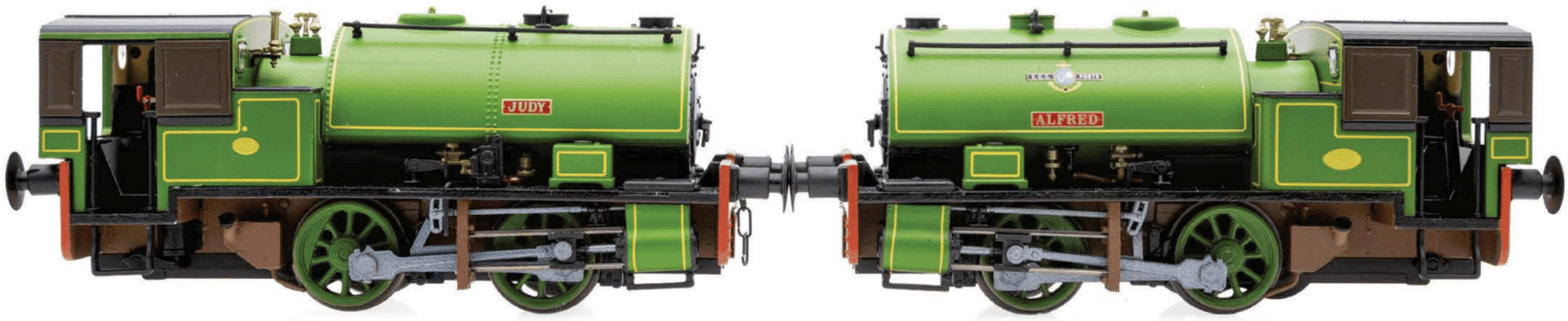
And yet, that's exactly what made them unforgettable.

While main-line steam quietly disappeared elsewhere, *Judy* and *Alfred* carried on working in full public view. Photographers noticed. Magazines followed. Even well-known authors took an interest. Those squat little engines became icons of industrial steam not because they chased attention, but because their circumstances made them impossible to ignore.

Rapido's models don't just turn up; they arrive in style. The Port of Par twin pack comes with an unboxing experience best enjoyed on a quiet Sunday morning with a decent brew. Inside is a beautifully illustrated booklet, a postcard featuring exclusive Jonathan Clay artwork, and excellent instructions – details that make you smile before you've even laid eyes on the models themselves.

As the name suggests, the pack includes both *Judy* and *Alfred*. Despite their tiny proportions, they command attention once placed on the layout. *Alfred* was constructed much later in real life and there are subtle prototype-specific differences between the two; spotting them all becomes part of the fun.

Every curve looks spot-on when compared with photographs, and the vibrant "as preserved" green livery is crisp, clean, and neatly applied. There's no shortage of separately-fitted details either—handrails, lamp irons, and pipework are all present. Handling needs to be careful, but nothing arrived loose, bent, or misaligned.



The Twins' practical design is captured with an endearing charm.



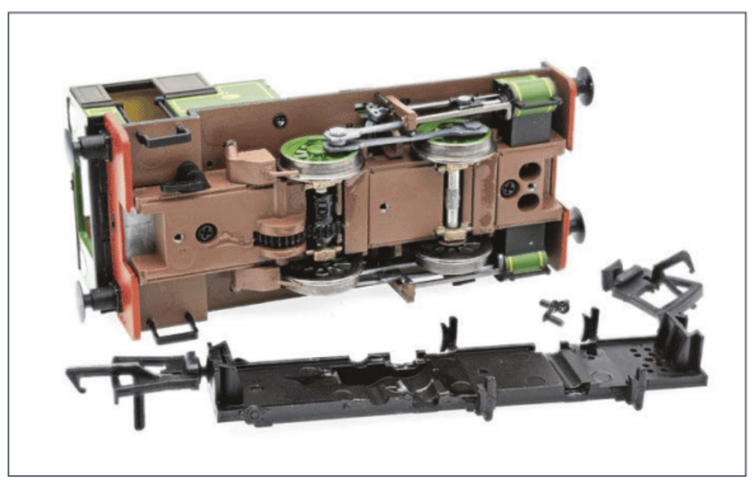
Opening the box is part of the experience.



There are several differences between the models.



Plenty of painted cab detail is visible.



Unscrew the keeper plate to remove the couplings.



Next to a Pannier Tank to give an idea of size.

FACTFILE

Model (review item in bold):
Port of Par Bagnalls– Lined Dark Green (Twin Pack)
British Railways - Late (1956 - 1968), Preservation (Twin Pack)
Port of Par Bagnall – Unlined Dark Green
Port of Par Bagnall – *Alfred* Port of Par Yellow (as preserved)
Construction: Diecast running plate and plastic body
Weight: 84g (per loco)
Era: 1956-1968/Preservation
Price: £139.95-£499.95
Minimum curves: Radius 2
Accessories: Brass etched plates and details, optional scale couplings and buffer beam inserts, vacuum pipe, illustrated book and postcard, poseable rear shutters

WHAT WE LIKE

- ✓ Overall presentation
- ✓ Coupling options
- ✓ Detail differences
- ✓ Running qualities

For such small locomotives, the tension-lock couplings are almost comically large. Simply pulling them won't remove them intact, but Rapido provides sensible solutions for their removal, along with alternative drawbar and three-link couplings for display or those brave enough to use links in this scale!

Finishing touches are excellent. The etched nameplates and near microscopic builder's plates are beautifully executed, and peering into the tiny cab reveals a surprising wealth of neatly-painted detail.

Although the running plate and smokebox door are die-cast, the body and cab are plastic; however, the models feel reasonably weighted and well-balanced. Mechanically, the DC review sample performed very well straight out of the box and improved further after running-in. A coreless motor, decent flywheel, and plunger pick-ups deliver smooth low-speed control, allowing confident navigation of Peco electrofrog pointwork. A *MoPower* stay-alive is fitted but only becomes functional once a DCC chip is installed, while a factory-fitted speaker sits discreetly behind the smokebox door.

Rapido has a habit of choosing prototypes others avoid - with the Port of Par twins, two quirky little locomotives you probably never knew how much you really wanted, until now, have been delivered.

Hornby's Bulleid Tavern Cars



Tony Wright



The prototypes of these superlative models were among the most remarkable (some would say the most controversial) passenger-carrying carriages of all time. There were eight pairs built at Eastleigh between April and June 1949. They were designed by Bulleid's team while still part of the Southern Railway, the process beginning in 1945. Bulleid had 'caught a cold' in 1938 because of his restyling of the 'Bognor Buffets', their being so comfortable that passengers tended to stay longer in the catering seating than desired, meaning that turnover (and thus profits) was too slow/low. With this in mind, the Tavern Cars proved to be entirely 'successful', only turnover was almost non-existent, because so few passengers could tolerate the austere arrangements inside. They were deliberately designed to make diners not overstay their meals – a pity, as nobody was there to stay in the first place!

The sets were not confined to the Southern Region, the original allocation being the SR 'Atlantic Coast Express' (two sets), the ER 'Master Cutler', 'White Rose', 'Norfolkman', ' Country Continental' (two sets) and the LMR/ER 'South Yorkshireman'. So loathed was the pairing in the 'Master Cutler' that the 'Nissen Hut' (the dining car) was quickly



Standard tension-locks in NEM pockets are fitted to the outer ends of the pairs.



The enamel pub sign, window bars and 'brickwork' are all faithfully reproduced.

removed from the train and replaced with an LNER dining car, and there is no evidence that the Taverns were ever used in the 'South Yorkshireman'. It was the composite dining saloons that caused the controversy. The 1st Class diners faced transversely, either side of a central walkway (rather like a public school refectory!), and the 3rd Class diners sat at more conventional tables. The biggest gripe was the lack of large windows – just high-up toplights - meaning that the pleasure of eating a meal while watching the English countryside glide past was lost. Catering takings fell off a cliff!

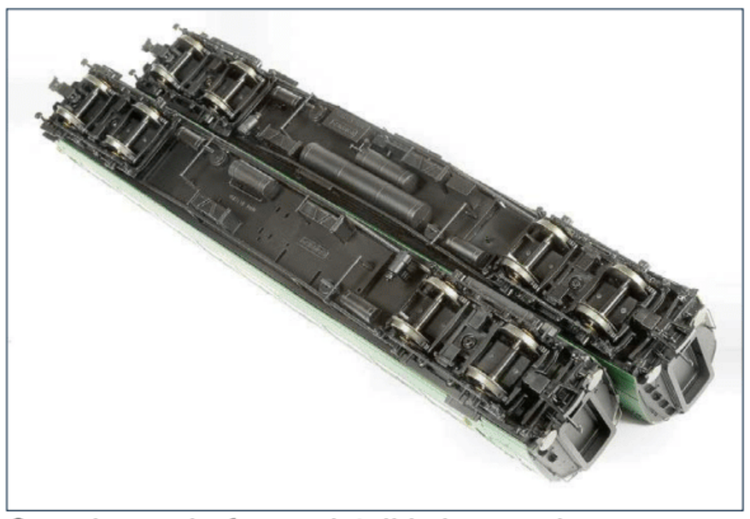
The pairs' interiors were designed to look like olde English pubs, with mock Tudor beams and tiled floors. Outside, they were made to look like pubs as well, with further (painted) beams and English bond 'brickwork' applied to the lower half of the kitchen end of the Buffet/Kitchen Car. Mock leaded-light toplights were also incorporated and a mock wooden door! Enamel 'pub signs' were also carried. Clearly, this pseudo exterior was against any corporate image, and the external fripperies were quickly removed, and standard carmine/cream substituted. Such was the 'hatred' of the dining car's interior, that from 1950 they were rebuilt into a more-conventional arrangement, with large



Coupling at the cars' inner ends is very 'intimate', though sharper curves present no problems.



Bright lighting illuminates a full interior.


Complex underframe detail is impressive.


Roof detail is perfect.



The livery application is exquisite.

windows and rearranged seating. In this form, they were far better received, and takings increased dramatically, though the MR/ER didn't hold on to them for very long, and all then were on the SR. The Taverns were all repainted in SR green in 1957, and the Buffet/Kitchens were rebuilt in 1959/'60. All had been withdrawn by 1967. Though designed to run as pairs (in this formation, there were no buffers between the cars), as noted with the 'Master Cutler', they could be separated (with buffers added?) and run with other stock.

Regarding the models, no controversy exists, because they really are exceptional – brilliant, in fact! I've had the 'At the Sign of the White Horse' in original condition and 'At the Sign of the Jolly Tar' in as-first rebuilt condition. The 'White Horse' pairing represents a very short period in the cars' lives, so one hopes that Hornby will also release the duo in 'plain' carmine/cream (with the rebuilt dining car), giving them a period of operation of seven years. The SR green pairing gives an operational period of three years. On checking against the scale drawings by S.W. Stevens-Stratten (one-time editor of *The Model Railway Constructor*) and those of Mike King (the guru of all things SR with regard to rolling stock), these cars match up perfectly. Full interiors are included (even though, especially with the models in original condition, they're difficult to see), but the rebuilt dining car's interior is very visible. Very visible indeed, especially with the lights on – the lights are, perhaps, a trifle bright, and they stay on for almost five minutes when the power is turned off, thanks to a substantial capacitor. The bogies are excellent representations of the Bulleid 8' 0" type, and ride exceptionally well through all types of pointwork. Underframe detail is fantastic, though the trussing is a bit flexible and 'bendy', no doubt to ensure there's no risk of breakage. Large oil/gas cylinders are present, but by the time the cars received SR green livery, cooking was usually by Calor or propane gas (at higher pressure), meaning that those large tanks had been removed and replaced by much smaller canisters in oblong boxes – a minor point.

The livery application is exquisite – perfect, I'd say, right down to the legible end printing and, correctly, the numbers being at the LH end of the carmine/cream set and at the RH end of the green set, the latter, correctly, including the 'S' suffix. Though I don't think that the door handles are separate items, they're picked out so well in 'brass' as to make the observer believe that they are.

All in all, superlative offerings, at a very good price considering some (single) RTR carriages have gone beyond the £100.00 mark. These cars capture perfectly these catering twins (Bulleid was well ahead of his time in carriage design, the later BR Mk.1 cars sharing a very similar profile). If they're re-issued in the form of the rebuilt diner and the duo in carmine/cream, I might entertain running them on 'Little Bytham'.

Entirely recommended.

FACTFILE

Models:
R40470 BR - Kitchen and Buttery Car & Composite Restaurant 'White Horse' - Coach Twin Pack
R40471 BR - Kitchen and Buttery Car & Composite Restaurant - 7834 'Jolly Tar' - Coach Twin Pack
Construction: Mainly plastic with metal wheelsets
Weight: 350g (pair)
Era: 1949-1967
Price: £139.99
Minimum curves: Radius 2
Accessories: N/A

WHAT WE LIKE

- ✓ Overall accuracy
- ✓ Quality of finish
- ✓ Excellent rolling capabilities
- ✓ Value for money

Accurascale's 57xx Pannier Tanks



Tony Wright









So popular is this particular class of GWR Pannier tanks, that I make this the fifth RTR manifestation produced in OO down the years. Clearly, Accurascale considers it worth producing another example, and I've been sent two models, representing detail differences and different periods in the lives of the locos – one in GWR condition and the other in BR. First glances reveal these both to be quite outstanding models.

The class has quite a convoluted history, first introduced by Collett in 1929 (a development of the previous 2021 Class). From 1930, examples were built with steam brakes and no ATC (for shunting and trip work only). From 1933, locos were built with detail alterations and modifications to the cab, increasing the weight. At the same time, 11 were built with condensing gear to work over the LT Metropolitan line. BR built further examples in 1948, again with steam brakes only for shunting and trip work. The final total built was 863, examples being erected by Swindon, the North British Loco Co., Bagnalls, Kerr Stuarts, Yorkshire Engine Co., Armstrong Whitworths, and Beyer, Peacock and Co. The number series was confusing, and it's no good assuming that those with higher numbers were the later developments. Thus, there were 57xxs, 77xxs, 87xxs, 67xxs, 36xxs, 46xxs, further 87xxs, 86xxs, 97xxs and 67xxs in date order of building. Their wide route availability allowed them to run almost anywhere on the GWR and BR (WR) system, and a glance at the Ian Allan *Locoshed Book* for 1955, reveals them to be shedded at places as far apart as Devon and Cornwall to the South West, Weymouth in the South, the London area, the West Midland and all the way up to Chester in the North (the last-mentioned where I mainly saw them - 8729, in particular – fussing about with empty stock in the WR bays at The General). They lasted to the end of steam on the WR, with some finally being sold to LT, and being painted in lined red. Several examples have been preserved.

Checking on my library sources, it was probably Graham Farish who first produced a 57xx RTR in the 1950s. Then came Hornby's in 1987 (in LT red as well as traditional green), followed by an upgraded version in 1987 as *Duck,* from the Thomas series. A really good model (visually) was introduced by Palitoy/Mainline 40+ years ago, but this was hampered by its split chassis (though many built etched brass frames to go underneath it). Then came Bachmann's (a development from the earlier Palitoy version?) some time later, and now we have the Accurascale version.

On checking with the information in Russell's Bible on GWR locos, *A Pictorial Record of Great Western Engines Volume Two: Churchward, Collett & Hawksworth Locomotives*, OPC 1975, these two locomotives seem to check out in every way; in principal dimensions and with reference to all relevant detail. Regarding detail differences, it will be noted that 6743 (in GWR green) represents one of those not fitted with vacuum brake nor ATC, while 8763 (in BR lined black) represents an example with vacuum brake for passenger workings, and, presumably, ATC (though there is no place to fix a representation of the shoe because of the provision of tension-lock couplings).

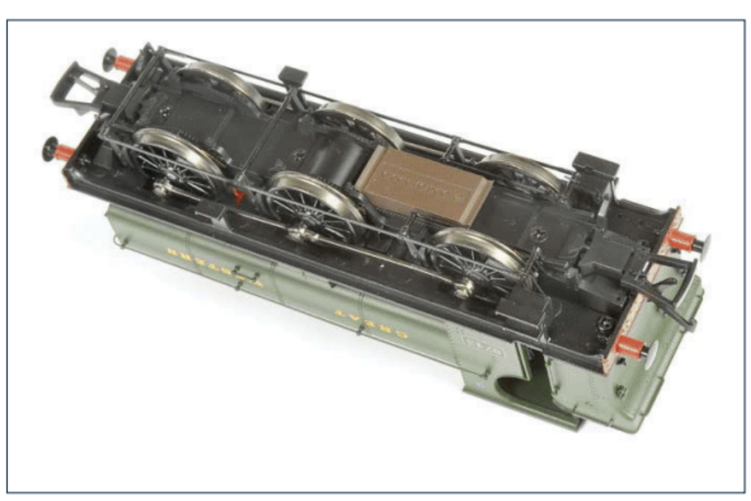
The overall finish on both is peerless, with the crispest of printing and, particularly, the lining on the BR version. Lined examples



Earlier-style (back) and later-style (front) cabs are correctly observed.



The difference between the vacuum-fitted example (left) and the unfitted one (right) will be noted.


The ashpan is nicely picked out in 'rusty brown'.



Top feed or no top feed? Both are correct.

(none was lined in GWR days) weren't common, and applied mainly to those locos working at principal stations as pilots – 8763 being allocated to Old Oak Common for this purpose at Paddington. Separate 'cast' numberplates are supplied (not in brass, but plastic relief) to be fitted over the printed versions (which I did on 6743 – a dab of PVA). Should 'scale' couplings be required, these are supplied (three-links for the unfitted loco and screw-links for the fitted one), but the tension-locks must be removed for operation. I tried fixing the three-links to 6743, but only succeeded in breaking the hooks. Luckily, I had some spares. Red lamps are supplied as well. In my ignorance, I assumed these would fit on the GWR lamp irons and hold in place, but no. One just pinged into oblivion! A second was secured with superglue. The amount of separately-applied detail is incredible, but it's fragile. Only finding out after taking photographs, the handrail pillar on the front of 8763 had come loose and had ended up round the side, and the end of the main horizontal handrail had come out of its stanchion on the LH cabside on 6743. Both were a real fiddle to get back in place! I assure readers, it was nothing to do with my being clumsy. The detail differences will be apparent in the photographs, but take care if considering renumbering. Obviously, the cabs differ, but also there's the situation of top feeds and their associated conduits.

Despite it being difficult to see inside, there is a full cab interior detail and a flickering firebox glow. Unlike Accurascale's recent 'Buckjumpers', the cab roofs will not come off for ease of fitting a crew.



A GWR 57xx hauling 45 loaded trucks on the ECML? Certainly, in model form!

FACTFILE

Models (Review items in bold):
5700 Class - L94 - London Transport Maroon
5700 Class - L91 - London Transport Maroon
5700 Class - 7754 - NCB Green
5700 Class - 7714 - Early Emblem Black
8750 Class - 9681 - Late Crest Black
8750 Class - 8763 - Early Emblem Lined Black
8750 Class - 9741 - British Railways Green
5700 Class - 5741 - GWR Green
5700 Class - 7755 - Shirtbutton Green
6700 Class - 6743 - Great Western Green
5700 Class - 5754 - Great Western Green
Construction: Diecast chassis, plastic body
Weight: 210g
Era: 1930-preservation
Price: £139.95-£239.95
Minimum curves: Radius 2
Accessories: Scale couplings, lamps and etched 'plates.

WHAT WE LIKE

✓ Overall accuracy
✓ Quality of finish
✓ Outstanding performance

Both locos ran superbly – 6743 being just analogue, and 8763 full-DCC. The latter actually worked on analogue, but, obviously, not with all sound functions. I thus tried it on a friend's layout, and you can watch the results of both locos' performances on www.world-of-railways.co.uk.

Both are incredibly powerful for their size! Pick-ups on every (perfectly-concentric) driving wheel ensure smooth running. Provision for DCC-fitting is via removal of the smokebox door, and by using the bespoke tweezers provided. I assume the motherboard will need removal from the smokebox to take the body off (as with the 'Buckjumpers'), but too much taking off the body from the chassis is not recommended.

As a final assessment, I think these are incredible models, at an entirely competitive price; I thoroughly recommend them both.

00 | 1966 - 1971 | £££ 74.99-129.99

Hornby RailRoad Class 55 Deltic



Steven Draper



Although older tooling, it still shouts Deltic!

Designed in the 1960s as a powerful express locomotive for the East Coast Main Line and powered by two Napier engines, originally intended for fast attack boats, the Class 55 Deltics were gloriously excessive. Named after famous racehorses or proud military regiments, enthusiasts had their favourites and, in preservation, they draw impressive crowds.

They weren't perfect, maintenance was…enthusiastic, and fuel economy was something nobody talked about - but for speed, presence, and sheer mechanical drama, nothing else on British rails came close. The Deltic didn't just haul expresses; it announced them, loudly, and at full throttle.

Hornby's Railroad range takes a more measured and pragmatic approach. These models are designed to be robust, reliable, and accessible, trading some of the incredible fine detail seen on many of the latest releases for durability and gentler price points. They're intended for users from three upwards and focus on the enjoyment of simply playing trains, generally offering the sort of detail, but better running, of what were once the latest ready-to-run models before manufacturing moved to China about 30 years ago.

The Railroad Deltic is a textbook example, its lineage running directly back to the Lima Deltic that seemed to feature in almost every modeller's fleet at some point.

Yes, it is chunky, and the under-scale proportions still reflect Lima's HO/OO design compromises; but resisting the temptation to reach for the callipers or pose next to photos of the real thing, to the eye it is unmistakably a Deltic. And once it's galloping around a layout, many of those compromises quietly fade into the background.

On the review sample, the impression is helped by a well-applied two-tone green, and the inclusion of etched nameplates provided a welcome surprise. Large tension-lock couplings are moulded into the bogies,



The model is designed to run and be handled.



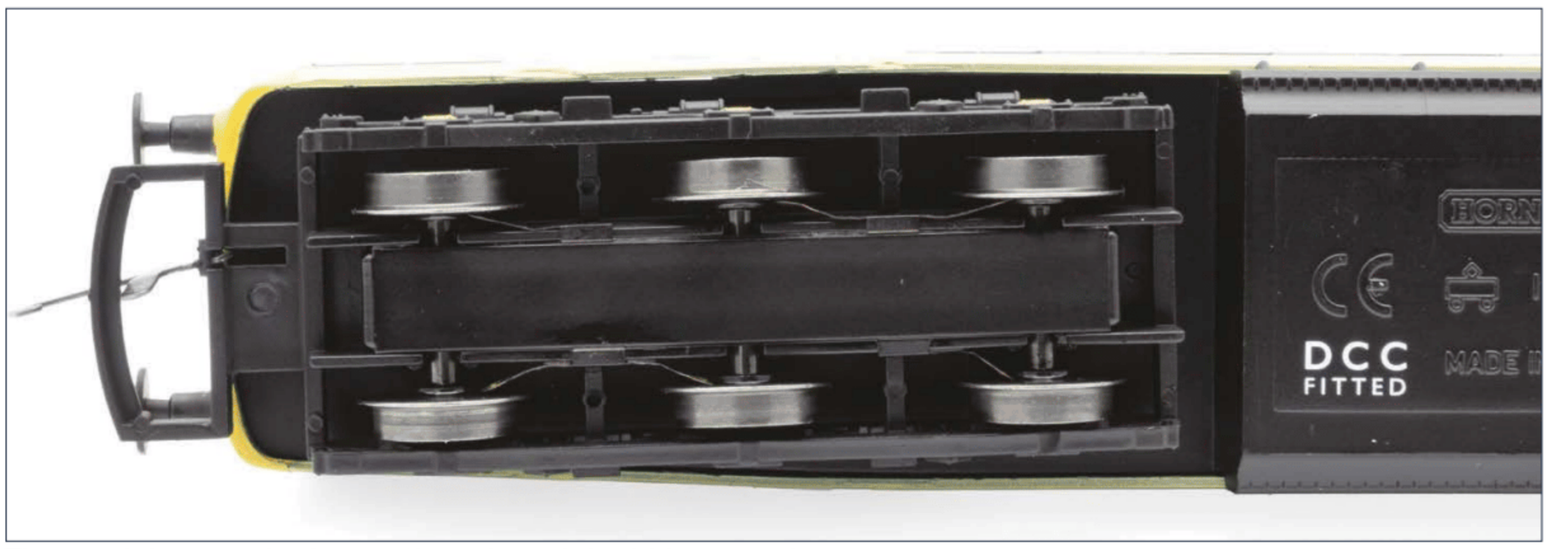
Clear instructions and it comes with etched plates.



Access to the neat and tidy interior is quick and easy.



The livery application is very good.



The model runs a lot better than the original Lima version.

FACTFILE

Model (Review item in bold):
R30438TXS RailRoad: Class 55 Deltic 55002 The Kings own Yorkshire Light Infantry (DCC Sound-Fitted)
R30048TXS RailRoad Class 55 Deltic D9018 Ballymoss (DCC Sound-Fitted)
R30049TTS Railroad Class 55 Deltic 55013 The Black Watch (DCC Sound-Fitted)
Construction: Diecast chassis and plastic body
Weight: 436g
Era: 1966 - 1971
Price: £74.99-£129.99
Minimum curves: Radius 2
Accessories: Etched Nameplates, Instructions and DCC information

WHAT WE LIKE

- ✓ Etched nameplates
- ✓ DCC Sound and functions
- ✓ Value for money

which limits easy replacement with more discreet options, though this is well within the scope of many modellers. In fact, with a little weathering and some sympathetic detailing, the model would quickly become an even more satisfying and characterful item of motive power, looking entirely at home on the layout or train set doing what it was designed to do: run.

Running qualities are smooth straight out of the box, aided by pick-ups on four axles and a five-pole motor bogie. With the help of two traction tyres, haulage is more than adequate for a sensible rake of free-rolling coaching stock with the model managing to pull 0.7Nm on my test rig.

Our sample was TXS sound-fitted. While it will operate quietly on DC, pairing it with a DCC controller or the HM7000 app unlocks additional features, including engine sounds, horns, and other noises. Thrash mode won't rattle the windows, but it adds additional atmosphere to evoke a King's Cross departure without overdoing it.

Taken as a whole, Hornby's Sound-Fitted Railroad Deltic delivers a smooth-running, action-packed model of a classic diesel, capturing the spirit of the prototype and delivering plenty of fun. It knows exactly what it is, and it does that job very well.

TT:120 | 1956 - 1964 | £££ 149.99

Hornby BR (Late) J50 Class 0-6-0T



Steven Draper



Designed by Gresley not for glamour, speed records or the admiration of spotters with notebooks, but for proper, knuckle-down graft in the shunting yards of north London to the industrial North East, the J50 is the railway equivalent of a dockyard brawler. Introduced in the early 1920s, this was a locomotive built to move things that didn't want to be moved.

Visually, it wastes no time trying to charm you. With its squat stance and large water tanks with sloping fronts, it has the look of something that turns up, rolls up its sleeves and gets on with the job. It's not elegant. It's not pretty. But it looks *capable* — which is why crews respected them, and why the class earned the nickname *Submarines*.

Having created the J50 in OO, the TT:120 version was the first small tank engine announced by Hornby, although it took a lot longer than anticipated to arrive. However, now it's here, straight out of the ice-cube packaging, that no-nonsense "coal, steam and brute force" attitude is immediately apparent. At 73g, it feels reassuringly dense in the hand — by far the heavyweight contender among the three small steam locomotives currently available in TT:120.

The overall black finish has good depth, and the absence of fancy lining works entirely in its favour. Nothing distracts from the distinctive shape of the prototype, and your eye is naturally drawn to the detailing. Lamp irons look sturdy and the separately-fitted handrails are straight, positioned where you'd expect them to be.

The whistle, metal buffers add to the finesse, and particularly effective is the detail inside the tank cut-outs.



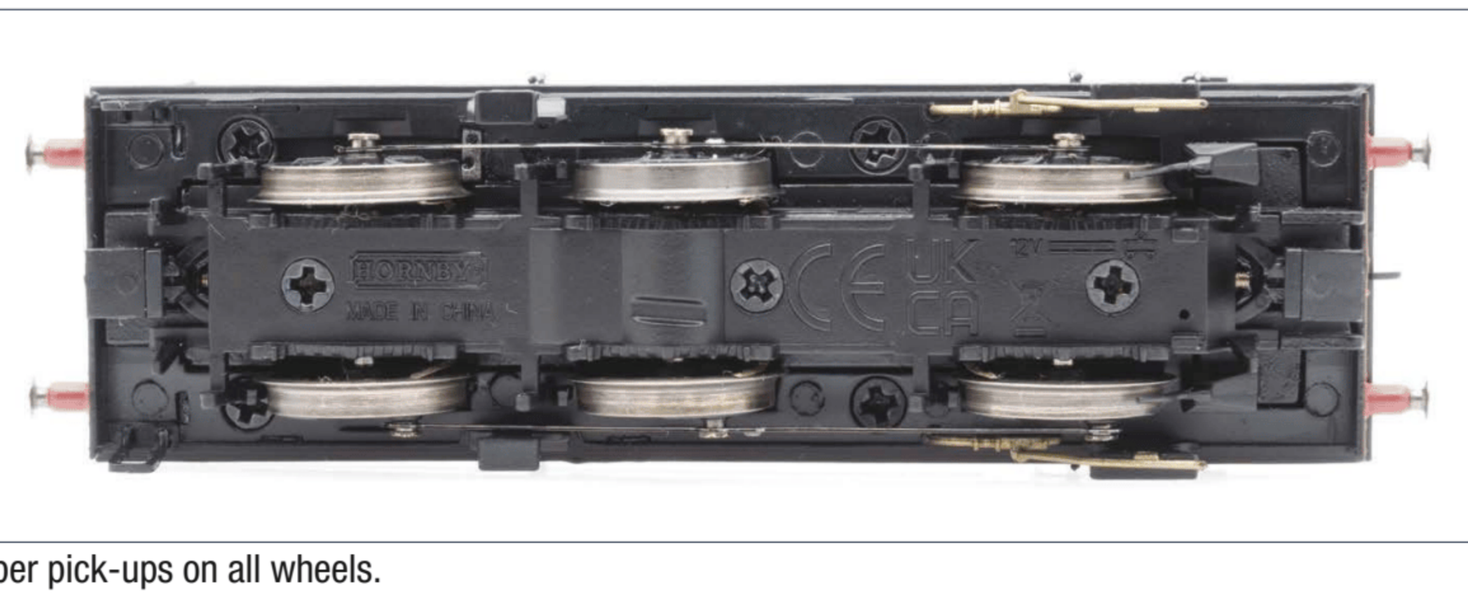
Appropriate below the running plate details.



The face of the class has been captured well.



DCC ready, with flywheel and factory-fitted speaker.



Wiper pick-ups on all wheels.



The paint finish as decoration is excellent.

FACTFILE

Model (Review item in bold):
TT3025M LNER Black J50 Class 0-6-0T No.2793
TT3024M BR (Early) J50 Class, 0-6-0T No.68983
TT3026M BR (Late) J50 Class, 0-6-0T No.68965
Construction: Diecast running plate, tank weights and Plastic body components/details
Weight: 73g
Era: 1956 - 1964
Price: £149.99
Minimum curves: Radius 2
Accessories: Brake rigging, dummy screw-link front coupling, instructions

WHAT WE LIKE

- ✓ Smooth running
- ✓ Excellent detail and finish
- ✓ Feels weighty

The round cab windows are convincingly glazed, and inside, the back head is well represented, with a good mix of painted and separately-fitted detail that rewards closer inspection. Below the running plate, steps, brass-effect injectors, spoked wheels and connecting rods all combine to suggest this isn't just a train-set model, it's also aimed squarely at those who want to treat TT:120 as a *serious* modelling scale, too.

That message is reinforced by the loco-specific accessory pack, which includes brake rods and dummy drawbar and screw-link coupling for the front buffer beam.

Electrically, power is collected via wiper pick-ups, feeding a coreless motor, which has a flywheel. Once the couplings and couplings pockets are removed (squeeze the lugs, don't just pull!), removing two very small and rather tight screws enables the body to ease off, particularly handy if you plan to install a 6-pin decoder. A pre-fitted speaker is present, making conversion to sound straightforward. However, on DC power straight out of the box, running was smooth and issue-free, including over my Peco and Hornby pointwork.

In short, this isn't a model that tries to impress you with sparkle or sophistication. Instead, it wins you over the same way the real thing did — by feeling tough, competent, and quietly confident that it can do the job all day without complaining.

00 | 1954-1988 | £££ 84.95 (triple)

Accurascale Clay Opens



In the early-1980s, I lived in West Cornwall and, while bowling down the A30, you always knew you were nearly home when the china clay tips, the 'Cornish Alps', came into view. South Devon, and in particular the area around St Austell in Cornwall, has a long history of china clay production. The workings were, and some still are, served by a myriad of branches and sidings, which have proved to be a perennial favourite subject for modellers.

BR built 875 of these opens between 1954 and 1960 to replace the ageing GWR O.13 clay wagons. The initial 300 were unfitted but, by 1958, these had been vacuum-fitted. The BR design (designated UCV, later, from 1983, OOV under TOPS) closely followed the design of its GWR predecessor, so as to be compatible with the existing infrastructure. China clay needed to be kept dry, hence the wagons always ran with tarpaulins when loaded. There was a tendency with the flat tarpaulins for water to puddle in the middle, resulting in damp clay. So, from 1975, a programme of fitting the wagons with a bar and custom-made 'hoods' (which would allow the water to run off) was commenced, although it was common for a number of years to see the two types running side by side. The wagons could be seen as single load or short cuts on the branches on their way to the ports or in long rakes out on the main line heading 'up country', to potteries, paper mills and other users. They were all withdrawn by 1988, being replaced by air-braked CDA wagons, though many survive in preservation.



Both flat and tented tarpaulins would benefit from weathering and fixing ropes.



The finish and lettering on all the wagons is superb.



Jerry Clifford



The distinctive 'tented tarps' are depicted in various shades of blue.

Accurascale has introduced a full range of the BR-built opens in fitted and unfitted versions, with both the early, dark grey tarpaulins and the later blue, 'tent' tarps – fitted versions of both types have been offered for review. As is usual with this manufacturer, the wagons come in triple packs with different running numbers. Detailing is superb with many separately-applied fittings, some of which are very fine and will require careful handling, although the tarpaulin bar on the hooded variant is metal and perfectly robust. The distinctive self-contained buffers are sprung.

The finish and lettering, particularly on the OOV, is exquisite; however, if any wagon would benefit from weathering, it's these. My memory of the china clay region of Cornwall was that everything was covered in a layer of fine, white dust, not least the wagons. The OOVs have various planks picked out to represent repairs or replacements, which is a nice touch, though, again, they'd benefit from a little calming down. Likewise, the tarpaulins, which are very nicely moulded, would greatly benefit from a little dry-brushing to highlight the folds in the sheets.

The underframe sports very fine brake gear details with the vacuum fittings and associated plumbing all present and correct. The free-running wheels run in brass bearings and the brake blocks look as though they would accept wheelsets to the 18mm gauges without too much surgery.

Overall, another excellent product from Accurascale, which is sure to prove popular.

FACTFILE

Models:
Clayhood - 13T - Unfitted - Pack A
Clayhood - 13T - Unfitted - Pack B
Clayhood - 13T - Fitted - Pack C
Clayhood - 13T - Fitted - Pack D
Clayhood - UCV - Fitted - Pack E
Clayhood - UCV - Fitted - Pack F
Clayhood - UCV - Fitted - Pack G
Clayhood - UCV - Fitted - Pack H
Clayhood - UCV - Fitted - Pack I
Clayhood - OOV - Fitted - Pack J
Clayhood - OOV - Fitted - Pack K
Clayhood - OOV - Fitted - Pack L
Construction: Diecast chassis and plastic body
Weight: 42g (per wagon)
Era: 1954-1988
Price: £89.95
Minimum curves: Radius 2
Accessories: Scale couplings

WHAT WE LIKE

✓ Removable hoods
✓ Fully detailed brake gear
✓ Superb finish and lettering



The tarpaulin bar beneath the removable covers is very well represented.

The moulded 'hump' on the flat tarps, suggesting the clay load beneath, is particularly convincing.



The complex linkages of the fitted brake gear is fully represented.

00 | 1902-1930 | £££ 84.95 (triple)

Accurascale NER Hoppers





Jerry Clifford

Triple pack of hoppers in LNER livery.

The collieries of the north east of England were unique amongst the British coalfields in that they made very limited use of private owner wagons. Instead, the North Eastern Railway developed a distinctive high-capacity hopper wagon to replace the traditional Chaldron type wagons and their 6-ton derivatives. Initially, these were 8-10 ton capacity, but by the start of the 20th century, influenced by witnessing the use of high-capacity wagons in the USA, the NER started to build high-sided wooden hoppers. The 15-ton capacity P6 hopper was introduced in 1902, with 1,800 being built, but these were quickly followed by the 20-ton P7, over 12,000 of the latter being built by the Grouping in 1923.

Accurascale has introduced a range of wagons to both P6 (LNER Dgm 11) and P7 (LNER Dgm 12), including a whole suite of tooling to cover the multiple regional and period variations displayed by these hoppers over their long lives. These include three different body styles, brake gear variations and liveries, from the original NER, through LNER and BR to NCB ownership.

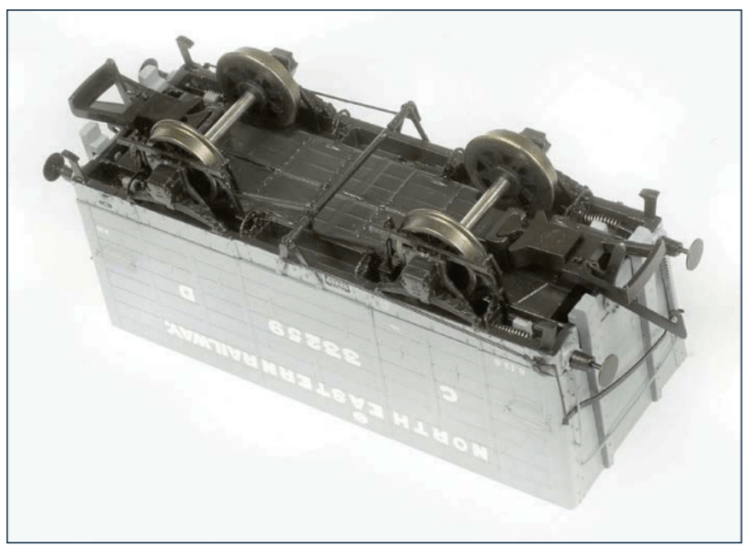
The LNER Dia. 12 and NER P7 offered for review come in Accurascale's usual stoutly boxed three packs. These



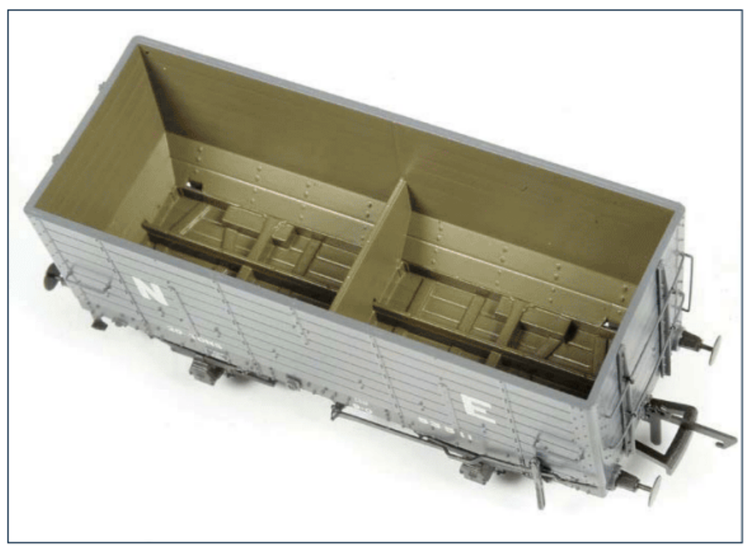
North Eastern livery showing the end handbrake fitted to some wagons.

are impressive wagons with very crisp detail and finishing. Both boast multiple separately-applied fittings, including hand and grab rails, steps, lamp brackets and brake gear. The NER wagons have end brake handles and wooden end stanchions dropped below solebar level to allow them to buffer up to the numerous Chaldron wagons that remained in use at the collieries. The LNER wagons have steel 'T' bar end stanchions and side brake handles only. Both types have diecast metal underframes, free-running wheelsets and small tension-lock couplings in NEM pockets.

Overall, these are a top-quality product of a highly distinctive prototype.



Underside view showing the fine brake gear and buffer springs.



Interior view revealing the fully-modelled hopper door details.

FACTFILE

Models:
DGM 12 Hopper - BR Grey, with black panels - Triple Pack
DGM 12 Hopper - BR Grey - Triple Pack
BSC (Internal User) Hopper - Pale Green, with black ironwork - Triple Pack
P7 Hopper - NCB (Brodsworth) Black, with white planks - Triple Pack
P7 Hopper - NCB Black, with white cross - Triple Pack
DGM 12 Hopper - BR Grey, with black panels - Triple Pack
DGM 12 Hopper - United Steel Company Grey - Triple Pack
P7 Hopper - NCB Red - Triple Pack
Londonderry Hopper - Red Bauxite - Triple Pack
DGM 12 Hopper - LNER Grey - Triple Pack
P7 Hopper - LNER Grey - Triple Pack
DGM 11 (ex-P6) Hopper - LNER Grey - Triple Pack
Mixed Q3 Hopper - Grouping transition period: NER Blue/ LNER Grey - Triple Pack
P8 Hopper - Pre-Grouping: NER Grey - Triple Pack
P7 Hopper - Pre-Grouping: NER Grey - Triple Pack 2
P7 Hopper - Pre-Grouping: NER Grey - Triple Pack 1
P6 Hopper - Pre-Grouping: NER Grey - Triple Pack
Construction: Diecast chassis and plastic body
Weight: 42g (per wagon)
Era: 1902-1930
Price: £84.95
Minimum curves: Radius 2
Accessories: Scale couplings

WHAT WE LIKE

✓ Comprehensive historical notes
✓ Detail variations
✓ Full interior details

Rapido Gunpowder wagons





Jerry Clifford

Rapido's 'Northern' group makes an attractive set.

Rapido recently introduced the distinctive Great Western V6 'Iron Mink' wagon to its range. The GWR was one of the first to champion the use of iron for wagons and, between 1888 and 1901, built over 4000 before reverting to wooden bodies. The design was extremely long-lived and successful, with many wagons to the same basic design being built for other railway companies as well as private owners. One area where they saw extensive use was in the transportation of explosives. The Railway Clearing House regulations called for wagons carrying gunpowder to utilise as much metal as possible in their construction. The best contemporary design was the GW iron Mink, and many companies made use of it.

Rapido has very sensibly utilised the excellent tooling for its GWR V6 iron minks to represent these wagons in a variety of authentic liveries in what it has called 'Not Quite Mink' packs. Rapido fully acknowledges that the wagons are not totally accurate. Generally speaking, the only visible difference on the bodies between the GWR V6 and the gunpowder wagons was the plating over of the end vents. The interiors were also lined in lead over the floor and partway up the sides, fixed with copper nails to prevent sparks, but this isn't something the N gauge modeller need worry about! The main differences were below the solebar, where the various companies tended to fit their own favoured brakes, buffing and running gear – a deviation from the prototype that I suspect most N gauge modellers will be happy to overlook.

The pack offered for review is what Rapido has dubbed the 'northerns'; LNWR, L&Y, and GN. The models themselves are exquisite with beautifully moulded bodies, including very nicely understated strapping and rivet detail and incredibly delicate-looking brake gear, which is different for each wagon. Very fine spoked wheels and standard couplings in NEM pockets complete the underpinnings.

The Great Northern ordered seven of these gunpowder wagons. The model is in a very attractive pale grey colour with the solebars and framing picked out in red. The underframe has single-sided twin brake shoes.

The Lancashire and Yorkshire ordered 12 wagons in 1904. The model is correctly depicted in standard wagon grey and has single shoe independent brakes on both sides.

The LNWR had 10 of these wagons, delivered in stages between 1906 and 1915. It carries the striking red livery, which the LNWR used for its gunpowder wagons up to around 1912 and has twin shoe independent brakes on both sides.



The G. Fawkes wagon would be perfect for a fireworks special!



The triple pack comes in a stout box for safe storage.

FACTFILE

Factfile (Review item in bold):
Iron Mink - BR (W) Triple Pack - 961011
Iron Mink - GWR (Early) Triple Pack - 961001
Iron Mink - GWR (Inter-War) Triple Pack - 961002
Iron Mink - GW at War Pack A Triple Pack - 961003
Iron Mink - GW at War Pack B Triple Pack - 961004
Iron Mink - SR at War Triple Pack - 961005
Not Quite Minks - LMS Acid Triple Pack - 961006
Not Quite Minks - Scotland & Borders Triple Pack - 961007
Not Quite Minks - Northerners Triple Pack - 961008
Not Quite Minks - Welsh Railways Triple Pack - 961009
Not Quite Minks - Cement Vans Triple Pack – 961010
Iron Mink - BR (W) Triple Pack - 961011
Not Quite Minks - G. Fawkes Gunpowder No.1605 - 961012
Construction: Plastic
Weight: 8g
Era: Various
Price: £24.95 (single) £69.95 (triple pack)
Minimum curves: Radius 1

WHAT WE LIKE

✓ Fine detail
✓ Attractive liveries
✓ Brake gear variations

The final wagon offered for review, *G. Fawkes of Westminster*, makes no pretence at authenticity, but is entirely for fun. That said, it has all the build quality of the others and is very attractive in its chocolate brown livery with cream, shaded red, lettering.

The finish on all the wagons is superbly applied with sharp lettering, particularly the GN example with its red lining and wealth of tiny lettering – all of which is completely legible.

Overall, despite the minor, understandable compromises, these are a quality product and are highly recommended.

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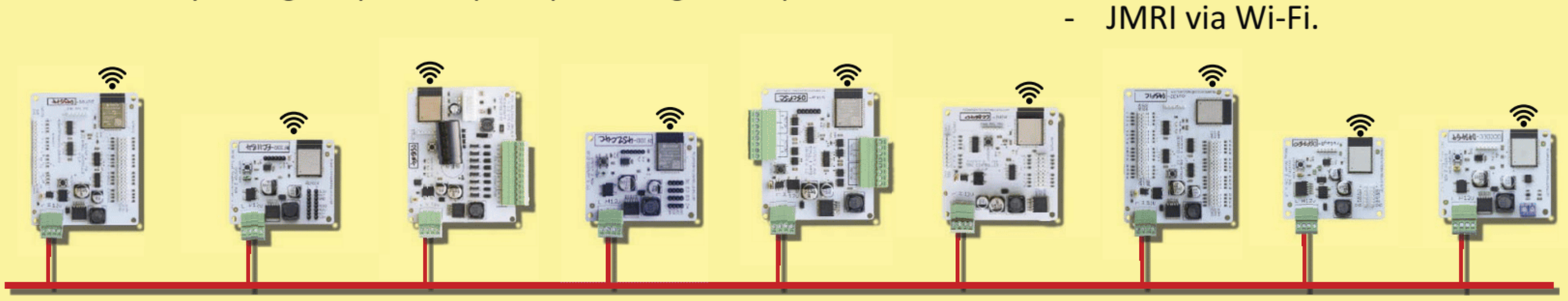

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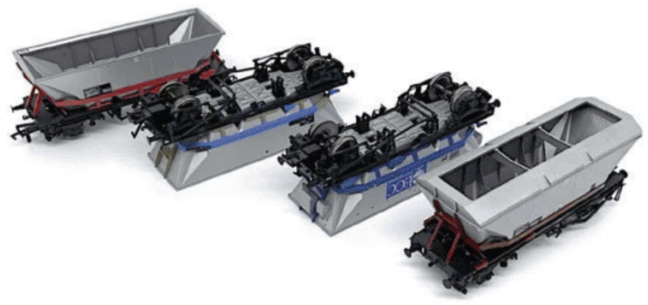



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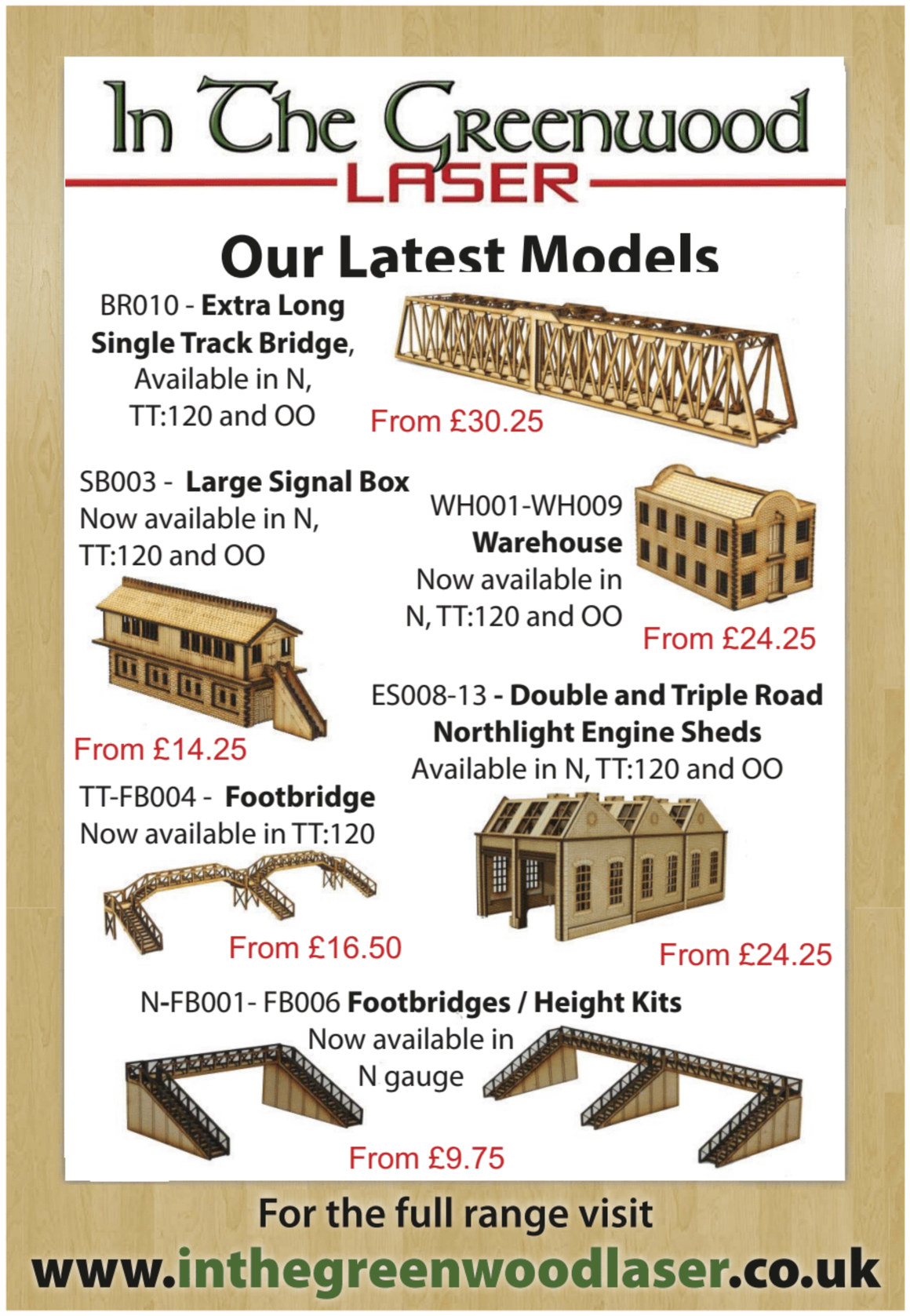
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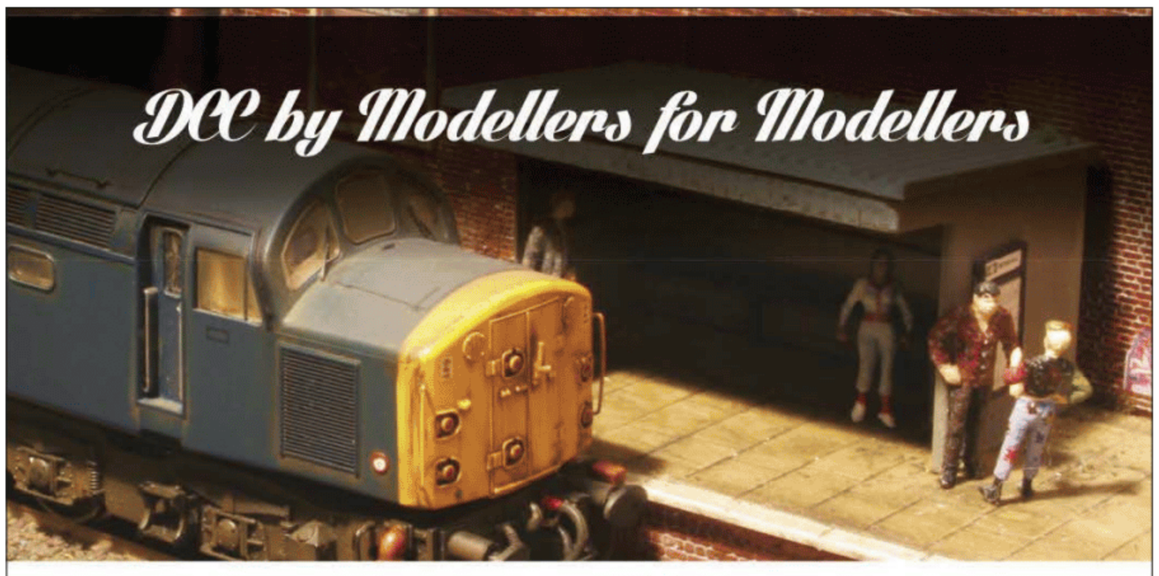
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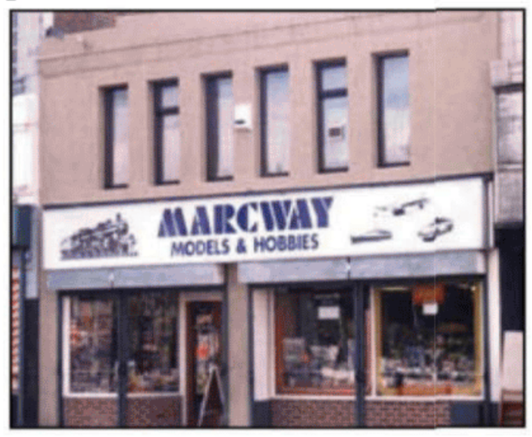

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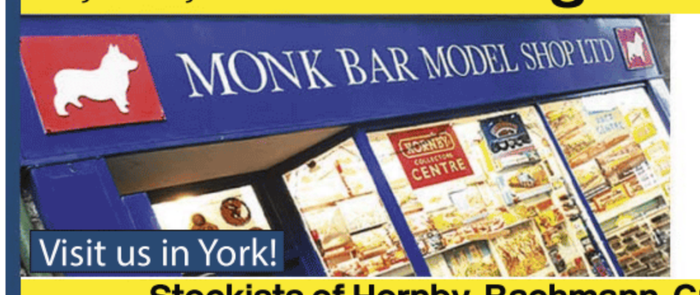

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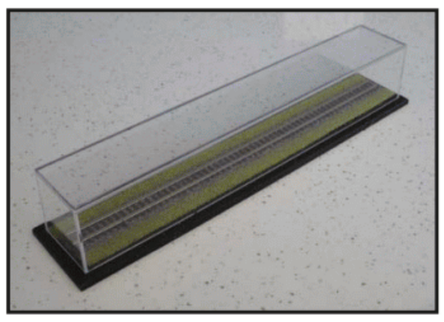

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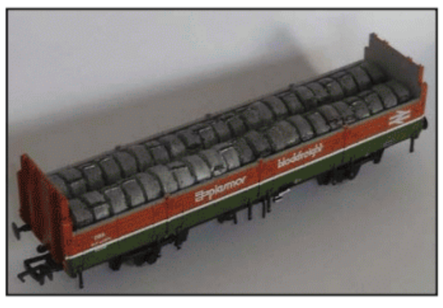

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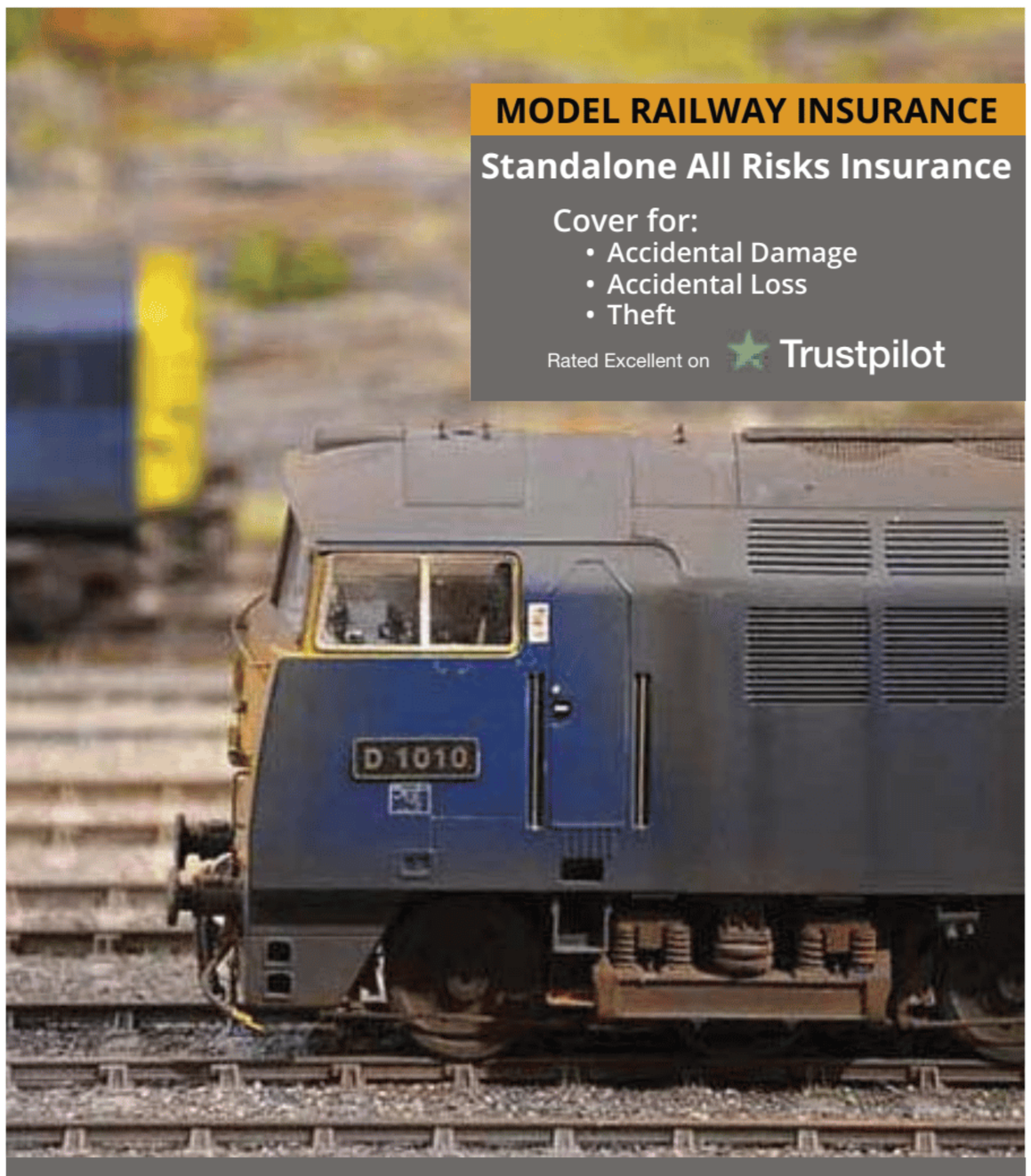

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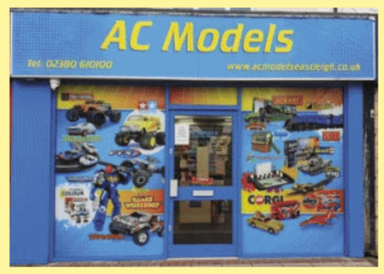

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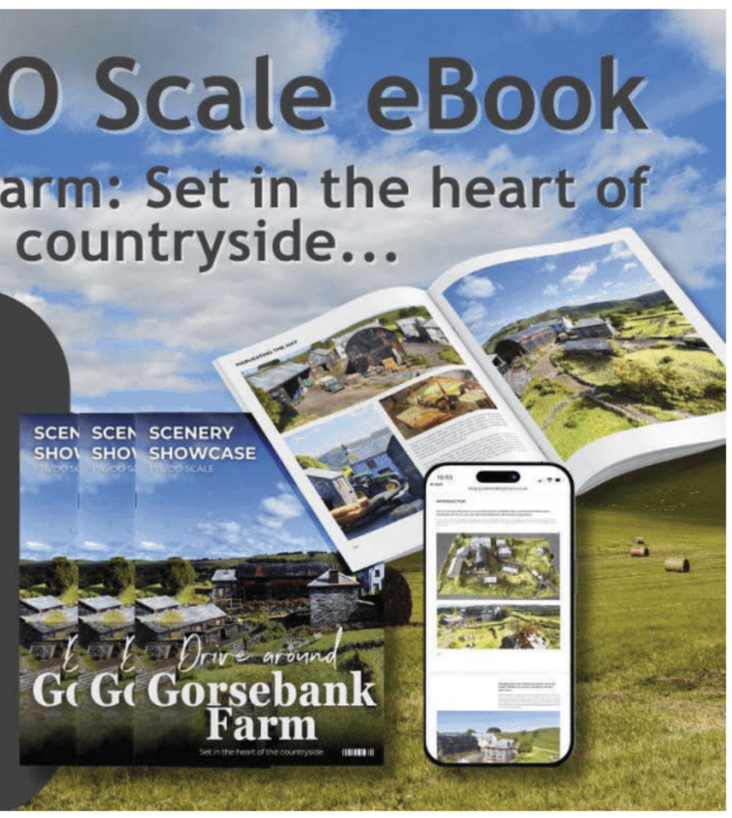

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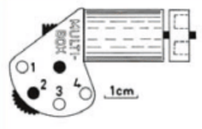

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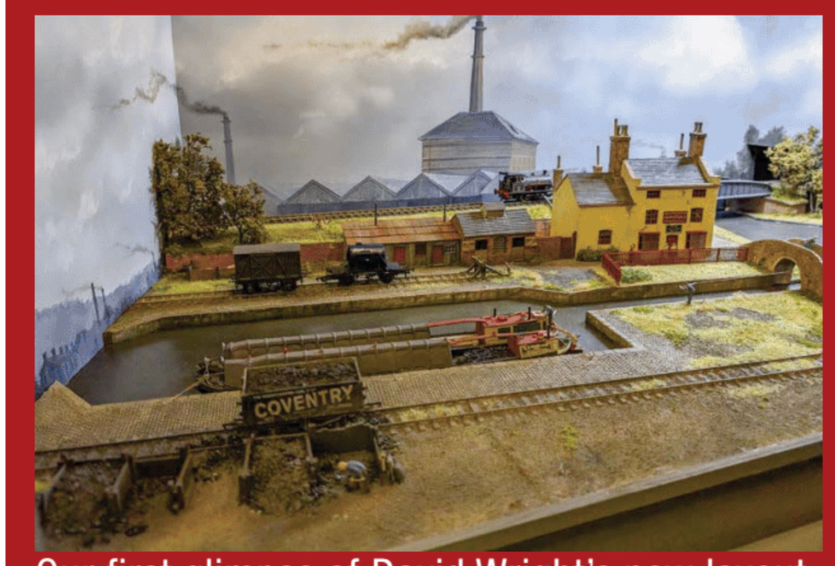

Our first glimpse of David Wright's new layout, "Bessie Bulls", which we'll be featuring, later this year.



That's what we call show signage! Phil reports that the hot cobs were delicious.



Musketeer is a freelance design and Phil's latest Garden Rail project build.



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