



Federation of Model Engineering Societies

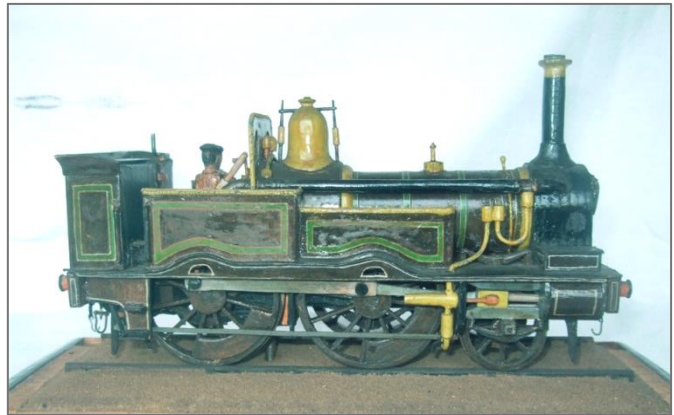
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Gauge 1 modelling

This document was written by Dave Brutnall and was originally published by Worthing and District SME in their newsletter in the Summer of 2016.

When Dereck asked me to write an article on how I became involved with gauge 1, I had to stop and think about it. The photo shows a model which belonged to my grandfather, but was made by his uncle who worked on the LSWR. I was given the model before my grandfather died.

Until I moved to Worthing just over a year ago, I lived in Wraysbury, which when I was young was still a country village. The station is on the Waterloo to Windsor line. Passenger services were electric while there was still a steam goods service bringing coal in and sand out. My mother used to say that I wouldn't go to sleep until the evening sand train had whistled up to leave. So my interest in steam locos goes back to an early age. Of course I had a clockwork train set followed by Hornby Dublo.



I was about nine when a new lad in my primary school class invited me round to his house where in an overgrown part of the garden were the remains of a large G1 railway. There were cast concrete viaducts and steel bridges in the long grass, and a triangular junction leading into a green house. A back board painted to look like Dover Harbour had all of the lifted track piled in front of it. Years later I found out that this had belonged to Captain Worrell, one of the founder members of the Gauge 1 Model Railway Association. It had featured in the Model Railway Constructor magazine and used to be visited by most of surrounding model engineering and miniature railway clubs.

My next contact with G1 was when my father took me to the Model Railway Clubs Exhibition at Central Hall, Westminster. The G1MRA had a layout there and we waited for what seemed ages for a coal-fired Britannia to be steamed up. It did half a circuit and stopped dead in the middle of a viaduct with the safety valves blowing and refused to move. On display was a part finished A4 which I was to see again in later years.

I had always wanted to have a go at building my own OO locos, but needed a lathe, so I saved my pocket money to buy a Unimat. This was used to build two reasonably successful locos. On a family trip to the Ideal Home Home exhibition at Earls Court I bought a Model Railway News magazine which featured the G1 Rockway railway in New South Wales, and continued into the next issue. This started my interest in G1. The third issue of the magazine that I bought featured a father and son from Manchester who made superb O gauge live steam locos. I still have these magazines, frayed at the edges, but still readable!

My Dad was a toolmaker and had shown me how to grind some basic turning tools. I had started an engineering apprenticeship when an article on a G1 appeared in Model Railway News. I managed to get some cast iron wheels from Kennions and drove my parents mad trying to turn them on the Unimat! Unfortunately, the article didn't have enough information for someone like me who didn't even know the difference between slide valves and piston valves. (The remains were only eventually consigned to the scrap bin when I moved to Worthing!).

Sometime later I saw in ME an advertisement for a book on LBSC's 'Tich' and decided to have a go at building it. My Grandfather loaned me the money to buy a Myford lathe, and the scrap bin at work supplied the materials. I joined the Staines model engineers and watched one of the members trying to run his Tich not very

successfully. I promptly lost interest in my Tich. The ME then started to serialise Don Young's 'County Carlow' and I started work on it. A lot of changes were made and when it was finished there wasn't much of Don's design left. A GWR 4700 2-8-0 was the next project.

I started working for BP Research in 1987 making toys for the boffins. This was just before our hurricane and the Piper Alpha platform blowing up in the North Sea. One of the chaps I was working with had just started in model engineering and he asked me if I had been to the London Model Railway Exhibition lately. So we made a trip to the Horticultural Halls for the show, which was the year the G1MRA had a large new layout. The corner it was in was crowded with people watching and the rest of the hall was nearly empty. A few years later they decided not to include G1 and the show died. The urge to have a go was now strong and I joined the G1MRA at the show.

I recalled that LBSC had started a G1 version of the LNWR Jumbo so I used his twin cylinder block design, with some modifications, to build an LMS 2P 4-4-0. There was a lot of interest in it at G1 get-togethers. I had now been at BP for five years and redundancy was looming- the third time it had happened! I had an extra year subcontracting work out and this gave me time to decide to work for myself.

The 4700 was pushed under the bench and I started to make G1 locos. My first customer introduced me to his friends and I was never short of work from then on. I am now working on the last batch of locos, and, when they are finished G1 will go back to being a hobby.

I have a garden large enough for a G1 railway, and five finished locos to run, two part-built, and rolling stock to go with them.

The loco in the picture is a Beattie well tank built by the LSWR at Nine Elms in 1861. It is made of wood; all of the detail is correct; and the wheels and rods will move. The loco's number is 36 and in 1863 was given the name 'Comet'. When I was given it, I took the glass case off to have a close look and found it is G1. Could it be the oldest G1 loco?