# RAILANAA NOODELLANAA For the average enthusiast October '79 45p





# Railway of the month Wherwell

# LSWR in 4mm scale by John Hobden

### Photographs by the author

THOSE of us who set our models in a past era have to decide between extreme accuracy on the one hand or artistic impression on the other. There are those, like the Pendon team, who have the resources, time and patience to demand of themselves the highest st ndards in both of these. The rest of us mere mortals sometimes need to sacrifice a little of the rivet-counting accuracy in the interest of producing our models in the time available. Also, we build for enjoyment don't we? If the search for accuracy results in tedium what have we gained? While working on Wherwell I dug deeply for accurate information but even so some liberties had to be taken to create an artistic impression of the place as it was. The platform canopies and lamps for example have been borrowed from other stations of the same period.

It was with this philosophy in mind that the Hurstbourne and Fullerton line was planned, even though circumstances have changed somewhat since then. During 1968 the prospect of moving house made me think about building a portable railway to replace my GWR Branch terminus (everyone had one in the '60s didn't they?) A plan was hatched featuring a small country station to which a larger one could be added later. After looking at various stations near to my home, I came across Wherwell, which had not seen a passenger train since the 1930s. The line was originally double track, built in 1882 to provide the GWR at Whitchurch with a through route to Southampton via the ABOVE: An 0395 Class 0-6-0 passes the signal box at Wherwell, which is modelled on the one at Fullerton.

(station building temporarily demolished!).

RIGHT: The passenger train in the down platform consists of 4-wheel coaches and bogie parcels van, hauled by Class M7. The shed behind the up platform is based on the cycle shed at Micheldever.

Andover and Redbridge line (this was before the Winchester Chesil section was built, giving the GWR direct access to the LSWR main line). The connection at Whitchurch was never completed, however, and so the line was something of a 'white elephant' from the start. The 1910 timetable shows five passenger rail-motor services in each direction and one picks up goods per day. In 1912 the line was singled, and the passenger service ceased in 1933. Freight traffic to Longparish survived until 1956.

When the site of the station was first visited in 1968 a group of bungalows had sprouted on the down platform and houses were appearing in the goods yard. There were enough features remaining to give some impression of the general layout of the station but the track layout had been completely obliterated. Research in local libraries and Hampshire County Archives yielded a little information about the line, as did conversations with local railwaymen, but the big breakthrough came with the 1910 edition of the Ordnance Survey 25 in. plan, which showed the track plan in detail. Armed with this information, decisions were taken concerning the amount of poetic licence which would be necessary to produce a reasonably authentic model of an interesting period in the station's history. Some aspects of the original planning have caused regret, mainly the great length of the assembled line, even with the condensation of the track plan which made the goods yard a nightmare to shunt in.





ABOVE: An 02 Class 0-4-4T brings a push-pull set in from Fullerton, while a 700 Class 0-6-0 waits in the yard. The cramped nature of the yard can clearly be seen in this picture. RIGHT: An M7\_Class 0-4-4T enters the station with an up passenger train.

ABOVE RIGHT: The sketch plan shows the position of Wherwell in relation to the surrounding LSWR and GWR lines. BELOW: The layout trackplan, which is representative of many typical

LSWR through stations.



It was decided to set the period at 1910, and to make the line to the East of the station single, to represent a later period (or perhaps to give a 'branch line' look). The only problem with this is that Maunsell's lovely coaches look out of place alongside 'salmon' coloured structures and so the locomotive and rolling stock is limited to pre-group.

So far the line has taken 11 years to construct, with a few short gaps, usually caused by domestic matters. In retrospect, several jobs could have been completed more quickly but who would have dreamed in 1968 that it would become possible to buy excellent LSWR signal arms, finials and platform lamps off the shelf.

#### **Baseboards and Trackwork**

Most of the baseboards are 1m long by 40cm and have a softwood frame either left open or covered with chipboard.Quarterinch coach bolts hold the sections together and the whole line rests on secondhand floor joists.

The track plan was first drawn out, full size, on very stiff canvas-backed paper and all sleeper positions marked out. The sleepers are thin ply, with tinned staples as baseplates. In one operation the sleepers and fine gravel ballast were glued to the paper base using Uni-Bond PVA adhesive. King's Cross B/H rail was used throughout and the brass chairs were soldered to the staples in the sleepers.

When the track was laid the paper base was laid on top of a thin layer of expanded polystyrene and the edges folded down to form the ballast shoulders.





Large radius curves were used wherever possible but parts of the goods yard necessitated things being a little tighter. The yard is short of siding space and so shunting can be a very interesting operation! As there are no run-round facilities for passenger trains the station is operated as a through station. Long freight trains look particularly effective threading through the bridges.

#### **Motive Power and Rolling Stock**

The scanty passenger service was generally worked by a steam railmotor in later years, but the diminutive Walschaerts valve gear has so far put me off building one. Passenger services are at present worked by two freely available commercial locomotives i.e. a detailed Triang M7 and a Wills 02. The push-pull set is scratchbuilt to drawings published in the RAILWAY MODELLER in 1962. After several attempts at making the bogies in sheet metal to incorporate all the bolt head detail, I gave up and used the Roxey white metal castings, which look about right. Their coach fittings saved a lot of time on all the coaching stock, the undergear simply being soldered to a nickel silver baseplate and the whole then fixed to the floor between the solebars (low-melt solder used throughout). The four wheel coaches are also of the same styrene sheet construction and look well with the 02 and parcels van, even though I should build more to make up a train of convincing length.

Goods traffic over the line was unusually handled by a '700' class 'Black Motor' 0-6-0. This locomotive arrived in the form of an Eames kit for a Caledonian Drummond 0-6-0 and needed some modification to resemble its sister engines built by Drummond south of the border. The Bec kit was out of the question as this portrays the engine in its later modified form. The 0395 class represents the Adams goods engines and was constructed from a DJH kit. I am steadily constructing a range of wagon types used by the LSWR and also those 'foreigners' from other companies which might be seen. Private owner vehicles are perhaps in short supply for the period chosen, but this will be rectified in due course. The wagons are all scratchbuilt on a variety of commercial or hand-built underframes. Airfix cattle wagon underframes are easily modified to resemble Fox's patent steel underframe as used by the LSWR.

Painting and lining of some of these items was started before the HMRS livery register and Precision Paints came on the scene and so the most glaring errors are being corrected as the items come through 'shops'.

Romford and Jackson wheels have been used as standard and have given little trouble, most problems having arisen where trackwork has come out of gauge. A quick touch of the soldering iron usually puts this to rights. Being more of an artist than an operator, three link couplings were chosen. ABOVE: Adams 02 Class 0-4-4T running bunker-first with the push-pull set.

## Signalling

The Ordnance Survey plan dated 1910 helpfully marked the position of signals and these are all lattice masts of appropriate vintage, most being built before the advent of the excellent arms and finials available today. Mention must be made here to G. A. Pryer's superb definitive record of Southern Signals which has prompted the construction of some signals and a signal box in much larger scale (1:20). Unfortunately the only style of signal box which is not drawn in the book is the 1880 design as used on the Bournemouth cut-off line and at Wherwell and Fullerton. The Wherwell box is, therefore, based on the one at Fullerton, which is the same size and which I was able to measure before demolition.

#### Electrical

The less said about this the better! Live frogs and a point complex which included a three-way junction and a diamond crossing stretched my electrical capabilities to the limit. Having experimented with various types of point blade operated switches, the points were eventually wired to switches on the control deck. Electrical connections across boards are made with connectors made of printed circuit board. Patches of copper are left on each half of a connector which screws together and a piece of spring strip makes the actual connection.

#### Scenery and Buildings

Most of the recent work on the model has been in this direction, and plans have been drawn with the object of eventually completing the main street of this picture postcard village where thatch is to be found everywhere. The scenery starts off with the ground contours being built up using a honeycomb of very thick card. Papier maché is then spread over rough areas and fine adjustments made with plaster of Paris. Where a building interrupts the smooth line of the ground a hole is left in the honeycomb so that the base of the building rests on the baseboard. This looks far better than having cracks around the base of the walls and allows the building to be removed for fine scenery work in the gardens, etc.

The methods used for the buildings were inspired by Pendon Parva, but lack the patience of Roye England's team. Card is the basic material for the structures but I must confess to having used embossed plastic in places despite the incorrect brick bond. However, when faced with traditional brick and flint walling, out come the scriber and paintbrush. Tiles or slates are cut in strips from appropriate thickness of paper and glued to a roof sub-base

BELOW: Drummond M7 Class 0-4-4T and passenger train running over the occupation bridge towards Fullerton.





have now been replaced with cast ones. Articles by Frank Crudass some years ago yielded drawings from which the platform seat and barrow were constructed.



This section of the LSWR has now been transplanted to Yorkshire, having survived several moves of house, a situation which makes research more difficult, but it does at least have a permanent home. Thanks must go to all those who have assisted by supplying information, to Pendon Museum for gallons of inspiration, and to my wife for keeping tiny fingers out of station windows. I keep hearing mutters about extension to Fullerton Junction but that may be another story!





FAR LEFT: 0395 Class heads for Longparish with a goods train.
UPPER LEFT: Bridge cottages.
LEFT: The cottage with the 'just renovated' look. Picture was taken before anything grew in the garden.
BELOW LEFT: Fullerton train rounding the slight curve.
ABOVE: Beer barrels for the White Lion and pump water for the cottages!
RIGHT: Cottage gardens.
BELOW: Imn, cottages and barn. The angled girder bridge carries a new road which replaced the steeper 'Old Hill' some years before the railway was built.



