

LIONSHEART

NUMBER 50

MAY 2001

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CONTENTS

EDITORIAL

CHAIRMAN'S MESSAGE

REPORT OF LIONSMEET 2000

ALAN BIBBY'S LION

BOOK REVIEW

CD REVIEW

THE ASTER GAUGE 1 LION

THE VINTAGE CARRIAGE TRUST CD - ROM

EDITORIAL

Dear Member

This issue of Lionsheart should reach you just before this year's AGM, but only just! I must confess that most of the material in this issue has been to hand for some time, in particular John Hawley's Chairman's Message which arrived immediately before Christmas. I have printed it as received although John's Christmas greeting is by now 6 months late through no fault of his own so please accept my apologies for this, or perhaps, charitably, regard the greeting as 6 months early!

Edward Parrott's report of Lionsmeet 2000 appears in this issue. Our hosts, the Rugby MES were most hospitable, and I am sure members will wish me to express our thanks to them for making it such an enjoyable day. Alan Bibby and his Lion were the winners. I had the pleasure of meeting Alan 2 years ago at the Brighthouse Society's track when he came a very close second in the LBSC Memorial Bowl Competition. Alan showed me the many modifications that he had made to his Lion and I was interested in his experiments with various types of super heater. I am grateful for Alan for responding very promptly to my request for an article for Lionsheart. Perhaps the question of super heaters is worth an article on its own. Readers of Model Engineer will no doubt have read Alan's excellent article on Spark and Oil Emissions (ME Vol. 186 No. 4139) and his more recent description of his trip to New Zealand (ME Vol. 186 No. 4144). So congratulations Alan on your success at Lionsmeet and thanks for your contributions to our hobby.

Members attending this year's AGM will find that the LMS Medical Officers Coach has changed places with the Planet replica which is now double heading Lion. Lion awaits our annual show of interest and admiration and the application of elbow grease. Like Lion I look forward to seeing as many of you as possible on the day.

Enclosed with this issue is an enticing publicity leaflet of the Aster hobbies gauge 1 model of Lion and Titfield Thunderbolt. Andrew Pullen informs me that the model and kits are available now and interested members should contact Andrew at Aster Hobbies Ltd. In view of the help received from OLCO, members will receive a discount on the normal retail price so please mention OLCO if you contact Aster Hobbies Ltd. Aster are also producing some attractive coaches based on the 1930 L & M replicas, and also a "Titfield Thunderbolt" train consisting of a loriot Y complete with Dan's Home and a Toad Brakevan. I suspect that the decision will not be whether to purchase one or not, but which one to choose.

John Hawley has sent me details of the Vintage Carriages Trust Database now available on CD Rom, and copies of the information leaflet are included.

Finally we welcome our new members to OLCO and hope to see them at some of our forthcoming events.

New members:

Mr. Alfred Lloyd
106 Gwendoline Drive
Countesthorpe
Leicester LE8 5SG

The Barrett Family
120 Field Lane
High Heath
Pelsall
Walsall W54 1DQ

Chairman's Message

"I had thought of 'winding down' for Christmas, but that seems to be the last thing one is able to do these days. Life seems to get more hectic as time goes by. Is it a function of the progress of civilisation or of an individual's age that life seems sometimes to be one continuous session on a treadmill, the very thing that civilisation should have done away with?

Needless to say, I have made no progress with my Lion during the last twelve months, except for two sets of small phosphor bronze castings that I machined up for Charles and myself, he generously donating my set of castings in return for my machining his set. (Who said that back scratching is a thing of the past?).

I much enjoyed our visit to Rugby for Lionsmeet 2000. The weather was superb, the track layout an imaginative one and our hosts exemplary in their hospitality and generosity, to say nothing of the hard work put in backstage by the ladies in providing as with excellent refreshment. We had a good day's competition, though the presentation of the cup was delayed somewhat, hence there is no photo of the award ceremony. Edward Parrott's full report on the meeting appears elsewhere in this issue, so I will say no more.

David Neish was kind enough to let me run his re-boilered Lion around the track in the morning and offered me the use of it for the competition, but I'm afraid my nerve failed me. I find it quite scary to approach a corner at 'speed', to 'lift off' the power and to feel hardly any reduction in velocity. This is such a world away from driving my Mini Cooper, which is more like a Go Kart in its response. Not that David's engine lacks power, far from it. I think the driving of a friend's engine is quite a responsibility and I am not yet accustomed to the surprising stability of these little locos.

Chris Parrott walked me around the extensive 7 1/4" gauge track, explaining the considerable amount of work that has been undertaken recently in extending and re-aligning the route. What a pity we cannot rustle up a couple of large Lions to take advantage of the facilities that most clubs can now offer. Back to me again, I suppose. I should get on with building! May I remind readers though of the 'for sale' advert placed by member Desmond Hill in the last issue. We even have a cup for winners of competitions in this gauge.

Included in this issue is a review of a new publication - On the Trail of the Titfield Thunderbolt, by Simon Castens. I have found it to be a mine of information, containing much more than just the story of the film, such as thumbnail comments on the many well known actors who took part in this nostalgic film. What a shock it is to note that nearly all have now passed away! I would highly recommend it and am giving it as a Christmas present, so there!

I would like to take this opportunity to wish you all a happy and peaceful Christmas, with the New Year bringing to you all that you could wish for - and further, a summer of parched grass and cinders in the hair. (Remember how we set fires all around the track at Sutton Coldfield?).

John Hawley

LIONSMEET 2000

This year's event was hosted by the Rugby Model Engineering Society Ltd at their track on the Onley Lane site on the outskirts of Rugby. The layout consists of a 1200ft dumbbell shaped raised track of 2½", 3½" and 5" gauges, and a ground level 7¼" gauge line about 5/8 mile in length.

Lions attending this year consisted of only 4 engines, all in 5", nobody else coming forward to challenge the other trophies. John Barrett, of the Gauge 1 fraternity, did however bring his G1 Lion, and I understand that he intends to have a go at the trails on some future date.

Saturday dawned a glorious day, and the days events began as usual with the contenders getting the feel of the track and their engines in preparation for the real test in the afternoon. Dinner was served at around 12:30 pm. and most OLCO members sat down at that point for a marvellous salad dinner laid on by the ladies of the host club, I think I'm right in saying that everyone was most appreciative and would agree that it was one of the best we've ever had.

The competition got underway at 2:30pm and it was agreed that the usual 10min runs would be used. No one was keen to go first so lots were drawn to decide, and David Neish of Guildford became the first competitor of 2K.

The weather was still holding out, and left superb conditions for running, although the activities of the morning had removed that very helpful film of rust from the rail tops. David proved this by making an excellent start with his load of 4 adults on a 3 - car set, unfortunately the Rugby passenger set system of articulation means that you can only take 1 or 3 cars and this did cause a few problems later on. From where I was sitting it didn't seem as though David wanted to be reminded of Geoff's performance last year, and on *his* engine, and his run seemed to consist of opening the regulator and leaving it there! After averaging a speed of 753ft / min, David covered a distance of 7530ft and picked up a work done figure of 62,715ftlbs, ultimately placing him in 2nd place.

Ray Wiggins took the second turn, choosing a load of 2 adults and 3 children, covering a distance of 6990ft and averaging 699ft / min. Ray's figures were later disqualified due to a unseen breach of the rules on my part.

Alan Bibby was our next challenger. He chose to take 4 unsuspecting adults, who I'm quite sure will have changed their minds about volunteering for anything again. Alan also seemed to learn from Geoff's example last year, but his engine was rather more lively in responding to the helm.

I later calculated his average speed at a staggering 876ft / min, so it's hardly surprising that he nearly lost me as he powered round the 30 - 40ft radius corners! I did once get a brief glance under Alan's arm as we negotiated one of these corners, and the old phrase 'blink and you miss it' would seem appropriate in regard to the coupling rods of his engine, so fast were they spinning! It is hardly surprising that he clocked up 8760ft, and achieved a figure of 80,670ftlbs. I have no idea where Alan's fire went after exiting the chimney but I'm sure Dunchurch got a dose of it!

Jon Swindlehurst was the final competitor for the day, taking a load of 3 adults and 1 child on the same three car set. Jon had hoped for another child but none were forthcoming, as I'm sure he later regretted. He also started with apparent ease, though he did *seem* more cautious than the rest, - perhaps, as I have been, nervous of last year's accident in the valve gear. My calculations showed that he achieved a speed of 770ft / min though, and he covered a distance of 7700ft. He also seemed to have trouble in keeping his fire in the 'box, although he did have an excess of steam - until he primed that is, evident by the blurred nature of my notes, written while observing *behind* him! His final figure was 54,465ftlbs, sadly the lowest of the day, not helped I'm sure by the lack of an extra child, or my abysmal timing keeping which almost left him with a 9 min run instead of 10! I'm glad to say I corrected in time and no one else was affected if anyone wonders....

Having called for and received no more contenders I drew the days proceedings to an end, and after calculating the figures, John Hawley was left the task of presenting the Mike Parrott Memorial Trophy to the days winner. After making their thanks known to the host club, all members headed home with the promise of coming again one day, turning out to be 1 week later in one member's case! It was a shame not to see any body bringing another engine to run on the Sunday, especially a 7¼" one, though I did have a run with my friends 'Romulus'.

The results for the day thus stand :-

- | | | |
|----|-----------------|--------------|
| 1. | A. Bibby | 80,670ftlbs. |
| 2. | D. Neish | 62,715ftlbs. |
| 3. | J. Swindlehurst | 54,465ftlbs. |

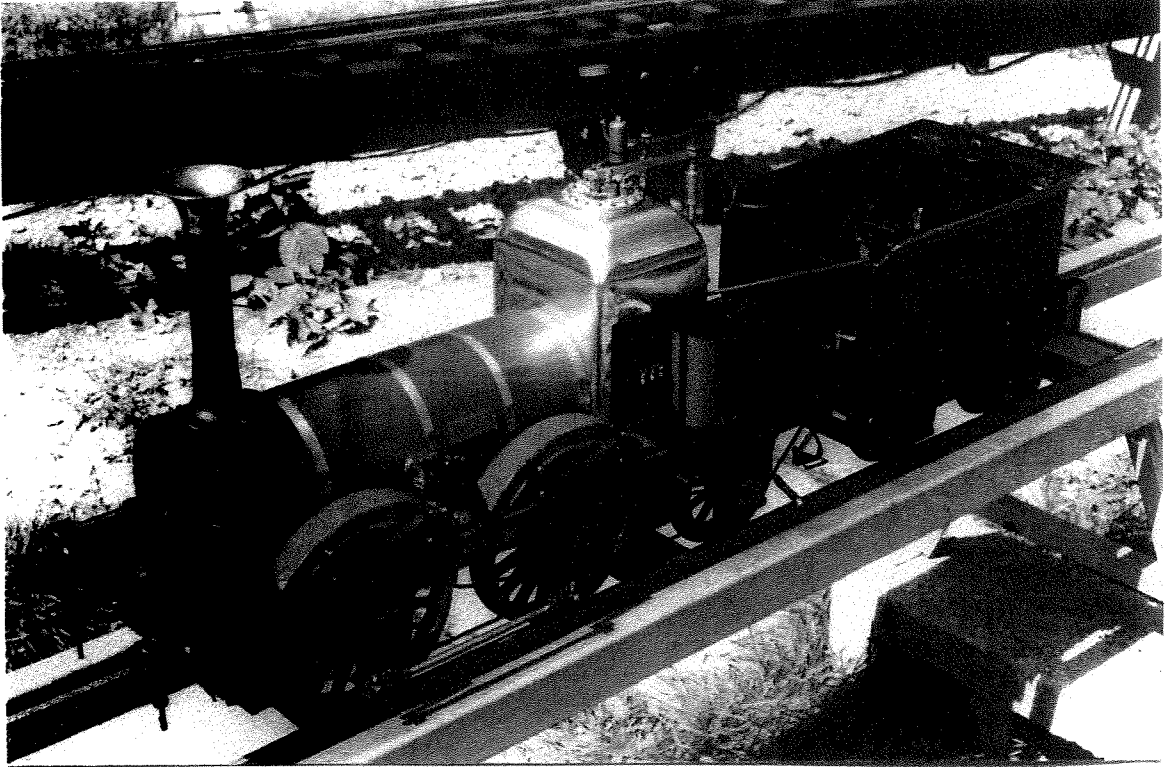
My Lion was not able to attend this year due to requiring a new boiler and some serious overhaul work required on the valve gear. As I mentioned early, I have had the same problem as Jon wrote about in the last 'Lionsheart'. Various things are needed from a new eccentric rod, to new crossheads and Slidebars.

On exhibition was John's boiler for his 7¼" Lion, a regular feature now to our events, I just hope that one day I will get to see it become a regular feature of the competition..... Charles had also brought along some bits for his 2-2-2 Jenny Lind, the boiler for which is being built alongside my Lion boiler, both of which I would *hope* to be in steam for the new year.

Looking ahead to next year's event, Now that I have recommence work at the school instead of gadding off on holidays I am looking for a host for next year, anyone who wishes to put forward their home track can do so if they wish, I hope next year to take the event North again, perhaps to the York area so that Sunday perhaps may be given over to a day at the museum.. Look forward to seeing you then.

Edward Parrott

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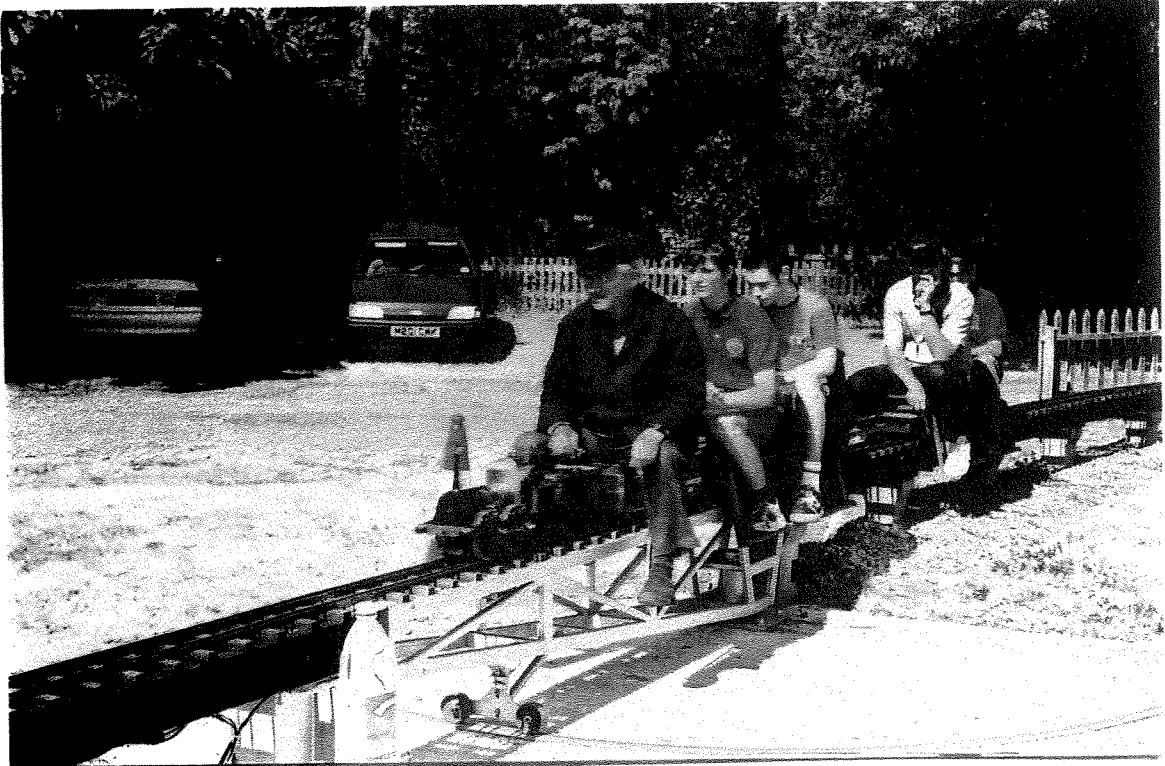
Ray Wiggins' well detailed Lion



A Lion Cub - The Barrett Families
Gauge 1 Lion - With 2 Cylinders
(Photos - John Hawley)



David Neish

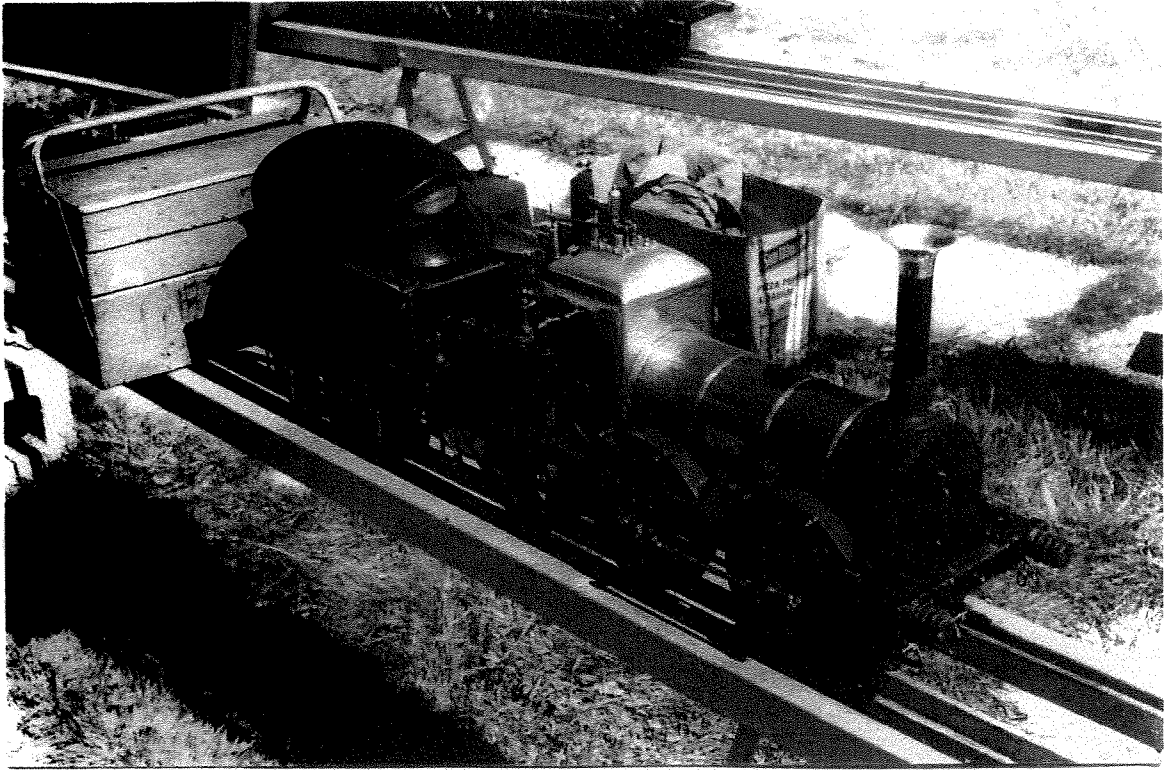


Jon Swindlehurst

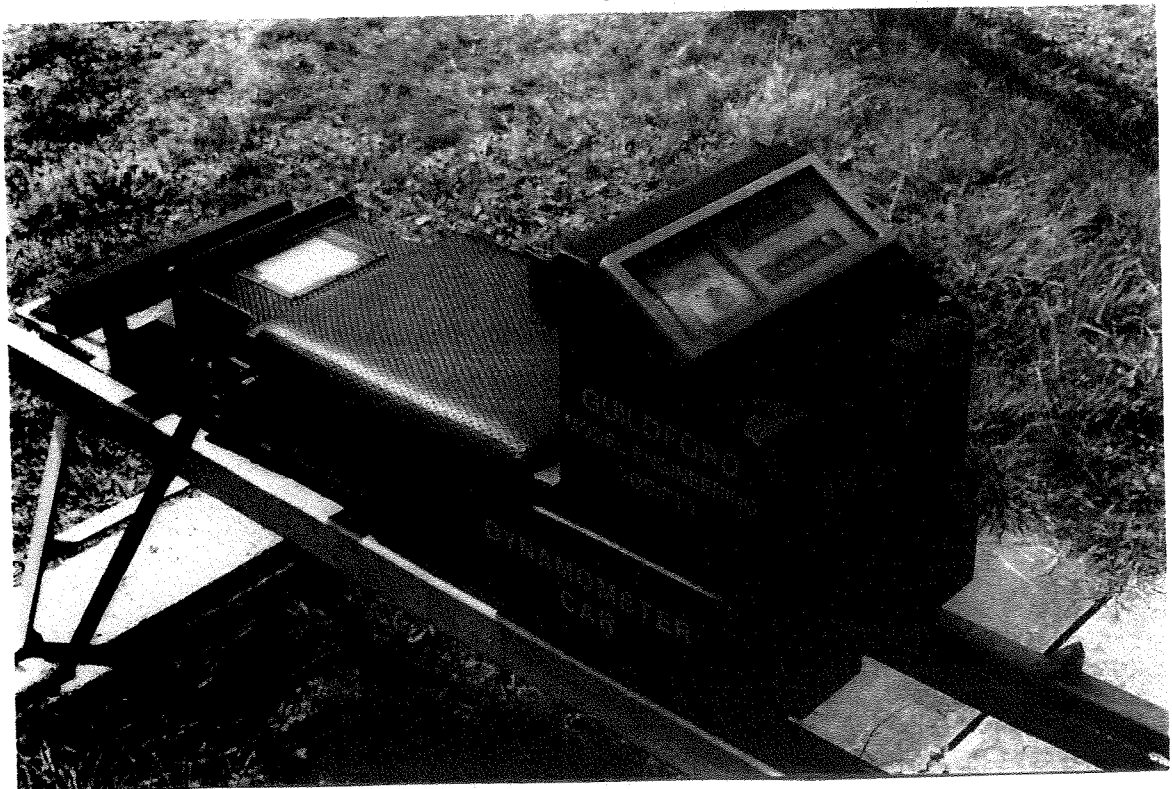


(Photos – E. F. Clark

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The Winner Lionsmeet 2000
Alan Bibby's Lion



The Guildford MES Dynamometer Car
(Photos – John Hawley)

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ALAN BIBBY'S LION

"Back in 1986, having completed my first serious engineering model, an Allchin traction engine in 1½ ins scale, I joined a model engineering club and started casting around for my next project. My new club had an elevated track so the project had to be a locomotive of some kind. For reasons I can't recall in detail, the short list was eventually whittled down to two engines, LBSC's Lion and Don Young's Railmotor. The matter was more or less decided for me by fellow member Alf Chadwell's rapturous accounts of building and operating his own Lion, and finally determined when he offered me the loan of his drawings, and the Scotsman in me decided that this was an offer too good to pass by. It certainly turned out to be the right decision; the little engine has earned me many friends and has been a firm favourite with passengers young and old as well as fellow model engineers at the many tracks I have visited as well as my own club track at Leyland.

In most respects Lion was a less challenging project than the Allchin, but there were a number of features which gave some difficulty, notably the brass haystack, which is not only tricky to fabricate in 18swg brass but also extremely difficult to get the shape exactly right, and there are very few if any models around with this feature absolutely correct. Mine is not one of them, but only the serious Lion aficionado would notice, fortunately! Another problematic feature is the gab valve gear, which like the prototype is rather slenderly constructed and rather heavily loaded: not a combination predicating a high degree of reliability, and so it was to turn out. An option on LBSC's drawing is a slip eccentric valve gear, easier to make and more reliable, but shunned by the purist in favour of the authentic version. Yet another option, widely used, is Stephenson's link motion, and at one point in the development process I came very close to abandoning the gab gear and converting my engine to Stephenson link. During 1977 it came to my attention that the full size engine would be celebrating its 150th birthday the following year, and I thought it would be nice to get the model finished in time to join in the celebrations in some way. It wasn't to be, but I did get the chance to crawl over the big Lion at Steamport during the birthday tour and to take a lot of photographs and measurements, enabling me to make my model a much closer likeness to the prototype than LBSC's drawings alone would have permitted. I am a great fan of LBSC's, and indeed of eccentrics generally, and we must not forget that he was inspired to model Lion by the film the 'Titfield Thunderbolt' and had little else to work on, which is probably why his steam dome flange is square whilst that on the prototype is round: he probably never saw the top of the engine! Neither did I! It also enabled me to design my own tender as a close replica of that currently seen with Lion, not admittedly the original tender but at least having a degree of authenticity rather lacking in Curly's design. The current tender is thought to originate from the Furness Railway, around the time of rescue and first restoration of Lion in the 1930's.

I also became aware of some published improvements to the LBSC design, notably the curved profile of the sliding faces of the gabs to facilitate engagement, and the positioning of the lubricator under the footplate, and these were incorporated into my model, along with the extra detail from the photographs, like frame and hornplate bolting and the much discussed variations in bolting pattern on the boiler supports.

My lubricator is home made and driven from an eccentric on the trailing axle. I used sprag clutches initially for the action, but eventually found a pawl and ratchet mechanism more reliable, using a home made 60 tooth ratchet in the place of the 30 tooth ratchets sold commercially, to get the flow rate down to a satisfactory level. The levers on the Salter safety valves were rather chunky as drawn I thought, so I made mine more slender, to good effect. The correctly functioning Salter gear has rather a wide pressure differential, but I think it looks better than the disguised 'standard' safety valves sometimes used, though it is a pain having to remind guest drivers to tap the valves shut after they've blown for a few seconds, otherwise the pressure is down to 60 psi before they pop shut on their own! The cause is friction in the lever pivots, and rather hard to remedy without using jewelled pivots! I found that the web of metal between the open birdsmouth of the gab and the hole for the lifting link broke on two or three occasions, and some experimentation was required to arrive at a dimension which gave sufficient strength without putting too much distance between the lifting pin and the gab pin. Also the rocker shaft tended to fatigue at the change of section, and I eventually modified both sides to run right through at $\frac{1}{4}$ inch diameter with no change of section. This cured the problem.

Another novel feature fitted in the very early days of the model and much imitated since, was a bicycle-type electronic trip computer, inspired by an ex-moped mechanical speedo which the late Jack Winder had fitted to his Martin Evans Jubilee. Efforts to obtain one of these mechanical speedos proved futile, but my son, who was into cycling, said 'why don't you fit one of these, Dad?', showing me the miracle of modern electronics clamped to his handlebar. The idea was sound enough, and there remained only the slight difficulty that in working out the calibration requirements, the designer of the unit I bought had failed to foresee that anyone would want to fit one to a bicycle with wheels $3\frac{1}{2}$ ins diameter. So off came the rear axle of the tender for the turning of a three start worm to engage with a 24 tooth wormwheel on which the magnet was mounted, and the instrument then thought it was looking at a 28 inch bicycle wheel. Voila! The engine has probably done around 1500 miles now in the 12 years since I finished it, but every time the odometer gets up to two or three hundred miles, either the battery goes flat or the unit gets a soaking and everything goes back to zero. Very frustrating!

Our club, in common with many, had some problems of sparks being thrown from the chimneys of locomotives onto passengers, and there was growing interest in finding some means of preventing this, particularly in view of the increasing tendency of the public to claim, and the enthusiasm of a growing portion of the legal profession to encourage them. Many ingenious arrangements were seen, and my little Lion was duly fitted with a peice of 50 mesh bronze gauze across the middle of the smokebox, arched upwards to clear the firetubes and cut away to clear the tubeplate flange and the blastpipe. A major refit was under way around this time and the opportunity was taken also to experiment with a means of removing another potential contaminant from the exhaust stream, namely steam oil, which mixed with carbon and thrown from the chimney can dramatically change the appearance of the cream shell suits so beloved of miniature railway passengers. The cylinder block was removed and a hole bored down between the cylinders into which the cylinder exhausts were re-routed to enter tangentially. A drain was fitted at the bottom and piped to take the offending material clear of the track, and a connection made at the top to the blast pipe.

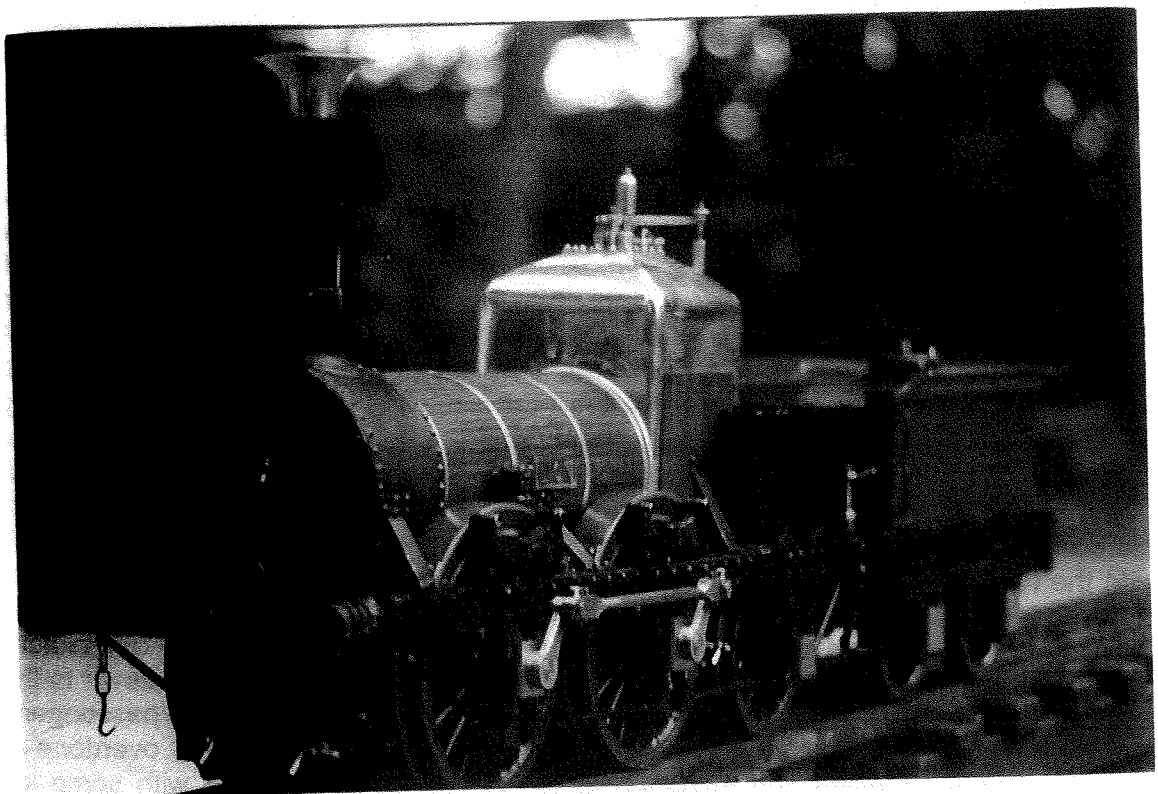
The arrangement works stunningly well and you can drive for several hours without looking as though you've contracted some mutant form of measles at the end of it. These emissions tend to be a feature of short-boilered engines with tall narrow chimneys, of which Lion is a classic example, and are exacerbated by hard working, which Lion loves!

So much for the anatomical details. The engine has appeared twice in IMLEC, coming 17th at Kinver in 1995 and 4th at Northampton in 1999 with the worst efficiency figure recorded in two real IMLEC's and a practice! The best figure recorded was 1.4% in a dress rehearsal for IMLEC at Leyland in 1993. It (I still can't make up my mind if Lion is a 'he', 'she', or 'it', so 'it' it must be), it has also appeared twice in the LBSC Memorial Bowl competition, at Chesterfield and at Brighouse, on both occasions being placed second. I have been trying to get to Lionsmeet since it started, but until last year have been balked by holidays and other commitments. Last year an overenthusiastic pressure test produced a leak in the castellated seam in the boiler barrel which put the engine out of commission at the critical time as well as requiring a complete strip down, so Lion had to wait until 2000 to make its debut at the first Lionsmeet of the new millennium. The event was held at the Rainsbrook Valley railway, home of the Rugby Model Engineering Society, set on an attractive hilltop site a few miles to the south of Rugby, on Saturday the 12th August. Only four engines were entered this year, rather disappointing, but the weather was beautiful and the tracksite and organisation first class, and the event was the relaxed and very congenial occasion it was always intended to be. Some of the competitors had a run in the morning, but I kept my powder dry, didn't like to dirty the engine you know, and instead did a couple of trial laps immediately before the timed run. At IMLEC you calculate your passenger load to the last gram, taking into account the weather, the track gradients, track condition, the coal, the time of day and the phase of the moon. I must have forgotten all that, with the result that as I opened the regulator and pulled away the train seemed rather light, and I looked round to see only the observer, a youthful and slim Edward, at the front of the train, and the Dean of Theology, somewhat larger but not exactly constituting a full load on his own, at the back. I had paid no attention whatever to the loading of the train, apart from requesting two trucks. I asked for two more passengers, and two quite solidly built gentlemen obliged, and I wondered if I had overdone it. However, we got moving and managed to get to the top of the bank with some leg assistance. This would not be allowed in the timed run and it soon became apparent that I would need to approach the bank at a fair turn of speed with full regulator to stand any chance of getting to the top. Edward said I would need to cross the bridge approaching the bottom loop at 12 mph and that turned out to be about right. So that set the scene for the run. Accelerating down the bank to cross the bridge at about 12 mph, as fast as one dared around the loop, leaning well into it, still picking up speed, ease off entering the reverse curve then full throttle all the way up the bank. to graunch slowly over the top, then round again. This went on for the statutory ten minutes and I think everyone on the train was as relieved as I was when we finally pulled to a halt. I had more load than I would have chosen, which meant that I had to take a good run at the bank, which meant a very high average speed, all of which conspired to produce probably a record work done performance in the ten minutes allowed, certainly for my engine: it has never worked so hard!

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All in all a most enjoyable day out. That night we camped on the track site by kind permission of the club, and the following day drove across to Bromsgrove to see the LBSC Memorial Bowl competition, to complete a great weekend."

Alan Bibby



Alan Bibby's Lion

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New Book Press Release

Title: On The Trail of The Titfield Thunderbolt

Publisher: The Titfield Thunderbolt

Address: Brassknocker Basin, Monkton Combe, Bath,
BA2 7JD, England

Contact: Simon Castens

Tel. +44 (0)1225 723039
Fax. +44 (0)1225 868568
E-mail. simon@titfield.co.uk
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Author: Simon Castens

ISBN: 0-9538771-0-8

Retail Price: £4.95

Format: Laminated cover, stapled A5, 44pp, 15
photographs on art paper plus 4 especially
drawn maps.

Available: Direct from publisher or from specialist shops.
Trade enquiries welcome.

Background to the book

Simon Castens has written and produced "On the Trail of The Titfield Thunderbolt", the first book to ever cover the making of Ealing Studios' famous comedy "The Titfield Thunderbolt".

"The Titfield Thunderbolt" was filmed in 1952 on location just south of Bath along the Camerton Branch of the old Great Western Railway, and was the first Ealing comedy to use "Technicolor", used to great visual effect in the film by the Cinematographer Douglas Slocombe.

Made in the heat of a perfect English summer, this film more than any other captures the atmosphere and spirit of the English branch line railway. Beautiful scenery, the country station, antiquated and quaint steam trains and eccentric operating practices - all are depicted to perfection in this ever popular film.

The story was an original piece of work by T.E.B. Clarke, writer of the films "Passport to Pimlico" and "The Lavender Hill Mob", and was inspired by a visit he made in 1951 to the Talylyn railway in Wales, the World's very first preserved railway.

Despite initially receiving lukewarm praise from the critics, "The Titfield Thunderbolt" has since 1952 gone on to become the best known and most popular of all of the Ealing Comedies. More recently the critical establishment has taken a more enlightened view of the film, recognising the qualities and pleasures of the film which were always apparent to its audiences, and the film is now regarded by many as one of the best products of Sir Michael Balcon's Ealing Studios.

Description of book.

"On the Trail of The Titfield Thunderbolt" contains a detailed guide to all of the locations used in the making of the film. All locations used are described and located, with the aid of four especially drawn maps, one which shows the Camerton Branch in its wider railway context, and three which show in more detail the individual locations and features along the line which appear in the film.

The book also sets out, for the first time in print, the details of how and when the filming took place, and includes numerous details and anecdotes about the film. This unique account has been assembled from contemporary reports in local newspapers, film journals, first hand accounts of the filming and interviews with family members of the cast.

There are seventeen contemporary photographs in the book, the majority of which have never been published before, and all of which have been chosen to illustrate the different viewpoints and locations used in the film. Fifteen of the photographs are reproduced on art paper, all of them to a consistently high standard.

The book also briefly covers the history of the railway line used in the making of the film together with details of the earlier canal along the route of which it was built.

For the modeller and enthusiast, full details of the rolling stock and other hardware used in the film are included, some of which still exists and can be seen today at various sites up and down the country.

Also included are brief biographies of the key personalities involved in the making of the film, these are drawn from a number of sources, and have never before been assembled into one work.

Finally there is a bibliography of books in which the film is mentioned with a mention, with details of author, publisher and current availability.

The author is continuing his research into the film, and hopes that this book will generate further interest and information, which will then be collected and referenced into a further work on "The Titfield Thunderbolt".

You can keep up with developments and learn more about the film through the author's website at:

www.titfield.co.uk

Verdict

Short and neat, this book answers most of the questions that anyone who has watched the film will ever have wanted to ask. Whilst on the face of it a book for the local enthusiast, the whole thing is engaging and readable, and the story is interesting - its appeal will extend to anyone with more than a passing interest in the subjects it touches upon.

CD REVIEW – THE FILM MUSIC OF GEORGES AURIC

Chandos Records Ltd. have produced a CD of the film music composed by Georges Auric for Ealing Studios which includes the music for the Titfield Thunderbolt. Although the Titfield Thunderbolt only accounts for 4 minutes and 26 seconds of the full 73 minutes playing time of this full price CD, it also includes the scores from Passport to Pimlico and the Lavender Hill Mob. Your Reviewer always felt that Georges Auric produced some delightful music for the Titfield Thunderbolt which complemented the film so well. His other film scores also make pleasant listening, and the CD is highly recommended. It is available on Chandos CHAN 9774.

J.T. Brandrick

TAIL LAMP

I hope that this issue has been worth your patient wait. I am sorry that work and other commitments have delayed its publication. Your Editor has however, only in the last week obtained a colour photocopier which should facilitate production of Lionsheart and in particular reduce the cost to OLCO very considerably.

Thank you to all who sent contributions, including John Hawley for the photographs of Lionsmeet 2000.

Hopefully the next issue of Lionsheart will appear shortly after the AGM and will advertise details of Lionsmeet 2001. If you have any material for publication please send it to me at:

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Ramsbottom
Nr. Bury
Lancashire BL0 0AR

Tel. 01706 822473

Hope to see you in Manchester.

With best wishes