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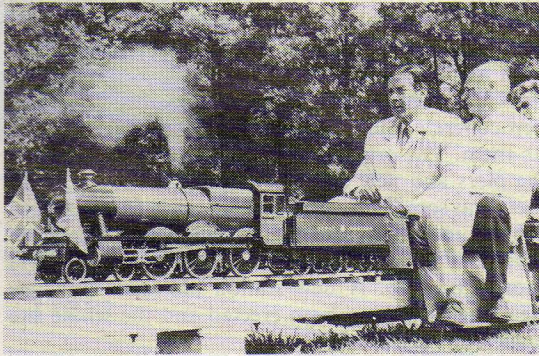
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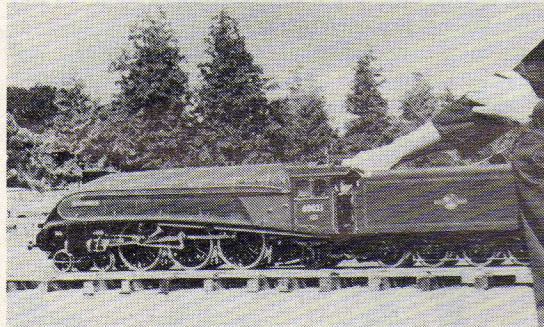
New Tracks for Canterbury S.M.E. and for Chelmsford S.M.E.

by Laurie

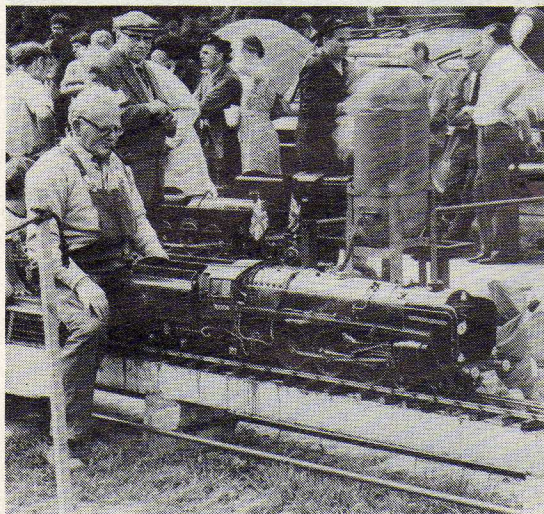
MORE NEW MINIATURE railway tracks spring up every year. At the end of July last, I went to the formal opening of the **Canterbury Society's** new track and found that this modest sized Society of only 45 members had done a fine job in only 18 months of endeavour. The Society was originally the Stour Valley M.E.S. but, like many another, interest waxed and waned and, in 1972, it was reconstituted under its present title and the membership was then filled with ambition. That ambition was realised with the opening of the 720 ft. continuous track by a former Mayor of Canterbury, Robin Carver. The track is on ground owned by the Society's President Tony Brett, who rents the area to the Society for a modest rent. He has intentions to allocate space on adjacent ground for an industrial museum and leisure area.



Former Mayor of Canterbury Robin Carver proved to be a capable driver on the inaugural train.



Above: The Editor drove Ben Dunster's 3½ in. A4, which had a fine turn of speed. Below: Jack Carr's 5 in. gauge Britannia is a really hefty job.



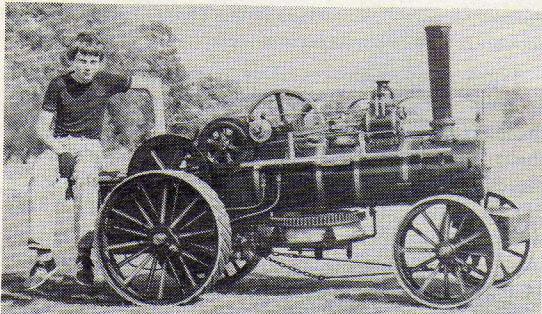
Track construction is of concrete pads at ground level with concrete piers and concrete beams placed on these. Hardwood sleepers are on top of this base and these have sheet steel plates fastened to them. The plates have lugs punched out at the correct spacing for 3½ in. and 5 in. gauges and flatbottom rail is laid within the lugs which are then knocked over to clip it in place. The idea was "pinched" from the Maidstone M.E.S. An anti-tipping rail is in situ but at present only in the station area. There is no water on the site and it has to be fetched in containers; the Society has hopes that a mains water supply can be laid on. There are no plans for public passenger hauling as yet and the track will be open most Sundays when any casual visitors may be given rides at the drivers' discretion. The Society holds meetings at Kingston Village Hall on the last Monday in the month and I hear these are always well attended.

The Opening event attracted many visitors from neighbouring Clubs who enjoyed to the full Canterbury's hospitality and this fine new track.

Walter Skuse's G.W.R. 57XX from Ramsgate at speed.

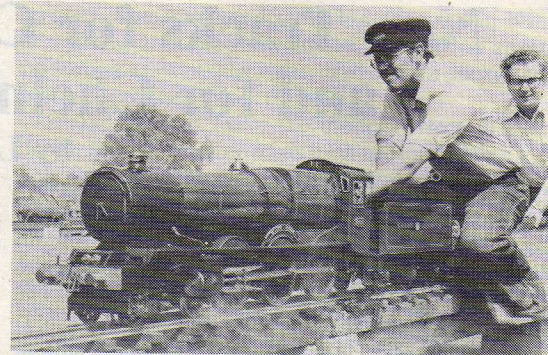


Now to the **Chelmsford Society**: although founded in 1935, it was not until 1960 that they brought into use their first continuous track. This was on some made up ground alongside the River Chelm, but over the years the ground "moved" and the track became somewhat "rocky" (my informant used another term, but rocky will suffice). Two years ago the decision was taken to re-lay the track and, strictly speaking, the present one is not entirely new as some modest use has been made of parts of the old track. However, the track has been completely re-built on freshly aligned new concrete foundations with new concrete piers set on them. The original concrete beams are placed on the piers and new sleepers and rail added. I gather there was some haste to get things ready for the Opening day in August and the rail alignment has a few "whiffles" here and there which the track gang will shortly tidy up. A new station platform and new steaming bays have been erected and the whole site made quite attractive.



Above: One of a pair of 4 in. scale Fowler engines of 1878 built by Trevor Ellis. Right: A fine 3 in. scale Burrell by Mervyn Greene.

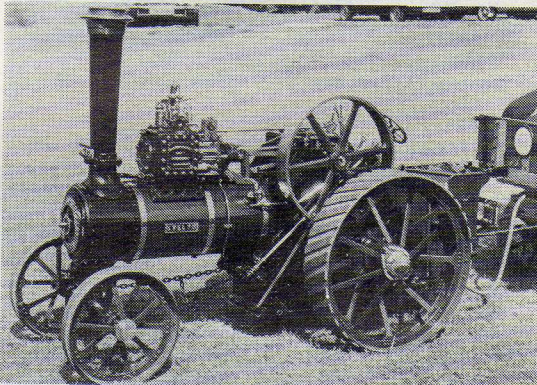
During the re-building, public passenger hauling was carried on to a limited extent; Chairman Arthur Hale explained that they still needed the money! During the afternoon the informal Opening ceremony took place, the Society having requested my presence to perform this function. Arthur and I had a good chuckle about this — they had forgotten to bring scissors for the tape cutting and I went back to my car to get my old pipe cleaning pocket knife for the sever-



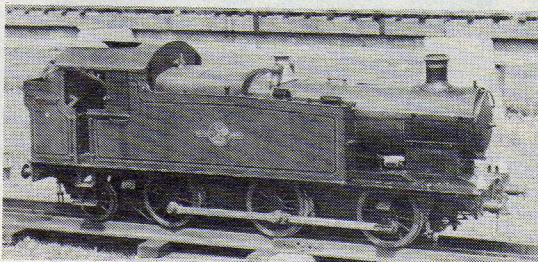
Paul Canning's 5 in. gauge King John "opened" the track after the tape cutting ceremony.

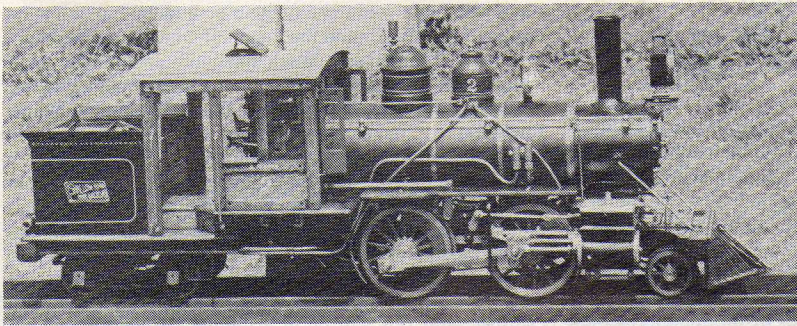
ance. Fortunately a kindly lady spectator provided the necessary small scissors and the tape was properly cut. Paul Canning's 5 in. G.W.R. *King* headed the inaugural train with myself at the regulator, followed by a long procession of Chelmsford's version of the *Rocket* cavalcade.

Plenty of visitors from other Clubs were in attendance to enjoy the bright sunshine, lots of goodies and refreshments provided by the Society's ladies (including some lovely marmalade tarts — the goodies, not the ladies), and a run round the 1,000 ft. track. There now hangs in your Editor's office a handsome gold edged plate, decorated with a picture of an L.M.S. Pacific, presented to me by the Society as a memento of a most happy occasion.



Left: Don Ketley's 5 in. gauge Flying Scotsman enjoying a fast run. Below: An unusual model 5 in. G.W.R. 56XX by Ian Craig.

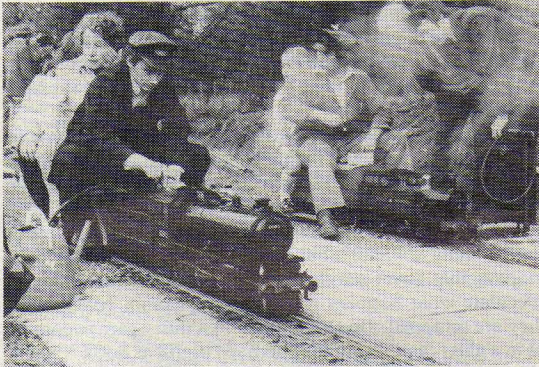




A visitor at the Chelmsford track was Arthur Flack's 3 1/2 in. gauge 2-4-4 American loco from Cambridge.

THE EDINBURGH S.M.E. NEW TRACK

by R. W. Train



Peter Walker's K1 class 2-6-0 and Bill Watson's Simplex (Complex) in the station area.

THE EDINBURGH S.M.E. has been quiet over recent years in these pages. This mainly being due to a life of constant moves. First of all we were cleared out of our Ramsey Lane premises and it looked as though we would lose our workshop facilities. It was only after considerable persuasion with potential Landlords and the Local Authorities that about 18 months later we were able to obtain a lease on our new premises. As if this was not enough, while negotiations concerning the above were going on, the Water Authorities informed us that they intended laying a new trunk water main along the line of our existing track outside the City. This was a real problem as we were told we would not be allowed to replace the uplifted line due to complications in the lease of the site. The search for a new site was on and eventually a Landowner just outside Edinburgh invited us to lay a track on his land. This is partly in view of his residence and along a miniature canal. The track length is approximately 1300 ft. continuous running on 3 1/2 in. and 5 in. gauge. Approximately 8,000 hardwood sleepers 9 in. x 1 1/2 in. x 1 in. were cut in the Club Rooms. It was more

like a Sawmill than an engineer's workshop while this was going on.

After two years of digging, bridge building and track laying, the loop and one siding were completed and the Landowner and his Wife invited to officially open the track in October of last year. The run, starting from the station area, follows the canal for a good level straight finishing in a right-hand curve on the girder bridge over a small waterfall and with a magnificent view of the Owner's house. The track then runs on an embankment for a short distance prior to entering the wooded area and its gentle curves which eventually give way to open ground at the steaming bays and on a gentle right-hand curve back to the station area. Due to the work, which includes steaming bays on site and the construction of proper riding wagons for ground level running, we have not encouraged visitors to join us. When this work is completed during the coming winter we hope to invite many old and, hopefully, new friends to join us at our track. Anyone interested in wanting further information should contact the Club Secretary — Mr. J. J. Maconochie — (Mac) — of 14 Craiglockhart Road, Edinburgh EH14 1HL. Telephone: 031-443 1558.

Bob Smith's narrow gauge 0-6-2 on the bridge.

