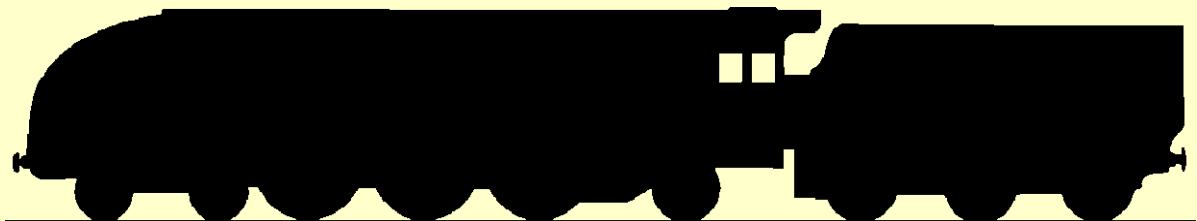


A HISTORY OF THE ERNEST DOVE RAILWAYS

**The story of the miniature locomotives
and railways built and operated by
Ernest Dove, including his portable
touring railway and model exhibition**



MINOR RAILWAY HISTORIES – No.6

A HISTORY OF THE ERNEST DOVE RAILWAYS

**The story of the miniature locomotives and railways
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PETER SCOTT



A much travelled Ernest Dove locomotive. Built in 1947, and intended to be named "City of Nottingham", it became "Queen of Scots" and was first steamed at Prestwick in Scotland. It then ran at Margate and Cleethorpes before emigrating to Canada. By then named "Isabel" it moved on to the USA before being repatriated in 2002. We see the locomotive here on the Royal Victoria Railway, Netley in Hampshire.

(P. Bowers. 8/10/11)

Title Page: The most well-known of Ernest Dove's locomotives must be the splendid "Coronation" completed in 1946 and first steamed in his home town of Nottingham. He sold the locomotive on in 1950 and, after a brief stay in South Shields, it ran for many years at Christchurch. This view dates from the time it ran in Syon Park in Brentford.

(N. Knight. 4/12/93)

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INTRODUCTION

The Second World War had just ended and after almost six years of war with limited entertainment and widespread rationing, the country was still in the grip of shortages and austerity. You have seen an advert in the local newspaper for a Miniature Railway & Model Exhibition, which will be in town for around a week. So you visit the local park to see what is on offer and an amazing sight greets you. Two large coal-powered steam engines stand in a two track station and take turns in running up and down a track some 300 yards in length with fully loaded trains, while many more people merely stand watching the spectacle. An adjacent large marquee holds an exhibition of model locomotives and ships. You have never seen anything like it, before or since.

This was the sight that met thousands of people in the towns Ernest Dove visited with his 10¼" gauge railway and model exhibition during his extensive tours around Northern England and Scotland in the years immediately following the Second World War. In fact, one young visitor to Prestwick to see Dove's railway there in the summer of 1948, recalled the two large locomotives in steam presented an "*unforgettable sight*" and added "*I have never forgotten the wonder at seeing these model locomotives in action. Having been brought up during the recent war period, there was nothing in one's experience to equal these locomotives. They were truly imposing articles!*". Born in Nottingham, by trade Ernest Dove was a partner in a long established firm of road haulage contractors. Model railway engineering seems to have been his passion, which he first put to use during the Second World War, displaying his 7¼" gauge locomotives in aid of war charities. His later tours, with 10¼" gauge equipment, were also mostly in aid of various good causes. Following these he went on to become involved in establishing miniature railways in the North East, North West of England and North Wales. In all these endeavours, his son Ken assisted him.

I was encouraged to research and write this book by Simon Townsend, who had already amassed a good deal of material about Ernest Dove and his locomotives from knowing Ken Dove during his time on the Rhyl Miniature Railway. Simon kindly gave me full access to this invaluable material and the notes from his "interviews" with Ken. I am also grateful to Dave Holroyde who freely supplied information from his extensive locomotive records. I was also fortunate to correspond with Philip Devonport - our researches overlapped somewhat and he generously supplied a great deal of useful information from *The World's Fair* publication. Brian Lee, my local researcher in Nottingham, proved most helpful and somewhat reduced the number of visits required for research to that City. I am also grateful to the many other people who assisted me - please see the Acknowledgements section. Where possible, all research has been taken back to primary sources, such as Council Minutes and contemporary reports in local newspapers. This involved many pleasurable trips across almost the whole of Great Britain to visit Libraries and Archive Offices.

Here then is the full story of the miniature locomotives and railways built and operated by Ernest and Ken Dove. Ernest was something of a showman, given to making sweeping claims in his advertising and reports to the local press - it is hoped this is a suitably dispassionate and accurate record of his work.

Peter Scott
Reading
July 2012

CHAPTER ONE

ERNEST DOVE

HAULAGE CONTRACTOR & MODEL MAKER

Introduction

Born in Nottingham to an ordinary and probably poor family, Ernest Dove rose to become joint owner of a successful road haulage firm. He was, perhaps, inspired by his father who had laid the routes of the haulage business and went on to become a pillar of local society. Aside from the haulage firm, Ernest's main interest was model engineering and he constructed a good number of steam locomotives - starting with small models and moving up to 7¼" and then 10¼" gauge engines. He commenced running these for charity during the Second World War - first locally and then following the war at locations all over the North of England and Scotland. These extensive tours during which he transported two large 10¼" gauge locomotives, associated carriages and track, together with other smaller engines and models that he displayed in an adjacent marquee, were unique. Nothing like it had been attempted, before or since, on such a scale. In all this he was helped and supported by his wife and son, Ken. The operation of these temporary railways and exhibitions, mostly for around a week in each town, raised many hundreds of pounds for various charities.

Ernest seems to have been somewhat of a showman and he was given to making expansive claims in his advertising and interviews with the local press in the towns he visited. The newspaper reports are littered with figures about how many passengers each of his locomotives could pull, how much they were worth, how many thousands of passengers they had hauled and how much money was raised for charity. Nevertheless, in period immediately following the Second World War his railways must have brought amusement to young and old alike and a welcome boost to the funds of well deserving causes. His legacy is the steam locomotives he built - all the 10¼" gauge examples survive - some of which are still running today.

A Very Brief History of Nottingham

The East Midlands city of Nottingham and its northern boundary was Ernest Dove's home ground, where he lived all his life. Located immediately north of the River Trent, Nottingham was probably established by the Saxons and gained its first charter in c.1155. By Tudor times it had become a prosperous market town, which in 1724 Daniel Defoe described as "*one of the most pleasant and beautiful towns in England*" in his work *A Tour Through the Whole Island of Great Britain*. The driving force behind Nottingham's growth in the 18th century was the hosiery trade, which Defoe had also noted. Thousands of residents made their living by producing, or finishing, hose (socks, stockings etc) for home and export markets. Working mostly in their own homes, or perhaps small workshops, these framework knitters produced hose on large wooden frames that were operated by a combination of hand and foot. As we shall see, members of the Dove family found work as framework knitters. The hosiery industry was controlled by merchants, who rented out many of the frames, set prices and distributed the finished hose. However, by the middle of the 19th century there was a decline in the demand for framework knitters and the town was experiencing considerable poverty.

Nottingham also saw the growth of a large lace trade, with exports going all over the world. In the latter half of the 19th century, three firms that were to become household names were established in Nottingham by entrepreneurs - Players Cigarettes (John Player), Raleigh Bicycles (Frank Bowden) and Boots (Jesse Boot). The town was granted city status by Queen Victoria in 1897 - her Diamond Jubilee year. Following the First World War the lace industry declined with the loss of export markets, never to fully recover. However, during the 1930s the hosiery industry entered a period of steady expansion. Development of the city continued between the wars, with many council houses being built on new estates to the north of the city in the 1920s & 1930s. This development in the north and also the south of the city continued into the 1950s and 1960s.

In the changed, post Second World War, era Nottingham's manufacturing success progressively declined. In 1951, Raleigh's Nottingham plant turned out more than one million bicycles. From the 1980s machines were also built in Asia and by the end of 2002 the company ceased English production altogether. The Boots empire generated a still thriving pharmaceutical and bioscience sector. Tourism became important to the local economy - Robin Hood being a big attraction. He is everywhere in Nottingham - the city's much hyped medieval legend. Local sites associated with Robin are numerous but, sadly, researchers have failed to turn up any hard evidence that the outlaw actually existed! The present day population of Nottingham is around 266,000.

Early Days

Ernest Dove was born Samuel Ernest Dove on Saturday 2nd July 1887 at Portland Street in Daybrook, Arnold, Nottinghamshire. Arnold was then a small town some four miles north of Nottingham and included the hamlets of Daybrook and Redhill. Today it is effectively part of Nottingham. He seems to have adopted his middle name and in this work he will be referred to as Ernest Dove. His father, another Samuel, was born in 1863 in Arnold to a family all involved in the framework knitting trade. The 1881 census shows Samuel Dove was living with his family in Bond Street, Arnold and working at home as a framework knitter. By this time the hosiery industry was in decline and times were probably hard for the Dove family. However, Samuel seems to have done very well for himself. By 1891, still occupied as a framework knitter, he had married Clara Stretton from Nottingham and was living in Portland Street, Arnold. Here Ernest was born in 1887 and by 1895 Samuel had given up framework knitting and had entered the grocery trade. The 1901 census reveals he was Sub Post Master of Daybrook Post Office, a Grocer and a "House Furnisher". Samuel Dove rose to become a respected member of the local community. A local preacher from the age of 16, he was instrumental in establishing Redhill Baptist Church, being its secretary for over 50 years. He served on Arnold Urban District Council for 43 years, being its Chairman three times; acted as a Sub Post Master for 50 years and also served on Nottinghamshire County Council. Together, Samuel and Clara had five children - three boys and two girls. Ernest was the third eldest.

In the 1911 census, Ernest Dove gave his occupation as "Upholsterer", but on being married in 1915 he gave his profession as "Motor Haulage Contractor". On Monday 24th May 1915 Ernest married Jessie Violet Prosser, a farmer's daughter from Nottingham, at Mansfield Road Baptist Church in Daybrook, Arnold. At the time he was living in the family home in the Post Office in Daybrook. By 1924 they were residing at 10 Crossman Street, Sherwood in the north of Nottingham - where on Monday 19th May of that year their son Samuel Ernest

Kenneth was born. Following the family tradition, he was known as Kenneth and we will meet him later as he became very much involved in railway matters. In 1928, Ernest Dove was still living at 10 Crossman Street, where the *Kelly's* directory of that year gave his occupation as "House Furnisher". By 1932 he had moved the short distance to 17 Ribblesdale Road, Sherwood and it was here all his 7¼" and 10¼" gauge locomotives were built.

Dove & Dove - Haulage Contractor

Samuel Dove seems to have started a road transport business sometime in the early 1900s. The "House Furnisher" reference in the 1901 census indicates this probably started with house removals. However, in the 1911 census his occupation is merely recorded as "Shop Keeper General". Ernest Dove's obituary records that along with his elder brother, Thomas Henry Dove (born in 1883), he "*founded in 1910 the road haulage firm of Dove & Dove Ltd, at Daybrook. This was one of the first road haulage businesses in the country and it started with just one vehicle*" (*Nottingham Evening Post*, Tuesday 10th November 1959). However, in the 1911 census, Ernest and Thomas gave their occupations as "Upholsterer" and "Cabinet Maker" respectively. An article in *The Commercial Motor* of 1st July 1915, confirms that by then the business was trading as Dove & Dove, "*furniture removers and general haulage contractors*". The article, one of a series about small users of motor transport in large towns around the country, gives an excellent account of the Dove's business at that time during the First World War - it is therefore reproduced in full in Appendix One. It records what seems to be a thriving concern, despite the problems of the war. We are informed by 1914 they had two 3-ton motor lorries for long distance removals work. These were the early days of road motor haulage - the industry only gradually developing following the *Locomotives on Highways Act* of 1896 (which did away with the infamous "man with a red flag") and the *Motor Car Act* of 1903. These swept away a number of restrictions and by 1905 there were some 3000 commercial vehicles in use. However, there were still not large numbers to be seen, but most people outside the more rural villages would have seen a road motor vehicle with a load before 1914. The article goes on to relate that Dove & Dove had a number of motor vehicles impressed by the War Department and at one time went back to using their horses, which they still used for more local work.

Dove & Dove operated as a partnership, of Samuel Dove, Thomas Dove and Ernest Dove until in 1937, when it was incorporated as a limited company (No.324302) being registered on 16th February 1937 as Dove & Dove Limited. The main business of the company was given as "General Haulage and Cartage". There were three Directors & Managers: Thomas Henry Dove of 31 Mansfield Road, Daybrook, Nottingham; Samuel Ernest Dove of 17 Ribblesdale Road, Sherwood, Nottingham and their father, Samuel Dove of The Post Office, Mansfield Road, Daybrook, Nottingham. The Registered Address was listed as 31 Mansfield Road, Daybrook. The *Northern Despatch* of Thursday 9th September 1948, reporting on Ernest Dove's visit to Darlington during that year's tour, added that he "*controlled a firm of long distance haulage contractors with offices in London, Glasgow and Nottingham*". However, a search of the Glasgow trade directories for various years between 1914 and 1947 failed to find any reference to Dove & Dove. Ernest Dove's obituary adds "*They carried goods between Nottingham, Glasgow and London and built up to a fleet of 20 vehicles*".

In 1939 Ernest Dove retired from the company, although he seems to have remained a Director. This allowed him the time to pursue his model engineering interests. During the Second World War, Samuel Dove passed away on Thursday 3rd December 1942 and on 31st

December 1946, both Thomas Dove and Ernest Dove officially resigned from the Company. This could have been as a result of the forthcoming nationalisation at the end of 1947 of those road transport firms, which (as the *Transport Act* of 6th August 1947 stated) undertook "*ordinary long distance carriage for hire or reward*". It is not known for certain, but very likely, that Thomas & Ernest Dove would have lost control of Dove & Dove Limited to the new British Road Services organisation at some stage - although not all the smaller companies were acquired before a change of Government in 1951 brought an end to road haulage nationalisation. However, Dove & Dove Limited was taken over by George and Beryl Dennis of West Bridgford - just to the south east of Nottingham. They already operated a haulage company called Robin Hood Transport Limited and George Dennis became Chairman of Dove & Dove Limited, passing a special resolution on 12th June 1947 to change the name to Robin Hood (Coaches) Limited. This was approved by the Board of Trade on 30th July 1947 and the name of Dove & Dove passed into history. George Dennis had been active in the coach business since the 1920s and developed express services, tours & excursions with Robin Hood (Coaches) Limited in the 1950s. No doubt any remaining haulage business was transferred to Robin Hood Transport Limited. On 1st October 1961, the long established Nottingham based bus company, Barton Transport, purchased Robin Hood (Coaches) Limited and from 1st January 1962 its operations were absorbed. Barton also purchased Robin Hood Transport Limited in 1972 as a non-operational company.

On 2nd July 1989, Barton sold its bus operations to the Wellglade Group and these traded as Barton Buses Limited. Barton continued as a separate company becoming Barton PLC, a property investment company. They retained Robin Hood (Coaches) Limited as a dormant company, until they applied to strike it off the Company Register on 16th March 1993. It was duly struck off on 29th June 1993 and then dissolved by a notice in the *London Gazette* on 6th July 1993. This then finally brought to an end the last vestige of the haulage company, which was formed by Samuel Dove and later run by his two sons. The Barton Bus Limited routes were combined with those of Trent, also owned by Wellglade, in 2003 and now operate as Trent Barton.

Model Making & Engineering

Ernest Dove appears to have been interested in model engineering from a very early age - especially so if we believe a passage he wrote for a guidebook for the Gwrych Castle Miniature Railway in North Wales in the 1950s "*My first flair was at seven years of age when an old engineer friend of the family, knowing my love for engines, assisted me on my first effort. We made the boiler out of a cocoa tin; the wheels were made of solid metal, and the cylinder was bought from a junk shop. We completed the job and then came the thrill and suspense. I had permission from my mother to run it on the linoleum in the kitchen. We filled the fire apparatus with Meths, lit up and waited. At last the boiler began to steam. Waiting anxiously for it to move, which it did not feel inclined to do, we gave it a push with the kitchen poker: over it went, setting fire to the floor; also the kitchen sofa, and I vividly remember it being thrown in the yard a mass of flame, the sofa after it, and I can well remember what I got*". One wonders what the "old engineer friend" got! This would have been 1894 - very early days in model engineering. Putting this into prospective - the first issue of the *Model Engineer* magazine was not published until January 1898, with the Society of Model & Experimental Engineers being founded the same year. The well-known model making company Bassett-Lowke was effectively started around the same time. In the same guidebook, Ernest Dove explains his next project, following the disaster in the kitchen, was a

model of "*the first locomotive that ran on the Stockton & Darlington line*" (presumably "Locomotion", although much later newspaper reports refer to it as "Rocket"). Apparently, he obtained some drawings and completed the engine at the age of nine (1896) - this time, he says, it worked! As with a lot of things Ernest Dove put into print, one has to keep an open mind on their accuracy. But the forgoing does indicate he was an avid modeller from a fairly early age.

The first model engineering society in Nottingham was formed around 1911, but seems to have been disbanded during the First World War. The present Nottingham Society of Model & Experimental Engineers was founded in 1929, at a meeting of thirteen potential members in a local public house on 7th February 1929. The *Model Engineer* of 21st February 1929 briefly reported the formation of the new Society. The first of what would become annual exhibitions was held in April 1930 at University College in Nottingham. The Society managed to keep going during the Second World War and in 1957 opened a permanent 2½"/3½"/5" multi gauge elevated track on a site at Valley Road (SK566437) in Sherwood, Nottingham. This was no more than ½ mile from Ernest Dove's then home in Ribblesdale Road. A ground level 7¼" gauge track was later added. In 1992 the Society transferred to a new site in the Nottingham Transport Heritage Centre at Ruddington and subsequently opened both elevated and ground level tracks there. The Valley Road site was taken over by members who did not wish to move to Ruddington and they formed a new society. However, problems with vandalism forced them to leave the site in 1999. They have now established a new track at a Farm Park & Garden Centre at Lambley, just to the north east of Nottingham. According to Ken Dove, when talking to Simon Townsend in 1994, his father was a member of the Nottingham Society of Model & Experimental Engineers - but did not attend many meetings or get involved to any great extent. Reference to back issues of the *Model Engineer* from 1929 to 1960 supports this - in the many reports of the annual exhibitions and other society activities, he is never mentioned. So one assumes he did not display any of his larger (7¼" and 10¼" gauge) locomotives at the annual exhibitions - these would have almost certainly been reported by the *Model Engineer*, as on a couple of occasions such locomotives displayed by others were specifically noted. Also, if he did enter any models in the competitions, he was never reported as winning a prize!

Apart from "Locomotion" (or "Rocket") mentioned already, we know from various newspaper reports, among the other models he built were two ships. These were a nine foot long model of an "*Atlantic Liner*" and a model "*Destroyer with a beaten metal hull, propelled by a triple expansion steam reciprocator driving a single screw*". According to one typical Ernest Dove quote, the Atlantic Liner could "*pull six people in a rowing boat*". A picture on the front page of the *Nottingham Evening News* of Friday 29th January 1943 shows Ernest Dove in his workshop. The paper notes that a "*¾in scale [probably 3½" gauge] model of an LNER Atlantic loco*" and "*another scale model [probably also 3½" gauge] of an LMS Royal Scot*" are visible in the picture, along with "*the chassis of a 5in gauge passenger loco*". He made the highly unlikely claim in a report in the *Ayrshire Post* of Friday 12th July 1946 that the "Royal Scot" had been "*exhibited in a glass case in practically every railway station throughout the Kingdom*"!

Miniature Railways & Locomotives

Ernest Dove's miniature railway activities form the basis of this book. However, a brief summary follows. He built three 7¼" gauge steam locomotives between 1940 and 1945, moving on to larger 10¼" gauge locomotives from 1946 onwards. All of these were constructed in the workshops at his home at 17 Ribblesdale Road, Sherwood, Nottingham - the workshops growing until they filled around a third of the garden. He also built a couple of petrol locomotives, a type of which Ken Dove built more of in the 1950s and 1960s.

Ernest Dove's first experience with the construction of a locomotive capable of hauling passengers seems to have been a 7¼" gauge 4-6-2 completed in May 1940. His early experiences with this locomotive and his first miniature railways, which he started to run during the Second World War, are covered in Chapter Two. The 7¼" gauge locomotives ran on an elevated track, with a sit-astride coach. Following the end of the war in 1945, Ernest Dove moved up to 10¼" gauge, with his purchase of a locomotive of that gauge and the completion in March 1946 of his most well-known locomotive - a model of the streamlined LMSR 4-6-2 "Coronation". From 1945 to 1948, he undertook extensive tours each season around the North of England and Scotland with one (1945) or two (1946-1948) 10¼" gauge locomotives. These ran on around 200 yards of temporary track and were accompanied with a marquee in which he exhibited his own models and locomotives. The tours, which were invariably undertaken for charity, are described in detail in Chapters Three to Six. One should bear in mind that he was already 58 years of age when he started these arduous tours in 1945. As we have seen, Ernest Dove officially retired from his haulage business at the end of 1946 and this would have given him more time to devote to his miniature railway tours. However, he must have retained at least one vehicle with which to move the locomotives, track and exhibition around the country during the ensuing years. The knowledge and connections gained with Dove & Dove Limited must have been very useful to him when planning and executing the tours, especially with the amount and weight of the equipment involved.

During 1949 Ernest Dove ran temporary railways in Kingston upon Hull and Darlington. After a brief foray in the North East in 1950, Ernest & Ken Dove helped establish two permanent railways in North Wales, although one proved to be very short lived. In 1951 Ernest Dove returned to the road, with a visit to Edinburgh with a temporary line for the summer season. Following this, for two seasons in 1954 & 1955, he helped build and then run a line at Fleetwood in Lancashire. These events are fully explored in the relevant chapters. Ernest Dove died, aged 72, on Monday 9th November 1959 at his home at 17 Ribblesdale Road, Nottingham. The Death Certificate recorded his occupation as "*Haulage Contractor (Retired)*". The *Nottingham Evening Post* of Tuesday 10th November 1959 carried his obituary, which briefly referred to his railway activities "*After retirement, Mr Dove, whose hobby was model engineering, built and operated model steam locomotives. They were often used to assist charities*". Those two simple sentences form the subject matter for the subsequent chapters of this book.

CHAPTER TWO

1940 - 1944

7¼" GAUGE RAILWAYS & LOCOMOTIVES

Introduction

During 1940 and 1941, Ernest Dove displayed a 7¼" gauge locomotive at a number of locations in aid of various war funds. He seems to have started running temporary miniature railways for charity in 1942. These were simple affairs using a 7¼" gauge locomotive and a single coach, running on an elevated track. Records of these railways during this period, up to the end of 1944, are scarce. This was, of course, during the Second World War and a number of war charities greatly benefited from these operations. In this chapter we shall consider what other local (to Nottingham) model engineers were achieving and what influence they may have had on Ernest Dove. Also included is a brief round up of the period 1940-1944, when he completed three 7¼" gauge locomotives, but was also constructing engines to the larger 10¼" gauge, which then became the norm for his locomotives and railways.

Other Local Model Engineers

Before describing the construction of Ernest Dove's first locomotives capable of hauling passengers and the operation of his early railways (all 7¼" gauge), it is perhaps informative to look at his local contemporaries, which may have influenced him to some degree in the building and operation of miniature railway locomotives. There were two principal local model engineers, both from the nearby Ilkeston area.

The work of Louis Shaw (1881-1971) has been well covered by Peter James in his book *Louis Shaw - Pioneer of the 7¼in Gauge* (7¼in Gauge Society 1988). He was an early exponent of 7¼" gauge railways - one of only four British model engineers to have used that gauge prior to 1914. Louis Shaw began building models of various types in 1902 and eventually constructed a good number of 7¼" gauge steam locomotives. By 1912 he had built a 7¼" gauge railway in a field next to his house in Longfield Lane, Ilkeston in Derbyshire. This saw some public use with a 4-4-0 engine, which he had built, based on a Midland Railway Compound. Between 1915 and 1923 he ran a line at a site called the "Beauty Spot" in Ilkeston, using his own locomotives. Following this, between 1924 and 1936, he operated a railway in the Lincolnshire coastal resort of Mablethorpe - although he did participate by displaying or running a locomotive at the 1930 & 1931 exhibitions held by the Nottingham Society of Model & Experimental Engineers. After selling his share in the railway at Mablethorpe, Louis Shaw returned back to Longfield Lane, where he started work on his final locomotive in 1940. This was completed in 1953, so the building of this engine, at least, overlapped with Ernest Dove's work.

The other local model engineer was Stanley Arthur Battison (1906-1960). Fortunately, we know a good deal about Stanley Battison and his locomotives, from an article by Peter James in the *Heywood Society Journal* No.23 (Autumn 1987). He constructed eight locomotives between 1938 and 1958: three 7¼" gauge, three 9½" gauge and one each of 10¼" and 15" gauge. All these, except the last, were built in his workshop at his home in Whitworth Road,

Ilkeston, Derbyshire. The time span of construction of these locomotives virtually coincides with that of Ernest Dove. Peter James specifically adds that Stanley Battison was acquainted with both Ernest and Ken Dove, before the Second World War. He also notes that Stanley Battison and Ernest Dove both built LMSR 4-6-2 locomotives around the same time, and that *"Battison and Dove knew each other; indeed the Battisons occasionally visited Dove's Sherwood home in the 1940s"*. His first locomotive was a 7¼" gauge GWR 4-6-0 named "King George V", which was started in 1927 and completed in 1938. Built for exhibitions

Holidays at Home

During the Second World War, to encourage people not to travel and seek amusement and recreation in their own towns, "Holidays at Home" events were promoted by the government and local authorities during the summer months. These started in the summer of 1942, when petrol rationing had become more severe. Mostly, they finished in the summer of 1944, although some towns continued for the 1945 season as well.

and rarely run, it won a number of awards. However, his next locomotive, a 7¼" gauge freelance GWR 2-6-2 completed in 1942, was put to work hauling passenger trains on a temporary railway in conjunction with the wartime "Holidays at Home" programme in that year. The site Stanley Battison used was Ilkeston Recreation Ground (also known as Rutland Recreation Ground) off Derby Road in Ilkeston. He also used the same location in Ilkeston as Louis Shaw, the nearby "Beauty Spot", for a "Holidays at Home" railway on which his next locomotive also ran - a LMSR 4-6-2 named "Duchess of Ilkeston" (but numbered 6100) completed in 1944. Peter James tells us that Ken Dove drove on both of these lines. Stanley Battison completed his only 10¼" gauge locomotive in

1953. This was a LMSR 4-6-0 "Royal Scot", a extremely fine locomotive built to enter exhibitions, such as the 16th annual exhibition of the Nottingham Society of Model & Experimental Engineers in 1954. According to Peter James, Ernest Dove tried several times to buy it from Stanley Battison, but was not successful. He also continued to run temporary lines at the "Beauty Spot" and other parks and sports grounds around the area. His final locomotive was a 15" gauge petrol locomotive, completed in 1958.

Between 1945 and 1950, a model engineering society was based at the Needlemaker's Arms public house in Kensington Street, Ilkeston. Stanley Battison was works manager at Tatham's Kensington Lace Factory off Nottingham Road in Ilkeston (close to the Needlemaker's Arms and his house in Whitworth Road) and he was able to provide the society with track facilities there. These consisted of a dual 7¼"/9½" gauge track and an elevated circuit of 3½" gauge. The only known photograph of this line shows Ken Dove driving Stanley Battison's freelance GWR 2-6-2 locomotive. We also know from Peter James, that Louis Shaw was also a *"regular visitor"* there. We can therefore say Ernest Dove knew Stanley Battison well and would have been aware of his locomotive building and "Holidays at Home" railways - and through the Needlemaker's Arms group, he may well have become acquainted with Louis Shaw, if he had not already done so. How much, if any, Shaw and Battison influenced Ernest Dove and his work is unknown. Shaw had been building locomotives long before Dove got started, but Battison built his locomotives over almost the same period of time as Dove.

7¼" Gauge Railways

Ernest Dove's first locomotive, capable of passenger hauling, was completed in May 1940. This was a 7¼" gauge 4-6-2 based on the LNER "Flying Scotsman" and named "Sir Kenneth" after his son. During 1940 and 1941 it was exhibited at a number of locations to raise money for war charities, for which it had raised £460 by late May 1941 (see Chapter Twelve for more details). Following this, Ernest Dove seems to have started using it for

passenger hauling at various locations. The track was elevated and passenger stock was initially a single coach seating six people. The *Model Engineer* of 17th December 1942 reported "Sir Kenneth" had been "*doing splendid passenger-track service at fetes and holiday-weeks in various parts of the country, and has now earned the remarkable total of £4,000 on behalf of war charities*". The term "holiday-weeks" was no doubt a reference to the "Holidays at Home" programme already mentioned and which commenced in the summer of 1942. Unfortunately, documentary evidence of these wartime temporary railways is hard to find. The local (to Nottingham) railways are not recorded in the Council Minutes and the newspapers of the time carry little detail of such events. Ken Dove, talking to Simon Townsend in 1994, remembered "Sir Kenneth" being used in and around Nottingham, at the Victoria Embankment, Wollaton Park and at Eastwood (all sites he later used for his 10¼" gauge railway). We have some evidence of the first of these locations from an interesting letter written in 1984 by George Barlow (long-time driver on the Romney, Hythe & Dymchurch Railway) to Matthew Kerr of the Kerr's Miniature Railway at Arbroath in Scotland. This is reproduced in Appendix Two and gives an interesting insight into Ernest Dove, especially some of the claims he made about his locomotives to local press reporters! However, it confirms "Sir Kenneth" ran on the Victoria Embankment during the war.

Ernest Dove's second 7¼" gauge locomotive was a SR 4-4-0 "Schools" class engine, completed in 1943, although by the end of that year it had seen little use (see Chapter Twelve for more details). There was a short elevated track in the garden of 17 Ribblesdale Road - no doubt used for testing the 7¼" gauge locomotives and the amusement of the family. One Nottingham resident remembers as a small boy sitting on a wall overlooking Dove's garden and being invited in for a ride on the railway along with other local children. He recalls Ernest Dove as a quiet man who smoked cigars, but with Ken Dove as being more talkative.

The *Nottingham Journal* of Tuesday 25th July 1944 had a photograph of Ernest Dove in his workshop and added in the caption that his "*exhibitions of model railway locos have brought substantial sums for comforts for men in the Services*". A good example of one of these was reported in the April 1944 edition of *Practical Mechanics*. In his "World of Models" article, "Motilus" informs us "*having to make a call in Nottingham recently on business, I had the opportunity of visiting the exhibition in aid of the Merchant Navy Comforts Service, held at the Ritz Cinema there during Merchant Navy Week*". There he found on display Ernest Dove's 7¼" gauge locomotives, "Sir Kenneth" and the SR "Schools". The article goes on to say that Ernest Dove's models had raised £250 in the first six days of the exhibition. It also stated that he was "*now engaged in completing a 7¼" gauge tank locomotive and also an LMS Duchess of Buccleuch [sic] class*". The Duchess was completed in February 1945, but nothing is known of the tank locomotive and there are no other references to it. Around this time Ernest Dove was Hon Secretary of the Nottingham Merchant Navy Comforts Fund.

Even as early as 1938, Ernest Dove had started building 10¼" gauge locomotives - the first being a streamlined LMSR "Coronation", followed by the American "Belle of New York" from 1940 - although neither would be finished until after the end of the Second World War. However as alluded to above, he was also still building one more 7¼" gauge locomotive. This was a LMSR 4-6-2 "Duchess", completed in February 1945 and named "Duchess of Portland" (see Chapter Twelve for more details). Ken Dove remembered the Duchess running at West Bridgford and Clifton, just to the south of Nottingham. The 7¼" gauge locomotives were normally used on their own and "Sir Kenneth" and "Duchess of Portland" never ran together. In reporting on Ernest Dove's visit to Ayr during the 1946 tour, the *Ayrshire Post* of Friday 12th July 1946 recorded him as claiming that "Duchess of Portland" had "*appeared in*

Birmingham during the month of April and was viewed and ridden on by 27,000 people a week". However, there is no evidence in the Birmingham City Council Minutes or local newspapers that this visit actually took place - in April 1946 or even April 1945. Since this article was also the source of the claim, mentioned in Chapter One, that his "Royal Scot" locomotive had been displayed at "*practically every railway station throughout the Kingdom*", perhaps one should treat it as suspect and typical Dove rhetoric! However, back in early 1945 with the approaching end of the Second World War, Ernest Dove's railway operations were about to move up in both scale and area of operation.

The 1945 - 1948 Tours

In 1944 Ernest Dove acquired from Dudley Zoo a 10¼" gauge GWR 4-6-0 locomotive (which he numbered 1944 and adopted as his own - see Chapter Twelve) and with the end of the Second World War in the following May, he could expand his railway operations. With the larger gauge it was now possible to carry more passengers and with the country at peace, travel much further from the Nottingham area. With the 7¼" gauge railways Ernest Dove said he could "*never keep the crowds moving at 20 passengers a time*". The following chapters describe in detail the extensive tours he made. However, it is convenient here to make some general comments about the tours and how they were accomplished. From 1945 to 1948 he undertook tours with a 10¼" gauge miniature railway, accompanied with a model exhibition in a marquee. The 1945 tour featured just the ex Dudley Zoo locomotive, but the following tours employed two locomotives and sometimes two train sets with a two platform station. It should be noted what follows are general comments and the transport arrangements and "staffing" may well have varied from tour to tour.

Moving everything around the country was quite a task, more so for the 1946, 1947 & 1948 tours when two locomotives and two sets of coaches were used. Two lorries were utilised, each with a trailer. These were a 1924 Leyland RAF type platform lorry and a General Motors searchlight lorry. Each trailer held a locomotive and its tender, along with the coach bogies. Two-thirds of the track was carried on the flat back of the Leyland lorry, while the back of the General Motors lorry took the remaining third of the track and the coach bodies. Also to be fitted in was the exhibition marquee and the models to be displayed therein. These would include the two ships, up to three 7¼" gauge locomotives and two or three smaller engines. One newspaper report referred to everything as weighing 39 tons (*Northern Despatch* Thursday 9th September 1948). A team of just five achieved all this: the Dove family - Ernest, his wife and son Ken; and two helpers. At least for the 1946 tour the latter were Tommy Pallister and Ernie Pulford. Ken Dove and Tommy Pallister would drive the trains, while Mrs Dove took the money in the ticket office and Ernest Dove directed operations. Ernie Pulford acted as a handyman - presumably helping to load, unload, lay the track and erect the marquee. During the tours Ernest Dove and his wife, no doubt along with Ken, stayed in a caravan. This was towed around by Ernest Dove's car. A summary of the tours is detailed in Appendix Four.



Ernest Dove (left), with trademark cigar, runs an eye over his freshly painted No.1940 "Sir Kenneth". This picture was taken in a works where it had just been painted, across the road from Dove's home at 17 Ribblesdale Road, Sherwood. A similar view appeared on the front cover of the *Model Engineer* of 6th February 1941 with the Lord Mayor of Nottingham.
(Courtesy S. Townsend Collection)



This view shows the first test run of No.1940 on the short elevated track in the garden of 17 Ribblesdale Road. The gentlemen partly hidden by the steam from the safety valves is probably Ernest Dove's father, Samuel. It is not certain who is giving the "right away".
(Courtesy S. Townsend Collection)

CHAPTER THREE

1945 TOUR

THE FIRST 10¼" GAUGE RAILWAYS

Introduction

The end of the Second World War in Europe came at last on Tuesday 8th May 1945, allowing some degree of normality to return - although it was to be many years before all the wartime shortages and rationing were to disappear. The same month saw the publication of the first volume in the famous "Thomas" series of books by Reverend Awdry. On Thursday 26th July Labour won the General Election, signalling widespread nationalisation and formation of the National Health Service. On Monday 6th August an atomic bomb was first used against Japan, precipitating the country's surrender on Tuesday 14th August. VJ Day was subsequently celebrated on Wednesday 15th August - this being declared a public holiday along with Thursday 16th August. The peace allowed people to get out and use their leisure time a little more, but with petrol rationing and transport restrictions still in place, many would have enjoyed local attractions. The wartime "Holidays at Home" campaign continued in the summer. All this meant, of course, there was plenty of demand for Ernest Dove's railways in and around Nottingham in the summer of 1945.

The majority of the 1945 tour was undertaken in the East Midlands (although Ernest Dove stated he had more ambitious intentions) - apart from a Whitsun visit to the seaside at Skegness and two visits north to Sheffield. In fact, unlike the tours of 1946 to 1948, it was really more a series of visits and we know from one newspaper report, Mrs Dove did not accompany her husband for the trip to Skegness, unlike the later tours when he was away from home. Proceeds were in aid of a number of different good causes, although various wartime charities were the largest beneficiaries. The locomotive employed throughout 1945 was the GWR 4-6-0, No.1944, which Ernest Dove had acquired from Dudley Zoo along with a set of coaches. This locomotive appears in a way, to have been a "stop gap" until his own 10¼" gauge engines were complete. The track used was steel strip mounted on wooden battens. The 7¼" gauge locomotives were still active and "Sir Kenneth" visited West Bridgford during August. As for the accompanying exhibition, we know from various newspaper reports "Sir Kenneth" was on display at Skegness and "Duchess of Portland" was likewise utilised during both visits to Sheffield. All sites known to have been used during 1945 are detailed here, but it is possible others may have existed, especially for the 7¼" gauge railway and locomotives.

Nottingham - Lover's Walk

Saturday 31st March - Tuesday 3rd April 1945

For what appears to have been his first 10¼" gauge railway, Ernest Dove chose a location alongside the River Trent, close to a site he had previously used for his 7¼" gauge railway (see Chapter Two). Although there is no mention of his request for a site in the City Council Minutes, an advert in the *Nottingham Evening Post* of Saturday 31st March 1945 announced "*By kind permission of the Parks Committee, on behalf of the Merchant Navy Comforts Service, Mr Ernest Dove's Miniature Railway will run at Lover's Walk, Trent Bridge, Easter*

Sat to Tues inclusive". The site was on the south side of the River Trent at around SK580376, close to the suspension bridge across the river. This was constructed in 1906, from the Victoria Embankment on the north side to West Bridgford on the south side. It was built to carry a water pipe line, but also has a footpath across its 225 foot span.

The railway opened on Easter Saturday, 31st March 1945, the *Nottingham Journal* of Tuesday 3rd April 1945 carrying a picture of No.1944 captioned "*On the Lover's Walk side of the River Trent at the Suspension Bridge, Nottingham, Mr Ernest Dove's model railway was doing a roaring trade yesterday for the Merchant Navy Comforts Service, 'travellers' filling the train to capacity each journey*". The railway finished running on Tuesday 3rd April 1945 and the *Nottingham Journal* of Friday 6th April 1945 was able to report "*Mr E Dove yesterday handed over to the Merchant Navy Comforts Service in Nottingham two bags containing £72 in coppers and silver, representing fares taken on his miniature railway on Lover's Walk, Trent Bridge during the Easter Holiday. The proceeds were received by Mr Norman Williams (area Chairman)*". Following this local run, Ernest Dove then took his 10¼" gauge railway and other locomotives further a field - to the traditional East Midlands seaside resort of Skegness.

Skegness - Cricket Ground **Saturday 19th May - Saturday 26th May 1945**

Skegness, on the east coast of Lincolnshire, was a quiet village that developed into a busy seaside resort after the coming of the railway in 1873. Billy Butlin opened an amusement park on the seafront at Easter 1927, and on a cold snowy Easter Saturday, 11th April 1936 he opened his first Holiday Camp - just north of the town. Ernest Dove's Whitsun 1945 visit to the town was arranged by the Skegness & District Hospital. Billy Butlin seems to have had an arrangement with the Council for sole provision of amusements on the sea front. The *Skegness News* of Wednesday 2nd May 1945 reported that Skegness Urban District Council had sought Butlin's permission "*to allow a miniature railway to be operated on the North Parade sports ground during Whit week to aid the Skegness Hospital*" and that he had replied, stating "*in view that his company had not been able to use the Amusement Park during the past five years [due to the War] he did not feel it would be fair for them to have any additional competition this year*". Therefore, another site was sought and the Skegness Cricket Club kindly gave permission for use of the Cricket Ground. Skegness Cricket Ground lies alongside Richmond Drive at TF563631, virtually opposite the railway station and very close to the town centre. Skegness Cricket Club and its ground have a long history, going back to 1874.

The *Skegness Standard* of Wednesday 16th May 1945 informs us the fare for a ride on the railway would be 6d for both adults and children, and that Councillor Fry was loaning some models for the exhibition. The railway was opened at 2.30pm on Saturday 19th May 1945, the *Skegness News* of Wednesday 23rd May 1945 reporting "*The holding of a special Hospital and Nurse Association Carnival Week over the Whitsun holiday is a distinct innovation, and the miniature railway and side shows at the Cricket Ground, which are being held to aid charities, have been well patronised. At the opening ceremony on Saturday, the band of the Gainsborough Salvation Army paraded the streets accompanied by a decorated vehicle giving a representation of a hospital ward*". It went on to say the opening ceremony was performed by Dr D F Menzies, Chairman of the Hospital and, giving a little insight into why Dove visited Skegness, that Councillor Fry thanked his "*colleague, Mr William Walton,*

through whose chance meeting with Mr Dove 12 months ago it was, those models were on view". At the end of the opening ceremony "the Mayor and Mayoress with Councillors and members of the Hospital Committee took the first ride on the railway". Among the other attractions available were pig pelting, skittles, clock golf and a rabbit show. One wonders what pig pelting entailed!

An advert from the *Skegness News* of Wednesday 16th May 1945 announcing the forthcoming visit of Ernest Dove's railway to Skegness Cricket Ground.

SKEGNESS AND DISTRICT HOSPITAL
Offers
COMPLETE WHIT WEEK ATTRACTIONS
MAY 19th to 26th, 1945, (inclusive)
ON THE CRICKET GROUND
(By kind permission of the Cricket Club Committee)
Ride on the Model Railway
EXHIBITION OF RAILWAY MODELS
|| BRING YOUR CHILDREN OR LET THEM BRING YOU ||
Sideshows ! Competitions ! Fancy Dress Parade ! etc.
SOMETHING FOR EVERYBODY
Proceeds to Skegness Hospital and the Nurse Association
Programmes giving full details of the railway models and each day's events
on sale : Price 3d. each.

The railway and exhibition closed on the evening of Saturday 26th May 1945, apparently after a successful week despite the weather being cold. The *Skegness News* of Wednesday 30th May 1945 stated that £350 had been raised for the hospital and *"the engine had travelled 69 miles up and down that track during the week and had carried 12 to 15 thousand passengers"*. The *Skegness Standard* of the same date noted that 5,000 people paid to visit the model exhibition, and went on to add that insurance for the railway cost £3 15s per day - although Ernest Dove said *"that there had not been a hitch or breakdown of any kind"*. He went on to thank his wife *"for allowing him to spend so much time away from her at the seaside"*. It was then time to pack everything up and return the 70 miles back to Nottingham. The Skegness & District Hospital Committee must have deemed the visit a success, as they later asked Ernest Dove to return in August 1946 and on that occasion Mrs Dove went along as well! The *Skegness Standard* of Wednesday 30th May 1945 reported Ernest Dove as mentioning *"that the following week he was running the attraction for the benefit of the Nottingham British Legion after which his engagements included Sheffield, Leicester, Liverpool, Southport and Blackpool"*. As we shall see, he certainly visited Sheffield and Leicester (actually Blaby), but there is no evidence that he took the railway and exhibition to Liverpool, Southport or Blackpool during 1945.

Nottingham - Victoria Embankment **Saturday 2nd June - Saturday 9th June 1945**

Although there is no mention of a request to run his railway on the Victoria Embankment in the City Council Minutes in 1945, Ernest Dove nevertheless returned to this location, which he had previously used for his 7¼" gauge railway and on the opposite bank of the river to his Easter 1945 site. An advert in the *Nottingham Evening Post* of Saturday 2nd June 1945 announced *"Miniature Railway by E Dove of Daybrook is now back from Skegness after a marvellous week and will be on Trent Embankment by kind permission of Nottingham Parks Committee from June 2nd to 9th inclusive"*. The Victoria Embankment lies on the north bank of the River Trent as it winds along the southern boundary of Nottingham. The City Corporation, having purchased the land, started work on the Embankment in May 1898. The works undertaken included making up the river bank, turfing, fencing and setting out paths

and roads. It was opened to the public on 25th July 1901. The suspension bridge, already referred to, was added in 1906. In 1920 the founder of Boots the Chemist, Jesse Boot, donated some land and money for the construction of a First World War memorial and adjacent gardens. The impressive memorial was unveiled and dedicated on Armistice Day 1927. The site of the railway was just to the north of the suspension bridge and opposite the war memorial, at SK579377, running parallel to the river bank.

The railway was opened on Saturday 2nd June 1945, the event being reported in the *Nottingham Journal* of Monday 4th June 1945. The opening ceremony was performed at 12 noon by Councillor W Hooley, chairman of the Public Parks Committee. The proceeds from the eight days running were donated to the Nottingham No.2 Branch of the British Legion, whose secretary Mr H Scotton "*made all the arrangements*". A number of local dignitaries were also in attendance, both from the Council and the Legion. The paper reported "*Those present, who also had a ride behind the powerful model engine built by Mr Dove, included...*" and went on to list them - note how Ernest Dove claimed he had built No.1944! Reporting the planned arrival of the railway, the *Nottingham Journal* of Wednesday 30th May 1945 added that four coaches would be used, capable of carrying 80 to 100 passengers. The railway ran for a week, closing on Saturday 9th June 1945, after which everything was dismantled ready for a trip north to Sheffield.

Sheffield - Hillsborough Park **Thursday 14th June - Saturday 23rd June 1945**

The South Yorkshire city of Sheffield, well-known for its steel production, lies some 40 miles north of Nottingham. At a special meeting of Sheffield City Council's Parks & Burial Grounds Committee on 18th April 1945, an application was submitted from the *Sheffield Telegraph* Children's Ring Cot Fund for "*permission to erect a large scale passenger carrying model railway in Hillsborough Park for operation from the 12th to the 23rd June 1945 inclusive*". Permission was duly granted, subject to the proceeds from fares going to the Cot Fund. Hillsborough Park is located some 2 miles north west of Sheffield city centre. Hillsborough Hall was built in 1779 and passed through a number of owners until purchased by the Dixon family of the world famous silversmiths. In 1890, after the death of James Willis Dixon, the estate was split up and Sheffield Corporation bought the Hall and 50 acres of parkland, which were developed to become Hillsborough Park. The former Hall later reopened as a library. Today the Park features a fishing lake, bowling green with pavilion, walled garden and a playground. It is not recorded where in the Park the railway was sited, but the centre is at SK332903.

HILLSBOROUGH PARK, Sheffield.
Mr. Ernest Dove's
MINIATURE RAILWAY
and Exhibition of latest model engine,
"DUCHESS OF PORTLAND,"
JUNE 14th to JUNE 23rd, inc.
(Sunday excepted).
Official Opening, 2 p.m., June 14th, by
the Deputy Lord Mayor of Sheffield
Coun. S. H. Marshall)
Afterwards from 2.30 p.m. Each Day.
Fares: Adults 6d., Children 3d.
In aid of "The Sheffield Telegraph"
Children's Ring Hospital Cot Fund.

A notice from the *Sheffield Telegraph* of Tuesday 12th June 1945, advertising the forthcoming opening of the railway and exhibition.

The railway and exhibition were opened at 2pm on Thursday 14th June 1945 by the Deputy Lord Mayor of Sheffield, Councillor S H Marshall. A photograph in the *Sheffield Telegraph* of Friday 15th June 1945 shows him driving No.1944. The caption adds that the railway and exhibition were in aid of "*the Sheffield Telegraph Children's Ring Cot Fund*" and "*The engines are the work of Mr Ernest Dove and are correct to the last detail*". On display in the exhibition was the new 7¼" gauge LMSR 4-6-2 "Duchess of Portland", only completed in February. The railway was then open each day (except Sunday) from 2.30pm, with a fare of 6d for adults and 3d for children.

The railway and exhibition were open until Saturday 23rd June 1945. The *Sheffield Telegraph* of Tuesday 26th June 1945 reported that Ernest Dove was able to hand over a cheque for £149 from the proceeds of the railway and exhibition, to "Uncle Timothy" of the paper, for the Children's Ring Cot Fund. An accompanying photograph shows Ken Dove alongside his father. The visit must have been deemed a success by all those involved, as Ernest Dove was to be invited back to Sheffield in September 1945.

Blaby - Social Centre Field **Saturday 7th July - Saturday 14th July 1945**

The village of Blaby lies just to the south of Leicester. As part of the local "Holidays at Home" programme, which was organised by the Blaby & District Social Centre Fund, Ernest Dove provided his railway and exhibition. The site used was the Social Centre field, off Leicester Road in the village at SP567981. A fun fair was also on offer. A typical Dove advert in the *Leicester Evening Mail* of Friday 6th July 1945, advertised his forthcoming visit as "*An Exhibition of Reknowned Model Engines and Wonder Miniature Railway*".

The railway and exhibition were opened by the Mayor of Leicester, Alderman John Minto, at 3pm on Saturday 7th July 1945. The *Leicester Mercury* of Monday 9th July 1945 reporting "*An exhibition of model engines and a miniature railway was opened in the grounds of the Blaby and District Social Centre on Saturday by the Lord Mayor of Leicester (Alderman J Minto). Large crowds visited the grounds throughout the day, and following the opening ride by the Lord Mayor and Mayoress, 2,000 people had trips on the miniature railway*". Proceeds were on behalf of the Blaby & District Social Centre funds.

The railway and exhibition were open daily for a week, closing on Saturday 14th July 1945. The event seems to have been popular - the *Leicester Mercury* of Monday 16th July 1945 was able to report under the headline "*Success of Blaby Holiday Fun Fair*" that, despite "*other bodies*" not continuing with "Holidays at Home" programmes due to the end of war, the Blaby & District Social Centre Fund proved that such events "*can be made to pay even when people are able to get to the sea*". It added the "*miniature railway [was] the chief attraction*" and ended by stating "*Thousands visited the venture and the Social Centre fund is expected to benefit to the tune of £450*".

Nottingham - Highfields Park **Saturday 21st July 1945**

Following the visit to Blaby came a one day trip to support a fete in Nottingham. This was held in Highfields Park, just to the south west of the city centre. The park is formed of 121 acres, including a boating lake, bowling green and children's play area. It was once part of the Highfields Estate of Joseph Lowe, who had built the adjacent Highfields House in 1798. The estate was purchased in 1920 by Jesse Boot who donated it for the foundation of, what is now, the University of Nottingham. Plans for the campus included a parkland setting to the south, adding to the landscaping already carried out by Lowe. The original Highfields House was absorbed into the campus. The park is known to many locals as University Park. The fete and railway were probably located at its eastern end, at around SK545381.

The *Nottingham Journal* of Saturday 21st July 1945 carried an advertisement headed "*Grand Fete at Highfields Today*". Among the attractions such as "*Sideshowes, Refreshments, Stalls, Cabaret*", was "*Mr E Dove's Railway*". There was also dancing from 7 to 11pm. The fete was organised by the Nottinghamshire Association of Girls' and Mixed Clubs and was opened at 2.30pm by the Duchess of Portland. None of the Nottingham papers reported the event. Fortunately however, the *Nottingham Journal* of Monday 23rd July 1945 carried a photograph of the Duchess of Portland and other dignitaries on the train following the opening ceremony. The locomotive is not visible, but the coach is clearly 10¼" gauge and a sit-in type, indicating the locomotive was the GWR 4-6-0 No.1944 and not a 7¼" gauge example.

Nottingham - Wollaton Park **Saturday 4th August - Tuesday 7th August 1945**

The first three weeks of August were to prove a busy time for Ernest Dove and during some of this time he had two railways operating concurrently at different venues. Wollaton Park Show took place between Saturday 4th August and Tuesday 7th August 1945, being held in aid of the Nottinghamshire Services Comforts Fund. Wollaton Park lies to the west of Nottingham city centre and forms the grounds of Wollaton Hall, which was built in the 1580s for Sir Francis Willoughby. The Park was enclosed by Henry Willoughby and originally comprised 790 acres - land sales have reduced it to 500 acres. The Hall and Park came into public ownership on 18th May 1925, when Nottingham Corporation completed their purchase from Michael Guy Percival Willoughby. The Hall now houses Nottingham Natural History Museum, whilst the stable block contains the Industrial Museum. The Park is used for a number of events each year and contains a herd of red and fallow deer.

The local papers covered the various Show activities, but did not mention the railway apart from a brief note in the *Nottingham Guardian* of Saturday 4th August 1945, which reported that Ernest Dove's "*Great Western locomotive will be at Wollaton Park Show and will have accommodation for 50 to 60 passengers*". The Show was opened by the Lord Mayor of Nottingham at 2.15pm on Saturday 4th August 1945. It is not known where in the Park the railway was laid - the Hall is located at SK531393. The Show closed on Tuesday 7th August 1945; the railway presumably running for the four days the Show was open. It was then taken up ready for moving to Eastwood, although Ernest Dove already had another railway at work in the Nottingham area. This was a 7¼" gauge railway in Hall Park at West Bridgford.

West Bridgford - Hall Park
Saturday 4th August - Saturday 11th August 1945

The *Nottingham Guardian* of Saturday 4th August 1945 reported that Ernest Dove's "*Flying Scotsman LNER locomotive will be in Hall Park, West Bridgford all the week. This locomotive has raised £18,000 for charity in three years*". From this report we know the locomotive used at West Bridgford was the 7¼" gauge 4-6-2 "Sir Kenneth". West Bridgford lies immediately south of Nottingham, on the opposite bank of the River Trent. Hall Park was formerly the grounds of Bridgford Hall, which was acquired by the Urban District Council in 1923. The Park is located at SK587377. The event was the 4th West Bridgford "Holidays at Home" week, which was opened in Hall Park on Saturday 4th August 1945 by the Chairman of West Bridgford Urban District Council, Mr Jesse Gray. Proceeds from the week were to go to the Nottinghamshire Services Comforts Fund and the West Bridgford Nursing Association. The "Holidays at Home" week presumably finished on Saturday 11th August 1945 and by that time Ernest Dove already had his 10¼" gauge railway in action again at Eastwood.

Eastwood - Mansfield Road Recreation Ground
Thursday 9th August - Saturday 18th August 1945

In reporting Ernest Dove's visit to Wollaton Park the *Nottingham Guardian* of Saturday 4th August 1945 added that, after finishing running there on Tuesday 7th August, the "*Great Western locomotive*" would "*then go to Eastwood for the holidays at home and remain there Thursday to Saturday, August 18th*". The small town of Eastwood, once closely associated with coal mining, lies some 7 miles north west of Nottingham. The full Eastwood "Holidays at Home" programme ran from Saturday 4th August to Sunday 19th August 1945 and therefore included VJ Day on Wednesday 15th August 1945. An advert in the *Eastwood & Kimberley Advertiser* of Friday 3rd August 1945 detailed all the events on offer, among which was "*Take a Ride on the Miniature "Victory Express". A feat of Model Engineering*". The events were held on a number of sites across Eastwood, but the railway was laid on Mansfield Road Recreation Ground. This lies on the north side of Eastwood, off the east side of Mansfield Road at SK466473. At their meeting on 3rd July 1945, the Cemetery, Allotments & Recreation Grounds Committee of Eastwood Urban District Council granted permission to "*install a miniature railway track in the upper portion*" of the Recreation Ground. Proceeds from the events were to go the Eastwood "Welcome Home" and Nottinghamshire Prisoner of War funds.

An advert from the *Eastwood & Kimberley Advertiser* of Friday 20th July 1945 announcing Ernest Dove's forthcoming visit to the town. One wonders who the "*Railway Experts*" were!

YOUNG AND OLD.
LOOK OUT FOR THE
VICTORY EXPRESS
MANSFIELD ROAD, EASTWOOD,
THURSDAY, AUG. 9th, to SATURDAY, AUG. 18th, 1945.
— o —
60,000 Passengers carried during past three weeks.
— o —
Acknowledged by Railway Experts to be the Finest Miniature Railway in the Country.

The railway was opened on Thursday 9th August 1945, this being nominated "Children's Day", with the *Eastwood & Kimberley Advertiser* of Friday 17th August 1945 reporting "*Mr Ernest Dove's miniature railway was opened on the ground and will remain until the end of the week, running each afternoon and evening. This has proved a great attraction*". The railway closed on Saturday 18th August 1945, running until after dusk on that day, when also a "*huge bonfire will be lit*". This was the last day of the main "Holidays at Home" programme, although a thanksgiving service was held on the Sunday evening. A fancy dress parade took place on Friday 17th August, the *Eastwood & Kimberley Advertiser* of Friday 24th August 1945 reporting "*prizes for which were kindly given by Mr Ernest Dove, the proprietor of the miniature railway, which has been a tremendous attraction and a great success financially to Eastwood's 'Holidays at Home' programme*". There now seems to have been a short lull in Ernest Dove's appointments for his railway, which probably gave him time for a welcome rest.

Sheffield - Hillsborough Park **Saturday 1st September - Saturday 15th September 1945**

Following his visit in June, Ernest Dove was asked to return to Sheffield - this time for a longer stay. At their meeting on 14th August 1945, the Parks & Burial Grounds Committee of Sheffield City Council, gave authority for "*a Miniature Railway to be installed in Hillsborough Park for operation from the 1st to the 15th September 1945, in aid of the Sheffield Telegraph Children's Ring and the British United Aid to China Fund*". It is not recorded, but likely the same site within Hillsborough Park was used for the railway and exhibition as for the June visit. "Uncle Timothy", writing in his children's column in the *Sheffield Telegraph* of Tuesday 28th August 1945, announced the railway would be returning to Hillsborough Park and would run "*each afternoon and evening*". It was opened on Saturday 1st September 1945 at 2pm by Mr Fred M Osborn of the Sheffield Hospitals Council. The *Sheffield Telegraph* of Monday 3rd September 1945 reported "*Uncle Timothy of Children's Ring presided on Saturday at the opening and Mr F M Osborn drove one of the engines for the first ride*". The railway and exhibition were then open each day from 2.30pm, Sundays excepted. The fare was 6d adults and 3d children.

The last day was Saturday 15th September 1945, "Uncle Timothy" noting in that day's *Sheffield Telegraph* the railway would be running from 2pm until dusk. The *Sheffield Star* having so far ignored both Ernest Dove's June and September visits, carried a photograph in its Saturday 15th September 1945 edition of No.1944 gaining the attention of some children. The locomotive is parked in front of what appears to be a covered back of a lorry, with the track running up into it. Neither the *Telegraph* nor *Star* recorded how much money was raised for the two charities during the two weeks of running. This then was the end of the 1945 tour. Ernest Dove would return to the road in 1946, this time with two 10¼" gauge locomotives and covering a much wider area of the country.

CHAPTER FOUR

1946 TOUR

IN AID OF LOCAL HOSPITALS

Introduction

Despite the end of the war, shortages continued - the period between autumn 1945 and the spring being particularly bad. Bread was rationed from Monday 22nd July, having never been so during the war. The Bank of England was nationalised on Thursday 14th February. The first FA cup final since the war was won by Derby County on Saturday 27th April. Easter, Whitsun and August saw the first peace time Bank Holidays since 1939 and at last many more people were able to take day trips or a holiday at the traditional seaside resorts - although it is unlikely many bikinis were on show as they only went on sale for the first time on Friday 5th July in Paris! So with the war ended, the emphasis started to change and there was not so much need for entertainment in Nottingham and the surrounding area, which Ernest Dove had catered for from 1942 to 1945. The best business for his railways, certainly in the summer, was at the seaside.

The 1946 tour was the first where Ernest Dove spent most of the season away from his native Nottingham area. April 1946 saw the first public runs of his iconic LMSR 4-6-2 "Coronation" locomotive, while the peak summer season was spent at the seaside resorts of Ayr and Skegness. The tour then moved to the north of England before a return to Nottingham for the famous Goose Fair in October. In all there were seven sites in six towns and Ernest Dove covered just over 1,000 miles travelling between them - the highest mileage of all the tours. The first visits of the tour, to Nottingham and Mansfield, were in aid of the British Legion, while all the others were in aid of local hospital funds in each of the towns. This was no doubt very welcome in the days before the National Health Service. From various newspaper reports, we know the exhibition in the marquee contained (at least) the 7¼" gauge locomotives LMSR "Duchess of Portland", SR "Schools" and possibly, from Ayr onwards, LNER "Sir Kenneth". Also present was the model destroyer ship. The railway itself seems to have mostly been around 200 yards in length and of single track, with trains either double or single headed. The locomotives used during the 1946 tour were the brand new LMSR 4-6-2 "Coronation" and GWR 4-6-0 No.1944 (which had been used on its own during the 1945 tour).

Nottingham - Victoria Embankment **Saturday 20th April - Saturday 27th April 1946**

Just as with the June 1945 visit to the Victoria Embankment, there is no record of Ernest Dove asking permission to operate his railway here during Easter week 1946. The position and history of the River Trent side location has already been fully described in Chapter Three, in connection with the June 1945 visit - the same site was used in 1946.

"Coronation" had been on display in Griffin & Spalding's department store from Wednesday 3rd April 1946 until Thursday 18th April 1946 (see Chapter Twelve for more details) and an advert in the *Nottingham Evening Post* of Saturday 13th April 1946 announced "*Owing to*

enormous success on view at Griffin and Spalding till Thursday next, Ground Floor, if fine on Saturday April 20th, will be on exhibition under steam on Trent Embankment". The railway was opened on Easter Saturday, 20th April 1946 at 2.30pm by the Mayor of Nottingham. The *Nottingham Journal* of Monday 22nd April 1946 reported "*Mr E Dove's model of the new LMS Coronation Scot locomotive was seen working in public for the first time on Saturday. The Lord Mayor of Nottingham (Ald E G Underwood) drove the engine on the first of many trips it will make along a 200 yards stretch of the Victoria Embankment this week in aid of Nottingham No.2 branch of the British Legion. The train on which hundreds young and old had a ride, was "double-headed" the Coronation Scot piloting another of Mr Dove's models a Great Western "Hall". It reached a speed of 30 mph along the riverside track, which takes passengers through a tunnel*". In fact, it can be seen from photographs, "Coronation" did haul some trains on its own, so one assumes its first public steaming was a success.

The railway probably ran until Saturday 27th April 1946 - the *Nottingham Evening Post* of Thursday 25th April 1946 had an advert, which stated the railway was at the "*Trent Side all week*". Another report in the *Nottingham Journal* of Saturday 20th April 1946 said it would run "*until the end of next week*". The scene was now set for a tour of locations in the Midlands, Scotland, Eastern and Northern England. However, the next site was only 15 miles or so away in Mansfield. But just before that Ernest Dove took a railway to Beeston for the British Legion Beeston & District Branch Fete & Gala. This was just a days running on Saturday 22nd June 1946 in the grounds of Hallcroft - the branch headquarters in Beeston, just south west of Nottingham. The report in the *Beeston Gazette & Echo* of Saturday 29th June 1946 unfortunately does not record which of the locomotives ran there. However, it is most likely this one of the 7¼" gauge models - possibly the LNER 4-6-2 "Sir Kenneth" as this locomotive is not listed as being in the exhibition at Mansfield, which opened a mere two days later.

Mansfield - Chesterfield Road Recreation Ground **Monday 24th June - Saturday 29th June 1946**

Mansfield, the largest town in Nottinghamshire, was at the heart of the North Nottinghamshire coalfield until the pit closures of the 1990s. It lies in the centre of Sherwood Forest. At the meeting of the Public Parks & Burial Grounds Committee of Nottingham City Council on 27th May 1946, the Parks Superintendent "*read a letter from Mr Ernest Dove asking if the Committee would allow him to use a portion of the Victoria Embankment for his model railway from the 19th to the 29th June inclusive in aid of the Lord Mayor's Women's Hospital Fund. The communication also contained an enquiry as to whether the Committee would grant him a site on which the model railway could be erected permanently*". It was resolved the Chairman, Vice Chairman and Parks Superintendent would deal with the application. There is no further mention in Council Minutes, but Ernest Dove never did manage to set up a permanent railway in Nottingham. Nor would it seem was his application to run on the Victoria Embankment in June successful either, as he visited Mansfield instead. At the 14th June 1946 meeting of Mansfield Town Council Parks & Cemeteries Committee, the Town Clerk submitted a letter from the British Legion "*intimating that a Mr Dove, of Nottingham had offered to run his model engine and miniature train for one week commencing June 24th in aid of the British Legion Building Fund Appeal*". The sites suggested by the Legion were Titchfield Park or Chesterfield Road Recreation Ground. The Committee resolved that use of the latter location would be granted for "*one week commencing 24th June next*". Chesterfield Road Recreation Ground, now known as

Chesterfield Road Park, lies north west of Mansfield town centre at SK532619, on the west side of Chesterfield Road - the present A617. It contains a children's play area, cricket ground, tennis courts and a five-a-side football pitch.

The railway and exhibition opened on Monday 24th June 1946. The *Nottingham Journal* of Tuesday 25th June 1946 reporting "*Winifred Duchess of Portland together with the Mayor (Coun C Harrison) were yesterday the first passengers on a train drawn by a 2½ ton replica of the Coronation Scot engine*". The paper went on to add that the track was 220 yards long and reported Ernest Dove as saying "*a six weeks tour with Coronation Scot had realised £800*". (It is not known where "Coronation" had been following its first run on the Victoria Embankment in Nottingham - the various Nottingham papers carried no reports of it running or being on display anywhere). The *Mansfield Advertiser* of Friday 28th June 1946 carried a similar report. The railway and model exhibition were in aid of a £5,000 fund to build a local headquarters for the Mansfield Branch of the British Legion.

Appearing Next Week
on the
CHESTERFIELD ROAD
RECREATION GROUND

MR. E. DOVE'S
World-Renowned Model of
"THE CORONATION
SCOT"

A model masterpiece acclaimed by
railway experts to be the finest
model ever built.
Substantial Donation will be given
to the British Legion (Mansfield
Branch) £5,000 Building Fund
Appeal.

A typical Dove advert from the *Mansfield Chronicle* of Thursday 20th June 1946 announcing the arrival in the town of his recently completed "World-Renowned" LMSR 4-6-2 "Coronation" locomotive.

The railway and exhibition probably closed on Saturday 29th June 1946. The various reports in the papers do not mention a finishing date, but merely refer to railway being in Mansfield for "*a week*". The *Nottingham Journal* of Tuesday 25th June 1946 stated the railway and exhibition were to go "*on tour to Scotland next week*" indicating Saturday 29th June as the most likely last day. The *Mansfield Advertiser* of Friday 21st June 1946 reported a typical exaggerated Ernest Dove quote in that "Coronation" was leaving for a tour "*of all the big cities of Scotland*". In fact he visited just one town, and even that was not a city! However, it was his first visit to Scotland with the 10¼" gauge railway - planning for which had started back in January. So it was now a journey of some 280 miles up to south west Scotland.

Ayr - Low Green Saturday 13th July - Wednesday 31st July 1946

The seaside and port town of Ayr in south west Scotland has a long and historic past. After the arrival of the railway it became a popular holiday destination with its sandy beaches and Robert Burns connection. At their meeting on 22nd January 1946, the Parks Committee of Ayr Burgh Council heard that a letter had been received from Ernest Dove offering "*to exhibit a model railway in Ayr for two weeks in the summer season. The track will be 200 yards long and charges will be made to the public for journeys on the miniature trains*". He proposed to hand over 40% to 50% of the takings to charity - as chosen by the Council. "*Photographs and literature relating to the railway were submitted and examined*" by the

Committee, which accepted his offer and it was left to the Parks Superintendent to select a suitable site. At subsequent meetings, the Parks Committee agreed to allow Ernest Dove to erect a marquee for the model exhibition and also for the railway to run for one week longer than the originally proposed two weeks.

The site chosen by the Parks Superintendent was the Low Green. This is a large area of open grassland adjacent to the seafront in Ayr. Extending to some 44½ acres, it is all that remains of Ayr Burgh's Common Lands, which were granted by Royal Charter to the Burgh in the 14th century. It has since been used for recreational purposes and large scale public events. It is not certain exactly where the railway and exhibition were located, but it is likely to have been in the area around NS332215.

The exhibition in the marquee was opened on Wednesday 10th July 1946. The marquee contained "*five locomotives, a destroyer and various other little gadgets*" according to the *Ayrshire Post* of Friday 12th July 1946. The Marquee was located "*at the point where the miniature track is to begin*". The railway itself was opened on Saturday 13th July 1946 by Houston Paterson, convener of the Parks Committee. The report in the *Ayrshire Post* of Friday 12th July 1946 stated the line was 240 yards long. By Friday 19th July, the *Ayrshire Post* reported "*approximately 24,000 people have been carried by the miniature locos. The engines, 'Coronation Scot' and 'Great Western', have it is estimated, travelled a distance of 540 miles on the single track which is one third of a mile long for the return trip*". The *Ayr Advertiser* of Thursday 25th July reported that each locomotive travelled 150 miles a day. In the first week, it stated, there were 42 running hours and 15,700 passengers. It added that Ernest Dove had "*agreed to extend his stay until Wednesday, July 31st*".

The railway ran until Wednesday 31st July 1946, this being the last day of operation before it was dismantled, along with the marquee and exhibition. There was now a long journey to the next site on the east coast of England, some 360 miles away, possibly with a brief stop in Nottingham on the way. The *Ayrshire Post* of Friday 2nd August 1946 reported that a total of 26,940 passengers had been carried. Ernest Dove was able to hand over £400 to the Council for charity, this being approximately 50% of the takings. The Finance Committee of the Council agreed to allocate the funds between Ayr County Hospital (£100), Earl Haig Fund (£55), Scottish Queen's Nurses Pension (£55), Erskine Hospital for Limbless Soldiers (£55), Newington House Institution for Blinded Soldiers (£55), Ayrshire League for Deaf & Dumb (£55) and Railway Benevolent Fund (£25). Despite this injection of money for Scottish and local charities, the Council did not seem keen to see the return of the railway on the Low Green for the 1947 season, possibly as it seems there was some local opposition. Ernest Dove wrote to the Council on 4th August 1946 requesting a site on the Low Green again and at their meeting on 19th December 1946, the Parks Committee asked the Parks Superintendent to report whether a suitable site was available. By February 1947 the Council were discussing two possible alternative sites - one further south near the seafront and another further south again at Seafield. They offered the latter, which Ernest Dove declined. He then asked again for a site on the Low Green for four weeks towards the end of the season. This was refused by one vote at the Parks Committee meeting on 31st March 1947. The matter was raised again at a Council meeting on 14th April 1947, only for it to be declined again. After this rebuttal, Ernest Dove does not seem to have tried again for a site in Ayr.

FIRST TIME IN SCOTLAND

The most Stupendous Attraction ever seen in Ayr.

ERNEST DOVE'S Masterpiece STREAMLINED MODEL

of the World Famous

CORONATION SCOT

Acknowledged by Railway Experts to be the finest Model ever built.

Weight 2 tons., 10 cwts.

Value £5,000

WILL BE RUNNING ON

THE LOW GREEN, AYR

(By kind permission of the Parks Committee)

Also His WONDERFUL

GREAT WESTERN MODEL

Commencing **JULY 13th, 1946**

POPULAR PRICES

You must ride behind these Miniature Giants.

Also on Exhibition will be other Famous Models, built and owned by Mr Ernest Dove, Nottingham, of well-known Express Passenger Locomotives. These Models are the result of 50 years work, and are acknowledged to be the finest collection ever seen. An education to young and old. Already during the past 6 years enormous sums have been raised for Charity, and remember Charities in Ayr are to benefit from this visit.

Every Model a real Engine. Fired by coal. Driven by Steam. Built to Board of Trade specification.

Don't forget the date, and don't fail to ride and view these renowned Models.

POPULAR PRICES.

Programme giving all details, etc.

WILLSONS, PRINTERS, NOTTINGHAM

An advertising flyer for the July 1946 visit to the Low Green, Ayr. It was certainly the first time "Coronation" had been to Scotland, but whether it was "*The most Stupendous Attraction ever seen in Ayr*" is another matter! The "*Programme giving all details, etc*" is probably the one reproduced in Appendix Five.

(Courtesy KMR Archive)

Skegness - Beach
Saturday 10th August - Monday 26th August 1946

Ernest Dove's second visit to the east coast resort of Skegness was, like his first in May 1945, arranged by the Skegness & District Hospital in aid of their funds. The Foreshore & Licensing Committee of Skegness Urban District Council heard at their meeting on 11th January 1946 that a letter dated 21st December 1945 had been received from the Skegness & District Hospital *"requesting the Council's permission to the running of a Miniature Railway on the sands between the Boating Lake and the sea for a fortnight commencing 12th August next in aid of the Hospital"*. The Committee agreed to the railway in principle. At their next meeting on 15th February 1946, the Committee heard that a letter had been received from Billy Butlin, this time giving consent to the railway, but only on a site south of his amusement park. Formal permission was then granted subject to conditions, including *"The site to be on the sands east of the boating lake and between the old boating lake bridge and Princes Parade"* and the railway did not obstruct any footpath leading to the beach. As usual the marquee and exhibition were to be present as well. The Hospital later requested a starting date of 10th August and a few days extension at the end. The Council agreed to both requests.

The area of the seafront where the railway was to run had not yet been fully developed. The site was on the sand dunes, between the boating lake and the beach - in the area to the north of Princes Parade - at TF572628. Later, during the winter of 1950/1951, this area was improved and developed and a permanent miniature railway opened there on Thursday 10th May 1951. This ran the full distance between Princes Parade and Tower Esplanade, but its southern half was probably close to the site used for the 1946 railway and exhibition. The Dove built locomotive "Commodore Vanderbilt" ran on this line between 1954 and 1970 (see Chapter Twelve).

Dove's advance publicity in the local newspapers was up to his normal standard - the advert in the *Skegness Standard* of Wednesday 31st July 1946 was headed *"Stupendous Attraction for Skegness"* and went on *"Mr Ernest Dove's miniature railway, which will be on Skegness beach for a fortnight from August 10th in aid of the local hospital, has recently been at Ayr Scotland, where it carried approximately 24,000 people. The "Coronation Scot" engine made by Mr Dove is the finest and most powerful model of its kind in the world"*. The railway and exhibition opened on Saturday 10th August 1946. The *Skegness News* of Wednesday 14th August 1946 reported the railway *"Drew its first train over the newly constructed track on the Skegness Foreshore last Saturday afternoon. It was a special train too. It bore the Chairman and several members of Skegness Council. And it bore them through a blinding rainstorm which had cut short the opening ceremony on the miniature station platform by Skegness's Chief Citizen Coun A Denham JP"*. It went on to add the bad weather had also held up track laying on Saturday morning, which had been proceeding during the previous 48 hours. This gives some idea of the amount of work involved in laying what was a "temporary" railway, although the sand dunes cannot have provided an ideal base on which to lay the track. The report also stated the track was 270 yards in length and briefly mentioned the model exhibition in the adjacent marquee. The *Skegness Standard* of Wednesday 21st August 1946 reported *"Officially inaugurated by the Chairman of the Skegness Council (Councillor A Denham JP) the miniature railway on Skegness beach is proving a very popular addition to Council-owned amenities"*. It went on to report *"Prizes are being given for estimating the number of persons carried on the railway between specified hours each day. On Friday the prize winner was Mr Page of Grosvenor Road and on Saturday Mr Landon of Firbeck Avenue was the winner"*. The paper does not tell us what the estimated, or actual figures were

though. However, it continued with a fascinating paragraph *"It is interesting to note that passengers are just as prone to leave belongings in a miniature train as in orthodox trains. Mr Dove awaits claimants for a pair of girl's slippers, a boy's raincoat, child's sandals, Ford car keys and a toy yacht!"* One imagines the car keys were quickly reclaimed by their owner. The report concluded by adding *"The track is roped off in accordance with official regulations and members of the public are asked to ensure that their children do not go inside the ropes, otherwise any accident which may occur will be their own responsibility"*. The railway ran until Monday 26th August 1946, the *Skegness Standard* of Wednesday 4th September 1946 reporting *"The funds of Skegness and District Hospital have been augmented by £285 as the outcome of Mr Ernest Dove's miniature railway attraction on the beach which ended on Monday week. A cheque for this amount was handed by Mr Dove to Dr Fraser Menzies, Chairman of the hospital at a little informal gathering held at the County Hotel last Tuesday [28th August]"*. It continued by mentioning that the weather had been poor throughout most of the visit and added *"The two locomotives had averaged 100 miles per day, covering a distance of 3,000 miles, during which 25,000 passengers had been carried, while 32,720 persons had patronised the exhibition of models in the marquee adjoining the track"*. The paper reported that Ernest Dove thanked the "railway company" (at that time the LNER) for *"its assistance mentioning in particular the engineer at Boston who had loaned a number of sleepers for the track"*. Then Ken Dove *"had pleasure in handing Mr Olle [Skegness Stationmaster] a cheque for £10 for the Railway Benevolent Institution"*. Concluding, and proving it was a family concern, the Secretary of the Hospital *"Proposed a vote of thanks to Kenneth Dove for driving the locomotives and to Mrs Dove for the hours she had put in the pay box. Mrs Dove had been in the pay box from 10.30 to 6pm each day"*. Then it was time to pack up and move on again, this time some 240 miles north west to the Lake District.

Kendal - Abbot Hall Park

Saturday 14th September - Saturday 21st September 1946

The next point on the tour was the market town of Kendal, set on the edge of the Lake District and at that time in the county of Westmorland. The visit was organised at fairly short notice. The Minutes of the Kendal Borough Council Parks, Baths and Cemeteries Committee meeting of 1st July 1946, record *"A letter dated 15th July 1946, from the Hon Secretary of the Mayor of Kendal's Westmorland County Hospital Fund was presented, applying for permission to stage an exhibition of model locomotives and also a model working railway in the Abbot Hall Pleasure Ground from 14th to 21st September 1946. It was reported that the exhibition would entail the erection of a marquee and the laying down of a track for the model working railway, and that the use of the pleasure ground would be required for a few days prior and subsequent to the above dates for the erection and dismantling of the exhibition"*. The Committee resolved to grant the application.

Abbot Hall Park lies on the west bank of the River Kent, just to the south of Kendal town centre. Abbot Hall itself was built as a large country house between 1759 and 1762, but was acquired by Kendal Borough Council in 1896. The grounds were then turned into a public park, being dedicated in 1897. The house survives as an Art Gallery and some adjacent buildings house the Museum of Lakeland Life. It is not known exactly where the railway and exhibition were located, but the park is relatively small - with its centre at SD516923.

The railway was first advertised in the *Westmorland Gazette* of Saturday 31st August 1946. Under the title "*Kendal's Greatest Week*", one of the attractions listed was "*The 'Coronation Scot' in Abbot Hall*". The whole event was known as the Mayor's Hospital Week. The *Westmorland Gazette* of Saturday 14th September 1946 reported that a "Hospital Queen" had been chosen at a competition and went on "*All the week there will be a model railway exhibition at Abbot Hall, the feature of which will be excursions in the miniature Coronation Scot*". The railway and exhibition opened on Saturday 14th September 1946, but it seems the whole event was somewhat spoilt by poor weather - the *Westmorland Gazette* of Saturday 21st September 1946 reporting "*A most attractive programme of events, arranged on behalf of the Mayor of Kendal's Hospital Week, was marred by atrocious weather. Since the effort began on Saturday, there has been heavy rain every day except yesterday (Thursday)*". The report continued "*Miss Gibson [the 'Hospital Queen'] and her attendants, together with the Mayor and Mayoress, took part in a procession to the miniature railway where her first duty was to ride in the model Coronation Scot on its initial Kendal run. An exhibition of model locomotives of many types was held in a marquee adjoining the miniature railway. The two miniature trains in the Abbot Hall grounds have been immediately popular among the children in the few rainless periods during the week*". During the evening of Tuesday 17th September the railway suffered a derailment. The *Westmorland Gazette* of Saturday 21st September 1946 reporting "*Since Tuesday evening, when the engine of the model train was derailed by a piece of wood which had been placed across the narrow gauge, a constant police watch has been kept on the miniature railway. At the time of the mishap, the train was pulling about 20 passengers, but there no injuries. How the wood came to be on the line, remains a mystery*". It then went on to quote Ernest Dove "*Whoever was responsible, committed a wilful act which might have had very serious consequences. In addition to causing a substantial loss in the takings on behalf of the hospital, which had already suffered through the atrocious weather, it took 20 men nearly an hour and half to right the £5,000 engine, weighing two and a quarter tons and as a result, the railway had to close for the rest of the evening*". From the figures quoted, it appears the locomotive involved was "Coronation". One is left to wonder how thorough the subsequent "constant police watch" really was!

The advert from the *Westmorland Gazette* of Saturday 7th September 1946 listing the events for the Mayor of Kendal's Hospital week.

<p style="text-align: center;">KENDAL'S GREATEST WEEK 14th to 22nd SEPTEMBER.</p> <p>SAT., 14th SEPT., LONGLANDS FIELD, KENDAL, from 9-30 a.m. OPEN SHEEP DOG TRIALS LANCASHIRE POLICE DISPLAY PONY GYMKHANA.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">THE "CORONATION SCOT" RUNS IN ABBOT HALL ALL THE WEEK.</p> <p>REVUES, DANCES, CONCERTS, BABY SHOW. Official Programmes are being Distributed Free. Get your copy and Enjoy the Fun</p> <p style="text-align: center;">ALL FOR THE MAYOR OF KENDAL'S GREAT HOSPITAL WEEK.</p>
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The railway and exhibition closed on the evening of Saturday 21st September 1946 - the *Westmorland Gazette* of that date concluding its report with "*The Coronation Scot is running in Abbot Hall until Saturday night and the exhibition will also be open concurrently*". The last day saw the best patronage of the week, due to much improved weather. The railway and exhibition raised £75 for the Hospital Week Fund. The *Westmorland Gazette* of Saturday 28th September 1946 recording "*At the dance in the Town Hall in the evening [Saturday 21st September], the Mayor received a cheque for £75 from Mr Ernest Dove, owner of the miniature railway which carried nearly 6,000 passengers during the week*". It went on to say that the takings would have been a lot more had it not rained at some time during each day in

the week. The paper also carried a picture showing Ernest Dove handing over the cheque to the Mayor, Alderman T Doble, in the company of Mrs Dove and members of the hospital staff. Everything was then dismantled and loaded up for the journey of 70 miles east across North Yorkshire.

Harrogate - The Stray

Wednesday 25th September - Saturday 28th September 1946

The Spa Town of Harrogate lies in the Nidd Valley in North Yorkshire. Fortuitously for Ernest Dove, in August 1946 the Mayor of Harrogate was on holiday in Skegness. The *Skegness Standard* of Wednesday 4th September 1946, reporting on the informal gathering following Ernest Dove's visit there, recorded him as saying "*firstly he would like to welcome the Mayor and Mayoress of Harrogate to the little gathering and he suggested that their presence rather added to the unity between hospital and hospital, as the Mayor had invited him to take his model engines to Harrogate for the benefit of the local hospital*". This explains why there is no trace in the Council Minutes of Ernest Dove approaching Harrogate District Council for permission to run his railway in the town in the normal way - this time the invitation was the other way round. The site selected was on West Park Stray.

The Stray is a semi-circle of 200 acres of open ground to the south of the town. It was created by an order of 19th August 1778, under the Enclosures Act of 1770 for the Forest of Knaresborough, ensuring that the public wells (with their famous medicinal spa waters) would remain accessible and unenclosed. The Stray was set aside in perpetuity as common land with free rights of access to everyone. In the 1860s trees were planted alongside the principal roads and in 1893 Harrogate Council obtained control by purchase at a cost of £11,780. Initially, it was planned to site the railway on West Park Stray - the section of The Stray at its western end - to the west of West Park Street. But very wet weather at the end of the previous week (the highest rainfall ever recorded in Harrogate according to the *Harrogate Herald* of Wednesday 25th September 1946 - presumably the same spell of rain, which spoilt things in Kendal) left the ground too soft to lay the track on. Therefore, a site at the north eastern end of The Stray at High Harrogate was utilised instead. Here the track was laid along a roadway, which crossed The Stray - probably in the vicinity of SE311554.

The railway and exhibition opened at 2pm on Wednesday 25th September 1946. The *Harrogate Advertiser* of Saturday 28th September 1946 reporting "*The Model Railway, opened on the road across High Harrogate Stray on Wednesday, has already carried thousands of people*". It went on to note the track was about 100 yards long - rather shorter than Ernest Dove normally laid - with "*two locomotives and six coaches*". A picture in the *Harrogate Herald* of Wednesday 2nd October 1946 shows a train with "Coronation" double heading No.1944, with the track laid directly on the road surface. The opening was performed by Lawrence Alfred Earl (Laurie Earl) a LMSR driver from Camden Shed in London and well-known for his hard driving of West Coast express trains. One of original drivers of the prototype "Coronation", he had been on the railway for 45 years having joined the LNWR in 1901, but was retiring "*next month*". Also present at the opening were Mayoress, Mrs Tennant and Major J C Hunter, Chairman of the Board of Harrogate & District General Hospital and other officials of the hospital. The hospital was to receive 40% of the proceeds. Major Hunter, according to the *Harrogate Advertiser* said in his speech "*There was nothing in the world like Mr Dove's models, which were going to America in the New Year*". This never happened; perhaps Major Hunter misunderstood a conversation with Ernest Dove, in

that he was merely building an American style locomotive at that time (the 4-6-4 "Belle of New York"). The only drama of the day came a *"few minutes before the opening of the railway"* when Ernest Dove was involved in a road traffic accident. The *Harrogate Advertiser* of Saturday 28th September 1946 reporting that the incident occurred *"within sight of where his locomotives were getting up steam and few of the spectators whom he addressed over the microphone were aware that he was suffering from a severe shaking"*. The other car, driven by an official of the Council's Electricity Department, *"turned a complete somersault"*. Fortunately, neither driver was badly injured. The railway was advertised to run each day from 1.30pm to 9pm, with a half-hour break from 5pm to 5.30pm and seems to have proved popular with trains running until well after dark.

**ERNEST DOVE'S
MODEL LOCOMOTIVES**

Which will include his Latest Masterpiece, the
L.M.S. Streamlined "Coronation Scot"
The only one of its kind in the World.
It weighs 2 tons. 10 cwt., and is valued at £5,000, the
only one of its kind in existence, and will be running
ON THE HIGH HARROGATE STRAY
SEPT. 25th, 26th, 27th, 28th,
1-30 p.m. to 5 p.m. and 5-30 p.m. to 9 p.m. daily
Also an **EXHIBITION OF HIS**
OTHER FAMOUS MODELS
which have raised enormous sums for various charities
during the past six years. And please remember
**THE HARROGATE & DISTRICT
GENERAL HOSPITAL**
is to benefit from the running of these famous models.
Do not forget to ride behind these miniature giants.
The opening will be performed by Mr. L. A. Earl, one
of the original drivers of the L.M.S. "Coronation
Scot," at 2 p.m. Wednesday

An advert from the *Harrogate Advertiser* of Saturday 21st September 1946, giving details of Ernest Dove's visit to the town. It contains his usual statements, such as *"his Latest Masterpiece"* and *"The only one of its kind in the World"*. L A Earl was a well known LMSR driver of the time on the West Coast mainline and would have driven the full size "Coronation".

The railway ran for four days, closing on Saturday 28th September 1946. The *Harrogate Herald* of Wednesday 2nd October 1946 stated *"some 10,000 people took trips"* on the railway and *"visited the exhibition of Mr Dove's other models"*. All this raised £100 for Harrogate & District General Hospital and the *Harrogate Advertiser* of Saturday 5th October reported that Ernest Dove presented a cheque for that amount to the Mayor, Mr J S Tennant on *"Saturday evening"* [28th September]. Other donations made by Ernest Dove were: Railway Benevolent Fund £5, Starbeck Veterans' Association £2 2s, and the Police Sports Fund £1 1s. It was then time to pack up and load everything for the journey of around 75 miles home south to Nottingham - but not for a rest, as there was still one more running engagement!

Nottingham - Forest Recreation Ground **Thursday 3rd October - Saturday 5th October 1946**

The Nottingham Goose Fair dates back over 700 years, being thought to have started as far back as 1284. The origin of the name is unknown, but may be connected with the driving of geese from Lincolnshire to Nottingham to be sold. The first reference to a "Goose Fair" is in the Borough records of 1541. Originally held on St Matthew's Day (21st September), when the calendar was revised in 1752 (omitting 11 days from September), the date of the fair was switched to early October. That year was one of the few occasions when the fair was not held. The plague caused another cancellation in 1646 and it was suspended during the two

world wars. The original purpose of the fair was trade - mainly of livestock and local produce. However, during the 19th century the fair became more and more a pleasure festival. With this change it was reduced from eight days to five, then to three. After the October 1927 fair it was moved from its traditional home of the Market Square, in the centre of Nottingham, to the Forest Recreation Ground - around 1 mile to the north.

As well as being the site of the annual Goose Fair, Forest Recreation Ground also has a variety of recreation facilities. The name comes from medieval times when the land was part of Sherwood Forest. The site was one of the original parts of the 1845 Nottingham Enclosure Act, which preserved 80 acres of Sherwood Forest for recreational use. Joseph Paxton, one of the leading Landscape Designers of the day was responsible for the interesting formation of the pathways. Today they are part of a city wide network of walks that link the recreation areas. Ernest Dove's railway was not part of the Goose Fair itself, but ran alongside the main pathway, which passes west-east across the Forest Recreation Ground - probably in area of SK564412.

The 1946 Goose Fair was opened at 12 noon by the Lord Mayor, Alderman E G Underwood on Thursday 3rd October 1946. The *Nottingham Journal* of Friday 4th October 1946 reported that after opening the fair and prior to luncheon in the Council House "*the Lord Mayor formally opened Mr Ernest Dove's miniature railway, which has been placed for the duration of the fair so that the rails are parallel to the main avenue which cross the Nottingham Forest*". The railway was operated on behalf of the Lord Mayor's Women's Hospital Fund and was "*supplementary to the fair proper*". Accompanied by the Lady Mayoress, the Lord Mayor "*rode behind the Coronation Scot on the first trip*". The *World's Fair* of Saturday 12th October 1946 had a brief report, which noted that the railway seemed "*to be very popular, especially with the children. A couple of locomotives were in steam - one being a "Great Western" and the other an LMS locomotive*". Neither report mentioned any accompanying model exhibition. There were no further reports in the local press on the railway and the only further reference we have is for an auction in December 2003 by Sheffield Railwayana of some photographic negatives. These were listed as "*Ernest Dove's exhibition at Nottingham Goose Fair in 1946 featuring scale model of LMS "Coronation Scot" in pre-war streamline*". One wonders where those negatives are now!

The Goose Fair closed at midnight on Saturday 5th October 1946 and this marked the end of Ernest Dove's extensive 1946 tour. He had covered some 1,000 miles - but the trip home to Ribblesdale Road from the Forest Recreation Ground was a mere 1 mile or so. There is no record of the funds raised during his three day visit to the Goose Fair.



The first stop on the 1946 tour, and the first public steaming of "Coronation", was on the Victoria Embankment in Nottingham at Easter. Here we see the locomotive at work beside the River Trent, where it ran along with the GWR 4-6-0 No.1944. Note the Suspension Bridge in centre background and the back of Dove's lorry in right background. Ken Dove is driving. The railway has attracted quite a crowd of onlookers and passengers.

(Author's Collection)



Another view of the railway on the Victoria Embankment at Easter 1946. Ken Dove, with obligatory cigarette, brings "Coronation" through the makeshift (canvas over wood frame) tunnel. The River Trent is clearly visible, left. Both these views are from a series of at least four photographs, presumably sold, or given away, by Ernest Dove to celebrate the first steaming of "Coronation" - he has signed the upper one. The other two were captioned "Waiting for the Right Away!" and "A Masterpiece of Model Engineering".

(Author's Collection)



Photographs of the "tour" railways are rare. This view of the line on the Beach at Skegness in August 1946 is full of interest. No.1944 and "Coronation" rest in the station. Note the unusual track and the mainline railway sleepers, which have been utilised to support the track on the dunes. The marquee housing the model exhibition is behind the locomotives.

(Courtesy I & L Hurst Collection)



Another view of the railway on the dunes at Skegness - note the pier, much of which was lost in 1978. No.1944 has just left the tunnel and is passing over a level crossing. Note the normal rails used here, but still laid on mainline sleepers and extra pieces of wood.

(Courtesy I & L Hurst Collection)

CHAPTER FIVE

1947 TOUR

PRESTWICK & CARLISLE

Introduction

The coal industry came into public ownership on Wednesday 1st January 1947, as the post war Labour Government's nationalisation plans started to bear fruit. The winter of 1946/1947 was one of the harshest on record - the period between Tuesday 21st January and Sunday 16th March being the worst. There were 14ft snowdrifts, icebergs off the Norfolk coast; the sea froze at Margate and 7in of snow on the Isles of Scilly. The following thaw caused major flooding. On top of all this, severe food and fuel shortages continued. Factories closed because of power shortages and people at home went to bed for warmth. Thankfully, a hot summer followed and about half the population took a holiday away from home - the vast majority within Great Britain. Most had a traditional seaside holiday, but some were staying at Billy Butlin's new holiday camps. However, this was still "Austerity Britain" - the meat ration was cut again in September, holidays abroad were severely restricted and petrol was still not available for pleasure motoring.

Following the extensive 1946 tour, the 1947 tour proved to be much simpler with just two towns visited - a long summer stay in south west Scotland followed by a couple of weeks in Carlisle. On 24th October 1946 Ernest Dove had written to Edinburgh Corporation offering to "*provide an exhibition of model locomotives in Edinburgh during the 1947 season*". As we shall see, he went to Prestwick instead, although he did visit Edinburgh during the 1948 tour. On 8th November 1946 Ernest Dove wrote to Darlington County Borough Council requesting "*permission to hold an exhibition of models and miniature trains in Darlington during 1947*". Despite the Council giving their approval, he did not follow this up - although he visited the town during the 1948 tour and again in 1949. In February 1947 he also approached Nottingham City Council for a site on the Victoria Embankment at Easter 1947, a site he had used previously - but this time they declined his application. Despite these apparent set backs, the 1947 tour seems to have been a success. We know from various newspaper reports the exhibition in the marquee contained at least his model of "Locomotion" (or "Rocket"), the two model ships - the liner & destroyer and the 7¼" gauge locomotives LMSR "Duchess of Portland" and SR "Schools". Also present was the part finished LMSR 4-6-0, which eventually became "Queen of Scots" (see Chapter Twelve). The two locomotives used for the 1947 tour were the same as the 1946 tour: LMSR 4-6-2 "Coronation" and GWR 4-6-0 No.1944.

Prestwick - Central Esplanade

Saturday 7th June - Saturday 16th August 1947

The seaside town of Prestwick in south west Scotland is better known today for its nearby Airport than as a seaside resort and nowadays its esplanade has little in the way of the usual seaside attractions. On 2nd November 1946, Ernest Dove wrote to Prestwick Town Council requesting permission to "*have an Exhibition of Model Railways on the shore front at Prestwick during the summer months*". The Entertainments Committee at their meeting on

19th November 1946 asked the Convenor and Sub Convenor to report back on the application, which they did at their next meeting on 10th December. They found the location requested by Ernest Dove, on the North Esplanade, unsuitable and offered a site on the Central Esplanade - from the putting green kiosk to Burgh Road, with a rent of £100 per week. He seems to have agreed to this site, but considered the rent too high - preferring a percentage basis instead. The Town Council at their meeting on 28th January 1947 agreed to the site, but referred the rent issue back to the Entertainments Committee, who at their meeting on 11th March 1947 confirmed the site and agreed to Ernest Dove paying them 20% of the gross takings as rent. The railway would run for 8 to 10 weeks during the summer months. There was some local opposition from nearby residents and Ayr County Council became involved, although no action was taken. The exhibition & railway were located on the Central Esplanade in the vicinity of NS346257. We know from an advert in *The World's Fair* of 19th July 1947, Ernest Dove stayed at 19 Marina Road during his visit to Prestwick.

The exhibition opened on Saturday 24th May 1947 with an admission of 6d for adults and 3d for children. A typical Dove advert in the *Ayr Advertiser* of Thursday 22nd May 1947 declared "*Ernest Dove's World-Renowned Model Locomotives will be on view in the Marquee on the Front at Prestwick. Come and view the Finest Model Locomotives Ever Built*". The railway was itself opened on Saturday 7th June 1947, the *Ayr Advertiser* of Thursday 12th June 1947 reporting "*after the miniature railway track on Prestwick esplanade was officially opened by Provost Dunsmore, it was estimated that some 3,000 people - adults as well as children - rode in the Coronation Scot and the Cheltenham Flyer models. Wishing the venture every success, Provost Dunsmore called on Mrs McNair, wife of the entertainments convener of the Town Council, to cut one of the tapes, and Mrs Moir, wife of Councillor Moir, to cut the other*". The official party then boarded a train hauled by "Coronation". The report went on to say that the two locomotives would run at five minute intervals, hauling trains of 80 passengers. The line was some 200 yards in length. Saturday 21st June 1947 was Gala Day in Prestwick and the *Ayr Advertiser* of Thursday 26th June 1947 carried a detailed report on the large numbers who visited both the railway and exhibition "*Between 1.30 and 6.30pm, 945 adults, 1695 children and 1600 children with vouchers given by the Town Council, travelled on the trains - a total of 4240. Paying visitors to the exhibition totalled 303, and there were 1304 children admitted on vouchers - a total of 1612*". Apparently, passengers were dealt with so efficiently; a train could be unloaded and loaded in three minutes. It also reported that an estimated 5,000 people lined each side of the track. One visitor, then a child of around 12 years of age, fondly recalls his visit to the railway during that summer of 1947: "*The smell from the locos of oil, smoke and steam in a cool evening was wonderful and I seem to recall that the track (or some of it) was fenced - no doubt to deter inquisitive dogs and protect small children. There was usually a goodly number of spectators of all ages at various points on both sides of the track - all boys at heart and immersed in the scene*".

The railway ran throughout the summer and closed at the end of service on Saturday 16th August 1947. The *Ayrshire Post* of Friday 15th August stated "*Over the season about 45,000 passengers have been carried on the miniature railway, and the approximate number of people passing through the exhibition marquee is 5000*". The Council's share of the income was £152 7s 11d. By this time Ernest Dove had been granted permission to return to Prestwick during the 1948 season, on his preferred site on the North Esplanade. On Monday 18th August 1947 he started to dismantle the exhibition and railway for the move south, 100 miles to Carlisle. He had originally hoped for a site in Ayr towards the end of the season, but as noted in Chapter Four, Ayr Burgh Council turned down his request.

This advert from the *Ayrshire Post* of Friday 6th June 1947, advertising the opening of the railway at Prestwick, is a good example of a typical Ernest Dove newspaper advert.

What Smashing Models!

ERNEST DOVE'S WONDERFUL MINIATURE RAILWAY
will be

OFFICIALLY OPENED at PRESTWICK TO-MORROW
(Saturday), 7th June, 1947, at 2.30 p.m.

You are invited to come and ride behind these magnificent locomotives
which will be running on their miniature track

REMEMBER THERE'S NOTHING LIKE THEM ANYWHERE.
Powerful Models — Perfect Riding — Picturesque Setting.

BRING THE	COME
CHILDREN	YOURSELVES
INSTRUCTIVE	INTERESTING
	INOFFENSIVE

Carlisle - Bitts Park
Saturday 30th August - Saturday 13th September 1947

The border city of Carlisle, then in Cumberland, was once the meeting point of seven different railway companies at its Citadel station. At the Parks Committee meeting of Carlisle City Council on 20th May 1947, the Council Surveyor submitted a letter from "*Mr Dove of Prestwick, offering to display his model railway exhibition in Carlisle. The exhibition would include a miniature railway, which could be suitably laid along the Mayor's Drive in the Bitts Park*". This letter was presumably written when Ernest Dove was setting up his exhibition & railway at Prestwick, and one assumes the application to Carlisle City Council was made to fill the gap left by the negative response from Ayr. He stated in his letter that 25% of the gross takings would be contributed to the Carlisle Savings Movement. The Committee granted permission for the exhibition and railway, subject to Ernest Dove meeting all expenses.

Bitts Park lies just to the north of Carlisle city centre, alongside the River Eden and close to the castle. It was opened as Peoples Park in 1897. In 1902 the Royal Agricultural Show was held in the park, during which a statue of Queen Victoria was unveiled - the park being renamed Victoria Park in honour of the Queen. Subsequently, Victoria Park became part of the larger Bitts Park. The site for the exhibition & railway was alongside Mayor's Drive close to the River Eden - somewhere around NY397565.

The exhibition & railway were opened on Saturday 30th August 1947. The *Carlisle Journal* of Tuesday 2nd September 1947 reported "*Children of all ages gathered in the Bitts Park, Carlisle, on Saturday to inspect and ride on the model train. Not the least interested spectators were a number of railwaymen comparing the powerful and true to scale model locomotives with the giants they drive in their daily work. The narrow gauge track is laid in a straight track along the side of the Mayor's Drive. Two locomotives are in use, a Coronation Scot streamlined model and one of the Great Western type, and all afternoon and evening the trains carried full loads of passengers, and at each return a long queue was waiting to go aboard. Several thousands of children and adults took the trip during the day*". A picture in the *Carlisle Journal* of Tuesday 2nd September 1947 shows a train being double headed by "Coronation" and No.1944. Another view in *Cumberland Evening News* of Saturday 30th August shows a train of stock misformed with both "Coronation" and "Cheltenham Flyer" liveries. This would seem to confirm, only a simple single track line was laid, with one train

operation. The first week of Ernest Dove's visit to Carlisle coincided with the LMSR Centenary Exhibition held in Citadel station. This was located in the Stationmaster's office and according to the *Cumberland Evening News* of Monday 1st September 1947, it contained some "very fascinating models of engines, some made by Mr Ernest Dove of Nottingham and others the work of Mr W Neish, Linton House, Cummersdale". Among the models mentioned "the locomotive "Duchess of Portland" [and] a model of the original engine which ran between Stockton and Darlington" were undoubtedly Dove's.

**You Must Not Fail to See the Finest Model Locomotive
Ever Built**

Ernest Dove's Streamlined

L. M. S. CORONATION SCOT

RUNNING IN
VICTORIA PARK, CARLISLE

Commencing SATURDAY, AUGUST 30th
At 2-30 p.m.

PART PROCEEDS TO BE DONATED TO THE CARLISLE SAVINGS
COMMITTEE'S "GIFTS TO BABIES" FUND.

THE ONLY MODEL LOCOMOTIVE OF ITS CLASS IN EXISTENCE
Weight 2 Tons 10 Cwts. Value £5,000

This advert appeared in the *Carlisle Journal* of Friday 29th August 1947, announcing the opening of the railway the next day. Victoria Park was actually merely part of the larger Bitts Park. Note the Ernest Dove claim, that his "Coronation" was "*the finest model locomotive ever built*"!

The railway ran until the evening of Saturday 13th September 1947. The *Carlisle Journal* of Tuesday 16th September 1947 then carried a very detailed report of a ceremony at the Crown & Mitre Hotel in Carlisle on Monday 15th September. There "*Mr Ernest Dove of Nottingham, the owner of the railway, presented cheques for £65 to the Babies' Savings Fund; £15 to the Railway Benevolent Fund; and £5 to the Whitehaven Pit Disaster Fund*". The Babies' Savings Fund was set up to provide a 2s 6d savings stamp to every baby born in the city. The report also went on to say that Ernest Dove had increased his donation from 20% to 25% of his takings and that Mr and Mrs Dove would make a personal donation. Ernest Dove thanked "*the Savings Committee, Corporation officials, the Mayor and others for all they had done to assist him. They showed a spirit which was really lacking in the world today*", he said. He added that approximately 8,000 people rode on the railway. In receiving the £15 cheque for the Railway Benevolent Fund, Mr Ronald Clarke, LMSR District Goods & Passenger Manager, Carlisle recalled "*that Mr Dove had been a regular subscriber to the Institution for many years*". After that, all that remained to do was pack everything up and return the 200 or so miles back home to Nottingham!

CHAPTER SIX

1948 TOUR

IN AID OF SSAFA

Introduction

On Thursday 1st January, British Railways came into being with nationalisation of the railway system. The electric industry followed on Thursday 1st April. However, perhaps the greatest success of the post war Labour Government came when the National Health Service went into operation on Monday 5th July. Also, finally, some of the shortages started to ease - on Tuesday 1st June a petrol ration for pleasure use was reinstated and bread rationing ended on Thursday 29th July. In May, Heathrow Airport was officially opened to international traffic and on Thursday 29th July the Olympic Games opened in London - the first since 1936. Holidays were still taken within Great Britain and mostly by public transport. The August Bank Holiday saw thousands travelling to the seaside resorts from the main industrial centres.

The 1948 tour was to be the most extensive of all the tours Ernest Dove undertook with his railway and exhibition. In the period between 8th May and 16th October he visited eight towns in the north of England and Scotland and in all probably travelled some 700 miles. The

Soldiers', Sailors' and Airmen's Families Association (SSAFA)

The Soldiers' and Sailors' Families Association was founded in 1885 by Major (later Colonel Sir James) Gildea (1838-1920). In that year Gildea wrote a forceful letter to *The Times* appealing for funds and volunteers to look after Service families left behind when men were set abroad. Within three months the Association was formed and the Princess of Wales was appointed President. In 1921, following the creation of the Royal Air Force, the name was changed to Soldiers', Sailors' and Airmen's Families Association (SSAFA). By the end of the Second World War, there were 29,000 volunteers and the Association administered more than £1m each year. In 1997 the charity became SSAFA Forces Help, when it amalgamated with the Forces Help Society. Today, it still supports and assists those who serve in the Armed Forces, those who have served, and the families of both.

whole operation must have entailed an enormous amount of work. Apart from a long summer visit to Prestwick and the final venue at Kingston upon Hull, which were commercial ventures, the whole tour was in aid of the Soldiers', Sailors' and Airmen's Families Association (SSAFA). Apart from the two locations mentioned, local SSAFA officials approached the relevant Council for permission to operate the railway and set up the exhibition. From various newspaper reports, we know the exhibition in the marquee contained at least the three 7¼" gauge locomotives (LNER "Sir Kenneth", LMSR "Duchess of Portland" and SR "Schools"), the two model ships (Atlantic Liner and Destroyer), "Locomotion" (or Rocket") and the 3½" gauge LMSR "Royal Scot" and LNER 4-4-2. The two locomotives employed on the railway were LMSR 4-6-2 "Coronation" (as used for the 1946 & 1947

tours) and the brand new NYCR 4-6-4 "Belle of New York". The latter had its first public run at the start of the 1948 tour in Newcastle. The GWR 4-6-0 No.1944 was therefore displaced from passenger work by "Belle of New York" and although being mentioned as attending Edinburgh in May by the *Model Engineer* of 15th April 1948, it is not referred to elsewhere during the 1948 tour and was probably sold by Ernest Dove before the start of the tour in May (see Chapter Twelve).

Newcastle - Exhibition Park
Saturday 8th May - Monday 17th May 1948

It had been the intention to commence the 1948 tour at Sunderland in early May. However, the Council officials there delayed granting permission and therefore Newcastle became the first point of call on the tour. At the meeting of the Town Moor & Parks Committee of Newcastle Corporation on 9th December 1947, the City Engineer reported that the Regional Appeals Officer of SSAFA had written to the Corporation on 8th December 1947 for permission "*to erect and operate a model railway in the Exhibition Park for a period of ten days at the Whitsuntide Holidays ie 10th to 19th May 1948, for the purpose of raising funds for the Association*". The park was to remain open to the public, but there would be a charge for admission to the "*enclosure*" and riding on the railway. The site proposed was "*along the western boundary of the park*". The City Engineer recommended that the application be granted and the Committee agreed, although one Councillor did vote against.

Exhibition Park lies just to the north of Newcastle city centre and was formed from part of Town Moor, itself established by an act in 1870. The park was used in 1929 for the North East Coast Exhibition, which ran from May to October 1929 and it was following this event the name Exhibition Park was officially adopted. The only building to survive from the Exhibition is the Palace of the Arts, which was used as the Museum of Science & Engineering, then a Military Vehicle Museum until closure, due to the poor state of building, in 2007. The site for the railway and exhibition was at NZ246657, utilising part of the miniature golf course and adjacent to the footbridge, which crossed the lake to the former Palace of the Arts building. The line then ran due south alongside the western edge of the park towards the southern entrance on Claremont Road (an area now partly obliterated by the A167).

At their meeting on 13th April 1948, the Town Moor & Parks Committee heard that the planned visit to Sunderland had been cancelled (actually postponed until August) and that it was therefore requested the railway and exhibition be opened on 8th instead of the 13th May. The Committee approved this and to the filming of the event by Pathe Gazette (sadly no footage appears to have survived), but declined to allow the railway to operate on Sundays. It also agreed that a band could be engaged to play during the opening ceremony. The *Newcastle Journal* of Tuesday 4th May 1948 carried a typical Dove advert stating "*Model Railway Exhibition. Come & ride behind these wonderful models on a miniature railway. Many other models of world famous engines*". The railway and model exhibition was opened on Saturday 8th May 1948 at 11am by the Lord Mayor of Newcastle, Alderman T McCutcheon. The local press gave scant coverage to the event. The [Newcastle] *Sunday Sun* of 9th May 1948 carried a picture showing the Lord Mayor cutting a tape in front of "Belle of New York" and "Coronation", with Ernest Dove looking on. A small picture appeared in the *Evening Chronicle* on Monday 17th May 1948, but none of the papers reported the railway or exhibition in any detail.

This was the first public run of Ernest Dove's new 4-6-4 locomotive "Belle of New York", which worked alongside "Coronation". The line was probably some 300 yards in length and photographs show the pair of locomotives running on two parallel tracks - "Belle of New York" on the western most track, "Coronation" on the other. The railway and exhibition were open from 10am to 9pm each day - through to the Whitsun weekend, closing at the end of Whit Monday, 17th May 1948. Everything was now dismantled and loaded ready for moving the 100 miles or so north to Scotland for the next venue.

Edinburgh - Leith Links
Saturday 22nd May - Saturday 29th May 1948

At the meeting on 25th November 1947 of the General Purposes Committee of Edinburgh Corporation, a letter dated 24th October 1947 from SSAFA was submitted requesting *"the Corporation to make available a site for an exhibition of model locomotives proposed to be held in Edinburgh from 22nd to 27th May 1948, to be run by Mr Ernest Dove of Nottingham"*. The letter went on to say a minimum of 20% of the gross takings of the whole exhibition would be given to SSAFA. The Parks Superintendent recommended a site on Leith Links and the Committee approved this. The Parks Sub Committee heard at their meeting on 13th April 1948, that another letter from SSAFA had been received seeking permission to *"erect a marquee at Leith Links in connection with the Model Railway Exhibition, to be held there from 22nd to 27th May next, and to retail there tea and buns etc"*. The Sub Committee gave their approval to these requests. The visit also came to the attention of the *Model Engineer* and *Meccano* magazines, which had brief advance reports in their issues of 15th April 1948 and May 1948 respectively.

Leith Links is a large area of parkland with tree-lined avenues and walkways, located in the Leith area of Edinburgh - to the north east of the city centre. Once part of a 16th century battlefield and long associated with golf, it has been employed for public executions, burials, duels and gatherings. Today it is used for a variety of recreational activities including putting, bowling, football, cricket, walking and jogging. The railway was located on the north side of the Links, alongside what was then James Place (now Links Gardens) near its junction with Bath Street (now Salamander Place) at NT275760.

The railway and exhibition opened on Saturday 22nd May 1948, the *Edinburgh Evening Dispatch* of that day reporting *"Lord Provost Andrew H Murray today dropped the mantle of civic dignity and went for a trip on a model railway. After formally opening the exhibition in Leith Links, the Lord Provost readily accepted an invitation to take a trip and, accompanied by the Lady Provost, Admiral Sir Frederick Dalrymple and General Sir Philip Christison, boarded the locomotive "Belle of New York" running on the 210 yard 10¼ inch track"*. The paper went on to say there *"was a rush by children for seats after the official party left the enclosure"* - no doubt they had been eagerly waiting for a ride! The report concluded by adding *"The exhibition consists of two stretches of miniature railway tracks and two engines which can pull more than 30 passengers. Other model engines and ships are displayed in a marquee"*. According to an advert in *The Scotsman* of Saturday 22nd May 1948, the railway ran each day from 11am until 9pm, except on Sunday 23rd May. One of the few known photographs of the railway shows "Coronation" running on the track nearest James Place. The final running day was Saturday 29th May 1948 (two days later than SSAFA originally requested). It was then time to pack everything up for the relatively short journey of 45 miles across central Scotland to the next site in Glasgow.

Glasgow - Glasgow Green
Thursday 3rd June - Wednesday 9th June 1948

The Parks Committee of Glasgow Corporation heard at their meeting on 26th November 1947 that a letter had been received from *"Miss M M MacKenzine, Appeal Organiser of the Soldiers', Sailors' and Airmen's Families Association, intimating that the association desired to stage an exhibition of model locomotives in Glasgow from 9th - 16th June 1948, and*

requesting the use of a site for this purpose". The Committee agreed to the request and remitted two Councillors to select a suitable site. The site they chose was Glasgow Green, Britain's oldest public park, which lies just south east of the city centre, alongside the River Clyde. The formation of the park dates back to 1450, but much of what exists now was laid down by 1828. It is said that one Sunday afternoon in 1765, while strolling on Glasgow Green, James Watt had his inspiration of the idea that led to the invention of his highly effective steam engine. The actual site within the park selected by the Councillors was Fleshers' Haugh, a portion of the Green at its southern end, on the far side of King's Drive. This is historically the site of gutting (or fleshing) yards, but for many years a focus for football. Part of Fleshers' Haugh is now home to the Glasgow Green Football Centre. The exhibition & railway were located somewhere on the Haugh, in the vicinity of NS601635.

The exhibition and railway opened on Thursday 3rd June 1948. The *Glasgow Evening News* of that date reporting "*Forty tons of model locomotives, worth £100,000 are on show at Flesher's Haugh, Glasgow Green, this week in aid of the funds of the Soldiers', Sailors' and Airmen's Families Association*". It then went on to describe the opening "*A miniature rail-track 300 yards long has been laid at the Haugh. The Countess of Eglinton and Winton, president of the Glasgow branch of SSAFA, presided at the opening of the exhibition today, and the opening ceremony was performed by the Duchess of Montrose*". An advert in the same paper stated the exhibition and railway would be open daily from 11am to 9.30pm, except Sunday. "*Come and travel on railways behind Ernest Dove's world famous "Belle of New York" (weight 4 tons) and the "Coronation Scot". See many other scale models, including the Duchess class, Flying Scotsman, Destroyer etc*". Admission was 6d and rides on the trains 6d.

The railway ran until Wednesday 9th June 1948, closing at the end of that day - note the earlier dates than originally requested in the application to the Corporation. The *Glasgow Evening News* of Thursday 10th June 1948 reported that SSAFA benefited with £100 from the event and that there were 15,077 visitors to the exhibition. Now it was on the road again - the next site was around 35 miles down to the south west coast of Scotland.

Prestwick - North Esplanade **Saturday 19th June - Saturday 7th August 1948**

Ernest Dove had already visited the seaside resort of Prestwick during his 1947 tour - running that summer on a site on the Central Esplanade (see Chapter Five). The visit to Prestwick does not seem to have formed part of the SSAFA fund raising tour, as he made the arrangements directly with the Council, who took a percentage of the takings. As early as 5th July 1947, Ernest Dove had written to Prestwick Town Council for a site during summer 1948 on his preferred location on the North Esplanade. The Entertainments Committee at their meeting on 8th July 1948 agreed to this site, probably bearing in mind the objections received to the Central Esplanade site in 1947. At a meeting on 9th September 1947, the Entertainments Committee agreed that the Council would take a percentage of the takings in rent - 20% up to £100 and 25% in excess of £100 per week. The site was on the North Esplanade at NS346264, close to the swimming baths, with the line running out on to the adjacent sand dunes to the north.

The railway and exhibition opened on Saturday 19th June 1948. This was "Children's Day" in Prestwick and they were allowed one free ride on the railway and one free admission to the

model exhibition. A typically expansive Dove advert appeared in the *Ayr Advertiser* of Thursday 17th June 1948 declaring "*Ernest Dove's Latest Masterpiece 'The Belle of New York' will be running at Prestwick North Esplanade Commencing Saturday, June 19th 1948. The largest and most powerful model ever built. Weight 4 ton 2cwt. Value £15,000. Also World Famous 'Coronation Scot'. The Railway Experts only comment 'AMAZING'.* The advert also claimed that 65,000 passengers had been carried in the "*past 4 weeks on these wonderful Locos*". The *Ayr Advertiser* of Thursday 24th June 1948 reported that a local small boy, Daniel Connor was injured on the railway on Saturday 19th June - the opening day. The paper stated "*Leaning over the side of the coach, it is alleged, he tried to touch the ground. He over-balanced and fell and sustained extensive bruising when struck by the train*".

An advert from the *Ayr Advertiser* of Thursday 8th July 1948 inviting people to "*Come along and have a grand ride*".

ERNEST DOVE'S FINEST MODELS

**"The Belle of New York"
and "Coronation Scot"**

are now running daily at

North Esplanade, Prestwick

Come along and have a grand ride. Perfect models. Popular prices. Picturesque setting. Nothing like them anywhere

From photographs it seems the line at the station end was double track, but the majority of its length along the dunes was single track. Fortunately, we have the memories of a young visitor to the railway during that summer, to bring the scene to life. He cycled to Prestwick from home with a friend and remembers "*the wonder of looking over the barrier and seeing the glowing coals in the firebox and the blue haze of smoke above the chimneys*" of the locomotives. "*Rails were set out for a short length of the esplanade and the engine hauled passengers out for trips before reversing to the starting point. We did not avail ourselves of this. Presumably we would be more than adequately satisfied to just gaze at the locomotives as they went about their work. We did go into the adjacent tent which held an impressive exhibition of model locomotives in various scales and, I seem to remember, large model ships*". His final comment shows the attraction Ernest Dove's railway had for youngsters of that time "*I have never forgotten the wonder at seeing these model locomotives in action. Having been brought up during the recent war period, there was nothing in one's experience to equal these locomotives. They were truly imposing articles!*".

The railway ran until early August, probably Saturday 7th August, although the actual closing date is not recorded. The *Troon & Prestwick Times* of Friday 13th August 1948 reported "*The departure of the model railway this week from the North Esplanade should not be taken as a sign that winter is approaching*". The Council's share of the income was £107 12s 8d. Ernest Dove wrote to Prestwick Town Council on 22nd September 1948, requesting permission to run his railway on the North Esplanade in summer 1949 - he also asked "*if he could have a three years option to avoid the expense of putting down and lifting the track each season*". Sadly, the ground had been earmarked by the Council for beach huts and they informed him the site would not be available for the 1949 season. So Ernest Dove's proposal for a permanent miniature railway in Prestwick came to nothing and he did not return to the town with his railway. To return to summer 1948 - he now had to pack everything up and continue with the SSAFA fund raising tour. This involved a journey of some 170 miles across the country to the north east of England.

Sunderland - Roker Promenade
Thursday 19th August - Tuesday 24th August 1948

As already mentioned, it had been intended to start the 1948 tour in the Wearside industrial town of Sunderland (a city since 1992). The Seaside Development & Entertainments Committee of Sunderland Corporation at their meeting on 22nd March 1948 heard that a letter had been received from a Commander Soley of SSAFA *"requesting permission to use the Lower Promenade, Roker, during the period 1st May to 8th May inclusive, for the purpose of exhibiting a model railway"*. The proceeds, less expenses, would be donated to the Association. The Publicity & Entertainments Manager suggested to the Committee that he contact other local authorities having experience of the exhibition, before they granted approval. This they agreed to and approval was therefore deferred. At the 21st July 1948 meeting of the Seaside Development & Entertainments Committee, the Publicity & Entertainments Manager reported that *"satisfactory information had now been received as to the devotion of the proceeds from a Model Railway Exhibition to the funds of the Soldiers', Sailors' and Airmen's Families Association"* and their consideration should now be given to the application *"to hold such an exhibition on the Lower Promenade, Roker, for a period of approximately one week as from 18th August 1948"*. The Committee now granted permission - exactly what troubled them in March is not fully recorded.

Roker, laying to the north of the River Wear and the city, is Sunderland's traditional seaside retreat, although following the Second World War it was, to a large extent, usurped by the development of Seaburn, just to the north. The construction of the Lower Promenade at Roker commenced in January 1886, as part of the Roker Improvement Works - Sunderland Corporation borrowing £7,000 to carryout the work at a time of severe economic depression to provide employment. The railway and exhibition were located on the Lower Promenade (now known as Marine Walk), at about NZ408591, close to the paddling pool.

The *Sunderland Echo* of Tuesday 17th August 1948 stated *"workmen were today laying lengths of rail track on the Promenade, Roker, in preparation for an exhibition of model railway engines"*. It went on to describe "Coronation" and "Belle of New York", with the usual statistics about weight and haulage capacity supplied by Ernest Dove, before adding that Sunderland Corporation had *"closed the Promenade to the public"* for the duration of the exhibition. The railway and exhibition were opened at 2.30pm on Thursday 19th August 1948 by Deputy Mayor, Alderman J Cohen - the *Sunderland Echo* of that day reporting he *"stepped into the "Coronation Scot" this afternoon and with other councillors seated in the blue and silver coaches, the train drew away from the platform. The Locomotive, however, was only a scale model and the platform was at the end of a 320 yard long track on Roker Lower Promenade"*. The paper concluded by saying Alderman Cohen *"officially declared the exhibition open, after he had driven the engine along the track"*. The single track was laid directly onto the roadway of the Promenade. The railway and exhibition were open until Tuesday 24th August 1948, closing at the end of that day. The next venue was just a short hop of around 20 miles down the North Sea coast to Hartlepool.

Hartlepool - Town Moor

Saturday 28th August - Saturday 4th September 1948

Until 1966, Hartlepool was formed of two separate towns - the original town (sometimes known as Old Hartlepool) on a large headland and adjacent to the old harbour, and West Hartlepool - where the current town centre is located. At the 5th January 1948 meeting of the Entertainments & Catering Committee of [Old] Hartlepool Borough Council, the Entertainments Manager reported he had "*made preliminary arrangements for this ["Model Train"] exhibition to visit Hartlepool in September next*". From the Minutes it is clear he expected to hold the exhibition in the Borough Hall - obviously not realising the scale and size of the locomotives! However, at the 7th June 1948 meeting of the Entertainments & Catering Committee, he was able to report that the Chairman and himself had met a representative from SSAFA, and he went on to describe what Ernest Dove was providing "*The exhibition consists of a double track line with a 2¼ ton model of the Coronation Scot and a 4 ton model of the New York Central Niagara Engine, together with various other workable models which will be on view in an adjacent marquee*". Now the Committee was aware of the size and scale of the exhibition, it resolved to allow its Chairman and Deputy Chairman to select a suitable site.

The location they chose was Town Moor - an open space of ground adjacent to the coast on the north east side of the headland, in fact the only open space in Old Hartlepool. An act of 1851 established Town Moor, under the control of Hartlepool Corporation, as an area of open ground for public recreation. It is not known exactly where on Town Moor the railway and exhibition were located, but its centre is at NZ530341.

ERNEST DOVE'S World Famed Models

CORONATION SCOT and BELLE OF NEW YORK
will be running on the **TOWN MOOR, HARTLE-**
POOL, opening **SATURDAY**, approximately 11 a.m.
To be opened by His Worship the Mayor, Ald.
Thomas Wood, J.P.

INSTRUCTIVE — INTERESTING

This effort is on behalf of S.S.A.F.A., and the
owner desires to thank the Council for granting
facilities to run the railway.

An advert from the *Northern Daily Mail - West Hartlepool* of Friday 27th August 1948 announcing the opening of the railway the following day.

The railway and exhibition were opened at 11am on Saturday 28th August 1948 by the Mayor of Hartlepool, Alderman Thomas Wood. However, the occasion was not without some excitement, as the *Northern Daily Mail - West Hartlepool* related under the headline "*Civic Party Didn't Have to Walk Back*". It reported that the official party got stranded at the far end of the railway "*After the Mayor had opened the exhibition of model engines the party stepped into the "Belle of New York", which chugged along to the other end of the line. When the return was attempted it was discovered that the main con-rod had come loose and jammed. The ignominy of walking back was too much to contemplate, and a second train was sent to bring the party back in state*". This was presumably "Coronation" saving the day and Ernest Dove's face! Sadly, the *Northern Daily Mail - West Hartlepool* of Monday 30th August 1948 had to report, more seriously, that the railway had been subjected to vandalism, causing about £20 worth of damage. The paper stated that children "*tore down lengths of wire netting and pulled up sleepers and part of the track*". Ernest Dove was reported as saying "*that while passengers were being carried on the railway on Saturday, groups of children were seen tearing up the track and though they were chased time and again, the youngsters returned as*

soon as the attendant's back was turned". He went on "Some of the adults have been as bad as the children. The law insists that I should put up wire netting at a safe distance from the track, but adults have trampled on it and kiddies were yesterday making hammocks of the material".

The railway and exhibition opened each day at 2.30pm, until the last day on Saturday 4th September 1948, when it opened at 11am. The paper reported no more damage - perhaps the local youth lost interest after a couple of days. The next site, still in the north east, was only around 25 miles away. However, SSAFA had applied to the Parks Committee of Carlisle City Council for a visit there during the 1948 tour. The Committee heard at their meeting on 28th January 1948 of a request from SSAFA to *"allow Mr Dove of Prestwick, to display a model railway exhibition along the Mayor's Drive in the Bitts Park [the same site as he had used in 1947] during the period 4th to 10th September next"*. Permission was granted, but there was no further mention in the Minutes to cancel this. However, there were no reports in the local press and it is assumed the visit to Carlisle did not go ahead - perhaps due to the change of date for the Sunderland visit, following the delay in gaining Council approval.

Darlington - South Park **Saturday 11th September - Thursday 16th September 1948**

The next venue on the tour was the railway town of Darlington in County Durham. At their meeting on 20th February 1948, the Parks, Cemeteries and Baths Committee of Darlington County Borough Council heard that an application had been received from the *"Regional Appeal Officer of the Soldiers' Sailors' and Airmen's Families Association for permission to hold a Miniature Railway Exhibition in the South Park for a short period in September next, in aid of the Association's funds"*. The Committee granted the application, subject to a formal agreement being entered into. They further agreed at their meeting on 31st August 1948 to allow the sale of SSAFA flags *"along the route of the miniature railway"*.

The 93 acre South Park is located just to the south of Darlington town centre, alongside the River Skerne. It is the oldest public park in the north east of England, having its origins back in 1636 when the ground was left to the town for charitable purposes. It became a formal park and recreation ground in 1853 and was purchased by Darlington Corporation in 1877. It is not known where the exhibition and railway were located in the park, although the centre of the park is at NZ288135.

The railway was opened on Saturday 11th September 1948, the *Northern Despatch* of that date reporting *"Major-General C F Loewen GOC Northumbrian District and GOC 50th Division opened at South Park, Darlington, today the model railway owned by Mr Ernest Dove, which will be running for a week in aid of Durham County branch of the Soldiers' Sailors' and Airmen's Families Association. After a short speech of welcome by Mrs Blumer, wife of Ald J Blumer and chairman of the county branch, Major-Gen Loewen paid tribute to Mr Dove's work for the organisation and described the help given by the association to the families of Service men"*. The same paper of Thursday 9th September 1948, reporting on the railway's arrival stated *"The track is 350 yards long and each trip will be about half a mile. The charges, despite increased costs, have not raised, and are still 4d for children and 6d for adults"*. A picture in the *Northern Echo* of Saturday 11th September 1948 shows "Belle of New York", on one track with "Coronation" (still covered over) adjacent on another. The *Northern Despatch* of Monday 13th September 1948 said that the weather had been poor on

Sunday, which prevented many people from visiting. It went on to add that there had already been a fair amount of trouble with "*attempted sabotage*" of the railway - youngsters playing on the lines and placing pieces of wood on the tracks. The railway ran until the close of service on Thursday 16th September 1948. The *Northern Despatch* of Monday 20th September 1948 reported that "*During the six days it was open last week*" the railway carried 11,530 passengers with 2,324 people visiting the model exhibition. Darlington County Borough Council deemed the visit a success and invited Ernest Dove to return during the 1949 season - which he did (see Chapter Seven). It was then on to the next site some 85 miles to the south east.

Kingston upon Hull - West Park **Saturday 2nd October - Saturday 16th October 1948**

Kingston upon Hull, more commonly known as Hull, was once the third largest port in the country, being located on the north bank of the River Humber. Ernest Dove's visit here was not part of the SSAFA fund raising programme and unusually it was at the Corporation's invitation he went to the city. The idea of having a miniature railway in one of Hull's parks was raised at the 4th June 1948 meeting of the Boating & Open Spaces Sub-Committee of Kingston upon Hull Corporation, following a letter received from the Hull & District Society of Model & Experimental Engineers offering to assist in the provision of such a railway. The Committee asked three councillors to consider the "*question of miniature railways in the parks*" and authorised them to "*visit and inspect with appropriate officials, any suitable equipment*". The councillors presumably then contacted other local authorities in the north east and subsequently met Ernest Dove during his visit to Hartlepool - as at the meeting of the Parks & Burial Committee on 23rd September 1948 it was reported that the three councillors had "*visited West Hartlepool [sic] to inspect a miniature railway belonging to Mr Ernest Dove and had arranged for Mr Dove to have a site to be selected, in one of the parks for the purpose of the railway and exhibition during the two weeks ending the 16th October*". They went on to recommend that Ernest Dove be also allowed to operate a line in one of the parks during the 1949 season (this was to be East Park - see Chapter Seven) and that "*negotiations be opened with him with regard to the purchase of a miniature train*". The Town Clerk was then authorised to proceed with such negotiations - but nothing more appears in the Minutes on the subject, so one assumes the Corporation was unable to agree terms on what Ernest Dove was able to offer for sale. Anyway, the Town Clerk was able to report at the same meeting that Ernest Dove had requested a site in the West Park "*for the two weeks ending 16th October, and suggesting that the hours of opening on Sundays be 3pm to 7pm*". The Committee agreed to this, subject to consultation with the Markets Committee - as part of the two weeks coincided with the annual Hull Fair held nearby. However, at their meeting on 1st October 1948 the Markets & Abattoirs Committee raised no objection.

West Park, as the name suggests, lays about 1 mile west of the city. The Corporation purchased 50 acres of land for the park from the North Eastern Railway in 1878. Work started to form a 32 acre public park when the Mayor turned the first sod on 8th November 1884. The completed park with drives, flowerbeds, lake, rockery and bandstand was opened on 29th August 1885 by Sir Albert Kaye Rollit MP - a resident of the area. The remaining 18 acres, immediately to the north, was set aside for fairs and shows - including the annual Hull Fair. Today the park contains the elevated and ground level tracks of the Hull & District Society of Model & Experimental Engineers, whose letter to the Corporation seems to have

prompted Ernest Dove's visit. Whereabouts in the park the railway and exhibition were located is not recorded. The centre of the park is at approximately TA076290.

The railway and exhibition opened on Saturday 2nd October 1948. The local press virtually ignored the event, except for a picture (the same one) in both the *Hull Daily Mail* of Monday 4th October 1948 captioned "*Park Specials get Steam Up*" and the *Hull & Yorkshire Times* of Saturday 9th October 1948, captioned "*These miniature locomotives are a popular addition to Hull West Park attractions*". The picture shows "Coronation" and "Belle of New York" side by side on a section of double track, presumably at the station. The adjacent Hull Fair opened, as was tradition, at 2pm by the Lord Mayor on Monday 11th October 1948. This pleasure fair was very much along the lines of the Goose Fair in Nottingham.

Both the railway and fair closed at the end of Saturday 16th October 1948. One imagines it was a very tired Ernest Dove, who then packed everything up and was, at last, able to return the 80 miles home to Nottingham to bring to an end a gruelling tour of some 700 miles visiting eight towns. Presumably, there was then time for a rest, before starting work on winter maintenance and more locomotive building work! This proved to be the last such tour with an accompanying model exhibition. During the winter of 1948/1949 Ernest Dove put some of the smaller locomotives up for sale. An advert in *Model Engineer* of 23rd December 1948 announced "*Ernest Dove has for sale several Model Locomotives from 2½" gauge to 7¼" gauge, also some castings etc. Owing to completion of exhibition tour*". It is not known which locomotives were sold then, although it appears the three 7¼" gauge engines may well have been disposed of at this time (see Chapter Twelve for more details).

MEMO.

ERNEST DOVE
MODEL ENGINEERING EXPERT,
**17, RIBBLESDALE ROAD,
SHERWOOD, NOTTINGHAM**

OWNER AND BUILDER OF THE WORLD RENOWNED MODEL OF THE L.M.S. "CORONATION" STREAMLINER
ACKNOWLEDGED BY RAILWAY EXPERTS TO BE THE FINEST MODEL EVER BUILT.

<p>ALSO GREAT WESTERN L.M.S. DUCHESS OF PORTLAND L.N.E.R. FLYING SCOTSMAN S.R. SCHOOLS CLASS L.M.S. ROYAL SCOT L.N.E.R. ATLANTIC</p>	<p>THE SMALLEST PASSENGER RAILWAYS IN EXISTENCE. ALL LOCOMOTIVES BUILT TO B.O.T. SPECIFICATIONS. (ALL FULLY INSURED), OPEN FOR ENGAGEMENTS CHARITY FETES, EXHIBITIONS, ETC. TERMS, ETC. FROM OWNER AND BUILDER. ENORMOUS SUMS HAVE BEEN RAISED DURING THE PAST 7 YEARS FOR CHARITABLE CAUSES.</p>
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50 YEARS OF MODEL BUILDING. PERFECT MINATURE STEAM LOCOMOTIVES.

This rather wonderful letterhead dates from 1946 or 1947, given the locomotives listed. "Coronation" was completed in March 1946, but there is no mention of "Belle of New York" completed by May 1948. Many Local Authorities must have received a letter so embellished in the period 1946 to 1950. It contains the usual sweeping Ernest Dove claims, such as "*The Smallest Passenger Railways in Existence*" and "*Perfect Miniature Steam Locomotives*".

Next page: This attractive poster was used to advertise the 1948 tour and, presumably, the visits to Kingston upon Hull and Darlington in 1949.

(Courtesy S. Townsend Collection)

ERNEST DOVE'S WORLD FAMED MODEL LOCOMOTIVES

STUPENDOUS ATTRACTION!

RUNNING IN THIS DISTRICT IN THE NEAR FUTURE
SUPERB MODEL OF THE
NEW YORK CENTRALS FINEST LOCOMOTIVE
(NIAGARA CLASS)

BUILT FROM BLUEPRINTS KINDLY LOANED BY NEW YORK CENTRAL PUBLICITY DEPT.
THE LARGEST MODEL LOCOMOTIVE IN 10 $\frac{1}{4}$ GAUGE • Weight: 3 tons
Value: £6,000, 8 Years to Build Must be seen to be appreciated



COME AND RIDE - POPULAR PRICES
PERFECT MODELS

Also—MANY OTHER EXHIBITS OF
INTEREST TO OLD AND YOUNG

THESE ARE THE MODELS THAT HAVE RAISED ENORMOUS SUMS
FOR CHARITIES

INSTRUCTIVE • INTERESTING • INOFFENSIVE

WILLSONS Printers, Nottm.



The first stop on the 1948 tour was at Exhibition Park in Newcastle. Here we see Ken Dove preparing "Belle of New York", with "Coronation" alongside. Note the lorry on the left and the model exhibition marquee behind Ken Dove. For its first year "Belle of New York" was finished in unpainted polished aluminium, as seen here. Note the method of track laying.
(*Courtesy Charlton Collection, Beamish Museum*)



"Coronation" has reached the end of the track at Leith Links, Edinburgh in May 1948. Note how the end of the track is ramped up and the large sand bag on the nearer track. The terraced houses in the background are in James Place (now Links Gardens) - the door directly above the leading driving wheel of "Coronation" is the present day No.5A. This view also clearly shows how the coaches were painted to match "Coronation".
(*Courtesy S. Townsend Collection*)



"Coronation" and "Belle of New York" are seen in the station at the foot of the dunes on the North Esplanade at Prestwick. "Coronation" is about to depart with a loaded train, driven by Tommy Pallister. Note the protective covers for the locomotives in the foreground.

(Courtesy KMR Archive)



"Coronation" takes a well-filled train along Roker Promenade, Sunderland in August 1948. The track here was laid directly on the hard surface of the Promenade and simply roped off. Clearly seen above the train is the long Roker Pier with the lighthouse at the far end.

In the foreground, children are enjoying the delights of the paddling pool.

(Author's Collection)

CHAPTER SEVEN

KINGSTON UPON HULL & DARLINGTON

1949 - MIGHTY FINE!

Introduction

Only slowly did the conditions in "Austerity Britain" ease in 1949 - clothes rationing ending on Tuesday 15th March. Rationing of sweets finished in April, but to the dismay of children this was short lived - demand far outstripped supply and they were put back on ration after just four months and remained so until Thursday 5th February 1953. The gas industry was nationalised on Sunday 1st May and on Monday 18th April the Republic of Ireland came into being. Otherwise things continued much as they had done, with most people taking holidays in Great Britain and travelling there by public transport. However, changes were just around the corner. Petrol rationing continued until Friday 26th May 1950 - just prior to Whitsun, which ensured chaos on the roads over the holiday period. May 1950 also saw (reputedly) the first British Package Holiday - to Corsica arranged by Horizon Holidays.

Following the gruelling 1948 tour, 1949 was a much quieter year with a temporary railway operated at just two sites - a long summer stay in Kingston upon Hull and a much shorter visit to Darlington. These were both at the invitation of the respective Council following visits during the 1948 tour. Over the winter of 1948/1949 the 4-6-2 "The Cleethorpes Flyer" was built for William Botterill (see Chapter Twelve), being completed and delivered by mid June 1949 - this must have been a busy time as the line at Kingston upon Hull opened at the end of May! The two locomotives used during 1949 were the same as for the 1948 tour - the LMSR 4-6-2 "Coronation" and NYCR 4-6-4 "Belle of New York". Also present, at Kingston upon Hull, was a 4 wheel petrol locomotive (see Chapter Twelve for more details).

Kingston upon Hull - East Park **Saturday 28th May - Friday 26th August 1949**

When Kingston upon Hull Corporation invited Ernest Dove to come to the city with his railway in October 1948, they also suggested he return during 1949. At the 23rd September 1948 meeting of the Parks & Burial Committee, it was *"recommended that Mr Dove be allowed a site or sites in the parks next season on the same terms"*. The Committee then resolved *"that the recommendation with regard to season 1949 be approved and adopted"* and that three councillors would be *"authorised to agree site or sites"*. The site they selected was in East Park and the Entertainments Sub-Committee reported at their 19th January 1949 meeting that among the programme for entertainments in 1949 was a *"Model Railway in East Park"*. Beyond that, there was no further mention in the Minutes.

At around 120 acres, East Park is Hull's largest and lies about 2 miles north east of the city centre. The western half of the park was opened on 21st June 1887 - Queen Victoria's Golden Jubilee. Designed by Joseph Fox Sharp, the Borough Engineer, this part covered an area of about 52 acres. During the 1920s the park was extended eastwards. The boating lake, originally opened in 1913, was also extended to the east - the new section opening in 1924. A twin arch bridge crossing the lake and dating from around 1925 marks the boundary between

the older and newer parts of the lake. The park remains a popular open space for the residents of east Hull. The railway was located in the eastern half of the park, on the south shore of the boating lake with the station at TA123314, just east of the twin arch bridge.

The railway was opened on Saturday 28th May 1949 at 12 noon by Big Bill Campbell. As with Ernest Dove's visit to West Park in October 1948, the local press only carried a picture,

Big Bill Campbell

Bill Campbell (1891-1952) performed as "Big Bill Campbell and his Rocky Mountain Rhythm", a musical cowboy act which topped the bill in 1940s and 1950s music hall variety. On the stage would be a camp fire and around it several cowboys. His catch phrase was "Mighty fine, mighty fine". In May 1949 he was appearing at the Tivoli News Theatre in Hull.

and no report. The *Hull Daily Mail* of Monday 30th May 1949, had a picture taken of the opening captioned "*Mighty Fine appears to be the opinion of Big Bill Campbell as the driver of 'The Belle of New York' explains the route to the band leader when he opened the miniature railway in East Park*". "Belle of New York" is visible, bedecked in flags, with the twin arch bridge over the lake behind. With a much longer period of operation than the usual week or two, it was possible to provide quite an elaborate two platform station. The line appears to have been double track at

each end, with the main centre section being single track. Various pictures show "Belle of New York" on the lakeside track, with "Coronation" on the other. The locomotives hauled trains eastwards away from the station and propelled them back. Initially, trains ran daily from 2.30pm, but from Whit Saturday, 4th June they ran daily from 9.30am until dusk - according to an advert in the *Hull Daily Mail* of Wednesday 1st June 1949. Saturday 13th August 1949 was "Gala Day" in East Park, with 5,000 people reported to be in the park.

An advert from the *Hull Daily Mail* of Thursday 26th May 1949, advertising the forthcoming opening of "*This Wonderful Railway*" as Ernest Dove would have it! Big Bill Campbell and his musical cowboy act were appearing in the Tivoli News Theatre in Hull at the time.

SPECIAL ATTRACTION
EAST PARK,
HOLDERNESS ROAD,
HULL
Saturday May 28, 1949
AT 12 NOON.
BIG BILL
CAMPBELL
WILL BLAZE A NEW TRAIL
WHEN HE OPENS
ERNEST DOVE'S
MINIATURE
RAILWAY
COME AND GIVE A
GREAT RECEPTION TO THIS
POPULAR ARTIST WHEN
HE CUTS THE TAPE AND
DECLARES THIS WONDER-
FUL RAILWAY OPEN.

The railway ran for almost 13 weeks and appears to have closed on Friday 26th August 1949, as at the Parks & Burial Committee meeting on 28th September 1949 the City Treasurer "*presented a statement showing the gross takings for the period from 28th May to the 26th August 1949. The rental of £245 10s 3d had been paid to the Corporation*". The *Hull & Yorkshire Times* of Saturday 27th August 1949 reported "*about 60,000 passengers*" had been carried on the railway, with the engines covering "*130 miles a week over the miniature railway tracks. For 12 weeks that works out at 1,560 miles*" and it went on "*The whole performance has gone through from start to finish without mishap and the locomotives have at no time had to be removed for repairs*". The *Northern Despatch* of Thursday 8th September 1949 (reporting during the visit to Darlington) added "*the railway was in East*

Park, Hull for 11 weeks and during that time carried a record number of 65,854 passengers and covered 1,650 miles". It is amusing to note the difference in the two reports! Ernest Dove then only had a few days to get everything taken apart and loaded up for the journey of around 85 miles north west to Darlington.

**EAST PARK
GALA DAY
SATURDAY**

**ERNEST DOVE'S FAMOUS
RAILWAY**

Will all competitors for the
Fancy Dress Carnival assemble
at the Railway enclosure at
1.45pm prompt. Judging at
2pm SHARP.

Prizes awarded as soon as
winners announced.

C and see the children.
O and greet the judges.
M and listen to the Railway-
men's Silver Band.
E and ride behind the
children's favourites,
Coronation Scot and
Belle of New York.

Have a jolly good time with
a jolly fine company.

Saturday 13th August 1949 was "Gala Day" in East Park and this advert from the *Hull Daily Mail* of Thursday 11th August 1949 is promoting the event and "*Ernest Dove's Famous Railway*". Visitors are encouraged to come and "*ride behind the children's favourites, Coronation Scot and Belle of New York*". The paper reported 5,000 people were in the park on the day - one wonders how many of those rode on the railway.

Darlington - South Park

Saturday 3rd September - Saturday 17th September 1949

This was Ernest Dove's second visit to Darlington, following his stop there during the 1948 tour. Darlington County Borough Council obviously decided that the 1948 visit was a success, as at the meeting of the Parks, Cemeteries and Baths Committee on 24th September 1948 it was reported that the railway & exhibition had "*proved a popular attraction*" and it was resolved that the Parks Superintendent be "*instructed to ascertain the terms on which the owner of the railway would stage an exhibition in the South Park next summer*". At their meeting on 10th December 1948 the Committee heard that a letter had been received from Ernest Dove indicating that he would "*be prepared to stage a miniature railway exhibition at the South Park in September 1949 on the understanding that the Corporation would receive 20 per cent of the gross takings*". The Committee then granted permission for two weeks in September 1949. The railway was probably on the same site in South Park as used in 1948.

The *Northern Despatch* of Thursday 1st September 1949 carried a picture showing the track in the process of being laid. Also clearly visible are locomotives "Coronation" and "Belle of New York". The track layout appears to be the usual two track station, converging into a single running line. The railway opened on Saturday 3rd September 1949. The *Northern Despatch* of Thursday 8th September 1949 reporting "*Since it opened on Saturday the railway has already carried 6,380 passengers. The two fine model locomotives, Coronation Scot and The Belle of New York, pull the trains*". The same paper also noted that two local railwaymen enjoyed a "Busman's Holiday" on the railway "*The Mayor (Coun M Lyonette) and the Deputy Mayor (Coun H Buckborough) both railway engine drivers, headed a large civic party, which went for a trip on the visiting model railway at South Park yesterday. The party, which included members of the Town Council, Corporation officials and their wives, were guests at a tea given by Ald W G Chandler, chairman of the Parks Committee. A*

number of scientists from the British Association meetings at Newcastle also visited the park and rode on the railway". The Northern Despatch of Monday 12th September 1949 recorded that "The model railway at South Park is proving a popular attraction - a total of 1,367 passengers travelled on it yesterday".

The railway seems to have closed on Saturday 17th September 1949 - the *Northern Despatch* of Monday 19th September 1949 reporting "*After a fortnight's running the miniature railway at South Park closed down this weekend*". It went on to report "*The popularity of the railway during its fortnight's stay in Darlington can be gauged by the fact that in 53 hours running time it has carried no fewer than 14,785 passengers. From his receipts Mr Dove has given a handsome donation to the RAF Benevolent Fund*". Ernest Dove then packed everything up and returned south, back home the 115 miles to Nottingham. At their meeting on 23rd September 1949, the Parks, Cemeteries and Baths Committee heard that the Council had received a sum of £55 12s 2d, as their part of the takings. They also heard that "*A petition from certain residents in Parkside complaining against the miniature railway exhibition recently held at the South Park*" had been received. The Committee decided that "*the matters raised in the petition*" would be borne in mind if any future application was received for "*holding a similar exhibition*". In any event, Ernest Dove did not apply to run the railway again in Darlington.

Middlesbrough - Albert Park

During his stay in Darlington, Ernest Dove received a visit from the Parks Superintendent of Middlesbrough Town Council. Apparently, he was looking for a railway for possible installation in Albert Park, Middlesbrough and Ernest Dove offered them a complete railway. The Parks Superintendent produced a detailed report ("*A Report Following an Inspection of the Model Railway Operating in South Park, Darlington*"), which he presented to the Parks Committee at their meeting on 23rd September 1949. From this we can see Ernest Dove was offering "*One locomotive (similar to the one displayed at Darlington), seven coaches and bogies, ¾ mile of rail track and necessary sleepers, station buildings, signal box and signals*", together with delivery to site, "*erection of the tracks, buildings, and all equipment (as viewed at Darlington)*" and the arranging of insurance. He was also to "*reside in Middlesbrough and to staff the railway for 20 weeks after erection*" also "*to train members of the Parks Department's staff for subsequent running*" and to "*carry out periodical inspection and to carry out repairs as necessary*". The price for all this was £5,000. From a small item in *The World's Fair* for Saturday 1st October 1949, entitled "*Model Railway for Park*", we know the locomotive involved was "*Belle of New York*". The Parks Committee authorised the purchase of the equipment and its installation in Albert Park and asked the Finance Committee about raising the purchase price.

However, the Finance Committee passed the matter back to the Parks Committee to supply more detailed financial information (ongoing maintenance cost and uncertainty about income, being concerns). The Town Council at their meeting on 11th October 1949 also asked the Parks Committee to consider the matter again. There was also some opposition from a local Ratepayers Association. In the end, the purchase of the railway did not go ahead. Apart from the matter of the finance, which the Council would have had to take out a loan to cover, there was also a question about the deeds of Albert Park and whether the Council had the necessary powers to install a railway there. At their meeting on 18th November 1949, the Parks Committee therefore decided "*That no further action be taken in regard to the purchase of a*

model railway". Ernest Dove had lost would have been lucrative deal for him. Interestingly, the Parks Superintendent's report included a detailed table giving the income and other statistics for most sites Ernest Dove used in 1948 and 1949. This is reproduced below.

Town	Days or Hours	Number Carried	Receipts (£ s d)
Darlington (1948)	7 days		226 17 8
Darlington (1949)	53 hours	14,875	287 16 8
Newcastle	8 days		575 7 3
Edinburgh	5 days		331 0 1
Glasgow	3 days		182 13 10
Prestwick	36 days		645 15 10
Sunderland	6 days		195 12 2
Hull (1948)	12 days		526 1 6
Hull (1949)	11 weeks		1,229 1 3
Average Working Time: 2pm to 4.30pm and 5.30pm to 7.30pm			
Suggested Prices per run: Adults 6d. Children 3d			

The "*Details of Operation*" table included in the Parks Superintendent's report to the Parks Committee of Middlesbrough Town Council on 23rd September 1949. One presumes Ernest Dove provided all the figures, although the "*Days or Hours*" column does contain some apparent errors. We do not know whether the "*Receipts*" column is net, or less any payments to Councils or, for some venues in 1948, SSAFA. However, it seems the takings from the two 1949 visits drew less income than those in 1948. Note there is no mention of the visit to Hartlepool. The "*Average Working Time*", suggests these were the normal times of operation and would allow those at school or working during the day to visit in the early evening. Comparison to a report in the *Northern Despatch* for the 1949 visit to Darlington and the "*Number Carried*" figure above, shows someone has transposed two of the numbers in the quoted figures of 14,785 and 14,875!

The end of the 1949 visits marked a watershed in Ernest Dove's railway operations. It appears he was now keen to move on to running a permanent line and give up touring with the temporary railways - hence the attempt to sell "Belle of New York" and a complete railway to Middlesbrough Town Council. The apparent falling receipts, as indicated above, may have influenced this decision. It is likely passenger numbers on the temporary railways were declining as wartime restrictions eased and holiday patterns changed. Another factor may have been his age - Ernest Dove turned 62 in July 1949.



A view of the splendid station erected for the railway in East Park, Hull during the 1949 season. Remember this was only a temporary railway! There are two lines served by an island platform. Note the signal box, just visible above the coaches in the right-hand platform. The boating lake is immediately on the left and Ernest Dove's car and caravan are just discernible, right. The names of the locomotives being used ("Coronation" and "Belle of New York") are displayed on the station buildings and in the windows.

(Courtesy D. Lewis Collection)



This is a view looking at the station from the opposite end. "Belle of New York" is being prepared, while "Coronation" is still covered up - presumably only one train was going to be working on this day. The large boating lake is on the right and visible in the background is the twin arch bridge across the lake, dating from around 1925.

(Courtesy D. Lewis Collection)



Another view of the railway in East Park, Hull. "Belle of New York", driven by Ken Dove, has just left the station, which is out of sight around the curve to the left at the rear of the train. A swan on the lake is taking an interest in, what appears to be, an empty working. Note the two sets of signals and the well-laid track with long evenly spaced sleepers.

(Courtesy D. Lewis Collection)



This is the far end of the line in East Park, which appears to double out into two terminal roads. John Hair is the driver of "Coronation", being guided by Ken Dove on the tender behind him. This may well be a test train as the track looks freshly laid.

(Courtesy Charlton Collection, Beamish Museum)

CHAPTER EIGHT

SOUTH SHIELDS & GWRYCH CASTLE

1950 - A BUSY YEAR

Introduction

1950 proved to be a very busy year for Ernest Dove. He was involved with the construction of two railways, both of which opened at Easter that year. In the north east of England, at South Shields, he established what he no doubt hoped would be a permanent line on the Promenade, before selling this on along with his iconic locomotive LMSR 4-6-2 "Coronation". At the same time, he was also helping build a new permanent railway at an up and coming tourist attraction on the North Wales coast owned by a self styled millionaire and entrepreneur. This line employed NYCR 4-6-4 "Belle of New York".

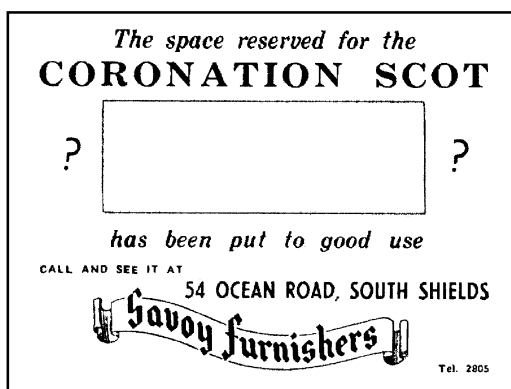
South Shields

The town of South Shields lies at the mouth of the River Tyne and on the North Sea coast, some 8 miles east of Newcastle. Long associated with shipping and coal mining, it also proved popular as a seaside resort and developed the usual accompanying attractions. Quite why Ernest Dove chose South Shields for a railway is unknown, although he may well have been familiar with the area from his road haulage days.

In February 1950, he approached South Shields County Borough Council for permission to operate a railway in the town, suggesting three possible sites: "*near the Groyne*" (possibly at the north end of the North Beach, near the Groyne Lighthouse), "*around South Marine Park Lake*" (the site of the current 9½" gauge Lakeshore Railroad) or "*near Gypsies Green*" (at the south end of the South Beach). The Entertainments & Catering Committee opted for the last of these sites and at their request, Ernest Dove attended the 20th February 1950 meeting of the Committee to discuss the details of his "*application to install a miniature railway with a track 300yds long on the seaward side of the South Promenade opposite the Mowbray Road entrance to South Beach*". The Minutes continued "*The engine would be a model Coronation Scot and the track would be fenced on both sides, with crossings for public use. The proposed charges are 6d for adults and 4d for children*". The Council would receive 20% of the gross receipts. Ernest Dove also went on to suggest the locomotive (his LMSR 4-6-2 "Coronation") should be exhibited in the town before the season commenced. The Committee decided that his application be granted and arrangements made to exhibit "Coronation" in South Shields.

The arrangements to display "Coronation" didn't go to plan, as the *Shields Gazette* of Wednesday 29th March 1950 recorded under the headline "*Two-Ton Model Made Floor Sink*". The paper reported that "Coronation" had arrived in South Shields on Tuesday 28th March with the intention to display it in the shop window of Savoy Furnishers at 54 Ocean Road. The shop had not realised the locomotive would be quite so big at the time they agreed to put it on show and when being taken into the shop the "*floor boards creaked and started to sink*". "Coronation" then retreated to the safety of the Town Hall garage for temporary storage. Unfortunately, the Council were unable to find another location to display the locomotive, but the shop made light of the disappointment with an amusing advert.

The advert referred to, from the *Shields Gazette* of Friday 31st March 1950, following the non-appearance of "Coronation" at Savoy Furnishers.



The new railway opened on Easter Saturday, 8th April 1950 the *Shields Gazette* on that day reporting "*Star attraction on the seafront the two-ton miniature locomotive Coronation Scot started running today at the "Gypsies Green" station at the Mowbray Road end of the seafront. Capable of pulling five coaches with 100 passengers it was not quite ready for use yesterday as previously planned*". The location was on the South Foreshore adjacent to the extensive sands of the South Beach at NZ379670, about ½ mile from South Marine Park.

As far as is known, Ernest Dove still owned "Coronation" and the railway when it opened at Easter. But sometime during the 1950 season he sold the whole railway, including "Coronation" and the concession from the Council, to Arthur Clethro an Amusement Park Caterer from Kirk Ella, Kingston upon Hull. According to the Minutes of Entertainments & Catering Committee meeting of 18th December 1950, Arthur Clethro had purchased the Mowbray Cafe on the South Foreshore and was requesting renewal of the lease for it. This café was presumably close to the railway, but the change in ownership of the railway was not recorded in the Council Minutes and the next mention is when Arthur Clethro requested the "*renewal of his licence to operate a miniature railway on the South Foreshore during the 1951 season*", which was reported by the Town Clerk to the Entertainments & Catering Committee at their meeting of 10th April 1951. The story of this railway and the subsequent history of "Coronation" continue in Chapter Twelve. Presumably, Ernest Dove sold the railway at South Shields to concentrate on developments at Gwrych Castle, near Abergele in what was then Denbighshire.

Gwrych Castle - A Brief History

Gwrych Castle lies on a wooded hillside looking out over the Irish Sea, close to the North Wales coast and just west of Abergele. It was built by Lloyd Hesketh Bamford-Hesketh (1788-1861), whose family acquired the Gwrych estate by marriage in 1787. He came into the estate in 1814 on the death of his father and subsequently set about designing the Castle. The foundation stone was laid on 13th June 1819 and some sections were complete by 1822 and the majority by 1825, although additions and alterations continued until 1854. In 1861, on the death of Lloyd Hesketh Bamford-Hesketh, ownership passed to his son Robert (1826-1894) and then in turn to his daughter Winifred Bamford-Hesketh (1859-1924). In 1878 she married Douglas Hamilton - Lord Cochrane (1852-1935), son of the 11th Earl of Dundonald. In 1885 Douglas became the 12th Earl of Dundonald on the death of his father, and Winifred, the Countess of Dundonald. They made some extensions to the Castle between 1912 & 1914 and it became the Countess's official residence. On her death in 1924 it was willed to the Royal family, who were unable to accept the gift. So under the terms of the will it passed to the religious Order of St John of Jerusalem to be turned into a priory. The Order thought this

was too onerous, so they sold the Castle back to the 12th Earl of Dundonald (who had unsuccessfully contested the will) and donated half of the proceeds to the Church of Wales, as requested in the Countess's will. Subsequently, the Earl produced plans to convert the Castle into a Hydro Hotel with swimming pool, golf courses, tennis courts, entertainment pavilion and houses in the surrounding park. This was the first of many such ideas for use of the Castle. The Earl's plans were opposed by his daughter and did not materialise, so it became unused and throughout the 1930s remained empty. In 1939, the Government requisitioned the Castle from the 13th Earl of Dundonald and subsequently housed Jewish refugee children there throughout the Second World War.

Following the end of war in May 1945, the Government handed back the Castle to the 13th Earl. However, he decided to dispose of the Castle and estate. It was sold at auction in July 1946 to Robert Rennie of Wrexham. He did not keep the Castle very long though, selling it on in 1947 to Stratton House School in Crewe. Suggestions for further use at this time were a

Leslie Thomas Salts (1907-1986)

Leslie Salts was a colourful self styled millionaire and entrepreneur. He was born on 21st November 1907 in Tranmere, Birkenhead in what was then Cheshire. By 1911 he was living in nearby Hoylake with his family, who seem to have come from a fairly humble background (his father is shown as a "Grainer & House Decorator" in the 1911 census and his paternal grandfather a "Plumber" in the 1881 census), so it is not known how he had the means to buy Gwrych Castle in 1948. At that time he was described as a "*Liverpool & Morecambe businessman*". The Castle guidebooks from the 1950s state he was "*a devoted churchman, who, all his life, has sung in the choir*". He was also an artist "*brilliantly gifted with pencil and brush*". By 1966 he had started calling himself Count Leslie Salts - this being based on a College of Arms document, which acknowledged that he was the grandson of Thomas Zedtwitz Saltz who in turn was the son of Wilhelm Zedtwitz Saltz who married Countess Olga Clementine Paula Zedtwitz, the daughter of the Count Hugo von Zedtwitz of Austria. Later research by the Salts family showed this claim to be bogus! After selling Gwrych Castle in 1968, he moved to Ramsey on the Isle of Man where he was involved with a number of headline making business ventures. He died in Birkenhead in 1986.

girl's boarding school and a folk museum. In 1948 ownership passed to Leslie Salts from the Wirral. The *Abergele Visitor* of Saturday 16th October 1948 reported that he had purchased the Castle and 300 acres of parkland. The price was not disclosed, but the Castle and park were said to be valued at £100,000. The paper went on to say Leslie Salts intended to make Gwrych Castle a "*mirror of Wales*", specifically designed for day visitors with Welsh choirs, folk dancers, indoor and outdoor games, an exhibition of paintings and possibly an outdoor swimming pool. The Salts family now made Gwrych Castle their home and he wasted no time in opening the Castle itself for public events. What appears to be the first of these (judging by adverts in the *Abergele Visitor*) was a "*Grand Old Time Masked Dance and Dinner*" held during the evening of Thursday 9th December 1948. The Castle and grounds opened to the public at Easter 1949, the *Abergele Visitor* of Saturday 23rd April 1949 reporting "*Over 8,000 people visited Gwrych Castle*

over the [Easter] weekend". Admission was 1/- for adults, with children at 6d. The Castle seems to have been immediately popular with visitors and for the 1950 season many new attractions were added, including a Monkey House, Aquarium, Punch & Judy show, opening of five caves in the grounds and more importantly a 10¼" gauge miniature railway!

Gwrych Castle Miniature Railway - Construction & Opening

It seems by November 1949, Leslie Salts had decided a miniature railway would be a worthy addition to the attractions at the Castle. Therefore, he placed an advert in *The World's Fair* of 26th November 1949 stating "*Gwrych Castle, Abergele, Require a Miniature Railway for the*

1950 Season. Shares. Good Site. Write: Proprietor". Presumably, Ernest Dove responded to the advert and entered into a suitable agreement with Leslie Salts. This probably saw the formation of the Gwrych Castle Miniature Railway Company, which is referred to in some of the Castle publicity. Unfortunately, Companies House have no knowledge or records of this company. However, it appears Leslie Salts acquired the locomotives and coaches from Ernest Dove for the new railway and, presumably, the latter received a share of the takings or a payment to operate the railway. Building of the line probably took place in early 1950, as it was completed ready for opening at the start of the 1950 season at Easter.

To operate his new railway, Leslie Salts purchased the NYCR 4-6-4 "Belle of New York" from Ernest Dove, along with a number of coaches. This locomotive had been employed during 1949 at Kingston upon Hull and Darlington, alongside "Coronation", but was spare after the planned sale to Middlesbrough Town Council fell through. The railway carried its first passengers on Wednesday 5th April 1950 - this and the following day were "Preview" days to which *"Camp, Hotel & Boarding House proprietors only"* were invited, according to an advert in the *North Wales Weekly News* of Thursday 30th March 1950. The advert went on to state there would be no charge, but *"everything will be in full swing, although the Castle does not officially open until Good Friday. Come, see and enjoy the beauty and amenities of this great Castle, which are enjoyed so much by your guests"*. The railway saw its first paying public passengers on Good Friday, 7th April 1950 - the *Abergele Visitor* of Saturday 8th April 1950 reporting *"The new attractions include the miniature railway on the Nant-y-Bella Drive 300 feet above the sea and overlooking the "Tropical-like" garden terraces. The steam engine which Mr Salts has purchased is the world-famed "Belle of New York", regarded by experts as one of the most amazing engineering feats of this century"(!)*. In typical Dove style the paper went on *"It took Mr Ernest Dove 8 years to build and has been greatly admired by members of the Royal family"*. Along with the railway some of Ernest Dove's models were put on display, the paper adding *"The exhibition of working model steam engines from the "Rocket" to 1950 will enthral the boys (and their fathers)"*.

The railway was 400 yards in length, running south eastwards from a station called "Gwrych Castle" located at SH92887743 next to the top porch entrance to the Castle, out through a large castellated arch and, at first, along Nant-y-Bella drive. After a short distance, the line diverged away from the drive, but running parallel and slightly to the south of to it - terminating at SH93187724. The line was a simple "end to end" run, with Gwrych Castle station having two platform lines, which converged into the single running line. The run was along a wooded hillside and according to a guidebook of the time *"a wonderful panorama of Welsh country and coast can be seen by the passengers"*. With the locomotive facing west, trains were propelled out from Gwrych Castle station and hauled back. There was no shed - the locomotives and coaches merely being sheeted over when not in use. It seems the intention was to have two trains running at busy times, with one no doubt loaded ready for departure when the other arrived back at the Castle station. The *Abergele Visitor* of Saturday 8th April 1950 had reported that *"Another and also famous engine will pull a second train - this is the sensational "Silver Bullet" [sic]"*. However, it is not featured in the advert for the Easter 1950 opening and was probably not completed at this time. The locomotive concerned was the NYCR "Hudson" 4-6-4 "Silver Queen" (see Chapter Twelve for more details). It was certainly in service by the Whitsun holiday at the end of May, as an advert in the *Abergele Visitor* of Saturday 27th May 1950 suggests that visitors *"Ride behind the "Belle of New York" and "Silver Queen" locos on the Miniature Railway"*.

ALL THE FAMILY CAN
Spend a Happy **EASTER**
at **GWRYCH CASTLE**
GRAND WELSH EASTER **ABERGELE**
FESTIVAL OF MUSIC

● **WELSH CHOIRS** including:
RITA LANDIS' WORLD FAMOUS LADIES' CHOIR
DYSERTH YOUNG WALES CHOIR
COURTAULDS (Greenfield) MALE VOICE CHOIR

● **GORDON BANNER** Britain's Greatest
HAMMOND ORGANIST

★ **DANCING** ★ **B.B.C. SOLOISTS**
★ **LEN JONES**, Famous Welsh Tenor
★ **TED LEWIS DISCOVERIES** ★ **PRIZES**
★ **AMAZING MARIONETTES**
★ **MAIR DAVIES**, Mezza-Soprano

MONKEY HOUSE • CURIOS
PETS CORNER • SWINGS
SLIDES • AQUARIUM
PUNCH & JUDY

MINIATURE RAILWAY ALSO
MODEL RAILWAY EXHIBITION
from the "ROCKET" to 1950

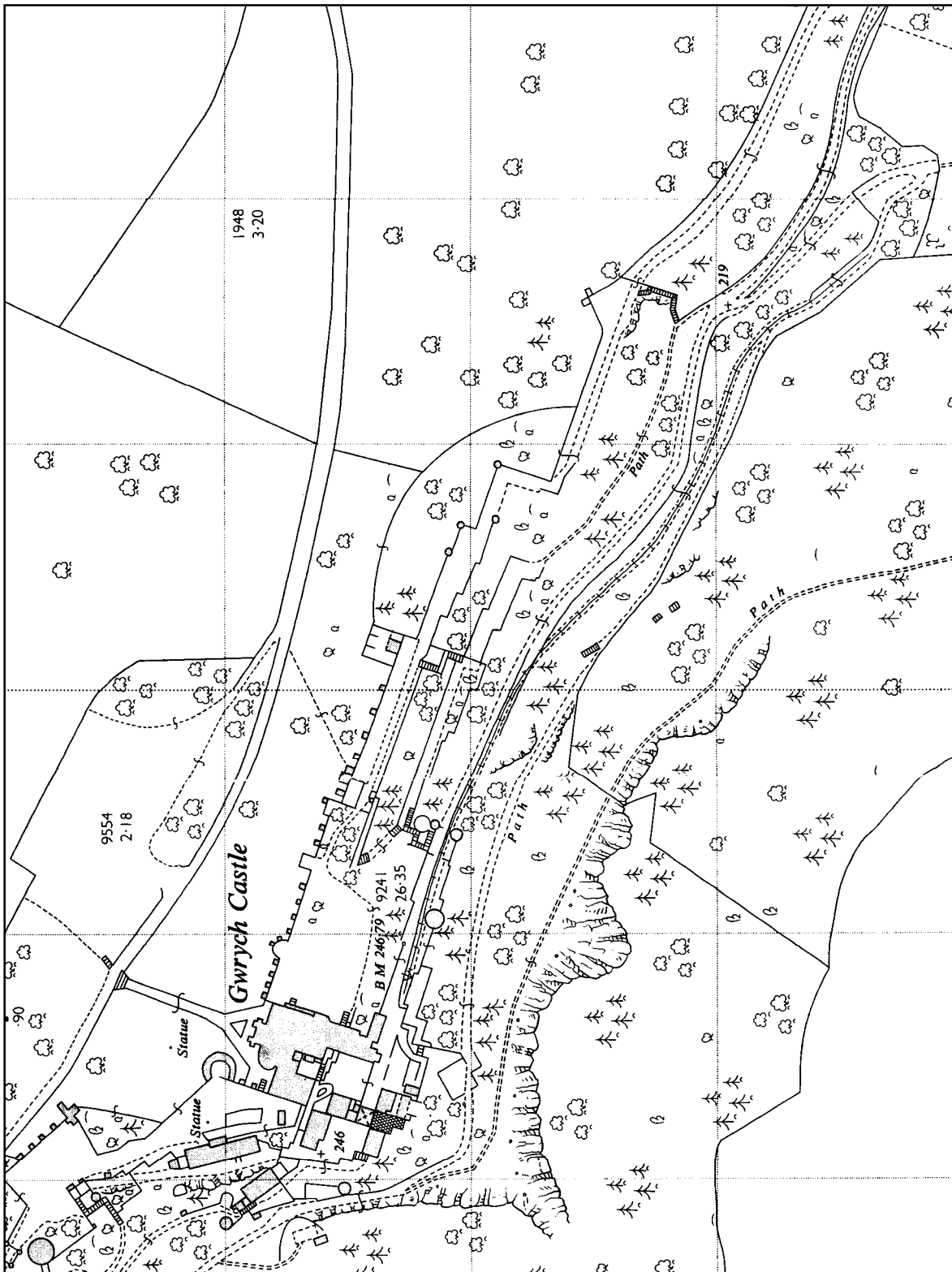
CAFE & TERRACE CAFETERIA
RUSTIC CAFETERIA & COFFEE LOUNGE
SNACK BARS • ICE CREAM
CASTLE OPEN TO VISITORS
FROM GOOD FRIDAY

Ride in . .
The **MINIATURE**
RAILWAY behind the
'BELLE OF NEW YORK'
WORLD'S GREATEST MODEL STEAM LOCO.

ADMISSION 1/-, KIDDIES 6d. Free Car & Coach Park L. T. SALTS
(Prop.)

An advert from the *Abergele Visitor* of Saturday 8th April 1950 announcing the opening of the Castle for the 1950 season. Visitors are encouraged to "Ride in The Miniature Railway behind "Belle of New York" World's Greatest Model Steam Loco". Note also the "Model Railway Exhibition from the "Rocket" to 1950". The Castle was very popular with visitors at this time, and would become more so during the summer of 1950 with the arrival of boxers Bruce Woodcock and Randolph Turpin, who both trained at the Castle.

The Castle and its attractions certainly proved popular with the public, the *Abergele Visitor* of Saturday 3rd June 1950 reporting that a total of 90,000 people had visited over the three days of the Whitsun holiday weekend. The end of petrol rationing, just a week before, no doubt helped boost that figure. The railway closed at the end of the season in mid September, and "Silver Queen" (which was still owned by Ernest Dove) then left the railway and returned to Nottingham. The subsequent history of the Gwrych Castle Miniature Railway continues in Chapter Eleven.



An extract from an Ordnance Survey 25" Map revised in September 1966, published in 1967 and reproduced here approximately full size. The railway can be seen running from the behind the Castle and out, for a short way, along Nant-y-Bella Drive, which runs to the bottom righthand corner of the map. Gwrych Castle station was located immediately below the "B" of BM 246.79.

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Ken Dove brings "Belle of New York" with a well-loaded train into the station on the Gwrych Castle Miniature Railway, during the first season in 1950. Trains ran through the castellated arch just visible beyond the rear of the train. Above the locomotive's headlight is a water tank, the wording on which reads "Gwrych Castle Railway Water Tank".
(Courtesy S. Townsend Collection)



Photographs of the Gwrych Castle Miniature Railway away from the station are rare. In this obviously posed view, Ken Dove is driving "Silver Queen". The locomotive only ran in this condition for the 1950 season, before being rebuilt. The line's location, on a wooded hillside, can be clearly seen. A fake tunnel can just be discerned on the extreme left.
(Courtesy S. Townsend Collection)

CHAPTER NINE

EDINBURGH & LLANDUDNO

1951 - 1954

Introduction

After setting up a railway in South Shields at Easter 1950 and establishing the railway at Gwyrch Castle for Leslie Salts in the same year, Ernest Dove went back to operating a temporary railway and exhibition for charity in 1951. However, unlike the tours between 1945 and 1948 this was at just one location, in Edinburgh. Ken Dove was left to run the railway at Gwyrch Castle for Leslie Salts. Yet, 1951 (which was "Festival of Britain" year) started in a big way for Ken - as on Thursday 4th January 1951 he married Joyce Margaret Posnett, an Insurance Manager's daughter from Oxclose Lane, Arnold. Ken gave his residence at the time as the family home at 17 Ribblesdale Road, Sherwood - presumably lodging at Gwyrch Castle during the season. His stated profession was "Engineer". By May 1952 Leslie Salts had started on plans for a railway at Fleetwood in Lancashire, and this line is fully covered in the next chapter. However, by the late summer of 1952 Leslie Salts was also planning a second railway in North Wales - at the summit of the Great Orme in Llandudno, which Ken, and no doubt Ernest, helped to construct. This railway, together with the temporary line in Edinburgh, is covered in this chapter.

Edinburgh - East Meadows **Wednesday 2nd May - Monday 6th August 1951**

In the summer of 1951 Ernest Dove returned to the city of Edinburgh, which he had visited during the 1948 tour. At the 14th November 1950 meeting of the Parks, Markets and Farms Sub Committee (of the Civic Amenities Committee) of Edinburgh Corporation, a letter was submitted from the Scottish Children's League asking if the "*Corporation would be prepared to make a site available in Bruntsfield Links or the Meadows for a few months beginning in May 1951 for a miniature railway*". The profits were to be given to the Children's Shelter in Edinburgh High Street. The Parks Superintendent reported that either location would be suitable and was requested by the Sub Committee to arrange a site for the railway. The Parks Superintendent then reported back at a meeting of Civic Amenities Committee on 12th December 1950 that the proposed site was "*on the south side of the allotments in the East Meadows*". The Committee gave approval to this site and remitted the Finance Committee to fix the terms on which the site would be made available. This they did at a meeting on 12th February 1951 - the rent being fixed at £1.00 per week.

The Meadows comprises 58 acres of open parkland, just to the south of the city centre. It was once a loch, supplying drinking water for the city, before being slowly drained from the middle of the 17th century onwards. From 1722 avenues of trees and paths were formed, with Middle Meadow Walk (completed in 1743) effectively dividing the area into West Meadows and East Meadows. During the Second World War around 500 allotments were dug in the East Meadows, the last not being turfed over again until the 1960s. Today, the Meadows are a popular open space for sport, events or a stroll along its tree lined paths. The site used for the railway was along the south side of the East Meadows, running through the avenue of trees

alongside Melville Drive, from a station at the children's playground adjacent to Hope Park Crescent (NT261726) to near Middle Meadow Walk (NT257726). To operate the railway, Ernest Dove took two locomotives to Edinburgh. One was the NYCR "Hudson" 4-6-4 "Silver Queen", which had been used at Gwrych Castle during the 1950 season. Over the winter of 1950/1951, Ernest Dove made some bodywork alterations to the locomotive and it then became No.1951 "Commodore Vanderbilt". The visit to Edinburgh appears to have been the first public appearance in its new guise. Accompanying "Commodore Vanderbilt" was the 4-4w petrol locomotive "The Pride of California", built by G & S Light Engineering Company Limited in 1939 for Dudley Zoo - this was its only known public appearance under Ernest Dove's ownership. For the most part, Ernest Dove ran the line without Ken, who was now of course looking after the railway at Gwrych Castle. However, Ken did attend the opening - one of the photographs shows him driving "Commodore Vanderbilt" on the opening day. (See Chapter Twelve for more details of both locomotives).

The railway was opened during the afternoon of Wednesday 2nd May 1951 by the Countess of Minto. The *Edinburgh Evening News* of Thursday 3rd May 1951 reporting "*A whistle blown by the Countess of Minto started a group of excited youngsters from the Edinburgh Children's Shelter off on a short but enjoyable journey*". The weather appears to have been wet from the raised umbrellas in the photographs. The line was formed of two parallel tracks, according to the paper only 100 yards long - perhaps indicating the full length had not been laid by the opening. Two trains were employed - one running on each track. Photographs appear to show "The Pride of California" propelling its trains out from the station, with "Commodore Vanderbilt" hauling trains out of the station on the track closest to Melville Drive. Also reporting on the opening *The Scotsman* of Thursday 3rd May 1951 added "*two model locomotives - the steam driven Commodore Vanderbilt and the Diesel turbine-driven Pride of California - pulled out simultaneously from the station at East Meadows, Edinburgh yesterday afternoon*" [with the first trains]. There was also an exhibition of models in a marquee adjacent to the station, presumably just the smaller models - the larger 7¼" gauge engines having been sold on by this time.

Sadly, the railway soon came to the unwelcome attention of vandals. The *Edinburgh Evening News* of Tuesday 8th May 1951 reporting "*Workmen today gave a final check to their repairs to the model railway in the East Meadows, Edinburgh, which was damaged by vandals yesterday. Sleepers had been torn up and large sections of the 250 yard long line disjoined*". If correct, the report indicates the track had been lengthened since the opening some days earlier. Ernest Dove was reported as saying he was sure that children had not committed the damage and "*only a group of men could have lifted these heavy sections of line*". The paper went on to report that "*workmen were busy driving pegs in beside the sleepers, so that there was no possibility of them moving, and also to discourage anyone who might try to lift them up*". The vandals also slashed the canvas and damaged a pole of an adjacent "tea marquee", which was then taken down. The sad affair prompted one local resident to write to the *Edinburgh Evening Dispatch*; his letter published on Wednesday 9th May 1951 concluded "*It is a slur on the name of the City of Edinburgh to know that this railway has operated for years throughout Britain on behalf of charity and that its first subjection to vandalism should be in the Scottish Capital. Her citizens must indeed be sick at heart*". We know from newspaper reports of Ernest Dove's earlier tours, that is not quite true - although this was probably the most serious case of vandalism any of his railways were subjected to. Despite this set back, the railway seems to have been a success and there were no reports of any further damage. It certainly appeared to have been popular - the *Weekly Scotsman* of Thursday 10th May 1951 recording a "little school boy" as complaining "*I don't want an Ice*

Cream, Mummy - I want another ride on the train". The paper went on "The two locomotives, the steam driven Commodore Vanderbilt and diesel turbine driven Pride of California, pulled 7,000 passengers during the first four days".

Originally it had been intended to run the railway until the end of July, but by the start of that month moves were made to extend this. At their meeting on 3rd July 1951 the Parks, Markets and Farms Sub Committee recommended that an application by the Scottish Children's League for an extension to 15th September 1951 be approved. The Finance Committee then set the rent for the additional time at the same £1.00 per week as for the original period. However, for whatever reason the railway only continued until Bank Holiday Monday, 6th August 1951, closing after that day's running - the *Edinburgh Evening News* of Tuesday 7th August 1951 reporting *"A cheque for £275 has been received by the Scottish Children's League from Mr S E Dove, whose miniature railway has been operating in the East Meadows, Edinburgh, during the past three months"*. The proceeds from the railway and exhibition went to the Royal Scottish Society for Prevention of Cruelty to Children, to assist in meeting the cost of a new children's shelter at 41 Polwarth Terrace (in south west Edinburgh) to replace the outdated premises in the High Street, which had been founded in 1894. *The World's Fair* of Saturday 11th August 1951 was able to report *"Mr Ernest Dove's miniature railway closed down last week after a very successful season at the East Meadows, Edinburgh"*. The locomotives were said to *"have carried over the tracks approximately 67,000 passengers, making between 30 and 40 journeys per day"*. Both locomotives then returned to Nottingham and were subsequently sold on by Ernest Dove - "Commodore Vanderbilt" to Leslie Salts and "The Pride of California" to Paignton Zoo.

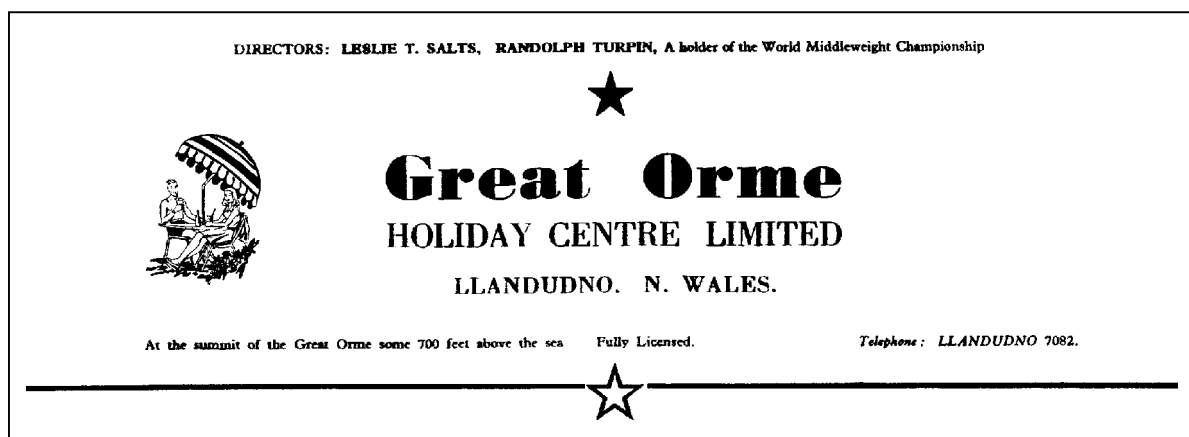
Llandudno - Great Orme Hotel

The Victorian seaside resort of Llandudno lies on the North Wales coast. Dominating the view to the west from the long curved bay, on which Llandudno is located, is the Great Orme rising to 679 feet above sea level. This large limestone headland is said to be named after the Old Norse word "ormr" - a worm or sea serpent. Formed 300 million years ago, faults in the layers of limestone allowed mineralisation to form deposits of copper and a little lead, bringing about mining in the area from the Bronze Age. This was continued by the Romans and much later revived at the end of the 17th century. The last mine closed in the 1860s. The prominent position of the Great Orme made it an ideal location for a telegraph station. In 1826 the Liverpool Docks Trustees installed such a system along the North Wales coast and established a station close to the summit. This enabled messages, using semaphore signals, about sightings of incoming ships to be passed from Holyhead to Liverpool. The station had a keeper's cottage attached and this was still used when the system was updated to electric telegraph and then to telephone around 1900. By this time the cottage had developed a sideline selling refreshments to visitors and became known as Telegraph House or Inn. The 3ft 6in gauge cable worked Great Orme Tramway fully opened on 8th July 1903, linking Llandudno town to the summit - making it easier for visitors to reach the Great Orme. The prospect of the tramway opening and the new business it would bring brought about the construction of a new Hotel. May 1903 saw most of the original Inn demolished and work started on a new building. Known as Telegraph Hotel and later Great Orme Hotel, it opened in 1904 along with an adjacent golf course. The Hotel and golf course seem to have been successful and remained popular up to the Second World War.

During the war, the Great Orme was requisitioned by the Government - the Hotel itself being used by the RAF as a radar station. Following their departure at the end of the war, the Hotel was reopened as the "Great Orme International Sporting and Holiday Centre". However, this does not seem to have been a success and it was put up for auction in 1949. It failed to sell, although the golf course was later sold off, and the Hotel remained empty with just a café open during the summer months. On Wednesday 23rd July 1952 it was again put up for sale at a public auction at 3.30pm in the Hotel dining room. The *Llandudno & District Advertiser* of Saturday 26th July 1952 reported 30 people including Leslie Salts attended the auction, with an opening asking price of £15,000. This was reduced to £12,000, but the first bid was for only £5,000. However, the paper went on to report the Hotel and 15 acres of land were "*bought for £10,000 by Mr Leslie Salts of Gwrych Castle, Abergele, in partnership with Randolph Turpin*". Following the auction Leslie Salts announced it would be used "*as a day centre of the most unusual kind, with emphasis on international sport, particularly boxing*". Boxer Randolph Turpin first met Leslie Salts, when he based himself for training at Gwrych Castle in August 1950. Leslie Salts then became Turpin's self styled business manager. These public training sessions proved popular with visitors to the Castle and continued in 1951 and 1952. Apparently, Randolph Turpin put up £7,500 of the purchase price with Leslie Salts providing £2,500. It was intended to be a successful business venture to allow Randolph Turpin an income when he retired from boxing. They formed a company called Great Orme Holiday Centre Limited - with themselves as the two Directors. At the time of the sale the Hotel had 29 bedrooms and was fully licensed, but was not used again as a residential hotel.

Randolph Turpin (1928-1966)

Boxer Randolph Turpin was born on 7th June 1928 in Leamington Spa, Warwickshire - the youngest of a family of five. His father had emigrated from British Guiana and all three sons were boxers. Dick was the first black boxer to be allowed to fight for a British title. But it was Randolph who was the most successful. Turning professional in September 1946, he became the Middleweight champion of Britain in October 1950 and of Europe in February 1951. However, he became an instant national hero when, as a 33-1 underdog, he defeated "Sugar" Ray Robinson before 18,000 spectators at Earls Court, London on 10th July 1951 - the first British holder of the World Middleweight title for 60 years. Sadly, he lost the title at the New York rematch in September 1951. His career started a decline around 1954 and his last professional fight was on 9th September 1958. After living in North Wales through most of the 1950s he returned in 1957 to his home town of Leamington Spa where, struggling financially, he tragically shot and killed himself on 17th May 1966 - aged just 37.



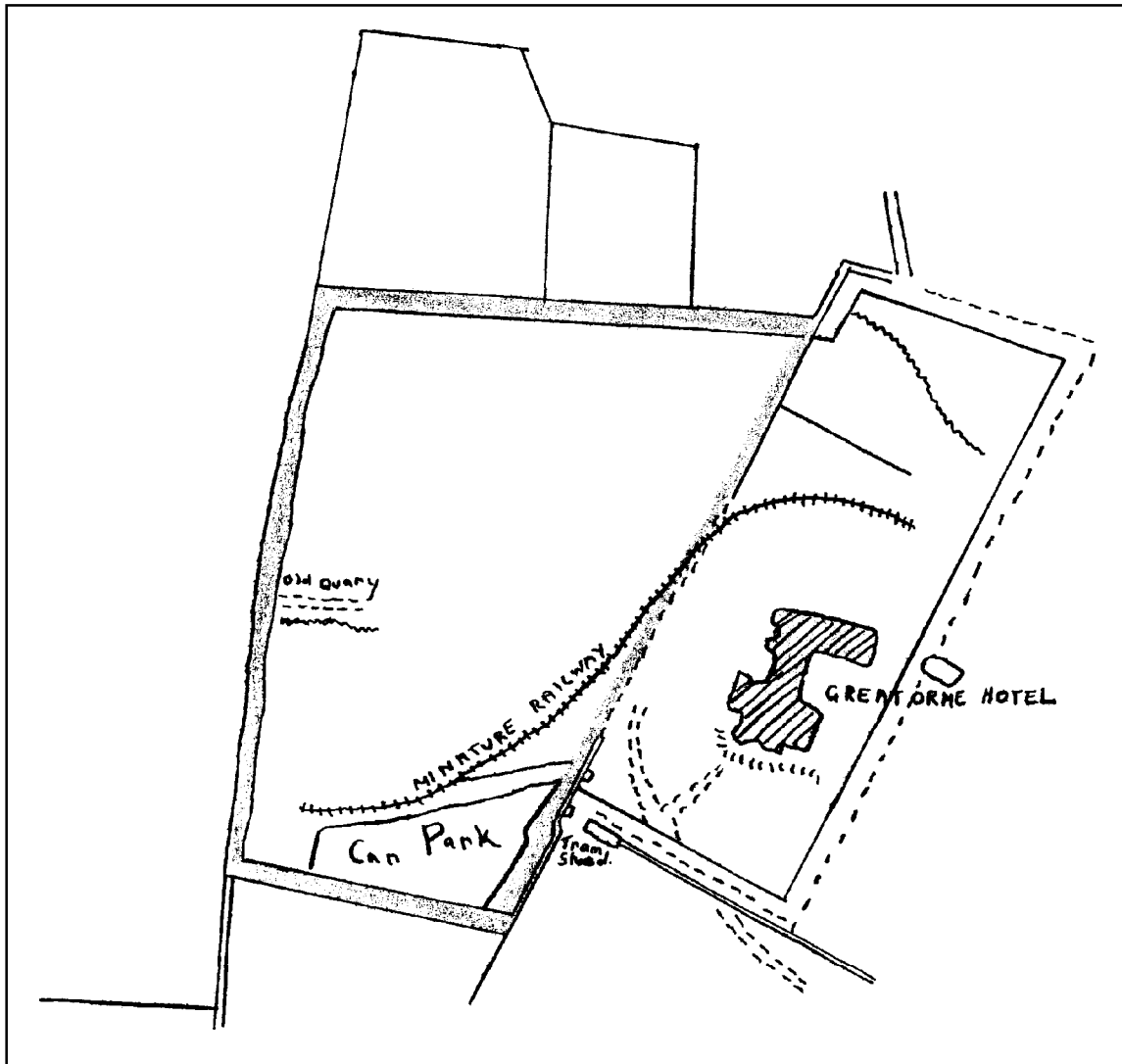
The letterhead for Leslie Salts' and Randolph Turpin's company, taken from a November 1952 letter to Llandudno Urban District Council. The original has blue writing, with the upper star, drawing and thick lower line in red.

Great Orme Miniature Railway

Although opening was not intended until Easter 1953, little time was lost in planning new attractions for the Hotel and summit. One of these was a miniature railway, no doubt the idea of Leslie Salts. The *Llandudno & District Advertiser* of Saturday 6th September 1952 was able to report "*There must be very few, if any, places in the country where it is possible to take rides on a miniature railway on the top of a mountain but Mr Leslie Salts and Randolph Turpin, joint owners of the Great Orme Hotel, to be opened next Easter as an international sporting centre, have made plans for such a railway*". The *North Wales Weekly News* of Thursday 4th September 1952 stated "*already a bulldozer is on the site cutting out the track*". It went on to say "*The engine to be used will be a £3,000 model of the "Coronation Scot" and it will pull a train accommodating 65 passengers. A complete station, together with a signal box and other details to scale, are to be constructed*". This locomotive was, of course, Ernest Dove's LMSR 4-6-2 "Coronation", which as recorded in Chapter Eight, he had sold in 1950 to Arthur Clethro at South Shields. "Coronation" and whole railway at South Shields were now for sale again, but Salts and Turpin were not successful in purchasing them - see Chapter Twelve for more details. The paper also added that it was intended to "*illuminate the track with fairy lights*".

The commencement of ground works for the railway and also a car park must have alerted Llandudno Urban District Council. On 8th September 1952 Leslie Salts wrote to the County Planning Officer stating in his opinion planning permission was not required and that "*levelling of certain pieces of ground have been embarked upon*". There then followed a lot of discussion between the parties, mainly about the disturbance to public footpaths at the summit. By January 1953, Leslie Salts' solicitor was able to provide a plan of the proposed railway for the Council. On 5th February 1953 the Works Committee of Llandudno Urban District Council recommended to the County Planning Committee that the proposal for the "*Miniature Railway and Car Park at Great Orme Hotel*" be approved subject to there being "*no interference with public rights of way over the land*". The Caernarfon County Council Northern Area Planning Sub Committee then granted permission at its meeting on 11th February 1953. Presumably, work to complete the construction of the railway could now be finished. Ken Dove laid the track for the new railway.

The railway probably carried its first passengers on Wednesday 1st April 1953, this being a "pre-view" day. The *Llandudno & District Advertiser* of Saturday 28th March 1953 reported "*The miniature railway also starts operation next week from the specially constructed railway station*". It also carried a full page advert, which stated "*Next week sees the opening of the Great Orme Holiday Centre*". This advert also added "*Next Wednesday. We invite hotel and boarding house owners to come and see the Great Orme - Free of course, as a pre-view*". The official opening of the Great Orme Holiday Centre was on Easter Monday, 6th April 1953. The railway was a sort of Y shaped line. The only station being located at SH766834, just below the Hotel and between it and the Great Orme Tramway. From there, trains were propelled out, alongside the car park, where they reversed and ran along below the west and north sides of the Hotel. A shed was provided at the far end of the line. The whole railway was around 300 yards in length. The *Llandudno & District Advertiser* of Saturday 28th March 1953, describing the line reported "*The track goes through a cutting in the hills in the direction of Anglesey, from which it is possible to see a vast panorama of the island and then turns back in the direction of Rhyl, affording magnificent views of Liverpool Bay*".



The plan of the proposed railway sent by Leslie Salts' solicitor to the Clerk of Llandudno Urban District Council on 15th January 1953. The main difference between this plan and the railway as built, was the spur into the station, which is only partly shown. The station was actually situated just above the Tram Shed - a continuation of the spur, which appears to have been drawn on as an afterthought.

Note "miniature" has been incorrectly spelt!

(Author's Collection)

To work trains on the new railway, Leslie Salts moved NYCR 4-6-4 "Commodore Vanderbilt" from Gwrych Castle, where it had spent the 1952 season on display. He had obtained this locomotive from Ernest Dove following its use at Edinburgh in the summer of 1951 as already detailed in this chapter. A small booklet for the Great Orme Holiday Centre, published for the 1953 season, had a picture of "Commodore Vanderbilt" in the station and stated "1600 nuts and bolts have gone into its construction. It is capable of a speed of 41 miles an hour. The Commodore Vanderbilt is owned by Mr Salts and Mr Randy Turpin". The driver for the 1953 season was Tommy Pallister, who had driven many times for Ernest Dove. The *North Wales Weekly News* of Thursday 4th September 1952 informed us Tommy was from Nottingham and that he was only 4ft 11in in height!

Many Leading Sporting Personalities will be
present during the Easter Opening

ATTRACTIONS INCLUDE:

★ **RANDY'S BAR**

FULLY LICENSED

THE MOST UNUSUAL BAR IN
GREAT BRITAIN!

FREE HOUSE

★ **£5,000 Miniature Railway**

pulled by the famous Steam Locomotive "COMMODORE VANDERBILT"
Wonderful Views to Anglesey, Puffin Island, Rhyl, Merseyside, I.O.M

★ **Little Theatre** the delightful Mecca for children

with MAGIC, PUNCH AND JUDY, COMPETITIONS, Etc.
Resident Magician: PETER RAY

★ **Exhibition of the Replica Set of British Crown Jewels**

A CORONATION SCOOP!

★ **Exhibition of Randy Turpin's Trophies**

★ **DEMONSTRATIONS OF SPORTS OF ALL KINDS AND CHILDREN'S CORNER**
with Swings, Slides, See-saws

★ **REFRESHMENTS : ICE CREAM AND SOFT DRINK BARS : MUSIC : PHOTOS**
★ **AUTOGRAPHS : GIFT SHOP : CAR PARK**

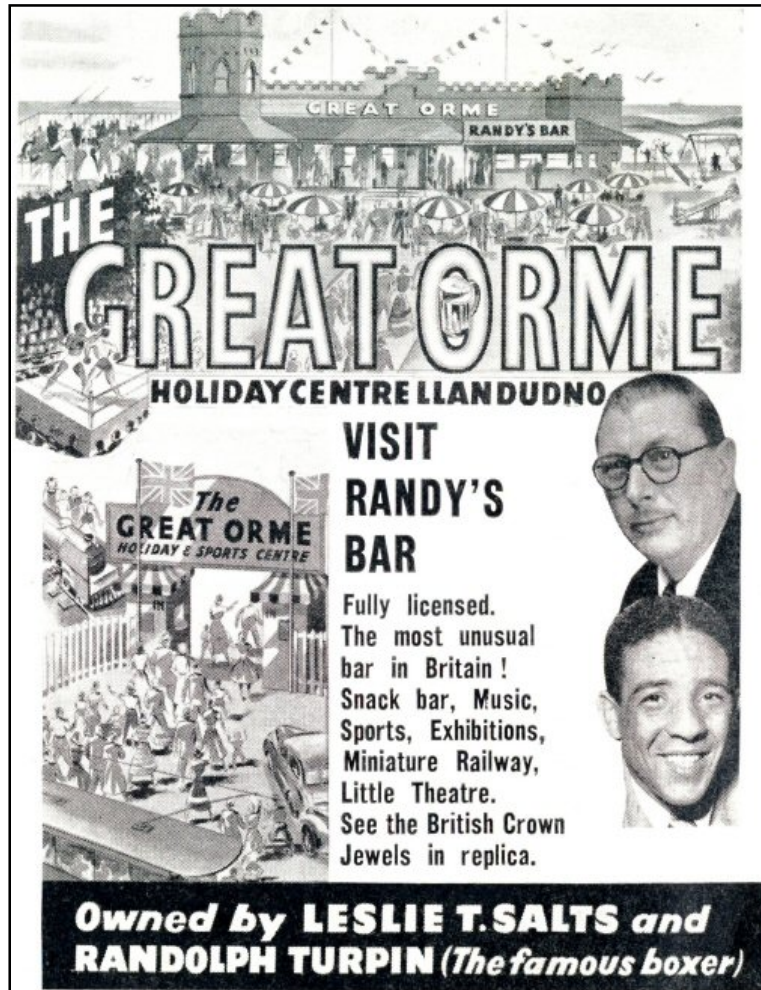
Part of the full page advert from the *Llandudno & District Advertiser* of Saturday 28th March 1953, announcing the opening "next week" of the Great Orme Holiday Centre.

This was Coronation year, hence the "scoop" of having a replica set of the Crown Jewels! It is a shame, therefore, that Leslie Salts and Randolph Turpin were not able to obtain Ernest Dove's "Coronation" locomotive to work on the railway. The "Wonderful Views" from the railway were obviously dependant on good weather!



This paper roll ticket is thought to be for the Great Orme Miniature Railway. Unfortunately, the colour of the original is not known.

Randolph Turpin became the manager and resident licensee of the Great Orme Holiday Centre and was apparently left by Leslie Salts to run things himself. Unfortunately, Turpin was a much better boxer than a manager and after a good start the business started a decline. "Commodore Vanderbilt" left the railway after the first season and was sold on by Leslie Salts to a railway in Skegness (see Chapter Twelve). For the 1954 season the line was worked by a petrol locomotive - this was "The Chieftain" built by Ken Dove at Gwrych Castle (see Chapter Eleven). Unfortunately, no photographs have been found of the line from that year. However, after the 1954 season the railway was closed and the track removed - "The Chieftain" returning to Gwrych Castle. Following this, Leslie Salts pulled out of the partnership leaving Randolph Turpin on his own. After the end of his professional boxing career in 1958, things became more difficult financially for him. With the Inland Revenue pressing for the payment of outstanding Income Tax, Randolph Turpin sold the Hotel and grounds for £9,000 in 1961 to Llandudno Urban District Council. Today the Great Orme remains a popular tourist attraction - many reaching the summit by way of the Great Orme Tramway. The former Hotel is now a collection of shops, amusements, restaurant, cafe and a bar. The car park has been enlarged over the years and today there is no sign a miniature railway ever ran on the Great Orme. The site of the station has been partly been taken by the visitor centre.



This advert comes from the official programme for the fight between Randolph Turpin and Charles Humez on Tuesday 9th June 1953 at the White City Stadium, London. The Miniature Railway is briefly depicted - with a locomotive that looks more like "Belle of New York" than "Commodore Vanderbilt". Note it was felt necessary to explain who Randolph Turpin was ("*The famous boxer*"), but not Leslie Salts!

Temporary Railways

The line at Edinburgh in the summer of 1951 was to be the last temporary railway operated by Ernest Dove. After this, he was no doubt busy helping Leslie Salts plan and build the Great Orme Miniature Railway and (as we shall see in the next chapter) the Fleetwood Miniature Railway). However, changes to insurance regulations around 1953/1954 may have precluded any more temporary lines on the scale he previously operated. In his article about Stanley Battison in the *Heywood Journal* No.23 (Autumn 1987), Peter James records that Battison's 10¼" gauge LMSR 4-6-0 "Royal Scot", completed in 1953, was only "*run locally a few times, but this had to come to an end when insurance premiums suddenly rose to prohibitive levels; moreover the insurance rules had changed which made the running of an engine of this size at weekends impossible*". Stanley Battison therefore sold the locomotive in 1954. Quite what the insurance changes were is not known, but if Ernest Dove had been contemplating anymore temporary lines, this may well have dissuaded him.



A rather grainy view, but nevertheless of interest. It clearly shows the position of the station on the Great Orme Miniature Railway, immediately below the Hotel. This area has now been partly taken by the visitor centre, which itself lies behind the upper station building of the Great Orme Tramway. "Commodore Vanderbilt" is at rest in the station, which was on a short spur. Ahead of the locomotive, just out of view, lies a buffer stop.

(Author's Collection)



"Commodore Vanderbilt" has propelled its train out of the station, over the track in the left foreground. It has just reversed and is now hauling the train along the section of track, which ran along the west and north sides of the hotel. The railway had only been open a short time when this photograph was taken. "Commodore Vanderbilt" was a rebuild of "Silver Queen" and had spent the 1951 season running in the East Meadows at Edinburgh.

(A. Pratt. Courtesy S. Townsend Collection. 9/4/53)

CHAPTER TEN

FLEETWOOD MINIATURE RAILWAY

CONTROVERSY AT THE SEASIDE

Introduction

We must now step back slightly in time to 1952, for it was in that year Leslie Salts first applied to operate a railway in Fleetwood, Lancashire. No doubt railway expertise, and certainly the locomotives, were supplied by Ernest and Ken Dove. Sadly, the railway proved to be short lived, which must have been a disappointment to Leslie Salts who expanded a lot of time and money in getting it up and running. The venture proved controversial for Fleetwood Borough Council, who seem to have brought about the line's demise after just two seasons of operation in 1954 and 1955.

Fleetwood

The town of Fleetwood is located on the Fylde Peninsula, some eight miles north of the popular holiday resort of Blackpool, being bounded on three sides by the Irish Sea, Morecambe Bay and the River Wyre. It was the first planned town of the Victorian period and was the brainchild of Sir Peter Hesketh, who designed the town as a seaport and holiday resort. The town assumed its name in 1836 and by the turn of the century was one of the three major fishing ports in the country. This industry reached a peak by the 1920s and was effectively brought to an end by the "Cod Wars" of the late 1960s and early 1970s. The "new" promenade (known as the Esplanade) on the north shore and bordering Morecambe Bay, and against which the railway ran, was opened in 1887. An outer promenade was added in 1928. Between the wars, Fleetwood Borough Council made a determined effort to promote their town as a holiday resort to try and win back visitors from Blackpool. The plans were announced in February 1929 and in the 1930s the seafront along the north shore was developed in typical seaside fashion. In 1932 the Marine Lake and Model Yacht Pool were opened, with the Marine Hall entertainment complex and adjacent Marine Gardens following in 1935. Today the town's economy still revolves around the traditional areas of fishing, tourism and port activity.

Planning

The proposal by Leslie Salts to build and operate a miniature railway in Fleetwood, proved to be contentious. It took Fleetwood Borough Council around seven months to agree to the proposed railway. This delay may have been due to at least three Councillors living close to the planned route along the seafront! Leslie Salts first wrote to Fleetwood Borough Council in May 1952. The Entertainments Sub-Committee, at their 29th May 1952 meeting, were read a letter *"dated the 8th May 1952, from Mr Leslie T Salts of Gwrych Castle, Abergelle, North Wales, making application for a site on the foreshore on which to operate a miniature railway"*. The Committee did no more than refer to the matter to the next meeting of the Entertainments & Publicity Committee on 9th June 1952, which Leslie Salts attended *"to explain the proposal"*. At that meeting the Committee considered his proposal *"for a track*

approximately 650 yards in length on the Pitch and Putt Course adjacent to the Esplanade Wall, between the Mount Hotel and Dronsfield Road, with the right to lay double track. Track to be on wooden sleepers to reduce noise. Mr Salts stated there should be no vibration, steam emission negligible and whistling by the engine could be limited. Mr Salts offered to provide suitable fences and to insure for third party and boiler explosion risks to about £25,000. Passenger charge to be 6d per journey; hours of running to be agreed with the Council". The Committee also took the unusual step of stating that Town Planning Consent would be required, but agreed to the railway in principal.

Almost immediately there were objections - by 16th June 1952 a petition against the railway had been signed by 283 local residents. However, the Fleetwood Hotel and Boardinghouse Association were, unsurprisingly, unanimously in favour of the proposal. The petitioners stated that whilst they had no objection to the operation of a miniature railway, that in their opinion *"the amenities of the area will be detrimentally affected and that the values of adjacent properties will be seriously affected"*. The matter made the front page of the *Fleetwood Chronicle* on Friday 13th June 1952. Leslie Salts was reported as saying *"Turpin, Britain's number one boxer of the moment would have an interest in the train and would be in Fleetwood for a least a month next summer if the scheme went through"*. It is thought, in the end, Randolph Turpin did not have any interest in the railway - possibly by the time it opened Salts and Turpin had drifted apart from their mutual business interests. The plans continued to make front page news through June and July as the Town Council referred the matter back to the Entertainments & Publicity Committee, who in turn merely reaffirmed their agreement and passed it back to the Town Council! The sometimes lengthy debates were fully reported in the pages of the *Fleetwood Chronicle*. However, finally, on hearing the proposal for the second time on Wednesday 30th July 1952, the Town Council gave their backing and approved the recommendation of the Entertainments & Publicity Committee to agree to the railway. The *Fleetwood Chronicle* of Friday 1st August 1952 reported at length on the Council's deliberations and commented *"Interest in the town on the proposal was shown by another big attendance by the public"*. Leslie Salts was reported as commenting *"It is wonderful news!"*. Now there was just the matter of planning permission!

The Highways, Market and Town Planning Committee first considered the proposal at their meeting on 13th October 1952, merely deferring to a special meeting on 29th October to be attended by Leslie Salts and his Architect. At that meeting the Committee unanimously refused permission, giving two reasons: 1) *That the super-structure of the proposed tunnel would be seriously injurious to the amenities of the area by reason of its design and height above the footway.* 2) *That the proposal, by reason of the extent of its encroachment on existing development would seriously injure the present amenities.* The *"proposed tunnel"* was opposite Carr Road and provided for a footpath from the Esplanade towards the Outer Promenade and seems originally to have been planned to double as a locomotive shed. Leslie Salts had now to modify his plans and subsequently resubmitted the application with just a single track line, therefore taking less ground from adjacent Pitch & Pitt Courses. It is not mentioned in the Minutes, but presumably the plans for the *"tunnel"* were also modified - the final outcome was certainly more akin to a bridge. The Entertainments & Publicity Committee gave their approval to the revised plans at a meeting on 2nd December 1952 and the Highways, Market & Town Planning Committee passed the planning application at their meeting on 15th December 1952. At the 31st December 1952 meeting of the Town Council (considering the revised plans), an amendment that the matter be referred back to the Entertainments & Publicity Committee was thankfully lost - a welcome New Year present for Leslie Salts! It had taken Fleetwood Borough Council seven months to do what some

councils did in just one or two meetings. However, despite all this it took another nine months for the "Heads of Agreement" to be agreed between the Council and Leslie Salts.

Construction & Opening

The *Fleetwood Chronicle* of Friday 22nd August 1952 reported boxer Randolph Turpin would be *"spending the weekend at Fleetwood and on Monday it is stated, will cut the first sod on the site of the miniature railway on the foreshore"*. It is doubtful this actually took place, given the delays in the Council approving Leslie Salts' plans. Additionally, there was nothing further reported in the paper - certainly Salts would have wanted the publicity if Turpin had performed the ceremony as intended. The Entertainments & Publicity Committee, at their meeting on 9th March 1953, heard that *"Mr Salts had been asked to confirm whether the Miniature Railway would be operating in the forthcoming season"*. He replied on 16th March 1953, stating *"that having gone thoroughly into the time schedule for the construction of the railway and the vital necessity of a track of the highest possible safety, it would be unwise to attempt to have it completed entirely in time for this season"*. However, it seems no work was started until that autumn. At their meeting on 14th September 1953, the Entertainments & Publicity Committee heard that *"the terms had finally been agreed and application made by Mr Salts for permission to proceed with construction work on the Foreshore"*.

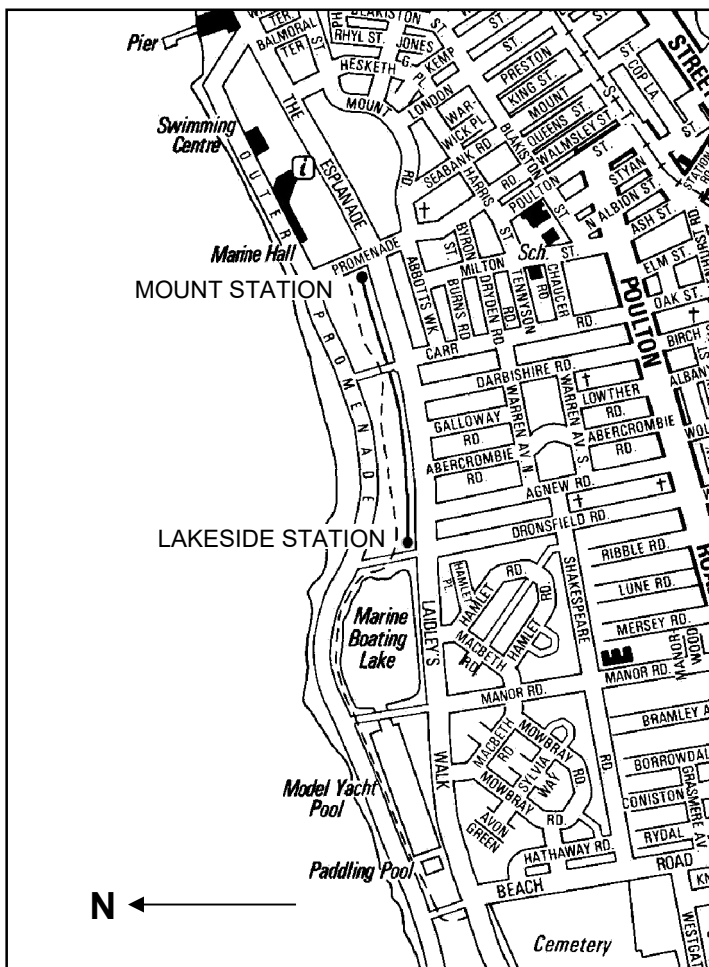
It seems work then commenced at last on building the railway and was underway by December 1953 - the Minutes referring to a shed used by the Parks Department having been demolished. A photograph appeared in the Friday 8th January 1954 edition of the *Fleetwood Chronicle* captioned *"Work on Fleetwood's miniature railway is now taking shape and here's a picture looking through the tunnel which has been built opposite the end of Carr Road"*. The picture shows at least this section of track had been laid by then. By March things seem to have progressed well. At the 22nd March 1954 meeting of the Entertainments Sub-Committee, Leslie Salts was formally applying to vary the levels of the track and to *"modify the Pay Box at the lake-side Station and to provide one Pay-box only, in lieu of two shown on the approved plan"* and several other matters. The Committee recommended approval of these. The *Fleetwood Chronicle* of Friday 26th March 1954 had a photograph of *"Mount Station"* - the railway's eastern terminus, which was *"now nearing completion"*.

To operate trains on his railway, Leslie Salts had obtained from Ernest and Ken Dove a new locomotive. This was a 4-6-4 locomotive completed in 1953 (ready for the original planned opening of the railway), which was named "Sir Winston Churchill" (for more details see Chapter Twelve). The locomotive was duly delivered to the railway on Saturday 3rd April 1954, being winched down onto the track from the Esplanade at the western end station. For all the publicity the railway had already received, the opening was a muted affair. The first passenger trains ran on Sunday 4th April 1954. The *Fleetwood Chronicle* of Friday 9th April 1954 reporting the arrival of "Sir Winston Churchill" added *"There were preliminary runs on the railway on Sunday"*. In his "Micawber" column in the same paper, he amplified on this by reporting *"The arrival of "Sir Winston Churchill" - the miniature engine - on Saturday brought swarms of youngsters to the promenade to watch the unloading, and on the following day they were given trips up and down the quarter-mile track as the train went through its trials"*. The usual Dove quote then followed *"The engine, which cost about £3,500 and took seven years to build, weighs nearly three tons. It is claimed to be the most up-to-date of its kind in the world and is coal fired"*. The railway appears to have opened properly on Maundy

Thursday, 15th April 1954, "Micawber" adding *"it is planned to open it next Thursday, but whether or not it will continue to run after Easter is not yet known. There are still several jobs to be done and the spell between Easter and Whitsuntide may be taken up to put the finishing touches to the £6,000 railroad"*. Finally, Fleetwood had a brand new miniature railway as one of its attractions.

The Route described

The new railway ran almost due west - east, alongside and below the wall of the Esplanade, from opposite the Mount Hotel at the cross roads of Promenade Road and adjacent to the Marine Gardens, to opposite Dronsfield Road, close to the Marine Lake. The line was about 600 yards in length, entirely single track with no points. At both ends of the line a station was provided, each having a double sided platform, which was reached by a short path down from the road leading away from the Esplanade. The station at the eastern end of railway was named "Mount" (SD33174819), whilst the western station was called "Lakeside" (SD32654810). The only other feature was an overline bridge at SD32994815, opposite Carr Road, serving a pathway leading away from the Esplanade to the Outer Promenade. This was the intended "tunnel", to which the planners objected. Despite being no more than a bridge, trackside notices warned passengers "Tunnel. Keep Your Seats". Otherwise the railway ran along below the wall of the Esplanade, with the two Pitch & Putt courses on its northern side. The railway was enclosed on both sides, throughout its length, with a wire mesh fence. The stations were surrounded with slightly higher wooden fences.



A section from a town plan of Fleetwood dated 1988 with the Miniature Railway added. The Mount Hotel was located at the corner of Promenade Road and The Esplanade – to the left of the "A" of Abbotts Walk. The alignment of the later 15" gauge railway is indicated by the dashed line running from near Mount Station to Beach Road.

From photographs, we know trains were hauled (with the locomotive at the eastern end) from Lakeside station to Mount station, and were propelled back. Trains were formed of five coaches. After a short time a petrol locomotive arrived and then trains could be hauled in each direction. When not in use the locomotives, if not the coaches, were sheeted over.

1954 Season

There seems to have been a minor derailment, with a child injured on the "*second day of the railway's opening*" - the *Fleetwood Chronicle* of Friday 20th May 1955 referring to this in an item about the line being readied for the 1955 season, although not reporting it at the time. However, the railway seems to have proved very popular with passengers, although not everyone was pleased. The *Fleetwood Chronicle* of Friday 23rd April 1954 reported that the Council's Finance & General Purposes Committee discussed what they saw as a number of problems. One Councillor thought that there was a "*terrible smell, which penetrated into nearby houses. In addition smoke and smuts were falling on people on the promenade*" - to which another retorted "*I have seen more smoke coming out of Alderman Minns' pipe*". One Councillor was worried about the "*practice of allowing someone to ride on the bumper of the last carriage. It was dangerous particularly when the train was going backwards*". Even the wages of the staff was raised. The Chairman rounded off by reminding them "*It is a private concern. All we are concerned about is the rent they pay and indemnity for injuries*". More typical perhaps, was a letter in the *Fleetwood Chronicle* of Friday 30th April 1954 from a visitor from the Wirral, who wrote "*I would like to say how greatly we enjoyed your new amenity - the little railway. It was a pleasure to see something new and it came as a surprise to us. The children particularly, enjoyed it so much that I would like to compliment your resort on its enterprise*". The letter must have been welcomed by those Councillors who had supported the railway.

There was a mishap on the railway on Sunday 9th May 1954, when the train over-ran Lakeside station. The *Fleetwood Chronicle* of Friday 14th May 1954 reported "*Three child passengers were treated at Fleetwood Hospital for slight injuries on Sunday when the newly-opened miniature railway on Fleetwood promenade failed to stop at the Lakeside station, smashed the buffers and ran off the line*". "Sir Winston Churchill" would have been propelling the train as it arrived at the station. After mentioning the injured the paper went on "*Nearly 30 passengers were aboard the train being pushed by the engine, when the accident happened. Crowds gathered on the promenade to watch, but within an hour the train was back on the line undamaged. It was running again on Monday*". The reason for the accident was unusual - it occurred according to the paper "*when Mr Daniel Douglas, 58-year old former railway engine driver, trapped his finger in the throttle and struggled in vain to close it before the train reached the station*".

Friday 28th May 1954 saw a petrol locomotive arrive on the railway to assist "Sir Winston Churchill". This was an American outline locomotive named "The Texas Ranger" (see Chapter Twelve for more details), the *Fleetwood Chronicle* of Friday 4th June 1954 reporting "*A model of the latest style Western Pacific American train arrived in Fleetwood on Friday. Named the "The Texas Ranger" the train will be used on the miniature railway track with the present train "Sir Winston Churchill" to help meet the demand of holidaymakers*". A photograph in the *Fleetwood Chronicle* of Friday 25th June 1954 (titled "Non-smoker!") of "The Texas Ranger" in Lakeside station, shows it was placed on the railway facing west. Hence, trains could now be "topped & tailed" by the two locomotives if required. Whether

the accident on Sunday 9th May had any bearing on the petrol locomotive's arrival is not known. Quite how it was supposed to "*help meet the demand of holidaymakers*" is uncertain, as no extra coaches could have been used. Perhaps the operation of a petrol locomotive merely allowed longer running hours. The railway then ran, apparently uneventfully, until closing for the winter in early September.

1955 Season

During the closed season, the two locomotives were stored off site, presumably in Fleetwood. The *Fleetwood Chronicle* of Friday 20th May 1955 on reporting the railway's preparations for the 1955 season commented "*Fleetwood's two engines - Golden Arrow [\"Sir Winston Churchill\"] and Texas Ranger - have been overhauled and checked by Robertsons during the past fortnight and the first trials are likely on Sunday*". James Robertson & Sons (Fleetwood) Limited of Dock Street, were a firm of marine engineers. For the 1955 season, Ernest Dove was in charge of the railway, the paper adding "*Mr Dove, who will be in charge of the railway this season, is the maker of the miniature engines which operate on the foreshore track*". It is unclear whether he had been in charge for the 1954 season as well, although the wording would indicate that he hadn't.

An advert from the *Fleetwood Holiday Guide* for the 1955 season. Actually, the railway only took passengers from Marine Gardens as far as the Marine Lake. To reach the Yachting Pool, one had to walk the length of Marine Lake, a distance of some 300 yards!

FLEETWOOD'S OWN MINIATURE RAILWAY

*Pulled by the World-famous
Locomotive "Golden Arrow"
this exciting little Railway
takes you along the Esplanade
from Marine Gardens to the
Yachting Pool.*

**A THRILLING RIDE
FOR ALL AGES!**

**COME TO FLEETWOOD
AND ENJOY A RIDE.**

L. T. SALTS (Prop.)

The *Fleetwood Chronicle* of Friday 27th May 1955 had a picture of "Sir Winston Churchill" being craned onto the track directly from the Esplanade above "*Already for opening for the season*". This was different to the 1954 season, when it was winched down to Lakeside station. No mention was made of "The Texas Ranger" or the coaches, but these were probably placed on the railway by the same method. The railway reopened for the 1955 season on Whit Saturday, 28th May 1955. Almost immediately the railway came to the unwelcome attention of some vandals. The *Fleetwood Chronicle* of Friday 3rd June 1955, after commenting that the railway was "*one of the few trains in country which maintains a regular service*" (the mainline system was the subject of a train drivers strike at the time) went on "*youths and boys have placed pieces of wood on the lines and dropped stones on passengers from a bridge under which the tracks run. On Wednesday the main ticket booking*

office was the target. Intruders smashed glass windows and left the interior of the premises in disorder. But they took nothing. Police are investigating". Which only goes to show mindless vandalism is nothing new. As early as June 1955, Leslie Salts had applied to renew his licence to operate the railway for the 1956 season, the Entertainments Sub-Committee at their meeting on 16th June 1955, asking the Town Clerk to prepare the necessary paperwork.

Closure & After

The last trains of the 1955 season ran on Sunday 4th September 1955, although no one knew it then, these were to be the last ever trains to run on the railway. At this time Leslie Salts and Ernest Dove were intending to agree a new licence with the Council and open again for the 1956 season. The *Fleetwood Chronicle* of Friday 2nd September 1955 commented "*The last trip by Fleetwood's miniature railway will be made on Sunday. But it will NOT be the last ever, only the last of the season. Rumours that the railway would not be at Fleetwood next season were denied by Mr Ernest Dove, the manager. "You can take it from me" he said, "that we will be back. And possibly there may be some improvements in the railway. I intend to put one or two suggestions to Fleetwood Corporation which will enhance the railway's popularity with the public".* However, it would seem Leslie Salts and Ernest Dove could not agree terms with Fleetwood Borough Council.

At the 16th January 1956 meeting of the Entertainments & Publicity Committee, the Town Clerk reported "*the licence to operate the Miniature Railway on the foreshore had not yet been renewed in respect of the 1956 summer season*". The detail was not reported, but it would seem the rent payable to the Council was considered too high. In a letter to Matthew Kerr of the Kerr's Miniature Railway in Arbroath, Ernest Dove commented "*The Texas Ranger*" did well at Fleetwood. Well over 4 figures in 18 weeks until the rates & rent went up. Then we gave it up". The 14th January 1956 issue of *The World's Fair* noted that the rateable value of the railway had increased from £247 to £300. The Entertainments & Publicity Committee heard at their meeting on 20th February 1956, that a letter dated 15th February had been received from Leslie Salts stating "*that he did not intend to continue the operation of the Miniature Railway during the 1956 summer season*". He also said he would be willing to help find a new tenant who "*would take over the fixtures and fittings*" (Presumably, the track and stations, but not the locomotives and coaches). However, this did not happen and during summer and autumn 1956 the Council sought to determine the exact terms of the original agreement and then ask Leslie Salts to remove the track and stations. At their meeting on 17th October 1956, the Entertainments Sub-Committee recommended that "*steps be taken to secure the removal by Mr Salts (or by the Corporation in default) of the Miniature Railway installations and equipment, and his offer to sell the same to the Corporation in the sum of £1,500 0s 0d be not entertained*". By December, not much seems to have happened as the Entertainments & Publicity Committee, at their meeting on 13th December 1956, granted Leslie Salts an extension until 10th January 1957 to "*complete the removal of the installations from the site*". The matter then rumbled on until May, when on 1st May 1957 the Entertainments & Publicity Committee heard that the Town Clerk had received a letter dated 24th April 1957, from Leslie Salts, agreeing to the Council's decision to reinstate the site and charge him for the work. Leslie Salts had probably lifted the track by this time, as the Minutes refer to "*final reinstatement*". During March, an F Smith and Son of Morecambe had requested the site for a miniature railway, but the Council decided not to proceed with this offer. The Council then carried out the reinstatement work, this being complete by early June 1957 at a cost of £25 14s 7d. Some remedial work carried out by the

Parks Department was not undertaken until autumn 1957. So the railway was no more - it had taken seven months of planning before building started and it was some sixteen months after the last trains ran before the track was lifted and the site was fully restored. All this for just two seasons of operation amounting to about 34 weeks running!

Following the end of the 1955 season in September, one assumes "Sir Winston Churchill" and "The Texas Ranger" were stored in Fleetwood - as at that time it was still intended to open again for the 1956 season. When Leslie Salts took the decision in February 1956 not to reopen the railway, the two locomotives were moved away to Gwrych Castle. Both were later sold on by Leslie Salts; see Chapter Twelve for more details.

Today, the only remaining feature is the overline bridge opposite Carr Road, which still stands just as it did when the last trains ran in September 1955. With very little work the railway could be relaid - the whole route is clear and the station sites are just open grassy areas. The course of the access paths to the two stations is still visible. Between 1975 and 1982, a 15" gauge line ran nearby, on a site nearer the Outer Promenade. The eastern end station was on the other side of the Pitch & Putt Course to Mount station. This line was somewhat longer, running past the Marine Lake and Model Yacht Pool, to a western end station on Laidley's Walk opposite Beach Road.

Calverton Lido

It is convenient here to deal with one small item that relates to around the same time the Fleetwood Miniature Railway was being planned and constructed. A note in *Narrow Gauge News* No.287 (July 2008) suggested that Ernest Dove ran a railway at Calverton Lido, but that does not seem to be the case. The Lido, which opened in 1935, was located between Calverton and Woodborough, at SK634490 - north east of Nottingham. By the late 1940s it had become quite a local attraction with the lido, pony rides, archery, putting and the like - just the place for a miniature railway. Stanley Lawrence (1895-1958) from Shirland, Derbyshire (about 2 miles north of Alfreton) was a model engineer who ran 7¼" gauge temporary railways, from just after the Second World War until the late 1950s - mainly in the northern part of Derbyshire. In his article in the *Heywood Society Journal* No.25 (October 1989), Peter James relates that Stanley Lawrence opened a 7¼" gauge line at Calverton Lido around 1950, using his LMSR 4-6-2 "Duchess of Buccleuch". However, the railway only lasted for two or three years.



This, somewhat stylised, view of the Fleetwood Miniature Railway was probably issued as a postcard. It certainly reflects the seaside location of the railway by Morecambe Bay.

(Courtesy S. Townsend Collection)



A good crowd is watching "Sir Winston Churchill" being winched down from the Esplanade onto the railway at Lakeside station. Ken Dove can be seen by the cab of the locomotive, talking to the chap with a smart cap. Note also virtually all of the onlookers are wearing some form of headgear! The first passenger trains ran on the next day, Sunday 4th April 1954.

(Author's Collection. 3/4/54)



Here we see "Sir Winston Churchill" departing Lakeside station with a well-loaded train. The concrete Esplanade wall is left, with the Pitch & Putt course, right. In the original, the petrol locomotive "The Texas Ranger" can be seen stabled on the buffers.

Note the ticket office at the top of slope leading down to the platform.

(Courtesy S. Townsend Collection)



Hauling a train towards Mount station during the 1954 season, "Sir Winston Churchill" has just passed under the bridge carrying the pathway down to the Outer Promenade. Over fifty six years later, this bridge still exists - the route of the railway now merely being grass.

(Courtesy of the University of St Andrews Library. Valentine Collection. JV-K8941)

CHAPTER ELEVEN

GWRYCH CASTLE MINIATURE RAILWAY

1951 TO CLOSURE

Introduction

When we left the Gwrych Castle Miniature Railway (in Chapter Eight), it had completed its first season of running in autumn 1950. This Chapter describes the subsequent history of Gwrych Castle and the railway, which the Dove family ran for another 18 years or so until the railway and Castle started a downward spiral after their sale by Leslie Salts in 1968. The heyday of the Castle was undoubtedly the 1950s until, from the early 1960s, changing holiday patterns and tastes saw a decline in visitors. The railway seems to have been rarely visited by enthusiasts and photographs are therefore scarce. Additionally, despite the Castle being a popular attraction, postcards depicting the railway are also few in number. The Chapter concludes with a brief history of the 15" gauge Rhyl Miniature Railway, which Ken Dove helped resuscitate in the 1980s and with which he was closely connected until his death in 1994, marking the end of the Dove miniature railway dynasty. Refer to Chapter Twelve for full details of all the locomotives mentioned below.

1951-1954

The railway reopened at Easter for the 1951 season, apparently with just "Belle of New York" as motive power. An advert in the *Abergele Visitor* of Easter Saturday, 24th March 1951 advised "*Miniature Railway. Pulled by the £15,000 "Belle of New York" locomotive*". "Silver Queen", which worked a second train during the 1950 season, had been moved away, still being owned by Ernest Dove. He rebuilt the locomotive as "Commodore Vanderbilt" and used it on his railway at Edinburgh during the summer of 1951 (see Chapter Nine).

Leslie Salts and Ernest Dove produced an attractive guidebook (*A Souvenir of Gwrych Castle Miniature Railway*) selling for 6d, in which many of Dove's locomotives were illustrated - although most, of course, were not at the Castle. The guidebook appears to have been written for the opening of the railway. In the introduction, Leslie Salts starts by saying "*It gives me great pleasure to introduce a man who is without doubt one of the engineering genius' of this century. Mr Dove lives for locomotives*". The book also stated "*Mr Dove and his son are in attendance and will be happy to answer any questions*". Of course, Ernest Dove would not have been there for most of the 1951 season, being in Edinburgh! The guidebook appears to confirm that Ernest Dove also had some of his other smaller locomotives and ships on display "*Don't miss the special exhibition of models of early and modern locomotives and ships in Gwrych Castle Museum*" it urged.

For the 1952 season "Commodore Vanderbilt" returned to Gwrych Castle. However, it did not see use on the railway, merely being put on display after being purchased by Leslie Salts from Ernest Dove. *The World's Fair* of Saturday 29th March 1952 reported "*Another great attraction to the popularity of Gwrych Castle, North Wales, as a holiday centre, is the purchase by Mr Leslie T Salts, the sole proprietor, of the world famous steam locomotive (with coaches), Commodore Vanderbilt*". After the usual Salts and Dove hype the report went

on "This year the Commodore Vanderbilt will be on exhibition with 14 small model engines and a working model railway show, at Gwrych". The report concluded by saying "Belle of New York" would be "working overtime" and was driven by Ken Dove. Leslie Salts then took "Commodore Vanderbilt" to work on his new line at the summit of the Great Orme in Llandudno, which opened just before Easter 1953 (as described in Chapter Nine).

Over the winter of 1952/1953, "Belle of New York" was partially rebuilt by Ernest Dove - presumably in his workshops back in Nottingham. It was renumbered No.1953 and named "President Eisenhower" after the 34th President of the USA. According to the Castle guidebook *"The United States President gave personal permission to Mr Salts to name it after him"*. The locomotive then went back into service at Gwrych Castle for the 1953 season. It appears two train working may have been confined to just the first season. After "Silver Queen" departed, "Belle of New York" worked the service on its own and the second track at Gwrych Castle station was cut back to just a short siding. A photograph showing "Belle of New York" arriving at the station (and therefore taken before the end of the 1952 season) clearly shows the second platform having been removed. The buffer stop of the remaining short siding can just be discerned. This was presumably used to change the positions of locomotives after a petrol locomotive arrived on the railway.



An advert from the *North Wales Weekly News* of Thursday 25th June 1953. Note the mention at the foot of the advert for the "Great Orme Holiday Centre, Llandudno and Randy's Bar", which was opened at Easter 1953 by Leslie Salts and Randolph Turpin.

Between 1952 and 1954 three petrol locomotives were built, which may have seen some service on the railway during this period. The first was "The Texas Ranger", built by Ernest Dove in 1952, probably at Ribblesdale Road, Nottingham. The other two were "Hiawatha" and "The Chieftain", both built by Ken Dove at Gwrych Castle in 1954. These locomotives were no doubt used at times of quieter traffic, in place of "Belle of New York"/"President Eisenhower". The *Abergele Visitor* of Saturday 3rd April 1954, reporting on the forthcoming season, added "Other new attractions for 1954 will include the magnificent passenger carrying locomotives, one an American diesel, and the other a new £3,000 steam engine". The paper went on "For the boys of all ages there will be the great Model Railway Exhibition, and two new engines will pull the famous miniature railway, one being the "Hiawatha", a modern streamlined engine". The *North Wales Weekly News* of Thursday 15th April 1954 had an advert, which stated "New - Locos, pulling the popular Miniature Railway". From all this we know one of the "new" locomotives was the petrol-engined "Hiawatha". However, the "new £3,000 steam engine" could only have been "President Eisenhower" - the 1948 built "Belle of New York", rebuilt over the winter of 1952/1953 with its new name! "The Chieftain" went to operate the Great Orme Miniature Railway for the

1954 season, after "Commodore Vanderbilt" had left there at the end of the 1953 season - bound for Skegness (see Chapter Nine). "Hiawatha" only spent the 1954 season running at Gwrych before departing - also for Skegness.

The advert from the *North Wales Weekly News* of Thursday 15th April 1954 advising of the new attractions for the season. One of these was "New - Locos, pulling the popular Miniature Railway"

NOW OPEN—Better than ever !
GWRYCH CASTLE
ABERGELE—the showplace of Wales
NEW—AMAZING WAXWORKS, over 60 life-like figures; **NEW—LOCOS**, pulling the popular **MINIATURE RAILWAY**; **NEW—GREATEST COLLECTION of ROYAL DOLLS** in **BRITAIN**; also **BRITISH CROWN JEWEL EXHIBITION**.

Model Railway Exhibition of Steam and Diesel Locos (cost £3,000); Snack Bars; Rustic & Riviera Terraces; Choirs; and the most beautiful Castle in Britain to explore

Admission: Castle & Ground 1/-; Children 6d. Buses to gates.
and don't forget a visit to the **GREAT ORME HOLIDAY CENTRE, LLANDUDNO**

1955-1959

"The Chieftain" seems to have returned to Gwrych Castle after the Great Orme Miniature Railway closed at the end of the 1954 season. Following the closure of the Fleetwood Miniature Railway (see Chapter Ten), Leslie Salts moved "Sir Winston Churchill" and "The Texas Ranger" to Gwrych Castle, probably in early 1956. Neither locomotive was used on the railway, both merely being put on display. "The Texas Ranger" was advertised for sale in 1956 and 1957 and by April 1958 had moved to Drayton Manor Park in Staffordshire. A few general comments about the operation of the railway during this time are probably relevant here. The railway was run by Ken Dove and operated each season from Easter until the second week in September. During the closed season, the locomotives were taken off the railway and moved inside - otherwise they were sheeted over when not in use. Trains were propelled out from the station and hauled back. Fares were 6d for adults and 3d for children. We know Ken Dove was living at Gwrych Castle by 1953, as his son's birth was registered there in that year. By the 1956 season, Ken Dove had become the General Manager of Gwrych Castle. An advert in the Castle guidebook, advertising Holiday Flatlets from May to September 1956 advises "write to Mr K Dove, General Manager for details". Later he was appointed Resident Director.

It appears steam operation may have ceased after the 1956 season. An advert appeared in *The World's Fair* of 5th January 1957, which stated "Owing to new equipment we have the following 10¼ gauge Miniature Railway equipment for sale. Two 10¼ Steam Locomotives in perfect order, overhauled and ready for work. Five six seater Passenger Coaches with ball race bogies". Details were available from "Mr K Dove, General Manager". The two locomotives concerned were "President Eisenhower" and "Sir Winston Churchill", although neither was sold at this time and "President Eisenhower" may have seen some further use. It is not certain what the "new equipment" consisted of - the local press did not contain any reports of a new locomotive for the 1956 or 1957 seasons. However, it was probably a new petrol locomotive - or a rebuild of the existing "The Chieftain". This is discussed in Chapter Twelve. Either way the railway was now mostly operated by a petrol locomotive named "The Chieftain", which was to remain on the railway until closure. An advert in the *North Wales Weekly News* of Thursday 13th June 1957 merely refers to "Miniature Railway with Railway Exhibition at the end of the ride".

During this time Ernest Dove was still looking for miniature railway business, as an advert from *The World's Fair* of 26th October 1957 shows. However, as far as is known, he was not directly connected with any more railways beyond any involvement he may have had at Gwrych Castle assisting Ken. By 1958 he was selling off some spare equipment. In an advert in *The World's Fair* for 29th March 1958 he had for sale a pair of cylinders and "other spare parts" for a 10¼" gauge steam locomotive. Also offered was a "*Miniature Train Outfit (steam) at Bargain Price*". He followed this up with an advert in the 21st June 1958 edition, which stated "*The Attraction That Never Fails. Miniature Railway Outfits*". Enquires were to be sent to Ernest Dove at his Ribblesdale Road address in Nottingham. A final advert appeared in *The World's Fair* for 5th July 1958 - this extolled "*Miniature Railways. 10¼ Gauge. Now is the time to prepare for next season. Only two outfits for 1959*". Exactly what these "outfits" were is uncertain - the only known spare locomotives, "President Eisenhower" and "Sir Winston Churchill", were at Gwrych Castle and still owned by Leslie Salts. However, in a letter dated 18th June 1958 to Matthew Kerr of the Kerr's Miniature Railway, Ernest Dove stated that he had "*Several [diesel] designs here that I can reproduce*". So perhaps he intended to build a new locomotive(s) if a customer came forward.

**Whether it's a
Miniature Locomotive
or a Complete
Miniature Railway**

—————
**Consult
ERNEST DOVE,
Actual Locomotive Builder.
17 Ribblesdale Road,
Sherwood, Nottingham.
Phone 268696.**

The advert referred to above from *The World's Fair* of 26th October 1957 indicating Ernest Dove was still looking for miniature railway business.

As recorded in Chapter One, Ernest Dove passed away on Monday 9th November 1959 at the age of 72. It is not certain how active he had been with the railway at Gwrych Castle after its opening - certainly for the period 1953-1955 he had been helping Leslie Salts construct and operate railways at Fleetwood and on the Great Orme at Llandudno. Nevertheless, his death effectively marked the end of an era for the Gwrych Castle Miniature Railway.

The 1960s

The 1950s saw the heyday of Gwrych Castle and the miniature railway. By 1964, when Robin Butterell visited the railway (as recorded in his book *Miniature Railways* Ian Allan 1966), steam operation had definitely finished. The short stub of the second platform line had also been removed, as he noted the track was "*Virtually a straight up and down with no points*". He added that "President Eisenhower" was "*derelict in 1964*". An accompanying photograph showed the locomotive stabled on the stop blocks at Gwrych Castle station, with the covering tarpaulins pulled back for the benefit of the photographer. The service was being maintained by the petrol locomotive "The Chieftain". Robin noted the rolling stock as "*6 bogie coaches in articulated set. Livery - red and yellow*".

By at least 1966, operation of the railway had been reduced to the "*summer months, usually from Whitsuntide*" as a guidebook of the time stated. By 1967, and after almost twenty years ownership, it appears Leslie Salts was considering selling Gwrych Castle and retiring - being 60 years old in November that year. The two steam locomotives were sold off. "President Eisenhower" was sold into private ownership in autumn 1966 and "Sir Winston Churchill" was sold at auction in summer 1967. The end of Leslie Salts' ownership, proved to be a watershed for the Castle and railway - although it must be said by the mid 1960s holiday patterns were changing with more people taking advantage of "package" holidays to warmer climates. The *Abergele Visitor* of Saturday 20th April 1968 announced Gwrych Castle had been sold "*On Saturday, April 6th, Mr Leslie Salts, owner of the famous Gwrych Castle, Abergele, signed over the deeds of this great show-place to Mr Pentland Hick, chairman of Associated Pleasure Parks Ltd. The price was not disclosed but is understood to be about £100,000*". By the time of the sale, Leslie Salts and his wife had moved to the Isle of Man, where he lived in Bolivia Mount, a large house in Dhoor, just to the north of Ramsey. Edwin Pentland Hick (1919-2016), entrepreneur, playwright and veteran of the Second World War, established a successful cinema business in Scarborough, North Yorkshire following the war. He sold this in 1959 and then in June 1961 opened what was to become Flamingo Land Theme Park at Kirkby Misperton, near Pickering in North Yorkshire. Hick floated the park on the Stock Exchange in 1965 as Associated Pleasure Parks Limited.

At first, things on the railway continued much as before and the Castle and railway reopened for the 1968 season on Good Friday, 12th April 1968. Admission was 3/- (children 1/6) to the Castle and grounds. "The Chieftain" was now the sole motive power on the railway, with a set of six coaches. Ken Dove stayed on for the time being and was appointed Managing Director of the Castle. Associated Pleasure Parks Limited also owned the nearby Llanerch Zoo Park at St Asaph, of which Ken Dove also became a Director. In 1968 Ken Dove built a petrol locomotive named "Hiawatha" for use on a new railway at Pentland Hick's Flamingo Park (see Chapter Twelve for more details).



Follow the
HAPPY CROWDS
to the NEW

GWRYCH CASTLE
ABERGELE

The Showplace of
North Wales

Daily 10 a.m. - 8 p.m.

GOOD FRIDAY, EASTER SATURDAY, SUNDAY, MONDAY

★ **STAR EASTER FEATURES** ★

- ★ **THE ITALIAN MARBLE STAIRCASE**
re-decorated in Magnolia & Wedgwood Blue with a
MAGNIFICENT NEW RED CARPET
- ★ **PUBLIC ROOMS** re-equipped with **ORANGE**
and **RED** Carpets, **VALUABLE PAINTINGS,**
ANTIQUES, CURIOS and **FURNISHINGS**
- ★ **THE L. T. SALTS ROOM** with **40 PAINTINGS**
- ★ **RE-SURFACED TERRACES** and improved
outside **CAFETERIA** facilities

Additional attractions open over Easter :

Miniature Railway, Chamber of Horrors, uv lighting
Miniature Zoo with Pets' Corner, Stable Cafe

Admission to Castle and Grounds : **Adults 3/-, Children 1/6**

Prop. Gwrych Castle Ltd. Managing Director : Kenneth E. S. Dove
(A Member of the Associated Pleasure Parks Group)

An advert from the *Abergele Visitor* of Saturday 13th April 1968, advertising the opening for the 1968 season - the first under the ownership of Associated Pleasure Parks Limited. It details some of the improvements made in the short time they had owned Gwrych Castle. Note that Ken Dove was the Managing Director - he was still there in October 1968, but had left by October 1969.

The 1970s and 1980s

In November 1969 Associated Pleasure Parks Limited was taken over by Scotia Investments although, as before, the Castle was operated by Gwrych Castle Limited, the company originally set up by Leslie Salts. By October 1969, Ken Dove had followed Leslie Salts to the Isle of Man. It hadn't taken Leslie Salts long to get established there - by July 1969 he was a Director of the newly formed Isle of Man Victorian Steam Railway Company Limited, being responsible for administration and publicity. This company had been set up to operate the Isle of Man Steam Railway, which at that time was leased by the Marquess of Ailsa and part subsidised by the Manx Government. He also purchased the Peveril Hotel on Mooragh Promenade in Ramsey and employed Ken Dove to manage it for him. Apart from railways, Ken was an accomplished organist and for a number of years he ran a music shop in Ramsey. During this time he even released a record of his rendition of the Manx Cradle Song on a Hammond Organ.

Back at Gwrych Castle, in the 1970 edition of his *British Locomotive Preservation & Light Railway Stocklist*, R H Leithead stated that "The Chieftain" was "*expected to be replaced by a new unit in 1970*" and in the 1971 edition "*This loco is expected to be replaced by a new unit*". This did not happen, although it did receive a brand new body, and it was this Leithead might have been alluding to. The note had been removed in 1972/73 edition of his book. In 1972 Scotia Investments announced that medieval banquets and jousting tournaments would take place at the Castle. It was probably at this time the railway was rebranded as the "Magic Dragon Railway". Certainly by the 1972 season, "The Chieftain" had been rebuilt with a hideous dragon body, complete with an open dragon's mouth at the leading end - the name was no longer carried. The coaches remained as before. In 1975 Scotia Investments sold the Castle to a company called Darjeeling Holdings Limited and from this time Gwrych Castle steadily declined in the hands of a number of different owners and lease holders. Darjeeling Holdings Limited encountered financial problems and closed the Castle at the end of the 1975 season and put it on the market. Jousting tournaments restarted in May 1978 after an absence of five years, but seem to have been short lived - the Castle itself remained closed. The *North Wales Weekly News* of Thursday 10th January 1980 reported that Gwrych Castle was "*now under new management after remaining empty and neglected for four years*". This was a company called Golaplan Limited, who merely leased the Castle from a finance company who were the then owners. However, the *Abergele Visitor* of Friday 24th October 1980 reported Golaplan Limited were to go into receivership after poor summer attendances. The Castle was sold again in 1982.

Closure

Somewhere in all this turmoil the miniature railway closed. Trains were still running on 20th August 1974 when visited by an enthusiast from Chester - this being the last confirmed date of operation. It was listed in the "*Railways & Relics '75*" supplement to the June 1975 issue of *Railway Modeller* - the supplement was produced annually, but this was the only occasion the railway at Gwrych Castle was listed. No details were given apart from the gauge. The railway was also listed in the 1975 edition of R H Leithead's *Miniature Railways Stockbook & Guide* (as the Magic Dragon Railway). Both these publications would have been based on the situation as known in 1974. The railway is also listed in *Steam 80* (George Allen & Unwin 1980, but not in the previous version of the book published in 1977) and the subsequent editions in 1981, 1982 and in 1985 when the last edition appeared. An undated

copy of a leaflet in Abergele Library, thought to be from the 1981 season lists "Childrens Rides & Amusements" as an attraction, but not specifically the railway. The report in the *Abergele Visitor* of Friday 24th October 1980 referred to above, in listing the attractions offered, does not refer to any rides or the railway. Unfortunately, there were practically no adverts for the Castle during the period 1976 to 1982 in the local papers.

Therefore, it is possible the railway last ran at the end of the 1975 season, when Darjeeling Holdings Limited closed the Castle. It was obvious the railway had been closed for some years when enthusiast Glen Fairweather visited the Castle in the summer of 1985 *"I recall it being a strange visit because we weren't sure if the castle was open or not! A number of other people were also wandering around the grounds but the house was locked up and everything outside appeared to be abandoned. The castle/house looked to be in pretty rough condition. But nobody told us to get out"*. He found the railway closed and commented *"Anyway the only trace of the railway was a section of track set in concrete up by the house itself [the former station]. The grounds were very overgrown and it was impossible to tell where the track went beyond what we could see. It had obviously been closed for some time. Beyond the station it was thick with brambles and bushes and impossible to follow any more of the trackbed"*. According to Mark Baker, author of a number of books on Gwrych Castle *"Gwrych finally closed to the public during the winter of 1985, never to reopen"*. It is presumed "The Chieftain" and the coaches were scrapped on site. Mark Baker comments in his 1999 book on the Castle (*The Rise and Fall of Gwrych Castle*) *"This railway went through the wooded hillside of the Blackthorn Covert and its station was next to the top porch entrance to the Castle. Most of the old rusted tracks are still there after nearly fifty years"*.

Gwrych Castle suffered badly after its final closure. An American businessman bought it in December 1989, with plans for renovation that never took place. It has stood empty for many years and has suffered fires, extensive vandalism and weather damage. In 2007 it was purchased by Clayton Hotels, who planned to convert it into a five-star hotel. However, the company went into administration and the Castle was sold in April 2010 to Edwards Property Management. However, the closure of the Gwrych Castle Miniature Railway was not the end of the Dove family railway influence in North Wales.

Rhyl Miniature Railway

Around 1980, when Leslie Salts sold The Peveril Hotel, Ken Dove retired and moved back to North Wales - settling in the seaside resort of Rhyl, only some 5 miles to the east of Gwrych Castle. However, he soon got involved with the Rhyl Miniature Railway - driving there during the 1982 season. The 15" gauge Rhyl Miniature Railway originally opened on Monday 1st May 1911, running for 1 mile around the large Marine Lake (SH999807), to the south west of the town. It operated successfully each year until the end of the 1969 season when, following the termination of the lease, it closed with the track being lifted in 1970. Thankfully, that was not the end of the railway and it reopened in July 1978, with the track relaid over much the same route as before. For this and the following year it was operated by Light Railway Engineer, Alan Keef. However, for the 1980 season local businessman Leslie Hughes took over the concession.

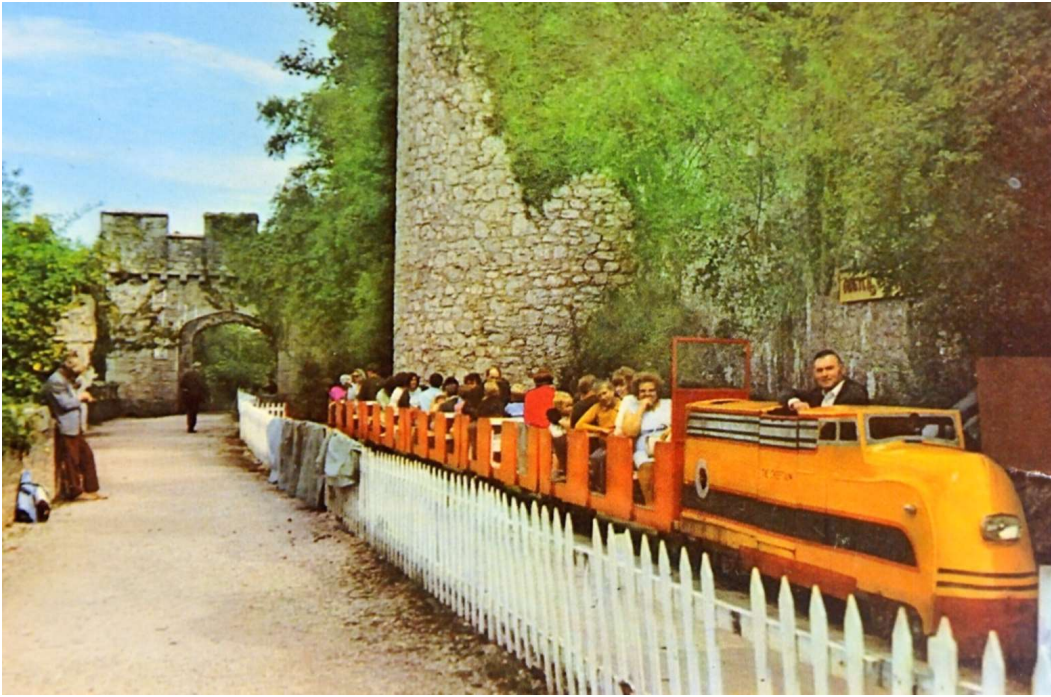
This then was how Ken Dove found the railway in 1982 and he became its chief driver and engineer, managing in difficult circumstances to overhaul the locomotives and generally keep things going. No doubt the experience of assisting his father run the temporary railways

between 1945 and 1949, helping build and operate subsequent lines on the Great Orme, at Fleetwood and the 18 years running the Gwrych Castle Miniature Railway helped enormously! In 1985 relations between the railway and local council broke down, and the railway closed at the end of that season. No trains ran during 1986 (although the track remained in situ), but thanks to Ken Dove, the railway reopened in July 1987. *Narrow Gauge News* No.160 (April 1987) recorded "*Rhuddlan Borough Council agreed in February to a proposal to reopen the line from former driver Ken Dove*". Simon Townsend (writing Ken Dove's obituary in the *Heywood Society Journal* No.35) adds Ken proposed "*himself as an independent railway operator, even mobilising a local Ratepayers' Action Group to help clear the track and provide a new ticket office*". Apparently, he even attended the council meeting, which was discussing the subject and heckled from the public gallery! Thankfully, his proposal was a success and the railway then ran a limited summer season, which in later years has been extended.

Ken Dove passed away on Sunday 22nd May 1994 after suffering a year with cancer. With his death came the end of the Dove railway dynasty. His two principal achievements were the assistance he gave to his father, which probably made those extensive tours between 1945 and 1948 possible, and the work he undertook in keeping the historic Rhyl Miniature Railway open and running. It is, perhaps, for the latter we should be the most grateful for - as it is due to his efforts that it is still possible today to travel around Marine Lake along the route of the oldest miniature railway in the country. One hopes Ernest Dove would have been proud!

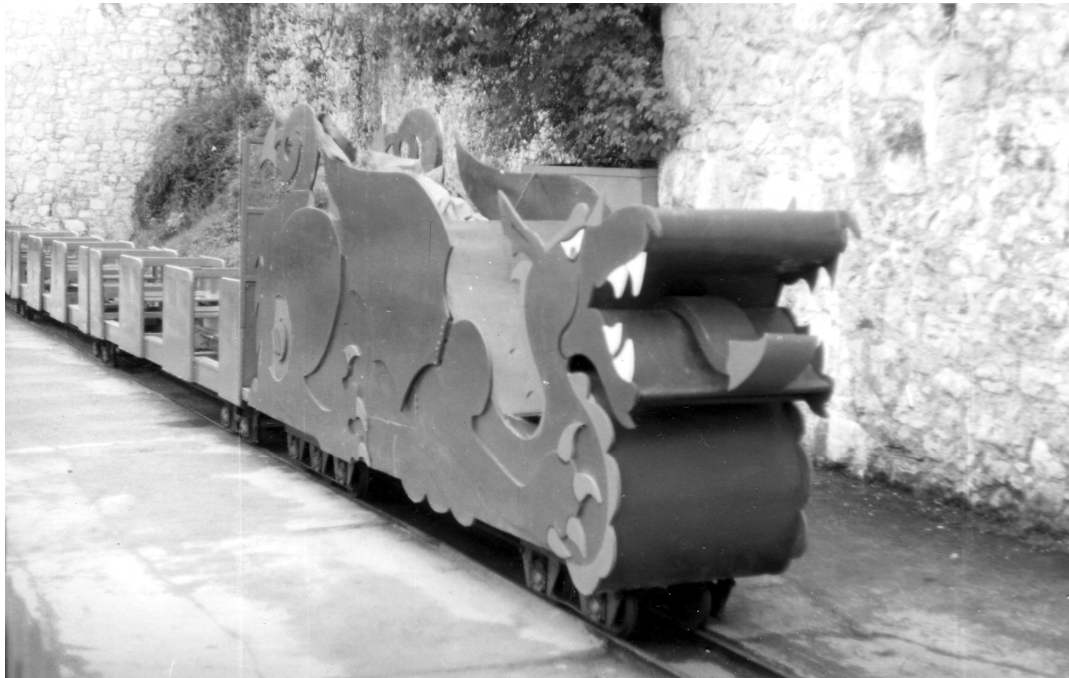


A pair of "Ultimate" tickets printed by Automatic Limited of London from the Gwrych Castle Miniature Railway. The date is not known, but is obviously pre-decimalisation in February 1971. In the 1950s the adult fare was 6d and probably remained the same for a good few years, in those days before the times of rapid inflation.



A rare colour view of the Gwrych Castle Miniature Railway. "The Chieftain" is seen in the station with a busy train, apparently about to depart. It will propel the train out through the castellated arch and along the 400 yard long track, before reversing and returning to the station. This view dates from the 1960s - the driver is Fred Firmstone of Abergele.

(Courtesy D. Firmstone)



In the early 1970s "The Chieftain" was rebuilt with this hideous dragon body. At the same time the railway was rebranded as the "Magic Dragon Railway". The coaches were left unscathed. Here we see the, now un-named, locomotive in the station.

(P. Nicholson. 18/6/72)

CHAPTER TWELVE

THE LOCOMOTIVES

SUMMARY & LIFE HISTORIES

Introduction

This Chapter contains a summary and subsequent history of all the locomotives built by Ernest and Ken Dove. Two locomotives constructed by others, but claimed by Ernest Dove as his, are also included. Ernest Dove is known to have built a total of ten miniature railway locomotives - three 7¼" gauge steam, five 10¼" gauge steam and two 10¼" gauge petrol. The steam locomotives were generally numbered after their year of completion and it appears, at times, several were being assembled together. All his locomotives were built in the workshop at 17 Ribblesdale Road in Nottingham. Ken Dove is known to have completed one 10¼" gauge steam locomotive and built three 10¼" gauge petrol or diesel locomotives - the latter all being built at Gwrych Castle. The history of the 10¼" gauge steam locomotives is reasonably well-known and has been fully researched where possible. However, the 7¼" gauge steam, along with the petrol & diesel locomotives, are much poorer documented and have proved harder to fully research. The following abbreviations are used in this chapter: LMSR - London, Midland & Scottish Railway, GWR - Great Western Railway, SR - Southern Railway, LNER - London & North Eastern Railway, BR - British Railways, NYCR - New York Central Railroad.

7¼" Gauge Steam Locomotives

Ernest Dove is known to have constructed three 7¼" gauge steam locomotives, which saw some use on his temporary railways between 1940 and 1945. Sadly, two of them have disappeared without trace. After he changed to 10¼" gauge in 1945, the 7¼" gauge locomotives saw little use, being mainly displayed as part of his accompanying model exhibition in the marquee. We know from an advert in *The World's Fair* of 19th July 1947, he was offering for sale "*Two 7¼" gauge Steam Locos and Riding Trucks, ideal for children's rides*". However, he did not sell the three locomotives described below until after the 1948 tour - an advert appearing in the *Model Engineer* of 23rd December 1948 announced "*Ernest Dove has for sale several Model Locomotives from 2½" gauge to 7¼" gauge, also some castings etc. Owing to completion of exhibition tour*". See Appendix Three for a table of dimensions.

4-6-2 1940 "Sir Kenneth" **Built: Ernest Dove 1940**

This was Ernest Dove's first locomotive capable of hauling passengers, normally running on an elevated track. It is the only one of his three 7¼" gauge locomotives known to still exist. The locomotive was based on the 4-6-2 LNER A1 (later A3) class engine "Flying Scotsman" No.1472. Built at Doncaster works and completed on 7th February 1923, it was at first unnamed. In February 1924 it was renumbered to 4472 and gained its famous name. "Flying Scotsman" hauled the first non-stop Kings Cross - Edinburgh train service, with that name on 1st May 1928. In his own publicity Ernest Dove stated "*After the first World War I built my*

Pacific Locomotive" and that it took "*Nine and a half years to build*". According to an article in the April 1944 issue of *Practical Mechanics*, he started building the locomotive in 1931. It was finished in May 1940 and was turned out numbered 1940 with LNER on the tender sides and named "Sir Kenneth" after his son. At first, the name was painted on the centre splasher, but later a nameplate was fixed to the same splasher.

Initially, "Sir Kenneth" was displayed to raise funds for war charities. The first of these was in June 1940 at the Ritz Cinema in Nottingham, the *Nottingham Evening News* of Tuesday 18th June 1940 reporting "*A wonderful model engine, designed by Mr Dove, of Daybrook, is also on exhibition at the Ritz at the present time*". It was displayed to raise funds for the Nottinghamshire Services Comforts Fund and remained there for some ten weeks, with £25 1s 6d being collected during that time. "Sir Kenneth" was then swapped for a set of bagpipes! The *Nottingham Journal* of Thursday 22nd August 1940 informed us that "Sir Kenneth" was being "*loaned to the Lord Provost of Glasgow for exhibition in aid of the 'Jocks' Box' Fund. In return, the Lord Provost has promised Mr H S Sherwin, secretary to the Notts Service Comforts Fund, a set of bagpipes for Scots who are serving with a unit in the East Midlands area*". The Jocks' Box Fund was an organisation, which in both world wars supplied Scotsmen in the services with comforts. The report went on to state Ernest Dove had made "Sir Kenneth" out of "*scrap material from old cars and lorries*".

By December 1940 "Sir Kenneth" was back in Nottingham. The *Nottingham Journal* of Saturday 7th December 1940 reported it had already raised more than £300 for charity and was "*now on exhibition at Nottingham Co-operative Society's premises in Parliament Street for the benefit of the Notts Services Comfort Fund*". The exhibition had opened on Friday 6th December 1940. The *Model Engineer* of 2nd January 1941 stated that it had "*recently been exhibited in Nottingham and in the North of England and Scotland, in aid of various Comforts Funds and has already been the means of raising more than £300*". The locomotive was pictured on the front cover of the 6th February 1941 edition of *Model Engineer*. During summer 1941 "Sir Kenneth" toured a number of local (to Nottingham) cinemas. Monday 26th May 1941 saw it placed on display at the Roxy Cinema in Daybrook in aid of the Sheriff of Nottingham's Cigarette Fund for a fortnight. It then moved to the Adelphi Cinema in Bulwell for a six week stay during August 1941. Here, there was a "*boiler rivet competition*" where one had to guess the number of rivets. This attracted 650 entries according to the *Nottingham Guardian* of Saturday 23rd August 1941 - the correct number of 162 being guessed by a Miss B Mayfield of Bulwell. The next stop was the King's Cinema in East Kirkby. All these cinema visits were in aid of the Cigarette Fund, which presumably arranged the supply of cigarettes to those in the services.

From 1942 Ernest Dove used "Sir Kenneth" on his wartime temporary lines; see Chapter Two for details. A further picture appeared in the *Meccano Magazine* for January 1943, where the caption reported "*It has been on display in various parts of the country and has been instrumental in raising £4,000 on behalf of War Charities*". During August 1945, "Sir Kenneth" ran on a line at West Bridgford (see Chapter Three). It then joined the two other 7¼" gauge locomotives (4-6-2 "Duchess of Portland" and 4-4-0 "Schools") to be exhibited during the tours from 1946 to 1948 (see Chapters Four to Six).

Following the end of the 1948 tour "Sir Kenneth" was sold, possibly as a result of the advert in the *Model Engineer* of 23rd December 1948 referred to above. Ken Dove, talking to Simon Townsend in 1994, said it was sold to someone "just outside Sheffield". During the 1949 season "Sir Kenneth" ran on a temporary line at Primrose Valley, just south of the Yorkshire

coastal resort of Filey and close to the large Butlin's Holiday Camp. The only documentary evidence of this line is a photograph (thought to be taken in May 1949), clearly showing the locomotive hauling a train of three coaches on an elevated track. The train is in a wooden built station, called "Primrose Valley". The *Filey News* and *Scarborough Evening News* contain nothing about the railway, nor is there any mention in the Minutes of Filey Urban District Council - indicating the railway was not erected on council ground. The person from "just outside Sheffield" presumably operated this line. However, he put "Sir Kenneth" and the railway up for sale in *The World's Fair* of 26th November 1949 - unfortunately with a box number thus hiding his identity! The price asked for was £875 for "7¼ gauge Pacific to scale and considerable detail" along with "Passenger trucks with fitted cushions to seat 20/25 children. Approximately 300 feet of steel track. Lock up case and heavy duck cover".

Arthur Clethro from Kirk Ella, Kingston upon Hull (who we met in Chapter Eight as the new owner of "Coronation" in 1950) had advertised in the *Model Engineer* of 16th February 1950 stating "Locomotive wanted. 6" gauge, would consider 7¼" or larger". He appears to have then purchased "Sir Kenneth" and the railway, with a view to operating it in his home town during the 1950 season. The Parks & Burial Committee of Kingston upon Hull Corporation heard at their meeting on 14th June 1950 that Arthur Clethro had written "*offering the use of a Model Railway on a suitable site in the East Park*". The matter was referred to the Entertainments Sub-Committee who agreed that the General Superintendent and other Councillors would discuss the details with Arthur Clethro. However, at their meeting on 11th October 1950, the Sub-Committee heard that the Superintendent had "*been unable to arrange for an inspection of the model railway, owing to the absence from the City of Mr A Clethro*" (he was probably in South Shields, see Chapter Eight). The Sub-Committee resolved that the matter should be pursued. At a meeting of the Parks & Burial Committee on 14th March 1951, the General Superintendent was able to report he had inspected the railway and the Committee resolved "*That the offer of Mr A Clethro be accepted for the installation of the model railway in the West Park and thereafter, should it be deemed advisable in the opinion of the General Superintendent, in the East Park, on a profit sharing basis*". The Corporation were to receive 20% of the gross takings.

"Sir Kenneth" then went to work in West Park in Kingston upon Hull for the 1951 season, the railway apparently opening on Whit Saturday, 12th May. (Ernest Dove had used the same park during his 1948 tour - see Chapter Six). The local papers ignored the railway, save for a brief report in the *Hull Daily Mail* of Thursday 10th May 1951, which in reporting the summer entertainment programme noted "*Efforts start with the model railway this weekend in West Park. The railway is a neat little set-up with a real coal-fired locomotive*". After the end of the season the Corporation obviously decided not to permit the railway to remain in (or return to) West Park, as Arthur Clethro put everything up sale in *The World's Fair* of 10th November 1951 - the advert stating "*For Sale, Owing to the owner receiving notice to leave the premises. The installation is just as it was brought in after operating for the season in West Park, Hull*". The price for "Sir Kenneth" and four coaches with "*Smart Self-Contained Station comprising glazed booking office*" was £275 - "*to effect quick sale*". Included was "*Over 100 yards Track on Sleepers*".

The new owner was Raymond Dunn, a dealer, working for himself and for his father Herbert, based in Bishop Auckland in County Durham. He very quickly advertised the complete railway for sale in the *Model Engineer* of 13th December 1951. A price was not mentioned, but the advert stated "*Cheap for quick sale, would consider exchanging for car*". However, the railway was not sold at this time, as it was advertised for sale again in *The World's Fair* of

25th April 1953 - this time by Herbert Dunn. The advert claimed it was "*Recently overhauled and ready for work*". Following this, information about "Sir Kenneth" is sketchy. A note in *Narrow Gauge News* No.148 (April/May 1985), requesting any information about the locomotive be sent to Raymond Dunn, noted that it was "*last heard of at W G Bagnall in Stafford c/1956*". It is not known why the locomotive was with W G Bagnall, the well-known locomotive manufacturer, although it could have been overhauled there for a customer. Raymond Dunn worked for Bagnall at one time.

The next we know of "Sir Kenneth" is that it was in the ownership of Walter Harper at Oakhill Manor near Shepton Mallet in Somerset. He was a collector and dealer of miniature railway locomotives and models. Around the mid 1970s the locomotive was purchased from Oakhill Manor by a private owner in Liss, Hampshire. He kept "Sir Kenneth" for three or four years, only static steaming it once. In 1978 ownership passed to another private owner in Billingshurst, West Sussex, as alluded to in *Narrow Gauge News* No.153 (February 1986). The locomotive was steamed a few times, but not run. Around 2004, "Sir Kenneth" moved to a new home near Cranleigh in Surrey. Here the locomotive is being restored and has been run on air. One can only hope Ernest Dove's sole surviving 7¼" gauge locomotive will one day be hauling public passenger trains again.

4-4-0 [SR Schools Class]
Built: Ernest Dove 1943

Little is known about this locomotive and its fate is a mystery. It was based on a SR 4-4-0 "Schools" class engine. These were constructed between 1930 and 1935 at Eastleigh Works - a total of 40 being built. Numbered 900-939, they were named after public schools - the last examples being withdrawn in December 1962. Unfortunately, it is not known what name or number Ernest Dove gave his locomotive, although one newspaper report referred to it as "Victory 1943".

It appears to have been completed in early 1943. The *Model Engineer* of 17th December 1942 reporting on the exploits of the 4-6-2 "Sir Kenneth" added that Ernest Dove had "*a 'Schools' class loco nearly finished*". Furthermore, a picture in the *Nottingham Evening News* of Friday 29th January 1943 shows Ernest Dove in his workshop. Clearly visible in the foreground of the picture is the six-wheel tender, from the "Schools" locomotive. It is referred to in the caption as a "*Southern Railway passenger loco tender*". The tender appears to be virtually complete. The first recorded public appearance found of the new locomotive was a "Grand Exhibition of Models" arranged as part of Nottingham's "Holidays at Home" programme in the summer of 1943. This was held in Circus Street Hall, off Park Row in Nottingham and was open from Tuesday 24th to Saturday 28th August 1943. The *Nottingham Journal* of Wednesday 25th August 1943 had a report of the exhibition, which contained 150 models of aircraft, yachts and locomotives. After informing us Stanley Battison's 7¼" gauge GWR "King George V" was on display, the paper went on "*Another model engine is that of the Southern Railway express 'Victory 1943' exhibited by Mr Ernest Dove*".

The locomotive does not appear to have seen much, if any, early use as an article in *Practical Mechanics* for April 1944 (reporting on a Merchant Navy Week exhibition, where Ernest Dove had put the locomotive on display) noted "*Mr Dove has not yet made a thorough test of the SR locomotive, but says she is a very sharp mover*". It also commented that the locomotive had taken six years to build. The *Cumberland Evening News* of Saturday 30th August 1947, which was reporting on the 1947 tour visit to Carlisle, stated the "*model of a*

Southern Railway locomotive of the Schools Class, which took 6½ years to build, can pull thirty people for 32 miles". Ignoring the usual Ernest Dove hype about the locomotive's hauling capabilities, this indicates construction was started around 1936. One of the very few pictures discovered of the locomotive appeared in the *Harrogate Herald* of Wednesday 2nd October 1946, showing it on display in the marquee during the 1946 visit to the town. Neither name nor number can be determined.

Reginald Lucas

Reg Lucas founded a Motor Garage business on Nottingham Road, Mansfield in 1918. He was a talented motorcycle rider and competed in the Isle of Man TT races for four years between 1920 & 1923, coming a creditable 4th in the 1922 Junior TT. By the 1940s his business was the main Austin and Rover dealer for Mansfield. It was incorporated as Lucas of Mansfield Limited on 31st December 1951, but sadly went into administration on 8th October 2008. During the Second World War, he started buying engineering and ship models, as well as locomotives - partly as a business and partly as a collector. The garage showroom was full of models & locomotives in the post war days when there were very few cars available. He was acquainted with Louis Shaw, Stanley Battison and almost certainly Ernest Dove.

It is uncertain how many times, if at all, Ernest Dove used the locomotive for passenger hauling. There is no documentary evidence that he did, but then reports of the wartime 7¼" gauge railways are scarce. From various reports, we know it was on display during the tours from 1946 to 1948, along with the two other 7¼" gauge locomotives - "Sir Kenneth" and "Duchess of Portland" (see Chapters Four to Six). Following the 1948 tour, it was sold to "someone in Mansfield", as Ken Dove remembered it. This was probably collector and dealer, Reg Lucas. After that, nothing more is known of the locomotive. Whether it still exists, and if so where, is a mystery.

4-6-2 1945 "Duchess of Portland" **Built: Ernest Dove 1945**

This locomotive was modelled on a 4-6-2 LMSR "Duchess" class locomotive (a non-streamlined example without smoke deflectors). These were constructed between 1937 and 1948, to haul the heaviest express passenger trains on the West Coast main line from Euston to Manchester, Liverpool & Glasgow. A total of 38 engines were built at Crewe works, named after Royalty, cities served by the LMSR and Duchesses - from which the class took its [unofficial] name (the official name being "Princess Coronation"). All had been withdrawn by October 1964. Ernest Dove's own publicity is very precise about the building dates for this locomotive, stating work commenced on 28th February 1937 and completed on 3rd February 1945. He also added that it was "*Built from Drawings kindly loaned by Mr Lotus Allen, Chief Publicity Manager, LMS Railway, Euston Station*". This is perhaps surprising, as at the time Dove said he started building the locomotive, the first LMSR example had yet to emerge from Crewe works! It is more likely the LMSR loaned him the drawings of the earlier, but very similar "Princess Royal" class locomotives, which were built between 1933 and 1935 - he then merely had to add a few touches to make it resemble a "Duchess" (either that or he was on very good terms with the LMSR!).

A photograph in the *Nottingham Journal* of Tuesday 25th July 1944, shows Ernest Dove (attired in suit and tie!) "*at work yesterday on the chassis of a new model of an LMS Pacific type locomotive of the Duchess of Buccleugh [sic] class*". The locomotive appears mostly complete, except for the boiler. The finished locomotive was turned out numbered 1945 and named "Duchess of Portland" - Ernest Dove's publicity noting the naming was "*By kind consent of Her Grace the Duchess of Portland*". This was Winifred Anna Cavendish-

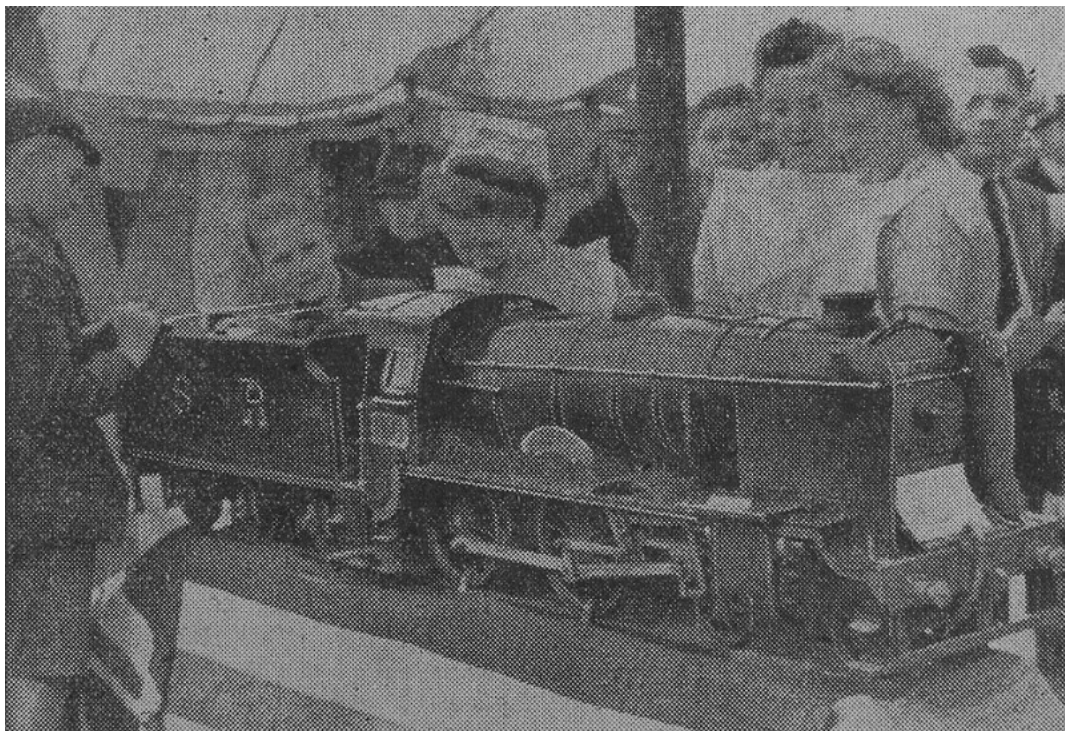
Bentinck, Duchess of Portland (1863-1954), who became Duchess following her marriage to the 6th Duke of Portland in 1889. She had a strong interest in the welfare of birds, and in 1891 became the first, and longest-serving, president of the Society for the Protection of Birds. The locomotive sported a double chimney and was a good representation of the original, much better than Stanley Battison's "Duchess of Ilkeston" built at the same time. The *Nottingham Evening Post* of Monday 26th February 1945 reported that Ernest Dove had "just completed another engine", which "far excels his previous handiwork". It went on to add "The Duchess of Portland has consented to her title being used as the name of the engine and she will be invited to perform the christening ceremony".

Possibly the first public appearance of the new locomotive was at an exhibition held in aid of the Merchant Navy Comforts Fund in Westminster Buildings, Theatre Square, Nottingham. This opened on Thursday 22nd March 1945, the *Nottingham Evening Post* reporting "Apart from the Model of the *Queen Mary* and other famous liners, Mr H Dove [sic] of Arnold has loaned his latest LMS locomotive, *Duchess of Portland*". The exhibition would have probably run for some weeks. "Duchess of Portland" appears to have had a very short working life with Ernest Dove, as even before completion in February 1945, he had decided to move up to 10¼" gauge. After running on a few local temporary lines, it was displayed at least twice during the 1945 tour (see Chapter Three). It then joined the two other 7¼" gauge locomotives (4-6-2 "Sir Kenneth" and 4-4-0 "Schools") on the tours from 1946 to 1948 (see Chapters Four to Six).

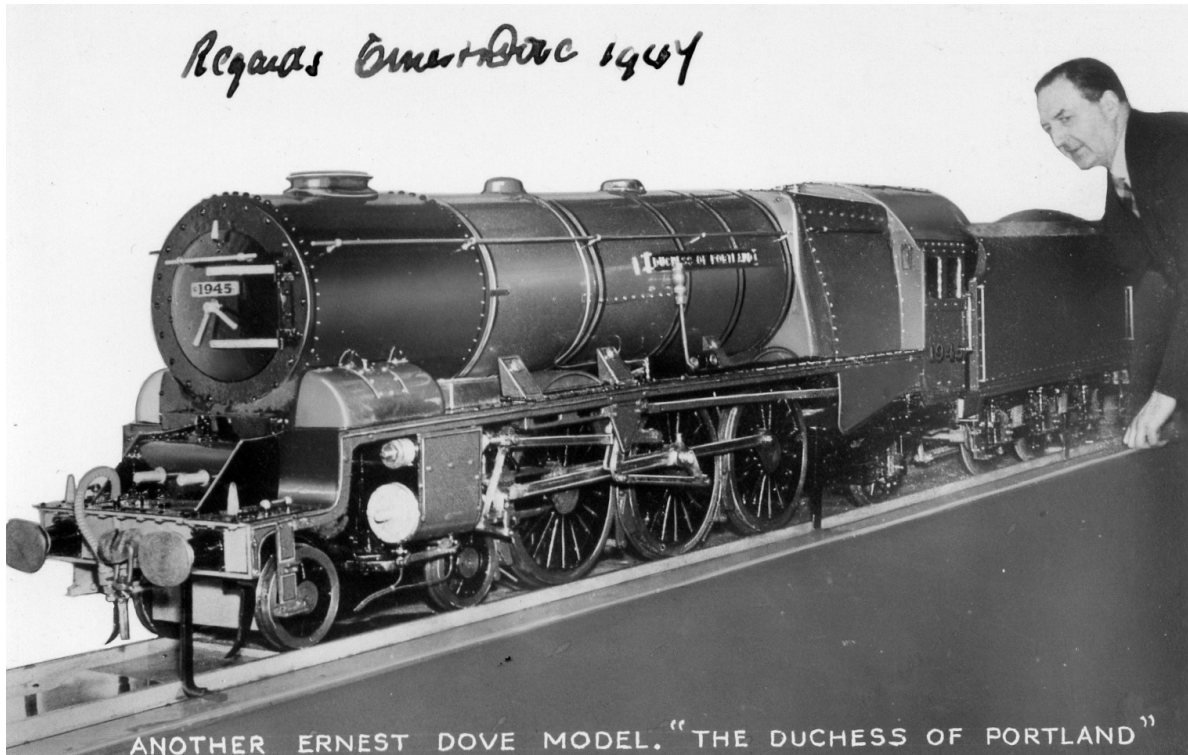
Following the end of the 1948 tour, as with the other 7¼" gauge locomotives, it was sold. According to Ken Dove this was to a "Mr Witty". This may well have been Mr Arthur John Witty who was a founder member of the Nottingham Society of Model & Experimental Engineers and later its President. However, we know from a rare (sadly undated) photograph that "Duchess of Portland" ran on a temporary railway laid for the summer season at Gyllyngvase Beach in Falmouth, Cornwall (SW809316). This railway first ran for the 1947 summer season, being open by mid July. The line consisted of an end to end run of probably around 100 yards, along the back of the Beach. It was operated by Reg Lucas from Mansfield (who we have already met in connection with the SR 4-4-0 "Schools" locomotive). The Beach was leased from Falmouth Borough Council by Sampson James and it was with him Reg Lucas made the relevant arrangements. This, unfortunately, means there is little documentary evidence of the railway. However, we know from a photograph in the *Falmouth Packet* of Friday 18th July 1947, the locomotive used for the 1947 season was Stanley Battison's "Duchess of Ilkeston", which Reg Lucas had purchased from Battison, via Stanley Shooter (a neighbour of Battison). Presumably, this locomotive was used again for the 1948 season. However, possibly for the 1949 season and then subsequent seasons, "Duchess of Portland" was used. Whether it was still owned by Mr Witty at this time or, more likely, sold on to Reg Lucas is uncertain. It is not known when the railway ceased to be laid each year - probably this was sometime in the early 1950s. After this "Duchess of Portland" vanishes and its fate is a mystery. "Duchess of Ilkeston" later ran at the Derbyshire Miners' Holiday Centre at Skegness, although unfortunately we do not have any accurate dates of its operation there - but is most likely to have been between c1949 and c1955. By 1963 it was running at Ingoldmells, north of Skegness and named "Ingoldmells Flyer". Apart from Falmouth, it is known Reg Lucas unsuccessfully applied to operate a line in Cleethorpes for the 1948 season.



"Sir Kenneth" Here we see Ernest Dove's first 7¼" gauge locomotive - running on a temporary elevated railway at Primrose Valley, Filey. He sold it on after the 1948 tour and this view is thought to date from May 1949. The station nameboard reads "Primrose Valley".
(Courtesy P. Ward Collection)



SR "Schools" This rather poor picture is the only one we have of the "Schools" class locomotive, completed in 1943. Unfortunately, neither number nor name are visible. It is also the only known view taken inside the model exhibition marquee, which accompanied the tours from 1945 to 1948. Some nurses from Harrogate & District General Hospital are admiring the locomotive, during the 1946 tour visit to Harrogate in September.
(Harrogate Herald. 2/10/46)



"Duchess of Portland" Ernest Dove is seen inspecting his LMSR "Duchess" class locomotive, in this view from an advertising photograph. This one has been personally signed by him in 1947. The locomotive certainly captured the impressive lines of the original.
(Author's Collection)



"Duchess of Portland" This is the only known (and unfortunately, undated) photograph of the locomotive at work. It is seen hauling a well-loaded train on the temporary line, which ran along the rear of Gyllyngvase Beach in Falmouth, Cornwall. The passengers are all Woolworth shop girls - the photograph being taken on a Wednesday afternoon, which was presumably early closing day! The photo was probably taken around 1949/early 1950s.
(Courtesy S. Townsend Collection)

10¼" Gauge Steam Locomotives

In the five years between 1946 and 1950, Ernest Dove completed five 10¼" gauge steam locomotives. Ken Dove finished another locomotive in 1953, which was probably started by Ernest Dove. All of these locomotives survive, despite two having been heavily rebuilt. At least four are steamable and three can be seen in action on public railways. See Appendix Three for a table of dimensions.

4-6-0 3/1944 "Wingland Grange"/2943 "Hampton Court"

Built: G & S Light Engineering Company Limited/Twining Models Limited 1939

This locomotive is the "odd man out" of the 10¼" gauge steam locomotives, not being built by Ernest Dove. He owned the locomotive between 1944 and 1948, acquiring it to move up from 7¼" to 10¼" gauge and thereby being able to carry more passengers. Even for miniature railway locomotives, this engine has been very well travelled and has passed through a good number of owners, seeing two major rebuilds.

Despite Ernest Dove claiming this locomotive as his own, it was not built by him, being constructed for the Dudley Zoo Railway. Dudley Zoological Society was formed in 1935 by the Earl of Dudley; Ernest Marsh, a director of Marsh & Baxter, local meat producers; and Captain Frank Cooper, a director of the Oxfordshire jams and preserves manufacturers. Dudley Zoo opened on Thursday 6th May 1937, with almost the entire animal stock coming from Captain Cooper's Oxford Zoo. The Dudley Zoo Railway opened on Whit Monday 6th June 1938 as a 10¼" gauge line. Motive power was provided by a pair of 4-4-2 freelance locomotives designed by J N Maskelyne and built by G & S Light Engineering Company Limited. This company had been formed by Herbert Trevor Guest and Raymond Saunders specifically to build these locomotives. However, it was found the 1 in 50 gradient did not suit the 4-4-2s, especially in wet weather and construction of a pair of 4-6-0s was started by G & S Light Engineering Company Limited, probably in autumn 1938. These were built to resemble a GWR "Saint", but with outside valve gear. Progress was slow, due to the pressure of other work, so the first of the locomotives was completed by Twining Models Limited of Pike Lane, Northampton. It was numbered 3, but remained un-named. The new locomotive went into service in the summer of 1939 - the *Northampton Independent* of 25th August 1939 referring to its "*recent*" arrival on the railway. Due to the Second World War the other locomotive remained unfinished. After 1941, steam power was only used at holiday times, but No.3 was still in service on the railway in 1943.

Following the 1944 season, due to the railway's popularity, it was decided to change to 15" gauge. This meant the 10¼" gauge equipment would become redundant and the three steam locomotives were made available for sale - the service being maintained by petrol locomotives until the line was regauged over the winter of 1946/1947. Therefore, No.3 was sold to Ernest Dove, along with the chassis of its uncompleted sister (which we will meet again later) and a number of coaches. Ernest Dove renumbered the locomotive No.1944, indicating he acquired it sometime in 1944 - probably towards the end of the year. In his publicity, Ernest Dove referred to No.1944 as a GWR "Grange" class locomotive, or simply "The Great Western". He also claimed to have built the locomotive adding, in typical Dove style "*One wonders how it was achieved but it goes to prove the amount of patience, skill, thought and concentration required to make these remarkable locomotives*". He stated the "*Speed attained*" was 37 mph. The number was carried on the cab sides, but no nameplate was fitted. The tender sides were lettered "Great Western". Some of the newspaper reports

also referred to it as the "Cheltenham Flyer" or a "Hall" class engine. Despite Ernest Dove only owning the locomotive for a short time, it had a fairly hard working life with him. His first use of No.1944 seems to have been at Easter 1945 on a temporary line alongside the River Trent in Nottingham at Lover's Walk. He then used the locomotive throughout his tours from 1945 to 1947, with the final run being at Carlisle in September 1947 (see Chapters Three to Five). For the 1945 tour No.1944 ran on its own, but for the 1946 and 1947 tours it ran alongside, and was somewhat over shadowed by, Ernest Dove's new LMSR 4-6-2 "Coronation" locomotive.

For his 1948 tour, Ernest Dove had completed a brand new locomotive to accompany "Coronation". This was the American NYCR 4-6-4 "Belle of New York" and No.1944 became surplus to his requirements. Therefore, Ernest Dove sold the locomotive to William Botterill. This seems likely to have been in spring 1948 - both *Model Engineer* (of 15th April 1948) and *Meccano Magazine* (of May 1948) mention No.1944 as attending the second venue of the 1948 tour at Leith Links, Edinburgh. There are no reports elsewhere that indicate the locomotive actually took part in any of the 1948 tour, so it is likely that No.1944 had been sold to William Botterill before the start of that year's tour in May. Botterill operated a number of railways and No.1944 is known to have worked on some of these. During the 1948 & 1949 seasons Botterill's Miniature Railways Limited operated a temporary railway around Wellington Pier Gardens in Great Yarmouth, Norfolk for the *News Chronicle*. No.1944 was employed on this line, which seems to have run between Whitsun and September each year.

William Botterill (1895-1959)

Prior to the Second World War, William Botterill was a showman. During the war he became a model dealer and later operated a number of miniature railways in the period following the war. In spring 1948, he formed a company called "Botterill's Miniature Railways Limited". At different times he operated from addresses in Canvey Island, London SE17, Peterborough and Tunbridge Wells. The Company was later dissolved and, unfortunately, the records destroyed.

An article in the *Heywood Society Journal* No.28 (May 1991) mentions a photo of No.1944 running at Billing Aquadrome in Northampton. However, this photo is merely part of an advert, which appeared in the *Northampton Chronicle & Echo* of Wednesday 13th April 1949. This was advertising the reopening of the Aquadrome for the 1949 season on Easter Saturday, 16th April - with a "New Miniature Railway" as one of the attractions. "Ride on the "Royal Scot" it extolled. It would appear this railway was supplied and/or operated by William Botterill and a photo of No.1944 was no doubt easily to hand when required for the advert. The locomotive actually opening the new railway was a LMSR 4-6-0 Royal Scot locomotive built by Carland Engineering Limited of Essex and, as far as is known, No.1944 never ran at Billing Aquadrome. Anyway, following its use at Wellington Pier Gardens, Great Yarmouth in the summer of 1949, William Botterill moved the locomotive to work on his line at Cleethorpes in Lincolnshire. This railway opened on Saturday 17th July 1948, being operated by Botterill's Miniature Railways Limited. It ran for 300 yards from behind the Bathing Pool (TA315079) to the northern end of the Boating Lake, near the Paddling Pool (TA316077). The line had some sharp curves so, for the next season, Botterill requested a new site from the Cleethorpes Borough Council slightly further south. This new line opened on Saturday 28th May 1949, running on the seaward side of the Boating Lake, close to the sand dunes. It was some 700 yards in length and unusually sported double track. The station at the northern end ("Cleethorpes Town") was close to the Paddling Pool at TA316077, with a station at the southern end ("Thrunscoe") at the south end of the Boating Lake at TA320073. Botterill used a number of different locomotives between 1949 and 1953 during

the time he held the concession for the railway, with up to four locomotives in steam on Sundays. No.1944 was one of these (probably arriving in spring 1950) as were the Ernest Dove built locomotives, "Queen of Scots" and "The Cleethorpes Flyer" (see below).

During this time, No.1944 was also said to have run at Lowestoft on the Suffolk coast. In the amendment list (apparently published in 1952) to his *Light & Miniature Railway Locomotives of Great Britain* (Birmingham Locomotive Club 1950), Eric Tonks lists the "*Lowestoft Min Rly*" as having [only] a "(GWR *Grange*") 4-6-0 OC E.Dove". This is obviously No.1944. The railway at Lowestoft opened as a temporary line on the South Pier in May 1948 and then ran there each season until September 1954. For the 1948-1951 seasons inclusive the line was operated by George Dingle from Cornwall and the locomotive in use was his 4-6-2 No.1003 "Tamar Queen" (built by H C S Bullock in 1934). This was replaced for the 1952 season, when the line was taken over by Lowestoft Borough Council, by a LMSR class 5 4-6-0 named "Sonia" built by G & S Light Engineering Company Limited in 1950. This locomotive then ran on the South Pier for the 1952, 1953 & 1954 seasons, before the line (and "Sonia") were moved to a permanent site on the South Esplanade in 1955. So there was apparently no requirement for a locomotive, beyond a short-term hire to replace a failure of either "Tamar Queen" or "Sonia". During the time of the Council's control, there is no mention of any locomotive problems or subsequent hire in the Minutes, so it is very unlikely to have occurred during this time and the entry in the Tonks amendment list, indicating No.1944 was there prior to 1952, supports this. Therefore, if No.1944 did run at Lowestoft, it must have been during the 1950 or 1951 seasons - merely for a short time to replace an unavailable "Tamar Queen". Unsurprisingly, no pictures have been found of No.1944 at Lowestoft. The other possibility is that Tonks recorded Lowestoft in error for Great Yarmouth. Anyway back at Cleethorpes, from the 1954 season the line was taken over by Arthur Clethro of Kingston upon Hull (who we have already met as the one time owner of "Sir Kenneth" and "Coronation" when it ran at South Shields) and he replaced steam motive power with battery electric locomotives - reopening the line on Good Friday, 16th April 1954. Therefore at the end of the 1953 season Botterill moved No.1944 away from Cleethorpes.

In June 1954 Botterill's Miniature Railways Limited opened a new railway behind the then new South Promenade in the West Norfolk seaside resort of Hunstanton. Judging by the Minutes of Hunstanton Urban District Council this line opened on Friday 4th June 1954, just prior to the Whitsun weekend - although the local press ignored the event. It was located at TF668401, immediately south of the Amusement Park. Botterill moved No.1944 to Hunstanton to operate the new railway. In October 1954 the Council granted Botterill's a further three years concession for the railway and also suggested the appearance of the "*tunnel and engine sheds needs improving*". In October 1955 Botterill's requested permission to transfer the agreement to Mr W H Brooke - the Managing Director of the Hunstanton Pier Company, which had its own miniature railway at this time. However, this did not take place. No.1944 appears to have run on the railway until the end of the 1956 season. A typed note in the Kerr's Miniature Railway archive (dated stamped 9th November 1956) from Botterill's Miniature Railways Limited, giving "*Brief Details of the Margate Miniature Railway*" records "*A Pacific Engine in use 1956 season*" and adds "*Reserve Engine at Peterborough, Gt Western Engine tested and ready for use if required*". This obviously refers to No.1944. Botterill's sold the railway at Hunstanton, with the remaining years concession, to William H Nunn (lessee of the Amusement Park) in November 1956. Eric Hannan observed No.1944 on 4th February 1957 in store at North Street in Peterborough. He recorded it as "*Ex No.3 Wingland Grange. Reboilered by Savage Kings Lynn circa 1953 - ex Hunstanton Promenade 1956*" (Wingland Grange was Botterill's home at Nassington near Peterborough). Back at

Hunstanton, the railway ran for just one more season and was put up for sale by William Nunn in September 1957. He advertised the railway in the 7th September 1957 edition of *The World's Fair*. The advert stated the locomotive was a "*Royal Scot Steam engine [with] new copper tubes this season*" and gave the length of track as 800ft with a "*station and other equipment*". It could be seen "*running this weekend*". The reason for the sale was that the Council wanted the land for some "Day Chalets" and today caravans cover the site.

To return to No.1944, which as already mentioned was in store at North Street, Peterborough by February 1957. The locomotive was first advertised for sale in *The World's Fair* of 17th November 1956 under the heading "Closing Down". It was again advertised in *The World's Fair* of 20th April 1957 and in the *Model Engineer* of 30th May 1957, from auctioneers Enderby Handson of 26 North Street, Peterborough ("*At a Bargain price to clear*"). This was also the Registered Office of Botterill's Miniature Railways Limited - an "E Handson" being one of its Directors. It was not sold and similar adverts appeared in *The World's Fair* of 7th September 1957 & 16th November 1957 ("*At bargain price of £200*") and in the *Model Engineer* of 30th January 1958, headed "Closing Down". Again, it seems there were no takers and yet another advert appeared in the *Model Engineer* of 6th March 1958 - this time stating "*Company closing down*", marking the end of Botterill's Miniature Railways Limited. Towards the end of 1958 the locomotive was finally sold by Enderby Handson, being acquired by Jim Hughes for the Hastings Miniature Railway - its purchase ("*this winter*") being reported in the *Model Engineer* of 25th December 1958. This railway, located at Rock-a-Nore on the seafront in Hastings, Sussex, had opened on Whit Saturday, 15th May 1948. Here No.1944 was completely rebuilt by Jim Hughes. Drawings dated 1911 were obtained from Swindon Works to assist in the work - 70% of the old parts were scrapped and a complete set of new valve gear fitted. The locomotive emerged numbered 2943 and correctly named "Hampton Court" after the GWR "Saint" class locomotive of that number. Interestingly, the *Model Engineer* of 25th December 1958 reported the locomotive had that number and name on arrival, so one presumes the choice had been made as soon as the purchase had been made - the fact that Ian Allan Limited, who had an interest in the railway, had their head office in Hampton Court is probably not coincidental! Anyway, the rebuilt locomotive went into service on the railway in August 1959 and was highly successful. The railway was extended for the 1960 season to its present length of 600 yards and it became very popular. However, by the 1971 season "Hampton Court" was little used and was put up for sale towards the end of 1972. It was advertised for sale by collector and Christie's consultant Jonathan Minns in the 5th January & 2nd February 1973 issues of the *Model Engineer*. In about 1974 it was sold to Walter Harper (one time owner of "Sir Kenneth") who owned Oakhill Manor near Shepton Mallet in Somerset and who was also a collector of miniature railway locomotives and models. He opened a railway there on Saturday 27th May 1978, but by this time "Hampton Court" was not serviceable and had been sold to Mark Bamford at Ashbourne, Derbyshire. In 1981 he sold the locomotive to John Gretton at Stapleford Park in Leicestershire.

The Stapleford Miniature Railway had first opened on Sunday 18th May 1958, but sadly closed at the end of the 1982 season following the death in March 1982 of Lord Gretton, the railway's founder and John's father. Part of the railway was removed, but the locomotives remained in store and John Gretton decided to have "Hampton Court" overhauled. It was therefore sent to Neil Simkins at Ashby-de-la-Zouch in Leicestershire in late 1986. Here, the locomotive was given another full overhaul and part rebuild. A new boiler and driving wheels were obtained and a new tender built. Unfortunately, John Gretton did not see the completion of this work, as he passed away on 4th April 1989. A fully restored "Hampton Court" was

then outshopped from Neil Simkins' workshop on 8th September 1990 ready to return to Stapleford. By the early 1990s moves were being made to restore the railway to life. Following some private steamings in 1992, the first public open day was held on Saturday 26th August 1995. Open days have continued since then and during these "Hampton Court" has been once again hauling passenger trains, although in very different surroundings to Hastings seafront. The 1¼ mile long line, featuring a tunnel has some real gradients to test the locomotive! It is hoped that after all its wanderings the locomotive has found a permanent home at Stapleford.

4-6-2 6220 "Coronation"
Built: Ernest Dove 1946

This was Ernest Dove's most iconic and well-known locomotive. Completed in 1946, he used it on his tours and temporary railways in Northern & Eastern England and Scotland during the four seasons 1946 to 1949, before selling it on in 1950. After passing through only two other hands and very briefly going into Local Authority ownership, it fortunately still hauls passenger trains today, demonstrating a type of locomotive rarely replicated in miniature.

The LMSR turned out their streamlined 4-6-2 locomotive 6220 "Coronation" from Crewe works in June 1937. It was finished in a striking "Caledonian" blue livery with silver stripes. On a trial run on 29th June 1937 it reached 114 mph south of Crewe, a world record at the time. "Coronation" was put to work on the new "Coronation Scot" train running between London Euston and Glasgow Central, which started service on 5th July 1937 with 6220 hauling the northbound train. Ernest Dove seems to have started work on his 10¼" gauge "Coronation" in 1938 and it is likely the Second World War slowed progress, with materials difficult to obtain, as it was not finished until March 1946. The completed locomotive, turned out in the same blue livery of its larger sister, must have been an impressive sight. Dove's own publicity was typically expansive *"The most magnificent and amazing model locomotive ever built. The whole coloured blue enamel with aluminium beading, letters etc presenting a most impressive and magnificent appearance"*. Apparently, the drawings Ernest Dove used were *"kindly loaned by LMS railway"*. He claimed a top speed on test of 39.7 mph, at which the drawbar pull was 25 tons. One wonders how he measured these with such accuracy. The nameplate was cast in aluminium. The raw materials, he said, cost £1,300 and the locomotive was insured for £3,000 - the boiler for £2,000. Weight in working order was stated as 2 tons 3 cwt, with a hauling capacity of 5 coaches with 100 passengers. In his book (*Miniature Steam Locomotives* David & Charles 1964) George Woodcock suggests that Ernest Dove (who he incorrectly names as Alfred) only built "Coronation" by assembling bought in components *"In 1948 [sic] constructed by partial assembly a 10¼in gauge "Pacific". The boiler and most other items were made by the Yorkshire Engine Co"*. The Yorkshire Engine Company had their works in Sheffield. However, George Barlow thought the boiler was supplied by Abbots of Newark - see Appendix Two.

The completed locomotive made its first public appearance when it was put on display on the ground floor of Griffin & Spalding Limited department store (now Debenhams) on Long Row, Nottingham. The exhibition of "Coronation" was opened on Wednesday 3rd April 1946 by Winifred Duchess of Portland. The *Nottingham Journal* of Thursday 4th April 1946 reported Ernest Dove speaking at the opening *"My wife has stayed at home and forgone pleasure while I worked on this model"*. Proceeds from the display were donated to the Portland Training Centre for disabled men and the LMSR Benevolent Fund. "Coronation" remained in the store until the exhibition closed on Thursday 18th April 1946. It was then

steamed for the first time in public on Easter Saturday 20th April 1946, when it ran on the Victoria Embankment in Nottingham. This first outing is described in detail in Chapter Four, which also covers the subsequent 1946 tour on which Ernest Dove employed "Coronation". For the tour he published and sold for 3d an attractive leaflet about the locomotive - this is reproduced in Appendix Five. He then used the locomotive on his tours in 1947 & 1948 and at Kingston upon Hull and Darlington in 1949 - as fully explored in Chapters Five to Seven.

As related in Chapter Eight, Ernest Dove then employed "Coronation" on his new railway on the South Foreshore at South Shields, which opened on Easter Saturday, 8th April 1950. This followed an abortive attempt to display the locomotive in a shop window in the town. Sometime during the 1950 season, Ernest Dove sold "Coronation" and the railway to Arthur Clethro from Kingston upon Hull, who then operated the railway on the same site during the 1951 season. However, he found the location, adjacent to the South Beach, was causing problems with sand damaging "Coronation" and encroaching on to the track. In January 1952 he requested a new site on the North Foreshore from South Shields County Borough Council. They agreed to his request and offered a site on land between Sea Road and Pier Parade (NZ372676). This was adjacent to the Sea Hotel and close to South Marine Park and the Amusement Park on the Promenade. "Coronation" then went into service on this new railway, which presumably opened at the start of the 1952 season. The line was a circuit of some 220 yards, as opposed to the previous 300 yard "end to end" layout of the line on the South Foreshore.

Despite the prospective new site, Arthur Clethro put "Coronation" and the entire railway up for sale in March 1952. The advert, in *The World's Fair* of 8th March 1952, stated the locomotive had been extensively overhauled and "redecorated". Apart from "Coronation", for sale were five coaches mounted on six bogies, 300 yards of track, fencing, public footbridge, sectional timber station and two 30 yard timber platforms. Everything was again advertised in the 17th May 1952 issue of *The World's Fair*. Arthur Clethro described the railway as "*Sited on most prominent site at South Shields with every prospect of a very profitable season*". Apart from "Coronation" and five coaches there was "*Circular track approx 220 yards long fenced in, Smart station and Platform etc*". The price for a "*quick sale*" was £1,400. Nothing was sold at that time and the railway operated during the 1952 season, but by October 1952 Arthur Clethro was offering to sell everything to the Council. The Entertainments & Publicity Committee of South Shields County Borough Council heard at their meeting on 8th October 1952 that he was "*offering to sell to the Corporation his 'Coronation Scot' miniature railway installation at Pier Parade at a price of £1,000. He had received a similar offer from a firm in North Wales which would, if accepted, mean the removal of the railway from South Shields. He wished to give the Corporation the opportunity of acquiring the railway if it was desired to retain it in the town*". The offer "*from a firm in North Wales*" was Leslie Salts' and Randolph Turpin's Great Orme Holiday Centre Limited, as detailed in Chapter Nine. Nevertheless, the Committee resolved the railway should be purchased at the price offered and put things in motion to complete the deal, appoint staff to operate the railway and prepare the same site ready for the 1953 season. However, at the meeting of the Town Council on 5th November 1952 an amendment was put not to confirm the purchase of the railway. The Town Clerk then informed the meeting that on the instructions of the Entertainments & Publicity Committee a "*contract had been entered into for the purchase of the miniature railway and that if this contract was repudiated the Corporation would be liable to damages*". Despite this the Council voted, 24 for and 3 against, on the amendment. At a following special meeting of the Town Council it was then decided to purchase the railway after all (or let the purchase stand) and deputed the Finance Committee to then dispose of it on the best possible

terms. This they did and, as reported under the headline "*Error Brought Profit*" in *The World's Fair* of 7th February 1953, made a £100 profit from the deal! "Coronation" and the entire railway were now to move south - the new owner being Nelson Andrews of Trowbridge, Wiltshire.

In November 1952, Christchurch Borough Council were looking for a new miniature railway to run on an open grassed area, adjacent to the River Stour, known as The Quomps. Nelson Andrews successfully bid for this concession and built the new railway, which after delays caused by problems with "Coronation", opened on Saturday 20th June 1953. Located at SZ157924, the line formed a circuit of 300 yards around Mayors Mead Car Park at the western end of The Quomps and close to the River Stour and Wick Ferry (later Pontin's) Holiday Camp. "Coronation" was the sole motive power. This was to be the longest stay on any railway for the streamlined locomotive and thousands of passengers must have enjoyed a trip behind it over the years. The railway and "Coronation" changed hands in April 1971, with Bernard Cole, a local Showman taking over. In August 1972 an American style petrol locomotive joined "Coronation" and the railway seems to have started a decline. A report in *Narrow Gauge News* No.83 (June 1973), noted "Coronation" was stored out of use in the shed. In its last years the railway ran with just the petrol locomotive and it finally closed at the end of the 1978 season. "Coronation" was advertised for sale in *The World's Fair* and on 15th February 1979 it was sold by Bernard Cole to Arthur Thomson of Salisbury. The locomotive now disappeared from the public eye for a number of years.

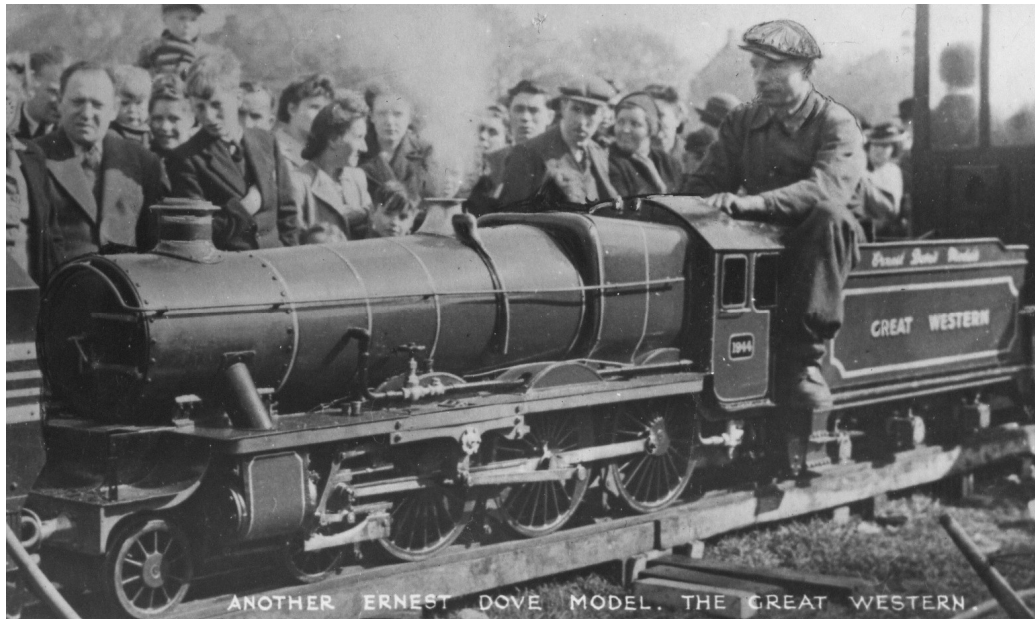
On the 12th June 1993 a new railway - the Syon Park Miniature Railway - opened in Syon Park Gardens, Brentford, Greater London. The railway was a simple "end to end" run of some 250 yards at TQ173769. Initially, motive power was a LMSR 4-6-0 Royal Scot locomotive built by Carland Engineering, but in October 1993 it was joined by "Coronation" - still under the ownership of Arthur Thomson. Following a full overhaul started in January 1993, with a new boiler and firebox, it was first steamed at Syon Park on Friday 29th October 1993. The railway was extended on 1st April 1994 to 400 yards (still as an "end to end" run) by bringing one end closer to the entrance to the gardens. Sadly, after twelve years of operation the railway closed on 29th August 2005 as the ground on which it ran formed part of a major re-landscaping of the gardens - there being no alternative site for the railway. "Coronation" then returned to Arthur Thomson at Salisbury.

In April 2007, "Coronation" moved to the Eastleigh Lakeside Railway located in Lakeside Country Park, Eastleigh, Hampshire (SU449175). This well-known dual gauge railway first opened on 31st July 1992 and is now home to a wide range of 7¼" and 10¼" gauge locomotives, including the Carland built Royal Scot, which ran alongside "Coronation" at Syon Park. At Eastleigh, the locomotive was given a major overhaul and repaint before its first run there on Sunday 18th January 2009. The work included retubing the boiler, reworking the streamlined casing and a new tender body. "Coronation" is in service and on loan to the railway, but remains in the ownership of Arthur Thomson.

The rather attractive nameplate, photographed when the locomotive was running at Eastleigh for a "Streamliners" weekend.

(P. Scott. 6/8/11)





No.1944 Despite the title, this locomotive was not built by Ernest Dove! This view shows it on one of the tour lines - thought to be at Mansfield in 1946. Note the tender of "Coronation" just visible on the extreme left and the unusual track. The driver is Tommy Pallister. The photograph has had the attentions of a touch-up artist, who appears to have added a cap on Tommy's head! The wording on top of the tender states "Ernest Dove's Models".

(Author's Collection)



"Hampton Court" Amazingly, this is same locomotive - two major rebuilds later! Now numbered 2943, here we see "Hampton Court" at its current home on the Stapleford Miniature Railway in Leicestershire. The most noticeable changes are the authentic valve gear, along with a new cab and tender. It is turned out in smart GWR livery.

(N. Knight. 16/9/95)



"Coronation" This rare photograph shows Ernest Dove's most well-known locomotive at work on Arthur Clethro's second railway at South Shields. This was formed of a circuit of some 220 yards on land between Sea Road and Pier Parade near South Marine Park.

The railway operated just for the 1952 season, before very briefly coming into the ownership of the local Council. It has a somewhat ramshackle appearance.

(J. Meredith. 28/6/52)



"Coronation" Fifty nine years later, we find the locomotive awaiting departure from platform two at Eastleigh Parkway Station on the Eastleigh Lakeside Railway, its current home. There are a number of detail differences - the main one being that the silver lining is now more accurately painted on, rather than the separate beading used previously.

(P. Scott. 6/8/11)

4-6-0 1947 "Queen of Scots"/27 "Isabel"
Built: Ernest Dove 1947

This locomotive was based on a LMSR 4-6-0 and was completed during the 1947 tour, being sold to William Botterill shortly afterwards. Following use on railways in Kent and then Lincolnshire, it travelled overseas to Canada and the USA, before being repatriated in 2002.

In 1944 along with the GWR 4-6-0 "Saint", Ernest Dove acquired from the Dudley Zoo Railway the rolling chassis of the uncompleted sister locomotive. See paragraphs above for more details on the background to these locomotives. It is believed that Ernest Dove then used this 4-6-0 chassis in the construction of his next locomotive - based on a LMSR 4-6-0 engine. His own publicity stated "*Commenced building 1939. Completed 1947. Blue prints kindly lent by LMS Director*". The locomotive as completed is commonly thought to be based on a LMSR "Royal Scot" class engine - as rebuilt with a taper boiler and double chimney. (Although the cab design, with two windows, more closely resembles the rebuilt "Jubilee" locomotives 5735 & 5736, or rebuilt "Patriots" - these also having taper boilers and double chimneys). The rebuilt Royal Scots did not appear on the main line until July 1943, when 6103 "Royal Scots Fusilier" was turned out from Crewe Works. (The rebuilt Jubilees appeared in 1942 and the first of the Patriots in 1946). This would seem to confirm that Ernest Dove did not start construction on the locomotive - from the frames up - until after he obtained the chassis from Dudley Zoo in 1944. His comment "*Commenced building 1939*" would therefore seem to relate to the chassis.

Between 7th June and 16th August 1947, Ernest Dove ran a temporary railway and model exhibition at Prestwick in south west Scotland (see Chapter Five for more details). In reporting this railway the *Ayr Advertiser* of Thursday 12th June 1947 added "*In the exhibition is a magnificent LMS model partly finished*". The *Ayrshire Post* of Friday 15th August 1947 reported "*A brand new model, the LMS "City of Nottingham", which had been on exhibition, was put through its steam test on Friday [8th August], when it put up a very fine performance, and a large number of people had the opportunity of riding behind it on its initial runs*". Despite the different name, by elimination, this must be the 4-6-0 that became "Queen of Scots". It would appear that Ernest Dove named (or was going to name) the locomotive "City of Nottingham" after his home town. He then displayed the locomotive during his stay at Bitts Park in Carlisle between 30th August and 13th September 1947 (see Chapter Five). The *Cumberland Evening News* of Saturday 30th August 1947 reported "*The latest of the models, which are all coal fired, is of an LMS locomotive which is not yet being operated by the company*". This interesting comment, would give weight to the suggestion the locomotive was in fact based on the LMSR rebuilt "Patriot" class, although even a few of these were in service on the mainline by that time.

However, Ernest Dove had already advertised the locomotive for sale. An advert in *The World's Fair* of 19th July 1947 has "*One 10¼" gauge Steam Locomotive (new)*" for sale, which "*can be viewed at Prestwick, Ayrshire, till end of August*". Subsequently, between the end of the 1947 tour in mid September and May 1948 the locomotive was sold to William Botterill (who we have already met in connection with the history of the GWR 4-6-0 No.1944). By then it was named "Queen of Scots" and numbered 1947. Botterill (trading as Botterill's Miniature Railways Limited) put the locomotive to work on a new line, which he operated on a profit share basis with the Margate Pier & Harbour Company Limited. This railway opened on Whit Saturday, 15th May 1948 and ran along the upper promenade of the stone pier (actually a jetty for the harbour, at TR353712) in Margate, Kent. The line was a

simple "end to end" run of 237 yards. "Queen of Scots" then seems to have worked on this line for at least the 1948 & 1949 seasons. At this time it was in a red livery. Possibly for the 1950 season, and definitely for the 1951 season (as reported in the *SLS Journal* for October 1951), it was replaced by a LNER 4-6-2 A3 locomotive. "Queen of Scots" then moved to the Cleethorpes Miniature Railway in Lincolnshire - also operated by Botterill at this time. Back at Margate, the railway closed at the end of the 1963 season being replaced by a line of the same gauge on the nearby iron & timber pier - the A3 working the line until that time.

The railway at Cleethorpes has already been described with the history of the GWR 4-6-0 No.1944. In summary, Botterill operated it and used a number of different locomotives between 1948 and 1953 during the time he held the concession. On Sundays up to four locomotives were in steam and "Queen of Scots" was one of these. For the 1954 season, the line was taken over by Arthur Clethro from Kingston upon Hull and he replaced steam motive power with battery electric locomotives. Therefore at the end of the 1953 season "Queen of Scots" moved away from Cleethorpes and probably back to Botterill's at Peterborough for store. The locomotive was listed by Botterill's Miniature Railways Limited on their "*List of Engines & Equipment for Sale*" dated 1st September 1956, as "*Queen of Scots (Green) requires overhaul 4/6/0*". To this someone has annotated in hand "*Sold*". The locomotives and equipment were stated to be stored at Sages Lane, Walton, Peterborough. One would assume then, not long after the list was typed on 1st September 1956, "Queen of Scots" was sold.

The new owner was Geoff Hunt of Bristol, although he was not to keep the locomotive very long. As related in an article by John Lunn in the *Heywood Society Journal* No.32 (Spring 1993), "Queen of Scots" was purchased by Sam Sunter of Calgary, Alberta, Canada - probably in late 1956. As a schoolboy in Northumberland, Sam had always wanted a miniature railway and had spotted the locomotive on a visit home to England. At that time, he operated the Bowness Park Railway in Calgary. However, "Queen of Scots" did not run on this railway, as Sam Sunter was slowly overhauling the locomotive. In 1960 he moved to Victoria on Vancouver Island, British Columbia - still in Canada, and took "Queen of Scots" with him. In Victoria, Sam built the Victoria Miniature Railway, which opened in 1961. This was a simple circuit of about 560 yards in length near Matticks Farm, at Cordova Bay, Victoria. Following overhaul, now named "Isabel" (after Sam's wife), numbered 27 and turned out in a green livery, the locomotive entered service on the Victoria Miniature Railway - probably in 1962. By October 1968 Sam Sunter was advertising the whole railway, including "Isabel", for sale in three subsequent issues of *Model Engineer* (4th & 18th October and 1st November 1968). However, nothing was sold. Passenger numbers were falling by this time and the Victoria Miniature Railway appears to have closed after the 1971 season and by October 1972 the track had been lifted. The complete railway, including "Isabel" was advertised ("*Reconditioned and ready to roll*") for sale in the *Model Engineer* of 15th February 1974 from a PO Box in Victoria. Presumably the seller was Sam Sunter. In any event, following some repairs and a repaint to "Isabel", everything was again advertised for sale in the *Model Engineer* of 20th August 1976 by Richard Isles in Victoria, who was probably acting on Sam Sunter's instructions.

"Isabel" was now sold to Van Isle shippers and subsequently passed into the ownership of Al Powers from Canfield, Ohio in the United States of America. He was something of a collector and had intended building a miniature railway on which to run "Isabel" and his other locomotives. Sadly, he never managed this and the engines remained stored at his family business premises, Canfield Industrial, located midway between Pittsburgh and

Cleveland in Ohio. Following Al Powers death on 11th January 2000, the locomotives remained stored at Canfield. Here in late 2002 British enthusiasts Peter Bowers and Brian Gent found "Isabel" in poor condition. The locomotive was separated from the tender, which took some finding amongst the various sheds and buildings. Part of the roof where the tender was stored had fallen in and badly damaged it. The cab had also been damaged. "Isabel" was purchased by Peter Bowers & Brian Gent and shipped back to the United Kingdom, arriving at Felixstowe on 15th December 2002. Initially, the locomotive was taken to the Royal Victoria Railway at Netley in Hampshire (owned and operated by Peter Bowers). Here, after unloading and being posed for photographs with some of the other locomotives obtained from Al Powers, "Isabel" was moved to Petersfield in Hampshire for storage on 19th December 2002. There some work was undertaken, including the construction of a new tender body, before a return to the Royal Victoria Railway was made on 7th November 2007. Little further work was undertaken and the locomotive was advertised for sale in *Miniature Railway* No.17 (Autumn 2011). On 4th May 2012, it was sold to John Lunn and delivered to his home in Horley, Surrey. He last drove the locomotive in Canada, between 1966 and 1970 and intends to fully restore it - and with a new name - "Isabel" will become "The Railway Mission".



"Queen of Scots" After purchasing the locomotive from Ernest Dove, William Botterill put it to work on his railway on the upper promenade of the stone pier at Margate, which opened at Whitsun 1948. Here we see "Queen of Scots" taking a lightly loaded train out on to the pier. The sides of the coaches have been emblazoned with "Margate Railway" in large letters. The wording on the coach immediately behind the locomotive cannot be made out, but probably reads "Botterill's Miniature Railways Limited" or similar. After running at Margate, "Queen of Scots" went to Botterill's railway at Cleethorpes before moving abroad.

A present day view of the locomotive appears on page 2.

(Courtesy J. Williams Collection)

4-6-4 1948 "Belle of New York"/1953 "President Eisenhower"
Built: Ernest Dove 1948

This was the first of two 4-6-4 engines built by Ernest Dove, based on American locomotives. It must have been an impressive sight to those who had never seen such a locomotive, even in miniature. The NYCR "Niagara" class locomotives were built by the American Locomotive Company between 1945 and 1946 for hauling trains over the NYCR main line between New York and Chicago. Twenty seven of the large 4-8-4 engines were built, which some experts have claimed were the ultimate steam locomotive. The tender sported seven axles (five, plus a bogie). Numbered 5500 & 6000-6025, all had been withdrawn by July 1956.

Ernest Dove stated that he started construction of his miniature version in 1940 and like "Coronation" he may have had some difficulty getting materials during the Second World War. However, the locomotive was completed in time for the start of the 1948 tour in May. Despite being only a 4-6-4 instead of a 4-8-4 (and with a six axle tender) it must have had a striking appearance, as it was finished in unpainted polished aluminium. Ernest Dove's own publicity contained the usual superlatives: *"The largest Model locomotive in 10¼" gauge. Must be seen to be appreciated. Acknowledged by railway experts to be the most magnificent Model Locomotive ever built. Eight years of patience and perseverance to bring to life to be the Admiration of Countless Thousands. All motion parts silver plated to counteract rust"*. He added *"Blue Prints kindly loaned by New York Central Railroad System"*. The locomotive carried no number, but had the name "Belle of New York" painted on the smoke deflectors. The name possibly refers to the musical *The Belle of New York*, first performed in New York in 1897, but which has seen new productions in this country off and on over the years. The wording "New York Central" was carried on the tender sides and a smart bell, headlamp and cow-catcher were also fitted. Ernest Dove claimed a top speed on test as 31 mph. Weight in working order was 4 tons 5 cwt, with a hauling capacity of six coaches with 80 passengers. Its value, he stated, was £6,000.

The first public appearance of the new locomotive was at the start of the 1948 tour at Newcastle in May of that year. It then worked throughout the tour alongside LMSR 4-6-2 "Coronation". The tour ended in October 1948 and "Belle of New York" returned to Ernest Dove's workshop. The unpainted finish had not been a success, so the locomotive was painted, with some lining out, although the colour is not known. The name was still painted on the smoke deflectors and "New York Central" was carried on the tender sides as before. The locomotive's number, 1948, was painted on the cab side and smoke box front. It then returned to service, running at Kingston upon Hull and Darlington in 1949 - again working alongside "Coronation". In September 1949 Middlesbrough Town Council considered buying "Belle of New York" for operation in Albert Park in the town (see Chapter Seven). But due to the price (of the locomotive and the complete railway Ernest Dove offered) and other problems, the Council did not proceed, so the locomotive remained in private ownership.

During the winter of 1949/1950 "Belle of New York" was purchased by Leslie Salts for use on his new railway at Gwrych Castle (see Chapter Eight), which opened in April 1950. The locomotive then ran on this railway for the 1951 and 1952 seasons. Over the winter of 1952/1953, it was partially rebuilt by Ernest Dove - presumably in his workshops back in Nottingham. Quite why this work was carried out is not clear - perhaps Leslie Salts wanted a "new" attraction. Anyway, the locomotive became No.1953 (the number giving the impression of a new engine!) and was named "President Eisenhower" after Dwight D

Eisenhower (1890-1969), the 34th President of the USA, who came into office on 20th January 1953. According to the Gwrych Castle guidebook *"The United States President gave personal permission to Mr Salts to name it after him"*. (When permission was originally sought Eisenhower was still a General, but by the time the letter granting permission, on White House note paper, was received he had become President! Apparently, the framed letter hung in the Castle until at least 1966). The smoke deflectors were removed and the front end fairings modified. The chimney disappeared into a long casing running the length of the boiler top, giving the engine a streamlined appearance. The name was carried in raised letters on the edge of the running plate, while the number (also in raised figures) was displayed on the side of the new boiler top casing. The bell on the front buffer beam was removed, but the headlamp was retained. The locomotive then went back into service at Gwrych Castle for the 1953 season.

"President Eisenhower" was advertised for sale in the 5th January 1957 issue of *The World's Fair*, as detailed in Chapter Eleven, but was not sold at this time. The locomotive ran on the Gwrych Castle Miniature Railway until laid aside, possibly needing expensive work undertaking. It was out of use by 1964 when Robin Butterell visited Gwrych Castle - noting the locomotive as *"derelict"* in his book *Miniature Railways* (Ian Allan 1966). An enthusiast saw this reference and contacted Gwrych Castle to ask whether "President Eisenhower" was for sale. With Leslie Salts probably already considering selling the Castle and the locomotive no longer having any practical use, a sale was readily agreed. Therefore, in autumn 1966 and after the railway had closed for the season, the locomotive moved to the new owner's home. Here "President Eisenhower" remains, in store in a private location. Extensive work would be required before it could be steamed again.

4-6-2 1949 "The Cleethorpes Flyer"/70055 "Rob Roy" **Built: Ernest Dove 1949**

Built for a customer and never run by Ernest Dove himself, this locomotive based on a LNER 4-6-2 has had a fairly quiet life compared with some. However, it has been completely rebuilt and now utilises just a few parts from the original and looks quite different. It was built by Ernest Dove for William Botterill for use on his railway at Cleethorpes in Lincolnshire (the history of which has already been detailed above). Construction of the locomotive started in 1948 (presumably after the end of that year's tour in mid October) and it seems the intention was to have it complete in time for the opening of Botterill's new railway, which was hoped to be at Whitsun 1949. The Minutes of Cleethorpes Borough Council suggest Botterill expected to have the locomotive ready for display at a model exhibition to be held over Easter 1949. Lack of reports in the local press suggests this did not take place and this may be supported by an article on the railways of Cleethorpes in the *Heywood Society Journal* No.43 (Autumn 1998). Here, Simon Townsend relates this rather amusing tale told by Ron Bray *"When Dove delivered the "Flyer" to Nicholson's Works in Yarra Road, Cleethorpes, Mr Botterill was waiting in the workshops for him, and an examination started on the loco, Dove giving a running commentary, while Mr Botterill walked round the loco very slowly, stopped and looked at Dove and asked why the spacing between both sets of wheels were different. Dove replied, "I will take it back and correct the wheel spaces, and then return it in a couple weeks time"."* Botterill opened his new longer, double track, railway on Saturday 28th May 1949, one week before Whitsun. At this time the new locomotive was not ready, but it had arrived by mid June. It was loosely based on a Peppercorn LNER 4-6-2 (which were at that time being built at Doncaster), with a double chimney and finished in a blue livery. The choice of colour was not Botterill's, but was stipulated by Cleethorpes Borough Council: *"The*

engines to be painted Azure blue colour and to be clean and polished at all times". It was numbered 1949 and named "The Cleethorpes Flyer". The tender was lettered "BR", presumably denoting Botterill's Railways. Evidently, it had a number of faults (which are described in detail in the article noted above) but despite these the locomotive was able to haul good loads, more so after some of the defects were attended to, and was kept busy on the railway. The name "The Cleethorpes Flyer" was carried on two straight brass plates mounted on each running plate. Although not visible in one of the few pictures of the locomotive running at Cleethorpes, which appeared in *Grimsby Evening Telegraph* of Tuesday 5th July 1949, half moon brass plates with just "Cleethorpes Flyer" on were later attached to each smoke deflector.

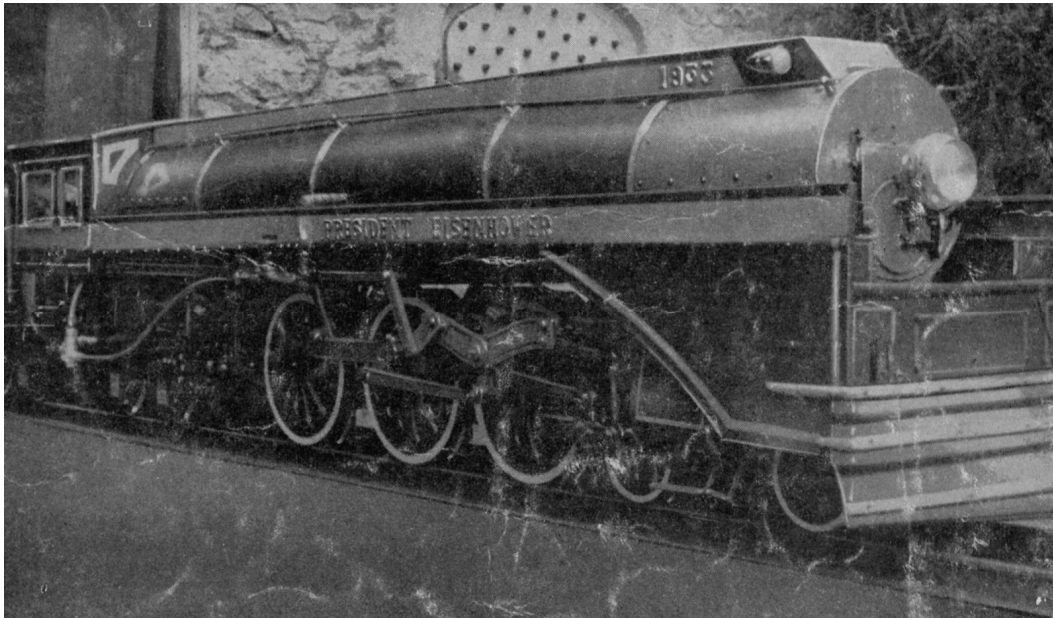
As already related, Botterill's control of the Cleethorpes Miniature Railway came to an end after the 1953 season and for the 1954 season the line was taken over by Arthur Clethro. "The Cleethorpes Flyer" was then to disappear from public view for a good many years. It returned to Botterill's at Peterborough and around 1954 it was sold from there to David Hunt, whose family owned the Cycle Shop in Long Street, Sherborne, Dorset. When he collected the locomotive it was stripped down to a kit of parts, for what purpose is not known, but he had to reassemble it. "The Cleethorpes Flyer" was to remain in David Hunt's ownership for some forty years and as far as is known it was not used during that time. However, he did some work on the locomotive including some firebox repairs and repainting and by 1981 it was in a green livery. At this time it was stored at "The Garage", Station Road, Milborne Port - about 2 miles east of Sherborne. With David Hunt in advancing years, his family put the locomotive up for sale. Accordingly, in May 1994 "The Cleethorpes Flyer" was purchased by Roy Pullen from Slough in Berkshire.

Following stripping down, "The Cleethorpes Flyer" was found to be in a poor condition, with much work needing to be undertaken. The cab appeared not to be the original and was a very crude affair. The bogie tender was a household water tank, surrounded by wooden sides that promptly fell apart when unloaded. So, during 1999 Roy Pullen rebuilt the locomotive at Slough - as a British Railways "Britannia" class engine, his favourite class at the time! Only the frames, cylinders and boiler were retained - although the boiler needed a fair amount of work. The solid bronze cylinders required re-boring and new wheels were obtained. The cab was new and the original bogie tender was discarded and a completely new one constructed - with high sides as with BR's 70050-70054. When complete, the rebuilt locomotive was numbered 70055 (the next number in the series if BR had built more of the class). The name selected, "Rob Roy", continued the Scottish theme of the BR names on the high sided tender variants, but with a nod to the owner and rebuilder!

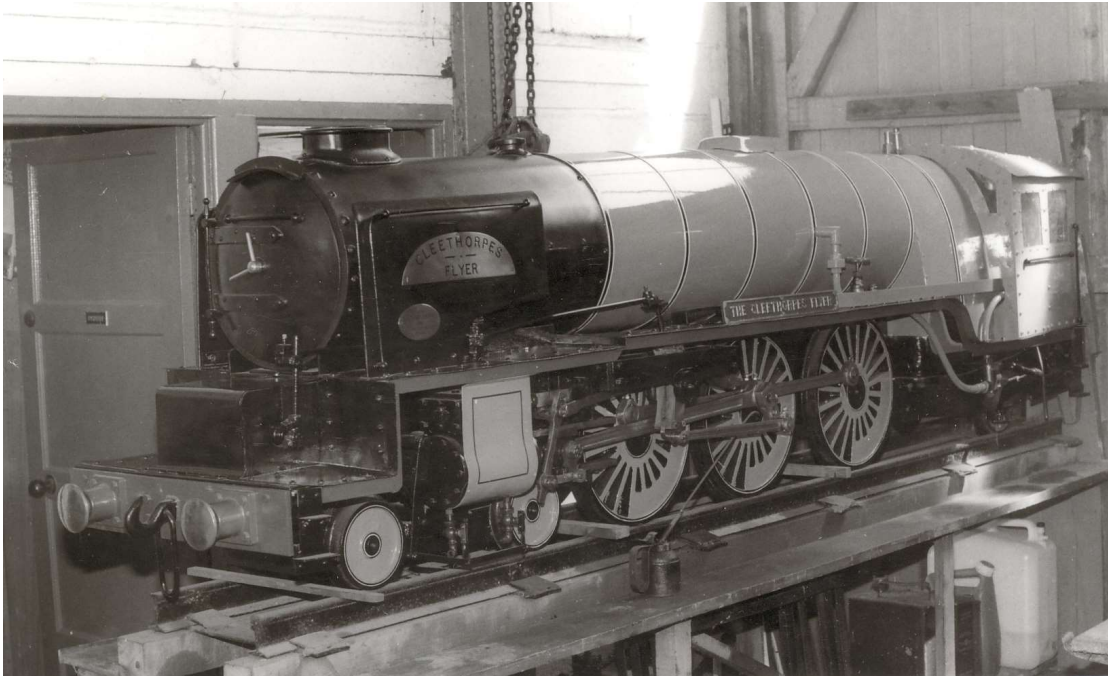
Roy Pullen advertised the locomotive for sale in the December 2000 issue of *Heritage Railway*, but it was not sold and in January 2001, "Rob Roy" went to the South Downs Light Railway. This railway operates inside a garden centre, just to the west of Pulborough in West Sussex and opened as a 10¼" gauge line on 21st April 2000. However, it was found a little too large for the track there, so on 1st August 2001 it moved to the Eastleigh Lakeside Railway located in Lakeside Country Park, Eastleigh, Hampshire. This well-known railway first opened on 31st July 1992 and is now home to a wide range of 7¼" and 10¼" gauge locomotives, including "Coronation". Here in 2008, "Rob Roy" was given a major overhaul and returned to service on the railway on 18th April 2009. The locomotive remains in the ownership of Roy Pullen, but on loan to the railway.



"Belle of New York" Here we see the newly completed locomotive being inspected by Ernest (in hat) & Ken Dove outside the workshop in the garden of 17 Ribblesdale Road, Sherwood in 1948. This view clearly shows the unpainted polished aluminium finish in which "Belle of New York" was originally turned out. Note the highly polished bell and lamp.
(*Courtesy S. Townsend Collection*)



"President Eisenhower" This poor quality photograph is the only one we have, which shows "Belle of New York" after it was rebuilt as "President Eisenhower" over the winter of 1952/1953. The smoke deflectors were removed and extra fairings and streamlining added.
(*Gwrych Castle Guidebook 1958*)



"The Cleethorpes Flyer" This locomotive was built in 1949 for William Botterill, to run on his Cleethorpes Miniature Railway. Here we see it, during the time it was owned by David Hunt, at "The Garage", Station Road, Milborne Port. The photographer noted the livery as "apple green with 7 boiler bands painted white/black/white". The tender was on a nearby stand.
(J. Williams. 13/5/92)



"Rob Roy" "The Cleethorpes Flyer" was extensively rebuilt by Roy Pullen, with only the frames, cylinders and boiler being retained. The resulting locomotive, named "Rob Roy", was this attractive BR "Britannia" class engine, which is seen here on the turntable at the Eastleigh Lakeside Railway, a home it shares with "Coronation".

(N. Knight. 16/4/05)

4-6-4 (later 4-6-2) 1950 "Silver Queen"/1951 "Commodore Vanderbilt"/1950 "Henry"
Built: Ernest Dove 1950

This was the second 4-6-4 locomotive, based on an American type, built by Ernest Dove and it is possible they were constructed alongside each other and shared a number of features. The NYCR and its subsidiaries built 275 "Hudson" class 4-6-4 locomotives between 1927 and 1938 - virtually all being constructed by the American Locomotive Company. Numbered 5200 - 5474, ten were built in 1938 with streamlining to match the coaches of the New York - Chicago "Twentieth Century Limited" train. Ernest Dove based his new 4-6-4 engine on these streamlined locomotives, which were numbered 5445 - 5454. All 275 "Hudsons" had been withdrawn by early 1956. We do not know much about the construction of this locomotive, as Ernest Dove did not feature it in his publicity. However, it appears to have been completed by May 1950 and was pictured in a newspaper clipping with a caption obviously supplied by Dove. This claimed *"it can travel at 38 mph hauling 70 passengers"*. Weight was stated as 3 tons 15cwt. Materials apparently cost £4,000 and it was insured for £20,000. The completed locomotive was smartly turned out with a head lamp in the middle of the smokebox door, which had the number 1950 across the top. Below, above the buffer beam (except there were no buffers!), the New York Central logo "NYC" was depicted, around which was the wording "Twentieth Century Limited". The cab side also carried the number 1950 and the tender sides "New York Central". The new locomotive was named "Silver Queen", but in the few photographs that exist, the name is not visible. The tender had three axles, as opposed to six on the originals. The significance of the name is not known - it could relate to an American 1942 Western film or a variety of holly!

"Silver Queen" went into service on the Gwrych Castle Miniature Railway in May 1950; see Chapter Eight. However, it only ran there for one season and, for whatever reason, Ernest Dove then changed the appearance of the locomotive. Over the winter of 1950/1951 it returned to Nottingham, and he added smoke deflectors and some more streamlining on the lower boiler sides. The addition of the latter is rather odd, as the original streamlined "Hudson" locomotives did not carry such appendages. The NYC "Twentieth Century Limited" logo was retained and the smokebox door was numbered 1951. The number 1951 was also carried on the cab sides and the tender wording "New York Central" was retained. Extra fairing was also added to the tender top. A new name was bestowed on the locomotive - "Commodore Vanderbilt" was carried in raised letters on the smoke deflectors. Cornelius Vanderbilt (1794-1877), perhaps more well-known by the sobriquet "Commodore", was an American entrepreneur who built his wealth from shipping and railroad interests. He gained control of the New York Central Railroad in 1867 and by the time of his death was worth \$100 million. The "Hudson" class locomotive 5344 was named "Commodore Vanderbilt" after him. Ernest Dove then used "Commodore Vanderbilt" on his temporary railway on the East Meadows in Edinburgh between 2nd May and 6th August 1951 (see Chapter Nine). For the 1952 season it was acquired by Leslie Salts and put on display at Gwrych Castle. Just before Easter 1953 Leslie Salts and Randolph Turpin opened a railway at the summit of the Great Orme (see Chapter Nine) and "Commodore Vanderbilt" was used on this railway throughout the 1953 season. During its time on the Great Orme Miniature Railway it was said to be owned by Leslie Salts and Randolph Turpin. However, over the winter of 1953/1954 they sold the locomotive to a railway in Skegness on the Lincolnshire coast.

The Skegness Miniature Railway was opened on Thursday 10th May 1951, running along the South Bracing - adjacent to the Foreshore and close to the site of Ernest Dove's August 1946 railway. The new line was some 450 yards in length, forming an end to end run between

"Clock Tower" (TF571630) and "Seacroft" (TF570626) stations. At the end of 1950, Skegness Urban District Council had invited tenders for the concession to provide the railway. The winner was Denham E Till, who managed the railway for Baydon Miniature Railways Limited of Marlborough, Wiltshire. At opening, the locomotive in use was an Atlantic built by David Curwen. After the 1951 & 1952 seasons, Baydon Miniature Railways withdrew and Denham Till operated the railway himself, with equipment hired from Baydon Miniature Railways. However, for the 1954 season, to presumably save hiring from Baydon, Denham Till acquired "Commodore Vanderbilt" - the locomotive going into service at Easter 1954. To accommodate his new locomotive, Mr Till had to build a new locomotive shed, as "Commodore Vanderbilt" could not access the existing building! Denham Till does not seem to have been pleased with his new locomotive, as he was trying to sell it only a year after its arrival in Skegness. *The World's Fair* of 12th March 1955 had an advert for a "*Super Streamlined American Hudson Type Steam Locomotive. 10¼ gauge*". A similar advert appeared in the 23rd April 1955 edition, adding that it was "*recently overhauled. Painted Garter Blue and Silver*". "Commodore Vanderbilt" was not sold and was again advertised in *The World's Fair* of 25th February 1956 - this time as "*For Sale 10¼in Steam Locomotive 4-6-4 Pacific [sic] or exchange for Atlantic*". Perhaps the 4-6-4 was considered a little too large for the railway. Again it remained unsold. The locomotive then operated on the Skegness Miniature Railway for a good number of years at some stage being renumbered to 1954 and later passing into the ownership of Bob Parsons, who took over operation of the railway.

However, by 1969 it was proposed to move the railway to a new site. In any event, during 1970 "Commodore Vanderbilt" was taken to work on a new line in Thorney Wildlife Park, located at TF281040, in the grounds of Thorney Abbey in Thorney, Cambridgeshire - to the east of Peterborough. Back at Skegness, the 1970 season was completed using the Ken Dove built petrol locomotive (formerly named "Hiawatha") and the line closed at the end of that season - to be replaced by a new 10¼" gauge line, running virtually between the same two points, but slightly further to the west. Thorney Wildlife Park, which had only recently opened in 1969, was owned circus proprietors Bobby & Tommy Roberts and featured large animals such as elephant and giraffe, as well as flamingo and other waterfowl. Operated by Alec Mills, this railway, which proved to be short lived, appears to have run for the later part of the 1970 season and the whole of the 1971 season. It was then replaced by a 2ft gauge railway, which opened in early 1972 with a Ruston diesel. This line was equally short lived and had been lifted by April 1974. The Wildlife Park itself closed in 1978. Meanwhile, "Commodore Vanderbilt", still owned by Bob Parsons but the under the care of Alec Mills, was moved in the winter of 1971/1972 to a private line owned by John Rundle. This ran on a site at TF308585 on the opposite side of the road to his works at New Bolingbroke near Boston, Lincolnshire. Here Alec Mills removed the locomotive's American features, thereby giving it a British appearance. A new site was now being sought to establish a railway and run "Commodore Vanderbilt" and it seems to have taken until 1978 to find a suitable place.

Such a location was found by Alec Mills at Ferry Meadows Country Park, just to the west of Peterborough. This was formed from an area of some 500 acres, which had been used for gravel extraction. From its inception a miniature railway had been planned as one of the Park's features. Opening of the Park had been planned for Easter 1978, but was delayed until July by wet weather, and this in turn seems to have delayed the building of the railway, which was to have opened in the late summer of 1978. However, an "end to end" line of 700 yards had been laid by autumn 1978, with two stations plus a locomotive shed. The main station, Ham Lane, was located at TL148975. The locomotive, now without a name, was also on site ready for the start of public service in 1979. The Ferry Meadows Railway opened to the

public in May 1979. It was financed and owned by Leonard Gray, from Boston - although the locomotive was still owned by Bob Parsons. However, after his death it later came into the ownership of Leonard Gray. In 1981 Alec Mills, rebuilt the 4-6-4 as a 4-6-2 and fitted smoke deflectors, virtually new boiler, new chimney and a different style cab. After July 1987 and by August 1988 the locomotive was named "Henry" after the "Thomas the Tank Engine" stories. By November 1994 it had regained its original number - 1950. Leonard Gray passed away in 1995 and ownership passed to his two sons - Leonard and Shayne. Alec Mills still looked after "Henry" and in summer 1997, aided by Dennis Jones, more work was undertaken, with the locomotive emerging in September 1997 supporting a new tender body and new cylinders.

Over the years at Ferry Meadows, "Henry" must have hauled thousands and thousands of delighted passengers. However, on 7th November 2007 the railway changed hands, the Gray brothers selling it - but not "Henry" - to new owners David & Sandra Coving. Under their direction the railway is being improved and will continue to carry many satisfied customers. "Henry" was off to new pastures and was advertised for sale on the "Tractionads" web site in August 2008 - in working order with a boiler certificate. The locomotive arrived at its new home in the Lake District, Cumbria on 24th October 2008. Here "Henry" is currently stored - but the new owner is building a private railway for the locomotive to run on and hopes that it might visit other lines as well.

4-6-4 1953 "Sir Winston Churchill"/ 70021 "Morning Star" **Built: Ken Dove 1953**

Although being a 4-6-4, this locomotive was based on a BR 4-6-2 "Britannia" class engine. Fifty five of these locomotives were built at Crewe between 1951 and 1954. According to Robin Butterell, as noted in his book *Miniature Railways* (Ian Allan 1966), the engine "*bore a plate giving 1948-1953 as the building period*". If the commencement date is correct, the locomotive must have started out to be something different, as the first "Britannia" was not finished until January 1951. Ken Dove told Simon Townsend that he built the locomotive, although it is likely, given the starting date of construction, Ernest Dove had a hand at least during the early stages. Sometime during the locomotive's construction, probably around early 1952, it was purchased by Leslie Salts for his new railway at Fleetwood (see Chapter Ten). We know it was intended to be complete ready for the planned opening of that railway in spring 1953, the *Fleetwood Chronicle* of Friday 13th June 1952 reporting "*The engine, Golden Arrow was a perfect engineering job costing £3,500 and taking seven years to build. It would be ready next February*". The actual opening of the Fleetwood Miniature Railway was delayed until Easter 1954, but the new locomotive was presumably completed, as planned, in early 1953.

The finished locomotive was numbered 1953 and named "Sir Winston Churchill" after the famous World War Two leader Sir Winston Leonard Spencer-Churchill (1874-1965), who had been knighted by Queen Elizabeth II on 24th April 1953. The name was carried on large straight plates attached to the running plate, while the number was carried on the cab sides. The tender was adorned with a "cycling lion" BR crest. None of the "Britannia" engines actually carried Churchill's name, although some were named after great Britons. However, one of the SR "Battle of Britain" locomotives (34051) was named "Winston Churchill" and it has been suggested in a couple of sources the locomotive was based on that type. However, these were originally built with "air smoothed" casing (streamlining) and the first to be rebuilt to a standard outline did not appear until 1956, long after No.1953 had been completed (in

fact, 34051 was never rebuilt). Two of the "Britannia's" completed in 1951 were sent to the Southern Region to work the famous "Golden Arrow" Pullman train between London and Dover. Locomotives hauling this train were given special treatment and carried a "Golden Arrow" headboard (a circular device with an arrow through the middle) and large arrows on the smoke deflectors. These were replicated on "Sir Winston Churchill", with addition of the wording "*The Golden Arrow*" on the smoke deflectors.

No.1953 then ran on the Fleetwood Miniature Railway for the 1954 and 1955 seasons; see Chapter Ten. After the railway failed to reopen for the 1956 season, Leslie Salts moved "Sir Winston Churchill" to Gwrych Castle, where it was put on display. It is surprising, perhaps, that it saw no further use at Gwrych Castle, as it was then only three years old and had seen just two seasons use. It was advertised for sale in *The World's Fair* of 5th January 1957, but did not find a buyer. In 1964 Robin Butterell found the locomotive "*on show in a tent at the far end of the line*". By 1967, Leslie Salts was looking to sell Gwrych Castle and retire to the Isle of Man, so he put "Sir Winston Churchill" up for sale.

The locomotive was sold by auction at Christie's, London on Wednesday 2nd August 1967 for 950 guineas (£997 10s). It seems the new owner was a Mr Killworth from Ballards Gore, just to the north east of Rochford in Essex. He fully rebuilt "Sir Winston Churchill" as 70021 "Morning Star" after the "Britannia" class locomotive. It then ran on a short railway for a couple of years at the rear of Mr Killworth's home on Gore Road in Ballards Gore (TQ904928). When he died, the locomotive was sold to farmer John Cater of Purdeys Farm, Sutton Road, near Rochford in Essex. He used the locomotive on temporary lines at events around Essex, an example being Downhall School, Rayleigh on Saturday 3rd July 1976 (as recorded in *Narrow Gauge News* No.103). He also had a circular line around a lake at Purdeys Farm, but by 1979 he had retired and sold the farm and land off (it is now a Retail Estate) and "Morning Star" was operating on a line at John Cater's home on Fambridge Road, Ashingdon (TQ860946) - just north of Rochford. By January 1980 the locomotive passed into the ownership of Ernie Bairstow (a partner in the Estate Agent chain of Bairstow Eves), who intended running it at Southend Aircraft Museum, close to Southend Airport. "Morning Star" had arrived at the museum by mid January, as it was pictured there in the [Basildon] *Evening Echo* of Wednesday 23rd January 1980. The paper informed us it had "*just [been] bought for the Historic Aircraft Museum*" and went on "*Morning Star has no rails at the moment. When it does, later this year, it will pull its five scale model carriages round the museum grounds giving youngsters rides among the old aircraft parked outside*". Sadly, this project faltered and only a few sections of track were ever laid - the museum itself closed in 1983. The contents of the museum, including "Morning Star", along with the stock and track, were auctioned off by Phillips on 10th May 1983. Failing to reach its reserve price of £5,000, they were shortly afterwards purchased by Charles Tabor of Rochford.

"Morning Star" was now moved to its new home at Sutton Hall Farm, Rochford, Essex (TQ889891). Here a track was laid, which by summer 1989 ran through the farm and out on to fields in either direction - in an "end to end" format of around 680 yards (later extended to 800 yards). This was operated mainly in conjunction with Barn Dances, of which around seven were held each year - summer evenings being the most popular. Even so, 70021 was steamed at least once a fortnight in the winter. Initially, the Sutton Hall Railway was only available to those attending the Barn Dances or invited parties, but by May 1998 public running had commenced on open days - later extended to one Sunday a month in the summer. As 70021 "Morning Star", the locomotive continues to run on the Sutton Hall Railway, giving pleasure to many happy passengers each season.



"Silver Queen" Here we see the locomotive on test on the Gwrych Castle Miniature Railway in 1950. The driver is Ken's first wife, Joyce, who he married in January 1951.
(Courtesy S. Townsend Collection)



"Commodore Vanderbilt" Over the winter of 1950/1951 "Silver Queen" was rebuilt as "Commodore Vanderbilt" and renumbered to 1951. It is standing in the station at the summit of the Great Orme, on Leslie Salts' and Randolph Turpin's railway there.
(L. Perkins. Courtesy S. Townsend Collection. 24/6/53)



"Henry" "Commodore Vanderbilt" was rebuilt into this attractive, LNER style, 4-6-2 by Alec Mills. It was later named "Henry" and regained its original number of 1950. It ran for many years on the Ferry Meadows Railway at Peterborough, where it is seen here.

(N. Knight. 19/7/98)



"Morning Star" Built by Ken Dove, this locomotive started life as "Sir Winston Churchill" and ran on the Fleetwood Miniature Railway. Now running as 70021 "Morning Star", we see it in the rural surroundings of the Sutton Hall Railway at Rochford in Essex.

(S. Townsend. 28/7/90)

10¼" Gauge Petrol & Diesel Locomotives

The Dove built internal combustion locomotives have proved much more difficult to research and accurately record, having been little reported in printed sources compared with their steam counterparts. It is not helped by there being different locomotives with the same name! They have also proved to be much less durable than the steam locomotives and all of them seem to have disappeared or been scrapped. With exception of the first locomotive completed by Ernest Dove, they were all built to a sort of standard design - with a leading 4 wheel bogie and a powered rear 6 wheel bogie. Bodies were based on American designs, with a sit-in cab. Also included here is a locomotive built by G & S Light Engineering Company Limited but claimed by Ernest Dove as his, when he sold it on! This locomotive still survives.

4w "Bluebell"/"Daffodil" **Built: Ernest Dove 1949**

This 4 wheel petrol locomotive seems to have been constructed over the winter of 1948/1949. Sadly, no photographs of it have been traced, although later adverts refer to it as a "tank type", so it may have had a steam outline. It was named either "Bluebell" or "Daffodil" and it is not certain whether it was built for sale, or to assist in operating the temporary railways at Kingston upon Hull and Darlington during 1949. It went with Ernest Dove to Kingston upon Hull in May 1949 - a writer in *Miniature Railway* No.6 (February 2008), talking about his summer visit to East Park (see Chapter Seven), mentions "*a petrol-engined 0-6-0 or possibly 0-4-0*" being there. Ken Dove remembered the locomotive being sold "*shortly after*" completion to a Showman from Ayr, Scotland, who visited East Park "*to see it going*".

This was a member of the large Codona family, who had arrived from the continent in the late 18th century and then went on to become one of Scotland's best known operators of funfairs and fairgrounds. William Codona established Scotland's first permanent funfair, known as Fun City, at Portobello, Edinburgh in 1908. It was here our locomotive might have first operated under the Codona family's ownership. *The World's Fair* of 2nd July 1949 carried a report about Fun City and added "*The provision of a Kiddies' Corner has been truly an inspiration. There the wee lads and lassies could have a trip on the miniature railway*". The report mentions Fun City was owned by John Codona, but supervised by Billy Codona. This would not have been a permanent railway, the track merely being laid on the tarmac area of the amusement park. However, it would seem the locomotive was not considered a success. It was advertised for sale in *The World's Fair* of 28th January 1950 by Lucy Codona as a "*Miniature Railway, 10¼" Gauge, Tank Type Loco, Petrol Engined, new last year, Three Carriages seating 36*". There was also approximately 250 yards of rail. Similar adverts appeared in the 18th March (stating 350 feet of track and a price of £600) and 24th June 1950 issues - the latter adding an exchange with a Peter Pan Railway would be considered. Lucy Codona was not successful in selling it and she again advertised the locomotive and railway in *The World's Fair* of 20th January 1951 - with a very informative advert, which tells us the "*Tank Type*" locomotive was powered by a "*Morris engine*" with three coaches (each seating 12 people) around 800 feet of track, and that it was "*Supplied by Messers Dove of Nottingham and have operated two seasons*". The asking price was £550. Despite not being able to sell the locomotive and railway, the Codona's presumably continued to make use of the locomotive and railway as part of their (portable) funfairs and amusement parks. An example seems to have been on the Promenade at Ayr in the summer of 1953. *The World's Fair* of 5th September 1953 contained a report, which stated Mrs Frank Codona [Lucy] and family had a showground at the harbour end of the promenade, where "*Fronting*

the showground, the lessee [the Codona's] had a miniature railway in operation". In the summer of 1954 the locomotive was possibly back at Fun City in Portobello. The World's Fair of 3rd July 1954 mentions a "miniature railway" being present on a site "To the east of Fun City" previously occupied by the late Billy Codona and operated by Michael McArdle and Son - also a member of the larger Codona family.

At some stage the Codona's converted the locomotive to electric, picking up power from a centre rail - rather like a typical fairground type railway. As such it was advertised again for sale, "or exchange for a Peter Pan Railway", in *The World's Fair* of 26th January 1957 by Frank Codona (Lucy Codona's son). It was described as a "10¼ gauge Miniature Railway. Tank type Loco and two 12 seater Carriages, Electrically driven, 110 volts, Centre line pick up". There was now only 300 feet of straight track. Note that one of the coaches had disappeared. Following that, nothing further is known about the fate of the locomotive and railway. It probably stayed in the showground business until being eventually dismantled - its components may have lived on in other rides or been scrapped.

4-4w "The Pride of California"/"Marie"
Built: G & S Light Engineering Company Limited 1939

Ernest Dove did not build this bogie petrol locomotive, although he did claim that when selling it on! It was originally built in 1939 by G & S Light Engineering Company Limited for the Dudley Zoo Railway (the history of this railway has already been described in connection with the GWR 4-6-0 No.1944). It was powered by a Singer 11½hp petrol engine, driving the rear bogie through a fluid flywheel. The single ended body had the outline of an American streamlined diesel unit then in use on some of the USA's luxury long distance trains. Livery was blue and silver. The Dudley Zoo Railway continued to run during the Second World War, using this locomotive and another petrol locomotive, with a railcar outline, which was completed in 1943. The railway was altered to 15" gauge over the winter of 1946/1947 and this meant all the 10¼" gauge equipment was surplus to requirements and duly sold off.

The 1943 built petrol railcar was sold to Paignton Zoo in Devon, going into service there in July 1948. This railway had opened as a 10¼" gauge line in May 1947, replacing an earlier line of 12" gauge, opened in September 1940. Ernest Dove purchased the 1939 built petrol locomotive, although it is not certain exactly when he acquired it. The first (and only) known occasion he employed the locomotive was on his railway in Edinburgh during the summer of 1951. This temporary line ran from Wednesday 2nd May to Monday 6th August and here it shared duties with 4-6-4 "Commodore Vanderbilt" (see Chapter Nine for more details of the railway). By this time the locomotive had been named "The Pride of California", almost certainly by Ernest Dove. The significance of the name is not known - Pride of California is a shrubby plant native to Southern California with crimson red flowers. Also applied by Ernest Dove was a circular device on the cab side with the wording "World Renowned Model Railways". Livery at this time was said to be yellow, although another source states it was silver grey.

After using it at Edinburgh, Ernest Dove sold the locomotive to Paignton Zoo where it had arrived by April 1952. Here it joined its former companion at Dudley Zoo - the petrol railcar built in 1943. The 6th edition of the Paignton Zoo guidebook, published in April 1952, stated "New rolling stock has been acquired this year, the powerful diesel engine is a scale model of the famous American diesel train, the "Santa Fe". This engine was specially built for and ran

at the Edinburgh Festival of Britain Exhibition, 1951. It was made by the renowned maker of model locomotives, Mr Ernest Dove, of Nottingham". From this it would appear Ernest Dove had spun a number of yarns when he sold the locomotive to the zoo! The Edinburgh line was not connected to the "*Edinburgh Festival of Britain Exhibition, 1951*", although the railway did operate during the period of the Festival, which was from 3rd May to 30th September 1951. The only official Festival of Britain events in Edinburgh during the time the railway was running were both inside, at the Royal Scottish Museum and the Signet Library. The first livery at Paignton, probably partly retained from Dove's ownership, seems to have been a representation of the Santa Fe Railway's "Warbonnet" red & yellow colours - with the Santa Fe name across the nose. A hand coloured postcard from the 1950s depicts it in this livery.

The locomotive has run for many years at Paignton Zoo, around the 520 yards circuit of track. By the summer of 1964 it had lost its "The Pride of California" name and was then re-engined in 1971. On Sunday 14th April 1985, the locomotive was badly damaged, when in an act of vandalism, it was set off on an empty, but driverless train. It derailed and turned over after reputedly reaching 25mph. It was rebuilt with a new body by staff at C A Ford-Hutchings Limited, Park Road Garage in Havelock Road, Torquay - in conjunction with Rogers Garage in Paignton. The chassis and bogies were retained, but with a body styled on a British Rail class 46 locomotive - although still single ended with only one cab. It returned to service on Monday 19th August 1985. Livery was BR blue with a full yellow nose. After 1995 the locomotive seems mainly to have only seen use as a standby. Around 1998 it gained the name "Marie" for a short time and by 2003 it was repainted into BR green livery, with a full yellow nose. The number D6719 was applied; meaning the locomotive was now a class 37, as opposed to a class 46! It is one of the oldest internal combustion miniature railway locomotives in the country and still sees occasional use on the Paignton Zoo Railway, if the resident large class 37 locomotive is not available or if traffic is light. Otherwise, it is normally parked in the siding near the station.

4-6w 54 "The Texas Ranger" **Built: Ernest Dove 1952**

In many ways this locomotive was similar to "The Pride of California" and one cannot help thinking that Ernest Dove "copied" some of it's features. It had the same single ended American streamlined diesel unit body, but was a little larger with a squarer bonnet - the driver sitting almost fully inside the leading cab with only his head protruding. It was probably built in Dove's workshop in Ribblesdale Road, Nottingham. Power was supplied by a Lanchester 12hp petrol engine, driving the rear (6 wheel) bogie via a fluid flywheel. The completed locomotive was named "The Texas Ranger", although in the few photographs found, the name is not visible. A large headlight was mounted on the bonnet and underneath, on each side, the number 54 was carried. Under this, the wording "Western Pacific" was displayed. The name no doubt referred to the Texas Rangers, the oldest state level law enforcement agency in the United States, formed in 1823.

The locomotive was built for Leslie Salts and completed in 1952, probably to run on his railway at Gwrych Castle or in anticipation of the opening of his new railway in Fleetwood (see Chapter Ten). Given the delay in opening the line at Fleetwood, it may have ran for a year or two at Gwrych Castle (see Chapter Eleven). "The Texas Ranger" then operated on the Fleetwood Miniature Railway during the 1954 and 1955 seasons. After the railway failed to reopen for the 1956 season, Leslie Salts moved it to Gwrych Castle where it was put on display. The locomotive was advertised for sale in *The World's Fair* of 31st March 1956 as

an "American Type Locomotive. A real flash - a rare Model at a reasonable price". There were no takers and Leslie Salts advertised it again in *The World's Fair* of 22nd June 1957. "*A Real Flash That Has No Equal*" the advert claimed! However, it was now described as "*Model of Canadian Locomotive - Stream Liner*". It was mentioned as being "*on exhibition at Gwrych Castle*". The advert concluded by saying coaches could be supplied if desired.

By April 1958 "The Texas Ranger" had been sold and moved to Drayton Manor Park at Fazeley, near Tamworth in Staffordshire. The park had opened at Easter 1950 as an "Inland Pleasure Resort" and later became the well-known theme park it is today. A 10¼" gauge railway had been running there since at least 1953; originally an "end to end" run, it was later extended to a circuit of some 850 yards alongside a large lake at SK194016. In the book *Drayton Manor* (published by the Park in 2006) a photograph of the "The Texas Ranger" has a caption adding that it was "*built in Bristol*". This is probably confusion with another petrol locomotive, built by Geoff Hunt of Bristol, which was running on the railway by 1968. The photograph referred to shows the locomotive with the number 54 and "Western Pacific" still painted on the nose. In spring 1971 a brand new Severn-Lamb built steam outline 2-8-0 locomotive, based on a Denver & Rio Grande engine arrived on the railway (the first of many of this style of locomotive from the builder). The new arrival saw "The Texas Ranger" and the other resident petrol locomotive put up for sale, although it was the other locomotive that was sold at this time. However, by May 1975 "The Texas Ranger" had been sold and moved to the West Country - to the New Cornish Riviera Lido at Carlyon Bay near St Austell in Cornwall (SX057522). A railway, around 300 yards in length, had been laid here in 1974 on a location close to the beach - it was later extended into a balloon loop of 1,000 yards. By this time the locomotive was in a red and cream livery, with a black front and devoid of any markings on its nose. In 1981 a Severn-Lamb product again displaced it - this time a BR "Western" class locomotive named "Duke of Cornwall" - supplied new to the railway. "The Texas Ranger" was now laid aside and the derelict remains had been sold by September 1982. Its current location, if it still exists, is unknown. The railway itself closed in 1992 and had all been lifted by November 1994.

4-6w "Hiawatha"/1001 "The Green Bee" **Built: Ken Dove 1954**

This locomotive was constructed for Leslie Salts, being built by Ken Dove at Gwrych Castle and completed in 1954. It was powered by an Austin 16hp petrol engine, driving the rear (6 wheel) bogie via mechanical transmission. The unusual body was of a freelance style, with a centre sit-in cab. The nose at the leading end was slightly higher and shorter than the trailing end, which featured curved side fairings up to the cab. It was called "Hiawatha", probably after a series of named passenger trains operated by the Chicago, Milwaukee, St Paul and Pacific Railroad. The original working first ran in 1935 and took its name from the legendary Native American tribal leader and central character of Henry Wadsworth Longfellow's 1855 epic poem, "The Song of Hiawatha".

It went into service on the Gwrych Castle Miniature Railway at the start of the 1954 season in April, being reported as a new locomotive by the *Abergele Visitor* of Saturday 3rd April 1954 "*two new engines will pull the famous miniature railway, one being the "Hiawatha", a modern streamlined engine*". However, it only spent one season in North Wales before Leslie Salts sold it to Denham Till, owner of the Skegness Miniature Railway in Lincolnshire. He had already purchased "Commodore Vanderbilt" from Salts over the winter of 1953/1954 (this railway has already been described in this chapter in the section about "Commodore

Vanderbilt"). The locomotive was in service at Skegness by June 1955. "Hiawatha" then worked on this 450 yard long seaside railway - presumably standing in when "Commodore Vanderbilt" was not available, or at times of quiet traffic. Ownership later passed to Bob Parsons and by July 1967, the locomotive had been named "The Green Bee" and carried the number 1001. After "Commodore Vanderbilt" departed Skegness during 1970, "The Green Bee" completed that season, after which the railway closed - being replaced by a new 10¼" gauge line slightly further to the west. The locomotive, still owned by Bob Parsons, was then stored in a haulage contractors yard in Boston, Lincolnshire. Here it was reported in September 1972 (in *Narrow Gauge News* No.80) as requiring extensive rebuilding before it could be used again. This did not happen and "The Green Bee" was scrapped around 1977.

4-6w "The Cheiftain"/"The Chieftain" **Built: Ken Dove 1954**

It has not proved possible to determine whether there were two locomotives with this name or just one, which was later rebuilt. A locomotive called "The Cheiftain" or "The Chieftain" was built for Leslie Salts by Ken Dove at Gwrych Castle in 1954. The name presumably refers to the head of a Native American tribe. It was powered by an Austin 16hp petrol engine, driving the rear (6 wheel) bogie via mechanical transmission. The American style body was single ended with a sit in cab, probably very similar to "The Texas Ranger". For the 1954 season it worked on the railway owned by Leslie Salts and Randolph Turpin at the summit of the Great Orme (see Chapter Nine). Unfortunately, no photograph has been found of the locomotive on this line. When the railway closed at the end of the 1954 season it returned to Gwrych Castle. A photograph of what is probably the locomotive appears in the book *Gwrych Castle - A Pictorial History* (Mark Baker 2000), which shows that it was lettered "*The Milwaukee Railroad*" on the upper side of the body.

At some stage the locomotive was either rebuilt or replaced with another locomotive of the same name. This may have occurred for the 1957 season when an advert in *The World's Fair* referred to "*new equipment*" (see Chapter Eleven). A photograph taken in July 1961, shows a locomotive with what appears to be a fairly new body - this being single ended American style with a sit in cab, but with a more streamlined appearance with a curved nose than the body of the locomotive, which was lettered "*The Milwaukee Railroad*". On the bodyside, the name can be clearly seen as "The Cheiftain" [sic]. When Robin Butterell visited the railway in 1964 he noted the name as "The Chieftain", although the actual applied name cannot be seen in his accompanying photograph. However, he did record that it was powered by a Lister diesel engine. A July 1969 photograph confirms the name had been corrected to "The Chieftain". The author is inclined to think there was only one "The Chieftain", built with an Austin petrol engine in 1954, which was subsequently rebuilt with a Lister diesel engine. Certainly later published locomotive listings (eg *British Locomotive Preservation & Light Railway Stocklist* R H Leithead 1970) have this locomotive with a build date of 1954.

Anyway, "The Chieftain" was left as the only locomotive at Gwrych Castle after the sale of "President Eisenhower" and "Sir Winston Churchill" in 1966/1967. Around 1972 the railway was rebranded as the "Magic Dragon Railway" and by the 1972 season, "The Chieftain" had been rebuilt with a hideous dragon body, complete with an open dragon's mouth at the leading end. The name was no longer carried. After the railway closed, nothing more was heard of the locomotive and it was probably scrapped on site along with the surviving coaches.

4-6w "Hiawatha"/"Flamingo Flyer"
Built: Ken Dove 1968

This locomotive was built by Ken Dove at Gwrych Castle in 1968. It had an American style body very similar to that of "The Texas Ranger", except the pair of cab windows were of a straight design, as opposed to the more attractive curved type of "The Texas Ranger". A large headlight was mounted on the middle of the nose. Inside, the locomotive was comparable to the re-engined "The Chieftain" - powered by a Lister diesel engine, driving the rear bogie via mechanical transmission. The locomotive was built for Flamingo Park Zoological Gardens at Kirkby Misperton, near Pickering in North Yorkshire. Opened as Flamingo Park on Wednesday 28th June 1961, this attraction was founded by Pentland Hick. He subsequently floated the park on the Stock Exchange in 1965 as Associated Pleasure Parks Limited. It was this company, which purchased Gwrych Castle from Leslie Salts in April 1968. One presumes, having seen the miniature railway with "The Chieftain" at Gwrych, Pentland Hick had the idea of installing a railway at Flamingo Park and asked Ken Dove to build a similar locomotive for use there.

The new railway at Flamingo Park probably opened for the 1969 season. It was formed of a simple "end to end" run of some 350 yards at SE778800, linking the car park and the fairground. The locomotive was named (confusingly) "Hiawatha" and carried the wording "Flamingo Park Railroad" across the top of the bodyside. Later the locomotive was renamed "Flamingo Flyer", but by June 1978 it had been replaced by a bogie diesel locomotive and was partly dismantled, dumped out of use and laid beside the track. It was later scrapped. In 1978 the park had become Flamingo Land and the railway itself was extended into a circuit by the summer of 1979. It was then altered to 15" gauge over the winter of 1981/1982 and again from 15" to 2ft gauge over the winter of 2002/2003. As such it still operates today.

10¼" Gauge Coaches

When Ernest Dove purchased the GWR 4-6-0 locomotive from Dudley Zoo in 1944, he also acquired some of their passenger stock. This was a set of five open articulated bogie coaches, with screens at the outer ends. Ernest Dove seems to have built a similar five coach set (without the screens) in 1946 to accompany "Coronation" and allow him to operate two trains, where possible, during the 1946 and 1947 tours. Photographs show one set was later painted to match "Coronation" with the wording "Coronation Scot" on the coach sides and the other labelled "Cheltenham Flyer" to accompany the GWR 4-6-0 No.1944. However, when only one train was operated, like at Carlisle in September 1947, the coaches could be a mix from both sets!

When No.1944 was sold to William Botterill in 1948, the original set of five coaches from Dudley Zoo accompanied the locomotive to its new owner. Ernest Dove presumably then built another set of coaches to permit two train operation to continue. These coaches were then used for the 1948 tour and at Kingston upon Hull and Darlington in 1949. He must have built more similar coaches for the opening of the Gwrych Castle Railway in 1950, as one set operated with "Coronation" at South Shields (and was subsequently sold with the locomotive) while two sets were used at Gwrych. More stock was required in 1951 as the temporary railway at Edinburgh used two sets and at least one was in use at Gwrych Castle. In 1953, a

set of coaches was in use at Gwrych Castle and the Great Orme, but in 1954 another further set was in use at Fleetwood. But by 1956 only one set was required, this being at Gwrych Castle. The other coaches were presumably sold off, some with the locomotives.

All the coaches described above were of similar build and had three "bays" of seats in each (except the ex Dudley Zoo coaches, which had a slightly different configuration), seating six adults (or more if they were not too large!) or up to twelve children. They were assembled in articulated rakes, usually of five coaches.



This view of "Coronation" hauling a well-loaded train at Prestwick in the summer of 1948, allows us a good view of a "standard" coach and its seating capacity. The leading vehicle appears to contain seven children and two adults in its three "bays". In this case it is running as part of a five coach articulated set. The painting of the coach sides to match "Coronation" is clearly visible. The train, driven by Tommy Pallister, is just leaving the two track station on the North Esplanade for the run along the dunes. Another view of this railway is on page 53.
(Courtesy KMR Archive)



"The Pride of California" The now un-named locomotive is waiting to depart from Lakeside Station on the Paignton Zoo Railway. It has operated here from the 1952 season onwards. Built in 1939 for the Dudley Zoo Railway by G & S Light Engineering Company Limited, Ernest Dove claimed it as one of his products when he sold it to Paignton Zoo!
(P. Nicholson. 2/6/73)



"The Texas Ranger" At the station on the Drayton Manor Park Railway, with the driver's door still open, the locomotive is almost ready to depart with a full train. A queue of expectant passengers can be seen, right, waiting their turn. Of all the Dove internal combustion locomotives, "The Texas Ranger" was probably the most attractive.
(Courtesy I & L Hurst Collection)



"The Green Bee" Although not apparently named in this view, this is "The Green Bee", formerly "Hiawatha", built by Ken Dove in 1954. It is about to depart from Seacroft Station on the Skegness Miniature Railway, during the final season the railway operated on this site.
(J. Doyle. Courtesy D. Holroyde Collection. 7/70)



"The Cheiftain" This photograph shows the incorrect spelling of "Chieftain" as applied to the locomotive, which is standing in the station on the Gwrych Castle Miniature Railway. The bodywork looks fairly new. Bill Ingham with his father (right) and his brother pose with the locomotive. The title on the "Notice" attached to the water tank reads "Wilful damage".
(Courtesy W. Ingham. 7/61)



"The Chieftain" By the time of this view, the spelling of "Chieftain" had been corrected! The train is reversing out of the station on the Gwrych Castle Miniature Railway for its trip along the line. Compared to the picture on page 135, the locomotive has gained some horns and an oblong headlight, but lost its cab windows. The livery has also changed somewhat.

(P. Nicholson. 12/7/69)



"Hiawatha" Here we see the final locomotive built by Ken Dove. It is about to depart from "Flamingo Terminus" at Flamingo Park, North Yorkshire - the railway it was built for. Along the top of bodyside is the wording "Flamingo Park Railroad" with the name below, left.

(J. Meredith. 3/8/69)

Appendix One

Extract from Commercial Motor Magazine

Extract from *The Commercial Motor* magazine 1st July 1915 (page 380) - taken from a longer article titled "*Small Users in Large Towns (No.16) - In the Lacework City of Nottingham*" and subtitled "*Examples of Local Motor Transport of Beer, Buns, Furniture, Linen, Meat, Flour, Drugs, Lace, Wines, Hosiery, Provisions etc*". Reproduced with the kind permission of *Commercial Motor*.

"Motors Run Our Business"

Messrs Dove and Dove, furniture removers and general haulage contractors, of Daybrook, had previous to August of last year in their employ two three-ton Commercar lorries which were chiefly used for long distance removal work.

These two machines were commandeered soon after hostilities began, and being unable to make use of the existing fleet of horses for long distance journeys, the concern had to find other means of transport.

A four-ton chain-driven Albion, which was ordered previous to the outbreak of war, was delivered, but after a week of hard service was impressed for Government work; likewise a two-ton Albion which followed. A Star was purchased next, and then a Durham-Churchill was put into service, but again these vehicles were commandeered.

For some months after this Messrs Dove and Dove had to rely upon the horses they had and the railway, which was most inadequate for their requirements. Breakages and freight charges were very heavy, which considerably lowered the profits of the concern. Recently Messrs Dove and Dove purchased a Garner four-ton and a Berna five-ton lorry. These two vehicles were both away on removal jobs when we called, and we were informed that they "had hardly been in service long enough for any conclusive testimony to be given as to their efficiency". One of the partners whom we had the good fortune to see, informed us "that the running of the Commercars was excellent," and continued: "I shall again employ machines of this make directly it is possible".

The Commercars carried sling bodies on the standard flat platforms, and as they were frequently away on long journeys, particular attention had been given to protecting the driver and his assistant against the changeable climatic conditions.

One of these machines, we were told, covered 1300 miles a week, during the first three of its service, surely an extraordinary and very creditable performance. It was on account of the North Eastern Railway strike that such a high mileage was attained.

Our informant concluded by saying "that they were certain that their business was only carried on by the use of motors: in fact, we should have possessed a large fleet by now, but for the outbreak of war".

Appendix Two

Letter from George Barlow to Matthew Kerr

Below is a transcript of a letter written by George Barlow, long-time driver on the Romney, Hythe & Dymchurch Railway, to Matthew Kerr of the Kerr's Miniature Railway in Arbroath. It relates to George Barlow meeting Ernest Dove in the 1940s. (Certain irrelevant paragraphs have been omitted). Reproduced courtesy of the KMR Archive.

George Barlow
New Romney, Kent
1st April 1984

Dear Matthew,

Thank you for all the info on Ernest Dove. Now I have a lot of friends in the Nottingham area as Nottingham was my home for over 30 years, so I will have to make a few inquiries!

I met ED once, about forty years ago, when I was an engine driver in the Royal Engineers, stationed at Chilwell. I was on 6-2 shift and I had been told about a 7¼" railway operating on the Trent Embankment, so in the afternoon I cycled into Nottingham to have a look at it. The loco was "Sir Kenneth" a very off beat engine, with a little hole for the exhaust in a more or less normal looking chimney being driven by a boy of about 16, who I took to be Ken Dove. As I watched, I was approached by this fellow in a smock coat and he said "What do you think of that soldier - I'll bet you have never seen anything like that before!" Well, of course, I had. In the 20s I had watched Shaw's [*Louis Shaw, see Chapter Two*] 7¼" Atlantic for hours and the family holidays were always at Mablethorpe 1923-1930 and I spent days watching Harding Kiff's railway there.

The conversation then went something like this:

GAB: She's very off beat.

ED: She's 3 cylinder, you know.

GAB: The first 3 cylinder simple I've seen with four beats to a turn.

ED: We cut out the middle cylinder when we run on the level like this.

GAB: That must be a job. Do you take the crankshaft out every time? It's only fair to tell you that I have driven a steam loco, full size, for eight hours today, all ready.

He immediately changed the subject and took me to see some models in his boot. One was a K2 [*an LNER 2-6-0*], I think - perhaps 5".

In 1946, after demob, I did a short spell with the Nottingham Journal and we published a report about Dove's new loco [*presumably "Coronation"*] and he told a reporter how many rivets and stays he had put in the new boiler, all done in the kitchen etc etc. The next thing was a phone call from the people who had built the boiler - I think it was Abbots of Newark. I seem to remember that after that, the Editor put a ban on anything appertaining to ED.

You tell me in your letter that your father [*Matthew Kerr Senior, founder of the Kerr's Miniature Railway*] dismissed Dove as a windbag. Now you have read the foregoing you will probably consider that he was being kind. I do.

Best wishes,

George Barlow.

Appendix Three

Details of Steam Locomotives

NUMBER	NAME	BUILT	BUILDER	GAUGE	WHEEL ARGMT	DESIGN BASED ON	LENGTH	WIDTH	HEIGHT	COUPLED WHEEL DIAMETER	CYLINDERS
1940	Sir Kenneth	1940	Ernest Dove	7¼in	4-6-2	LNER A3	10ft 0in				2½ x 3½in
		1943	Ernest Dove	7¼in	4-4-0	SR Schools					
1945	Duchess of Portland	1945	Ernest Dove	7¼in	4-6-2	LMSR Duchess	12ft 0in		1ft 8in		
3 1944 2943	Wingland Grange Hampton Court	1939	G & S Light Engineering Co Ltd & Twining Models Ltd	10¼in	4-6-0	GWR Saint	11ft 11½in	1ft 7½in	2ft 6½in	15in	3¼ x 5in
6220	Coronation	1946	Ernest Dove	10¼in	4-6-2	LMSR Streamlined Duchess	16ft 6in	2ft 11in	2ft 6in	15in	3¼ x 5in
1947 27	Queen of Scots Isabel	1947	Ernest Dove	10¼in	4-6-0	LMSR Rebuilt Jubilee/Patriot	12ft 7½in	1ft 9in	2ft 7in	14in	3½ x 5in
1948 1953	Belle of New York President Eisenhower	1948	Ernest Dove	10¼in	4-6-4	NYCR Niagara	16ft 7in	1ft 10in	2ft 8½in	16in	3½ x 5in

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Continued from previous page

NUMBER	NAME	BUILT	BUILDER	GAUGE	WHEEL ARGMT	DESIGN BASED ON	LENGTH	WIDTH	HEIGHT	COUPLED WHEEL DIAMETER	CYLINDERS
1949 70055	The Cleethorpes Flyer Rob Roy	1949	Ernest Dove	10¼in	4-6-2	LNER Peppercorn	16ft 4in	2ft 0½in	3ft 0in	19¼in	3½ x 5in
1950 1951 1954	Silver Queen Commodore Vanderbilt Henry	1950	Ernest Dove	10¼in	4-6-4	NYCR Streamlined Hudson	15ft 7in	1ft 11½in	3ft 0in	15in	3½ x 5in
1953 70021	Sir Winston Churchill Morning Star	1953	Kenneth Dove	10¼in	4-6-4	BR Britannia	16ft 5in	2ft 0in	2ft 11in	15in	3¼ x 5in

The dimensions shown above have been compiled from Ernest Dove's advertising material, newspaper reports and, where figures were missing, measurement of the locomotives by their current owners. The dimensions should not be taken as a wholly accurate record, but merely as a guide to allow comparison. In any event some of the locomotives have been extensively rebuilt.

Refer to Chapter Twelve for a detailed account of each locomotive's history.

Since no information was ever published as to the dimensions of the petrol & diesel locomotives, and none have apparently have survived, it is not possible to assemble a similar table for these locomotives.

Appendix Four

Summary of Tours: 1945 - 1948

Date	Location	Charity	Money Donated
<u>1945 (Chapter Three)</u>			
Locomotive used: 1944			
31st March - 3rd April	Nottingham - Lover's Walk	Merchant Navy Comforts Service	£72 0s 0d
19th May - 26th May	Skegness - Cricket Ground	Skegness & District Hospital	£350 0s 0d
2nd June - 9th June	Nottingham - Victoria Embankment	British Legion	
14th June - 23rd June	Sheffield - Hillsborough Park	Sheffield Telegraph Children's Ring Cot	£149 0s 0d
7th July - 14th July	Blaby - Social Centre Field	Blaby & District Social Centre	
21st July	Nottingham - Highfields Park	Notts Association of Girls' & Mixed Clubs	
4th August - 7th August	Nottingham - Wollaton Park	Nottinghamshire Services Comforts	
4th August - 11th August	West Bridgford - Hall Park	Nottinghamshire Services Comforts West Bridgford Nursing Association	
9th August - 18th August	Eastwood Mansfield Road Recreation Ground	Nottinghamshire Prisoner of War Eastwood Welcome Home	
1st September - 15th September	Sheffield - Hillsborough Park	Sheffield Telegraph Children's Ring Cot British United Aid to China	
<u>1946 (Chapter Four)</u>			
Locomotives used: 1944 & 6220 "Coronation"			
20th April - 27th April	Nottingham - Victoria Embankment	British Legion	
24th June - 29th June	Mansfield Chesterfield Road Recreation Ground	British Legion	
13th July - 31st July	Ayr - Low Green	Various (see text)	£400 0s 0d
10th August - 26th August	Skegness - Beach	Skegness & District Hospital	£285 0s 0d
14th September - 21st September	Kendal - Abbot Hall Park	Westmorland County Hospital	£75 0s 0d
25th September - 28th September	Harrogate - The Stray	Harrogate & District General Hospital	£100 0s 0d
3rd October - 5th October	Nottingham - Forest Recreation Ground	Lord Mayor's Women's Hospital	

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Date	Location	Charity	Money Donated
<u>1947 (Chapter Five)</u> Locomotives used: 1944 & 6220 "Coronation"			
7th June - 16th August	Prestwick - Central Esplanade	Commercial Venture	n/a
30th August - 13th September	Carlisle - Bitts Park	Babies' Savings Railway Benevolent Whitehaven Pit Disaster	£85 0s 0d
<u>1948 (Chapter Six)</u> Locomotives used: 6220 "Coronation" & 1948 "Belle of New York"			
8th May - 17th May	Newcastle - Exhibition Park	SSAFA	<i>£575 7s 3d</i>
22nd May - 29th May	Edinburgh - Leith Links	SSAFA	<i>£331 0s 1d</i>
3rd June - 9th June	Glasgow - Glasgow Green	SSAFA	<i>£100 0s 0d</i> <i>£182 13s 10d</i>
19th June - 7th August	Prestwick - North Esplanade	Commercial Venture	n/a
19th August - 24th August	Sunderland - Roker Promenade	SSAFA	<i>£195 12s 2d</i>
28th August - 4th September	Hartlepool - Town Moor	SSAFA	
11th September - 16th September	Darlington - South Park	SSAFA	<i>£226 17s 8d</i>
2nd October - 16th October	Kingston upon Hull - West Park	Commercial Venture	n/a

The figures in the "Money Donated" column are taken from the various newspaper reports of the time. Those in *italics* come from a report produced by the Middlesbrough Parks Superintendent (see Chapter Seven) and are "Receipts", so presumably the charitable donation made by Ernest Dove would have been less his expenses. Note the two figures for the visit to Glasgow.

Unfortunately, not all the donations were reported by the local press. However, taking the 1946 tour (for which the figures are the most complete) as an example - Ernest Dove gave a total of at least £860 to charity that year. This equates approximately to a very respectable figure of £22,300 at 2005 values (Source: The National Archives web site currency converter).

Appendix Five

"Coronation" Souvenir Leaflet



To mark the completion of "Coronation", this leaflet was published in 1946 and sold during the tour that year. Matthew Kerr purchased this copy during Ernest Dove's visit to Ayr.

The centre pages appear on the next page.

(Courtesy KMR Archive)

L.M.S. Coronation Scot

THE MOST MAGNIFICENT AND AMAZING MODEL LOCOMOTIVE EVER BUILT. Drawings kindly loaned by L.M.S. Railway. Frame, 5/16" Bessemer steel plate correctly cross-stayed and rivetted. Driving wheels, 15" diameter; bogie wheels, 6 1/2"; trailing wheels, 7 1/4"; on covered Bissil trailing truck. Axles, 2" Bessemer steel; axle boxes, 3" x 3 1/2" x 1 1/4" phosphor bronze, all wheels correctly sprung. Con rods made from solid forgings. Cylinders, 5" stroke; 3 1/4" bore. Correct pattern valves and Waalschaerts motion, cylinder cast phosphor bronze. Drain taps, etc., fixed. Mechanical lubrication to cylinders and valves. Steam brakes to driving wheels, two cylinders gun-metal, giving complete control of locomotive and train; emergency brake on tender. Boiler made from solid drawn tube, 3/8" thick. Fire box dimensions, 16" x 10" x 10" high, fitted fusible plugs. Twenty copper tubes, 1 1/4" diameter, correctly stayed as full-sized locomotive practice. Fed by two steam injectors at rate of 8 pints per minute. Coal used, anthracite. Capacity of boiler, 35 gallons water. Fittings include: Steam valve for driver's brake, 3 short valves, water gauge, steam gauge, steam blower, 2 safety valves, whistle valve, blow-off valve, blower valve, injector valves, test valve, etc. Boiler tested to 230lb./sq. inch.; working pressure 120lb./sq. inch. The whole stream-lined in silver steel casing, lagged with asbestos blanket, spring-loaded buffers, concert

pattern vacuum brake, lamp brackets, double-blast chimney, etc. Tender constructed sheet steel. Water tank copper fitted with water valves and filters. Water capacity, 45 gallons. Coal capacity, 3/4 cwt. Emergency hand-pump on tender. Correct drawbar, pull, fireman's rake, shovel, etc., to match.

The whole coloured blue enamel with aluminium beading, letters, etc., presenting a most impressive and magnificent appearance.

Total weight in working order: 2 tons 3 cwt.

Hauling capacity: 5 coaches, 100 passengers.

Top speed on test: 39.7 miles per hour.

Gauge of track: 10 1/4 inches.

Locomotive covered by insurance for £3,000.

This model will be running at various times on behalf of the charity concerned on a specially made scale track in properly built coaches.

FARES: ADULTS 6d. CHILDREN 3d.

THIS IS THE GREATEST NOVELTY YOU
CAN ENJOY—AND REMEMBER, YOU ARE
ASSISTING A MOST DESERVING CAUSE.

Locomotive completed in March, 1946.

Appendix Six

Publicity leaflet - "Famous Models by Ernest Dove"

Ernest Dove produced an attractive fold out leaflet to publicise the various locomotives he had built (although it did contain the ex-Dudley Zoo GWR 4-6-0, which was not one of his products!). The cover featured a photograph of a NYCR "Niagara" locomotive, as opposed to a view of his completed "Belle of New York" - indicating that the leaflet dates from early 1948, probably being produced for that year's tour. All the pages of the leaflet are reproduced here, courtesy of the KMR Archive and slightly reduced in size.

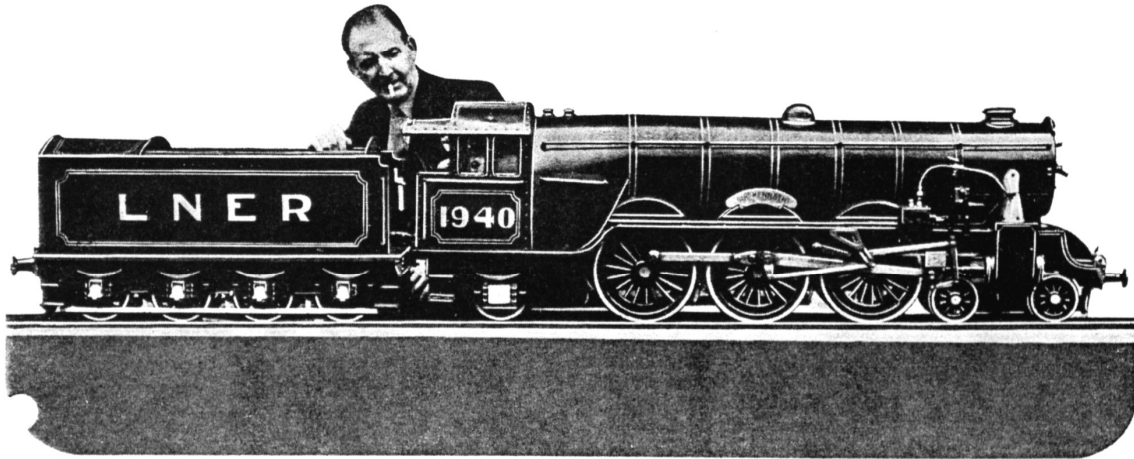


The front cover of the leaflet, depicting NYCR's 4-8-4 "Niagara" class locomotive No.6001.
Ernest Dove's "Belle of New York" was only a 4-6-4.

L.N.E.R. " FLYING SCOTSMAN "

L.N.E.R. " Flying Scotsman." Nine and a half years to build and represents one of the most famous locomotives in Britain.

This model has travelled over 28,000 miles on track, which represents 224000 to scale, and has carried 168,000 passengers, in raising over £17,000 for charity during four years.



The usual Dove statistics are included in the caption for "Sir Kenneth". By the time of this view the locomotive had gained a proper nameplate on the centre splasher - compare to photographs on page 15. Ernest Dove is inspecting the cab.

" THE DUCHESS OF PORTLAND "

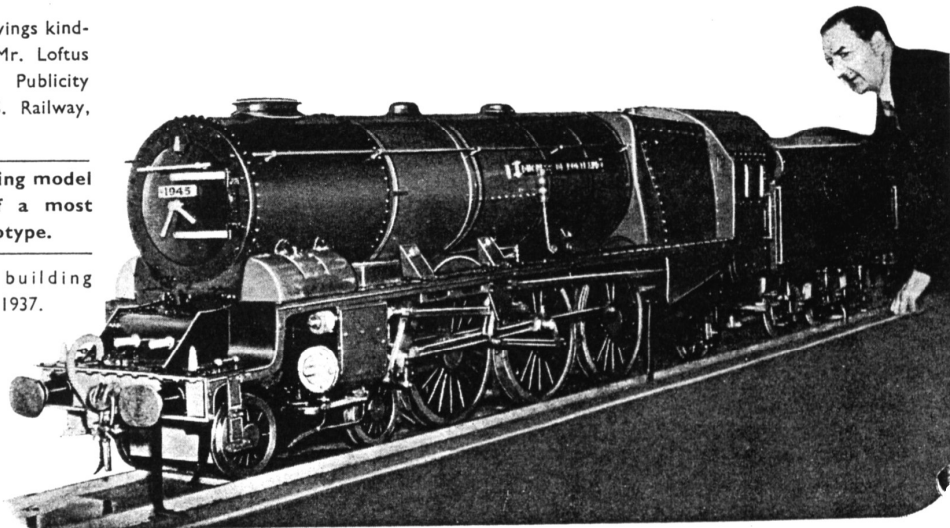
(by kind consent of Her Grace the Duchess of Portland).

Built from Drawings kindly loaned by Mr. Loftus Allen, Chief Publicity Manager, L.M.S. Railway, Euston Station.

A most amazing model locomotive of a most amazing prototype.

Commenced building February 28th, 1937.

Completed February 3rd, 1945.



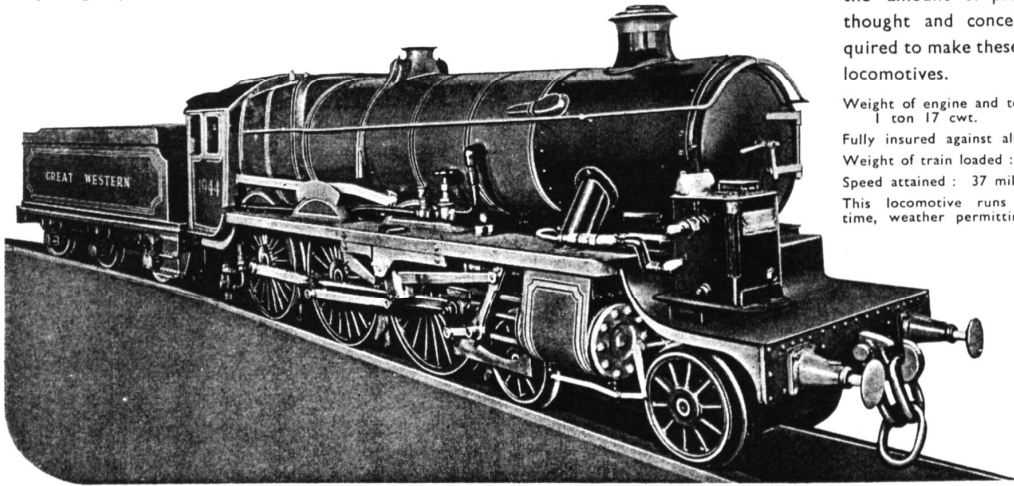
A TEMPEST—NOTTINGHAM PRODUCTION

Exact commencement and completion dates are given here for "Duchess of Portland", Ernest Dove's second passenger hauling 7¼" gauge locomotive after "Sir Kenneth". His third locomotive of that gauge, a SR "Schools" was not featured in the leaflet. Ernest Dove is again seen inspecting the impressive locomotive.

G.W.R. "GRANGE" CLASS — 10½ GAUGE

This remarkable locomotive is a type popular on the Great Western System and has done many thousands of miles running on its miniature track.

Record for the engine during July, 1945. Ten hours' running, 1,500 passengers per hour — adults and children.



One wonders how it was achieved but it goes to prove the amount of patience, skill, thought and concentration required to make these remarkable locomotives.

Weight of engine and tender : 1 ton 17 cwt.

Fully insured against all risks.

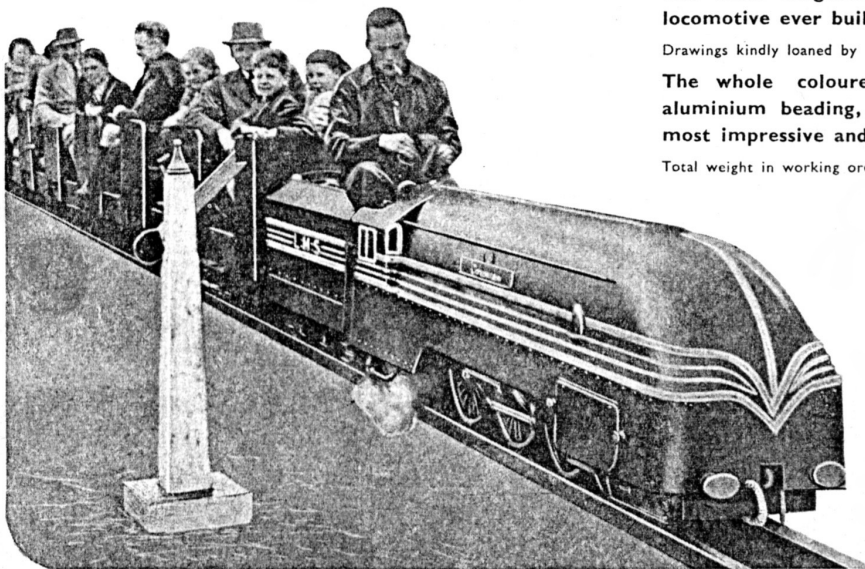
Weight of train loaded : 8 tons.

Speed attained : 37 miles per hour.

This locomotive runs most of the time, weather permitting.

Not a Dove built locomotive, but purchased by him in 1944 from Dudley Zoo. He then used it on his first 10¼" gauge railways in 1945. The "*Record for the engine during July, 1945*" refers to the visit to Blaby, Leicestershire between 7th & 14th July 1945.

L.M.S. "CORONATION SCOT"



The most magnificent and amazing model locomotive ever built.

Drawings kindly loaned by L.M.S. Railway.

The whole coloured blue enamel with aluminium beading, letters, etc., presenting a most impressive and magnificent appearance.

Total weight in working order : 2 tons 3 cwt.

Hauling capacity : 5 coaches, 100 passengers.

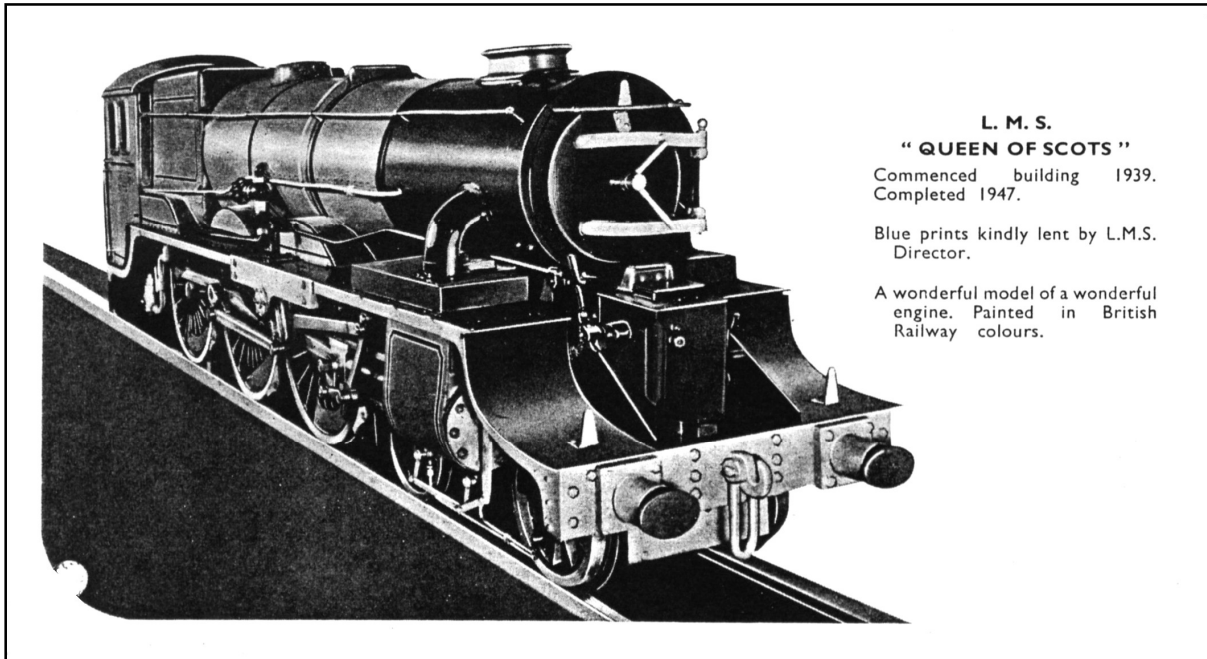
Top speed on test : 39.7 miles per hour.

Gauge of track : 10½ inches.

Locomotive covered by insurance for £3,000 ; also boiler risk, £2,000.

Ernest Dove's most well-known locomotive, "Coronation" is seen here being driven by Ken Dove. The usual Dove hype and statistics are given. The signal also appears in the photograph at the top of page 36, taken at Skegness during the 1946 tour.

This view is from the visit to the Low Green, Ayr in July of the same year.



"Queen of Scots" was sold soon after completion to William Botterill, so did not appear during the 1948 tour. It was based on a LMSR 4-6-0 locomotive.



This is the front cover of a very similar leaflet Leslie Salts and Ernest Dove published for the Gwrych Castle Miniature Railway. Probably produced for the opening of the railway in 1950, it contained the same views as the earlier leaflet, but with added text.

Appendix Seven

Chronology of Important Dates

2nd July 1887	Ernest Dove born in Daybrook, Nottinghamshire
24th May 1915	Ernest Dove marries Jessie Prosser
19th May 1924	Kenneth Dove born in Sherwood, Nottinghamshire
May 1940	4-6-2 No.1940 "Sir Kenneth" completed
1940-1941	"Sir Kenneth" displayed at various locations in aid of War Charities
1942	Ernest Dove starts running 7¼" gauge railways in aid of War Charities
Early 1943	4-4-0 "Schools" completed
Autumn 1944	4-6-0 GWR No.3 purchased from Dudley Zoo
3rd February 1945	4-6-2 No.1945 "Duchess of Portland" completed
31st March 1945	1945 tour starts at Lover's Walk, Nottingham - Ernest Dove's first 10¼" gauge railway
15th September 1945	1945 tour finishes at Hillsborough Park, Sheffield
March 1946	4-6-2 No.6220 "Coronation" completed
20th April 1946	1946 tour starts at Victoria Embankment, Nottingham
5th October 1946	1946 tour finishes at Forest Recreation Ground, Nottingham
7th June 1947	1947 tour starts at Central Promenade, Prestwick
August 1947	4-6-0 No.1947 "Queen of Scots" completed
13th September 1947	1947 tour finishes at Bitts Park, Carlisle
April 1948	4-6-4 No.1948 "Belle of New York" completed
8th May 1948	1948 tour starts at Exhibition Park, Newcastle
16th October 1948	1948 tour finishes at West Park, Kingston upon Hull
28th May 1949	Railway opens in East Park, Kingston upon Hull
June 1949	4-6-2 No.1949 "The Cleethorpes Flyer" completed
26th August 1949	Railway closes in East Park, Kingston upon Hull
3rd September 1949	Railway opens in South Park, Darlington
17th September 1949	Railway closes in South Park, Darlington
18th November 1949	Middlesbrough Town Council decide against buying a railway from Ernest Dove
5th April 1950	Gwrych Castle Miniature Railway opens
8th April 1950	Railway opens on the South Foreshore in South Shields
May 1950	4-6-4 No.1950 "Silver Queen" completed
2nd May 1951	Railway opens in East Meadows, Edinburgh
6th August 1951	Railway closes in East Meadows, Edinburgh
Early 1953	4-6-4 No.1953 "Sir Winston Churchill" completed
1st April 1953	Great Orme Miniature Railway opens
4th April 1954	Fleetwood Miniature Railway opens
Autumn 1954	Great Orme Miniature Railway closes
4th September 1955	Fleetwood Miniature Railway closes
9th November 1959	Ernest Dove dies at Ribblesdale Road, Nottingham
6th April 1968	Gwrych Castle sold to Associated Pleasure Parks Limited
c1975	Gwrych Castle Miniature Railway closes
1982	Kenneth Dove becomes involved with the Rhyl Miniature Railway
July 1987	Rhyl Miniature Railway saved by Kenneth Dove
22nd May 1994	Kenneth Dove dies in Rhyl

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Royal Burgh of Ayr Council, Sheffield City Council, Skegness Urban District Council, South Shields County Borough Council, Sunderland Corporation, West Bridgford Urban District Council.

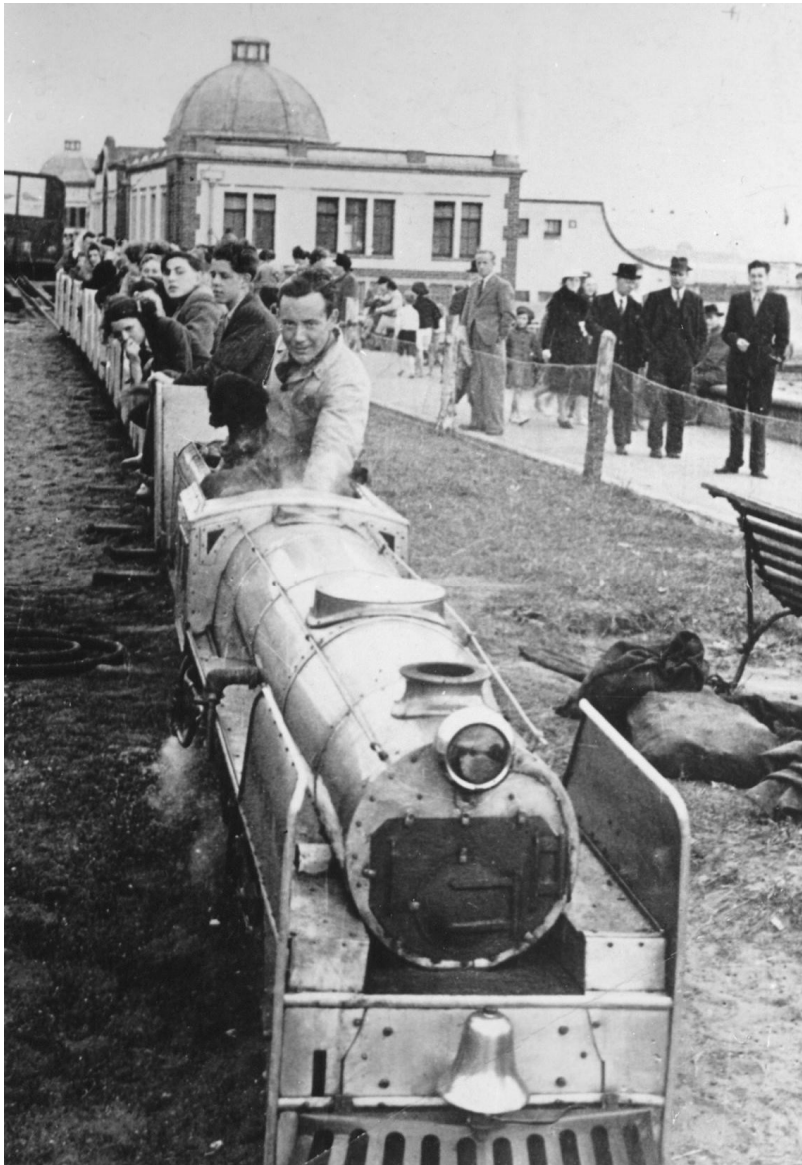
Companies House Archive. Records for Dove & Dove Limited. [No records were found for Gwrych Castle Miniature Railway Company. The records for Gwrych Castle Limited and Botterill's Miniature Railways Limited have been destroyed].

Kelly's Directories. Various editions for Nottinghamshire.

Guidebooks & Brochures. City of Nottingham "Holidays at Home" guides 1942-1944; Gwrych Castle guidebooks c1950, 1958, c1966, 1970; Great Orme Holiday & Sports Centre brochure 1953, Fleetwood Holiday Guide 1955.

Nottinghamshire Services Comforts Fund. News cuttings (in scrapbooks) for October 1939-January 1947. Nottinghamshire Archives DD/1168/1-9.

Electors Registers. Abergele 1967-1969.



This interesting view shows "Belle of New York" in the "station" on the North Esplanade at Prestwick, during the summer of 1948. The locomotive is being driven by Ken Dove (and dog!). The attractive building in the background is the swimming baths, with the sea away to the right. The second track, on which "Coronation" was running, is out of sight to the left. Note the track ramped up onto the rear of the lorry. See also pictures on pages 53 & 133.

(Courtesy S. Townsend Collection)

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Emma Deacon BA Ed for once again generously undertaking the onerous task of proof reading the finished book and correcting my English where necessary!

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Most of Ernest Dove's locomotives seem to have had a works plate. Here we see the example fitted to "The Cleethorpes Flyer", below the attractive nameplate. Both were attached to the smoke deflector.

(J. Williams. 13/5/92)



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