



Perseverance in Gauge 3

By John Candy

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No, this is not an article about the construction of a locomotive (or even a warship) but of facing and overcoming the challenges presented by modelling in a larger scale than that to which one has been accustomed. As with all new activities in we choose to engage, there is a learning curve and model-making is no exception. Whether it be starting out, young or at an older age, and in whatever scale, from the smallest to the largest, there are skills and techniques to be learned (many the hard way, through initial failure). Many of these acquired skills have applications in everyday life, beyond the scope of model construction.

If, like me, you started modelling in a small scale at an early age, then the skills acquired in those scales will be stepping stones to some of the more advanced techniques required in Gauge 3. Many tasks are in fact easier to accomplish in the larger scale, since one is not confronted with the tiny, difficult to handle, parts which abound in the smaller scales (a distinct advantage as eye-sight deteriorates with advancing years)! Yes, there is a comparative lack of 'trade support' for Gauge 3 when compared with smaller scales (even Gauge 1) but this should enhance the enjoyment and be seen as a challenge and an opportunity to employ acquired skills, rather than as a reason to turn away from the scale.

If you had visions of reproducing in Gauge 3 that 10 platform terminus, four-track mainline with junctions, branches, etc. that you had been dreaming of in 'OO' gauge, then (unless you are either very young or extremely wealthy) you will be very lucky to find the time required to produce all the items necessary to realise that dream. What a Gauge 3 railway may lack in complexity of layout and quantity of stock is more than compensated by the sheer mass and robust nature of the models and the degree of detail which can be incorporated (not flimsy or over-scale detail as is often necessary with smaller models).

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So, having taken the leap from (say) 4mm to Gauge 3 one is deprived of the vast array of models on offer from the 'trade' but the opportunity is there to produce more 'individual' models employing skills acquired over the years and the result will be a railway consisting of items which are unlikely to be confused with anything mass-produced and appearing on countless pages of magazines. It will be *your* skill which is stamped as a hallmark of achievement on your creations.

Why have I written this article? A source of disappointment to me is the number of Members who join the Society but fail to renew membership for a second year. Frequently, the reason given is lack of available models from the 'trade'. It is unfortunate that, having started out in Gauge 3, they have not risen to the challenge and have missed out on the satisfaction of having surmounted the perceived difficulties.

The Gauge 3 Society is only the sum of its Members and can only achieve its aims in proportion to that effort which the Members are prepared to contribute. The more support the Society receives from the membership the more power it wields and the greater influence upon those 'traders' whose support is required. A strong Society equates to a thriving Gauge 3 community and a strong 'voice' in the world of model railways.

Finally, if you have just started on that new Gauge 3 railway and are finding progress rather slower than anticipated, perhaps you have been over-ambitious and initially set your sights too high but, please, do not be discouraged!

Is it not better to travel in hope than to arrive?