

Tales from Barlow Works

Project Gresley

Part 2:- Getting started.

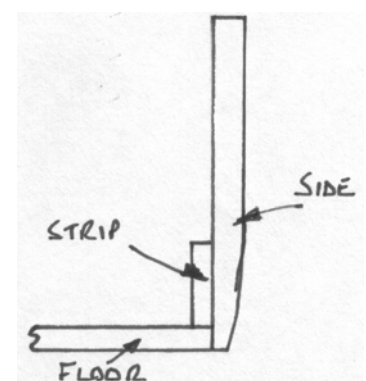
The kits I based my notes on were intended for my garden railway, as a result they have to be quite robust and this is reflected in the construction and the level of detail. It is quite possible to add extra detail and the interiors can be made a lot more detailed if required. I assembled my coaches in a slightly different way to the way Mr Kirk advocates as I like to make the roof removable and not the floor, also the interior compartments are designed to be removable to make construction and finishing easier. This does not imply that the original method is incorrect, it's just that I have my own preferred way of working. So in these instructions we will be making a coach with a removable roof that screws into place, the interior compartments will be removable and will have home made seating. We will also be making our own flexible corridor connections and I will describe a rigid coach connection that is made to look like the coach pipes under the corridor connections. When I say in the instructions to glue one part to another I assume that the parts have been cleaned up first.

The coaches are made in a modular construction with separate door and window panels. The first task is to check that there are the correct number and type of module against the diagram in the original instructions. If any units are missing then a quick S.A.E to Mr Kirk will soon provide a replacement. All of the modules will now require careful removal from the plastic sprue and cleaning up. Remove any moulding flash from the edges and in the windows and I run each side against a file a couple of times to ensure everything is flat. If the door handles are to be replaced with brass ones then the moulded ones will have to be removed at this stage. If the coaches are LNER teak then try and preserve the raised beading, for the LMS the sides were flush so try not to damage the side itself when removing the moulded handle.

To assemble the sides we will require a jig. I made mine from an off cut of white Melamine shelving long enough to accommodate the coach side. I purchased a length of brass strip from the local B&Q metal centre and attached it to the bottom of the shelving as a datum to build the side up on. Have a trial run of the modules in the correct sequence and measure the length of the coach side. The side is built up on a length of white plasticard that is included in the kit. Check that one end is square and offer up the strip to the side and mark the finished length. Remove about 6mm from this length to allow the ends to fit and cut to this final length.

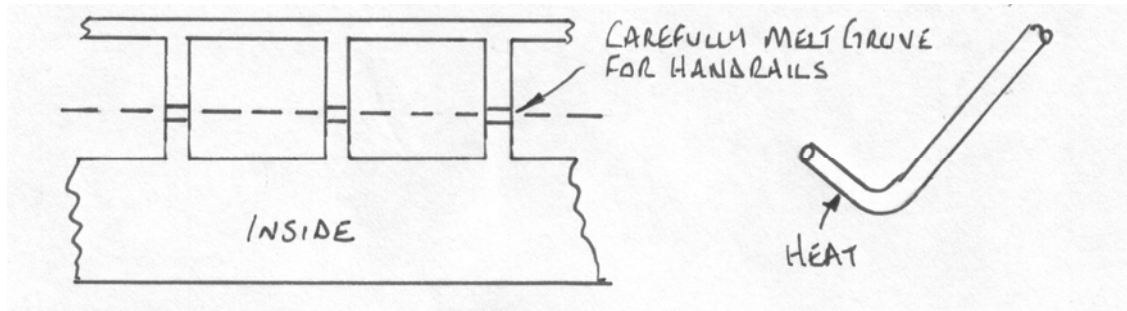
As I like the floor to be part of the body I use this strip to locate the floor at the correct depth. Apply a couple of small strips of the double-sided tape to the strip. Take the floor from the kit and place it on edge up against the brass strip. Fix the white strip to the jig with the sticky tape trapping the floor in place. Remove the floor to give a gap that the floor will sit in when the side is complete.

Start to fix the modules to the white strip ensuring that the first one is square using the metal square and that it overhangs the strip by the 3mm at the end. Fix the rest of the modules in the correct sequence making sure that the bottoms are all resting on the brass strip and the tops are level. I usually apply the solvent to the strip and then fix the module in place, then quickly run a brush with solvent down the side of the module and the strip. This is usually enough to hold it. When all the modules are in place allow to dry for a short while and then carefully remove the side from the jig. Turn the jig over and run a small amount of solvent down the joints in the modules and along the strip. Set aside to dry.



Remember to get the orientation of the second side correct, copy it from the drawing in the instructions. Assemble the second side as we did the first and also set aside to dry. If you are making a LNER teak brake third or brake compo, the sides of the brake section were narrower than the passenger section so the sides will have to be made in 4 pieces instead of two.

If we are making corridor stock there is an interior handrail on the corridor side. I make provision for it at this stage but it cannot be fitted until after glazing. The way I do this is not for the faint hearted but works well with a bit of care. Firstly mark the position of the handrail on the inside of the coach, I used the vernier as it is ideal for this kind of job.



As I made the handrails from 0.7mm brass rod I took short length of rod and mounted it in the pin chuck. I then put a 90-degree bend in the end for about 10mm. By heating the rod in a flame it is possible to carefully melt a small indentation into the plastic on the inside that will take the rod when the handrail is fitted. By carefully melting the indentations where the marks are on the side and a level handrail should result.

We should now have two completed sides, or four sides if it is a brake third or brake composite.

Next we will make these into the basic coach body....