

Layout in a Corner Setting

IF a Hornby-Dublo layout is to be permanently arranged, or nearly so, the greatest care must be taken to choose a suitable site. A great deal of course depends on the all-important domestic arrangements, for these inevitably settle the amount of space that can be devoted to the line.

A layout that was placed after much thought on these points is that shown on this page. It occupies a position that has many advantages, of which Mr. D. Findlater, of Nairn, and his son David, who built it, have made excellent use. These enthusiasts indeed have lots of fun in its operation.

One special requirement was that the layout had to be made accessible from the invalid chair in which, unfortunately, David has to spend most of his time. This explains the arrangement of the Controllers and the bank of Switches on a separate control panel projecting from the board. There is much to be said for the separate control panel idea in any case. It keeps the baseboard itself free from the control gear and the whole area of the board is thus available for railway or lineside purposes.

One special advantage of a corner setting is that background scenery round the two wall sides of the layout helps to give depth to the scene when the railway is viewed from the normal operating position, and to give an air of real completeness to the line and its

surroundings. It is indeed quite easy to imagine that such a line stretches well into the distance instead of being a continuous track of the favourite oval type.

The Findlater railway has double track throughout for main line purposes and there are the usual sidings. The main station has the Hornby-Dublo Through Station on one side and the corresponding Island Platform on the other, the two Platforms being connected with the usual Footbridge. There is a miniature township in the near corner in our picture and other buildings are well placed elsewhere.

A favourite and important part of the working arrangements involves the running of an express goods train consisting of vans only. This is hauled by a main line tender engine. After making several circuits it is shunted direct into a reception road, where the

main line engine is uncoupled. This engine runs to the shed and then a Hornby-Dublo Tank Locomotive distributes the vans into the various sidings.

An effective piece of roadside work is the attachment of the odd van or two to a passenger train calling at the station. The van is placed in a convenient siding by the Tank Locomotive, which then goes away and the necessary movements are performed by the train engine.

The engines on the layout now are four in number, the latest addition being the *Duchess of Montrose*. Five coaches and about 40 goods vehicles are in use.

A corner site was chosen by Mr. D. Findlater and his son David, of Nairn, for the Hornby-Dublo layout they operate, and has been found by them to have many good features. Photograph by R. MacIntosh, Nairn.

Two Notable Hornby-Dublo Layouts

The Secret of Smooth Railway Working

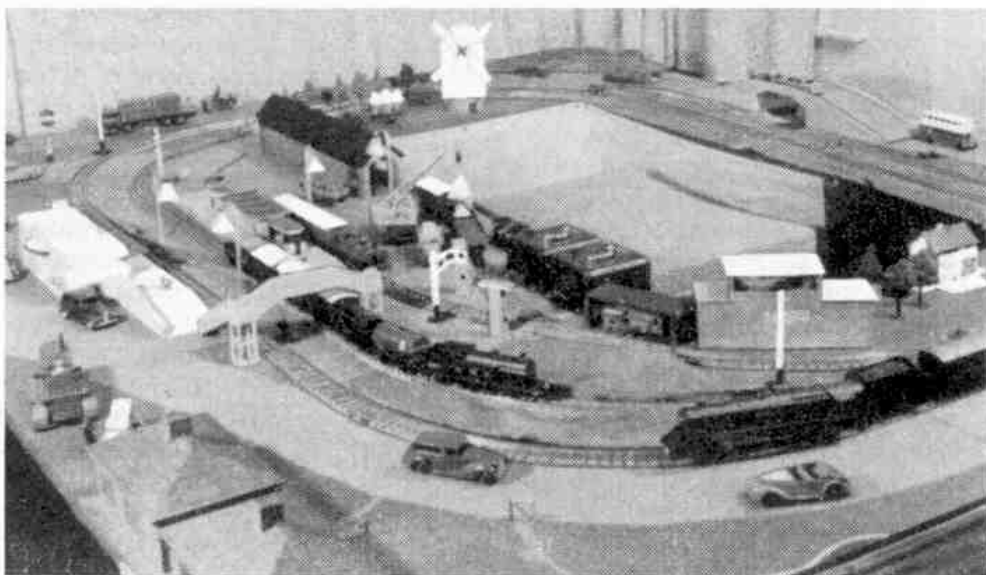
THE Hornby-Dublo layouts shown in the pictures on these two pages are probably typical of many similar systems that have grown up from the elementary oval track. Each of them remains basically simple, and this is a secret of successful operating. There is no real point in having a layout that is too complex to be worked smoothly and easily. Train working and the management of the railway should be enjoyable, not something of an ordeal or a difficult mental exercise.

It will be noticed in the picture on this page, which shows the layout of Mr. L. P. B. Smith, of Leiston, Suffolk, that the tracks surround a sort of operating "well" formed in the centre of the baseboard. There is a lot to be said for having the operator in the middle of things. He has to move very little, even where there are several separate sets of controls to be handled, and no part of his railway is really out of his reach. This complete layout occupies a space of approximately 7 ft. 6 in. by 5 ft. 6 in., but the whole of the area is not occupied by track. As has been said on several occasions, one can have such a thing as too much railway, but this is certainly not a fault of the system in question.

Although the railway is laid on a baseboard, the latter can be dismantled when required, so that the system is not permanent. This does not prevent Mr. Smith and his son, Anthony, from having a very good time indeed with their train working. A double track main line is available, and as the two tracks are connected by crossover Points the trains on the outer track have ready access to the inner one, and *vice versa*, while the sidings inside the tracks can be reached

easily from both tracks. The track leading into the sidings can be seen in the illustration. On reaching what might be termed "yard" premises this track divides, one line forming an ordinary siding while the other leads to an engine shed. This is the part of the layout where the Controllers and other equipment of that nature are installed, so that the operator of the layout has the yard and its working under his immediate observation.

Unlike many layouts, the railway track is not the most conspicuous part of the baseboard scene. It forms a part, and an important part too, of the general layout,



A general view of the Hornby-Dublo layout of Mr. L. P. B. Smith, Leiston, Suffolk, showing the space for the operator in the centre of the system. Photograph by Mr. P. Goldsmith, Leiston.

and fits in with its surroundings in the manner that is natural with real railways. So there is plenty of lineside space for roadway and similar developments.

A layout of a more permanent character is that shown in our other two illustrations. This has been developed by Mr. G. W. Alexander, of Stockport. Here we have a slightly smaller board, measuring 6 ft. by 4 ft. In this instance the operator is accommodated "outside" his railway, and the central area of the board, within the inner main line, is occupied by sidings and roadside features. Part of this interior is visible in the upper illustration on the next page, which is taken looking across from one corner of the layout inside the main line. In the foreground is the siding,

by a small area of grazing land, and beyond it is a roadway with Dinky Toys traffic and other features. Beyond the roadway comes a further stretch of country, and then another siding.

In the background is a station. This bears the picturesque name of *Millers Dale*, actually of course that of a well-known station in the Peak District. Peakland associations are suggested, too, by the name on the signal cabin, one end of which can be seen at the right hand end of the lower picture. This cabin bears the name *Peak Forest West*.

The baseboard itself is of interest, as it is built up of two pieces of hardboard joined by metal plates. The board proper is supported clear of the table by rubber door stops, thus leaving clearance for the wiring of the track to be carried out underneath the board. This is a good point, resulting in a neat finish on the upper surface. The plan is an admirable one for a compact layout such as this, on which the outer main circuit is divided into eight electrical sections, for wires on the surface could get horribly in the way. The inner circuit

Scenes on the layout of G. W. Alexander, Stockport, appear on this page. Considerable attention has been given to lineside detail, with the happy results apparent in the illustrations.

contains two main sections, and the isolating arrangements are such that two trains can be run at the same time, each on a different track, while another one is standing by in a siding or section electrically isolated.

The various sections are indicated on the surface of the board by small number plates or indicators. At the crossover Points, between the outer and inner circuits, locomotives are worked from one circuit to the other by using the Controllers in sympathy. At the end of the crossover, on the outer track, an Uncoupling Rail is fitted, so that the rolling stock can be shunted over to the inner track, and taken over by another engine standing by there.

The scenic effects, roadbridge, signal cabin, engine shed, loading bays, station, water tower and so on were made at home. Miniature trees, shrubs, hedges, gates, railings, and even a herd of cows were bought. The layout board is painted in various shades of greens, yellows and browns, to give the effect of fields, roads and ploughed field.

Purely for effect, curved guard rails made from wire are located at the corners of the layout, and these are painted white, with excellent results.

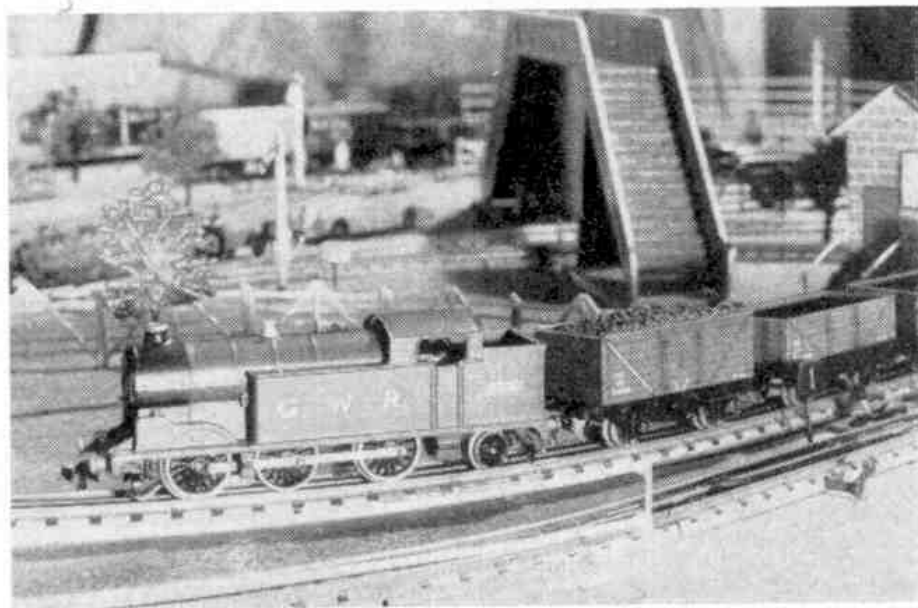
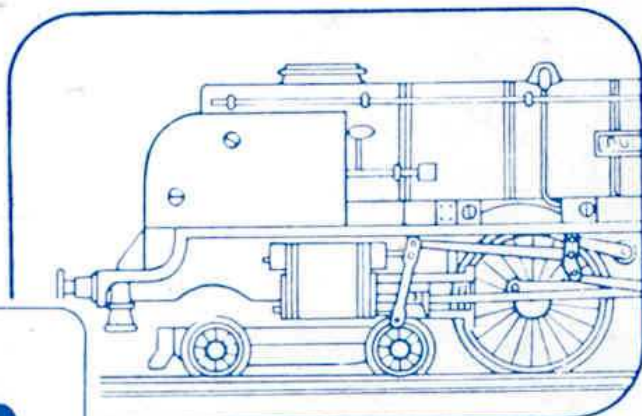


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The 'Duchess of Montrose' is a superb 'Pacific' Locomotive of the type used by British Railways to haul main line expresses. Note the Walschaerts valve gear, smoke deflectors, double chimney and other wonderfully accurate modelling on this Hornby-Dublo Locomotive.



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