

Rowland's Castle D-Day Model Railway



The Rowland's Castle Heritage Centre is now the proud owner of the award-winning model railway designed and built by Peter Goss. The model depicts The Green and Railway Station and yard at Rowland's Castle, in 1944 during the preparations for the Normandy D-Day Landings.

by

Paul Marshman and Peter Goss



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Wartime village

Paul Marshman

In 1944 Rowland's Castle was chosen as one of many infantry 'de-training' stations in the south coastal area from which troops were transported by lorry into local camps in preparation for the Normandy landings. Elements of the British 3rd Infantry Division were in this area and some are modelled at the station and in the forest camp nearby. (1st Battalion King's Own Scottish Borderers) and a troop of armoured self-propelled guns (Priests) are shown near the railway bridge moving towards Gosport. (76th Field Regiment).

The village green was covered in brick rubble sent up from Portsmouth and is known to have been used by army engineers as a tank repair depot. Their repair vehicles are shown together with three troops of Sherman tanks getting ready to drive the last 8 miles or so to the landing craft at Gosport. (3rd County London Yeomanry, 4th Independent Armoured Brigade).

Full blackout regulations are still in force and concrete pillboxes, removed road signs and station name boards with names painted out remain from an earlier part of the war when England was under threat during the 'Battle of Britain'. Home defences were prepared to receive an invader.

Rowland's Castle was a key location because of the railway station and sidings, and its closeness to Portsmouth. Also the wooded countryside was ideal for hiding troops and machines from enemy spotter planes.

All the roads were used for parking camouflaged tanks, lorries and other equipment. The woods were hiding thousands of men and all the camp equipment, including kitchens and even a cinema.

Railways played a big part in moving men and machines Rowland's Castle was one of only a few de-training stations in the South, and the only one East of the main A3 trunk road to Portsmouth.

Set in the centre of Rowland's Castle, this scale model shows the troops, vehicles and trains as they were during the approach of D-Day in 1944.

What the Model Railway Taught us about the Village in World War Two

Peter Goss lives in Yorkshire and has been a railway modeller for many years during which time he has earned a reputation for excellence that is well deserved. In 2005 he chose Rowland's Castle as a project, the result of which many of us were fortunate to see when in October 2009 he brought the finished model exhibition here to the village.

The Rowland's Castle Heritage Centre is now the proud owner of the award-winning model railway. The model depicts The Green and Railway Station and yard at Rowland's Castle in 1944 during the preparations for the Normandy D-Day Landings. The area was one of the major troop assembly and training points in southern England.

In his own notes Peter explains his need to make a new model, his next project, a combination of his two passions, railways and World War Two military. The link was, maybe, D-Day 1944 and, as most concentrated military movements then occurred in the south, it led him here. With lots of help from his wife Julie they 'assaulted the Internet' and made a list of books and locations. Then came, *only one thing to do now, get in the car and take a trip down south to have a look at these places and get to grips with it*. They tracked the line from Haslemere to Portsmouth, visiting stations along the route and many, many libraries and museums. They found a detailed map showing a detraining station in area X camp A1 and it was us. They had visited the village during their first survey and decided then that Rowland's Castle was going to be the model.

This small booklet is an attempt to bring together some of the memories, anecdotal comments and general observations made by visitors to the exhibition, not only here but nationwide. It is all backed by samples of the good solid research made by Peter when making the model. Hopefully, as the title suggests, the model has shown us things previously not known, or just plain unnoticed about the village.

Starting at the station itself, the first thing Peter noticed was that the old trestle footbridge depicted in the earliest photographs, circa 1915, differed from the one shown in photographs from the time he wanted to build into the model. As advertised the lay-out depicts the railway and the village in 1944, a time when few photographs were taken but nonetheless we have ones from either side of 1939-45. This hadn't been noticed before; what was known was that the concrete base remained on each platform long after the foot bridge was replaced by the standard concrete structure in use today. These bases were themselves an addition to that trestle bridge to strengthen it. Until they were removed, they used to severely restrict the width of the platform; they did make a very handy seat, leaving just enough room for the stations' porters to pass when using the large handcart. A villager remembers using this handcart to help a friend move house, only a few possessions alas, in the early 1960s. His friend's father was a railwayman so there was no problem with the borrow.

Going back to concrete, there was a large block of it at the end of the longest siding in the goods yard (it's on the model). Peter believes that this was of wartime origin, it being a good way of controlling wagons during shunting operations in the black out. These shunting operations would of course been of military goods and took place at night for security reasons. Such was the fear of being spotted that the steam engines involved had 'blackout curtains' fitted around the driver's cabin so the glare from the firebox was not seen from above.

However, a memory recalls that the bend in this siding was too tight for a steam engine so indeed wagons had to be shunted by hand. There was a sign at the bend, just outside the goods shed, warning drivers not to go beyond that point. The straight siding up to Courtlands Arch was used by the shunting engine so as not to obstruct the main line and therefore when the wagons entered that long siding they would have been running free and at speed (hence that special buffer). The memory goes on to relate that despite that sign, or maybe it led to the sign, an engine did pass the critical spot and could not return to the main line. Railway engineers laid a track

across the station forecourt for the locomotive to re-join the line on the siding to the south, marked on the map as taken out of use in 1936, so the event was indeed many years ago. The goods yard itself was last used in 1961.

Another incident concerns the first train to come through on the down line after the track was re-laid many years ago. Even in those days the track was re-laid, banked over in fact, to allow trains to go faster. The story goes that this first train took a segment out of the down side canopy. Whether true or not, there was a 'rounded' piece missing from the edge of this canopy into which the roof of the electric trains fitted rather nicely, until some more recent rebuilding and more track laying.

The model and the research behind it has also corrected some falsely held beliefs. It was always thought, especially amongst train spotting schoolboys, that the GWR locomotives never came this way because they were too heavy; maybe true - they were certainly too wide. The Castle class, for example, would not have cleared the platforms. Despite that fact, a Castle class did try; it may not have been a complete accident, but however it happened it had to be escorted through the stations at walking pace when it made the return journey.

Another erroneously held belief concerns the structure just off the end of the down platform. (Down by the way is for Portsmouth, up for Petersfield). It is a section post and not an air-raid shelter. It was for the defence of the area rather than just the railway line. Its purpose was to house soldiers (a section of ten men) and was part of a longer nationwide line. There are two smaller ones in the trees just off the road as you approach Comley Arch and another at Eastleigh crossroads. Peter points out that its position here is most likely taking advantage of the natural barrier made by the railway embankment. The structure is not there anymore, just a pile of broken concrete.

The platelayers hut was constructed of upright sleepers, a corrugated tin roof and a brick chimney. They must have been very cosy. It was there for

certain in the 1960s, a well-trodden path led down to it from the end of the platform. There was another, very near to the south but that too has disappeared. One still standing, but not in use and in a dilapidated condition, is at Knight's Hill near to Dean Lane End. These huts were replaced with standard concrete ones, like the footbridges were, but even those are now in ruins. One stands covered in ivy above the Stansted Court flats at the bottom of Bowes Hill.

The model also shows some towering signal posts at the station; they were as high as depicted, the one behind Finchdean Road being the highest, at least according to a railway man who had to climb it to replace the lamp. They could be seen from many parts of the village, giving a clear and visible indication that the train was coming, sometime before it could be heard. If you look you can still just about make out a white square painted on Courtlands Arch; this provided a background so the signal there could be seen by a train driver.

The diagram is Peter's working drawing and shows the main building, less the canopy, as viewed from the down platform. The station master's house is on the right and it continued to the rooms above. It was certainly big enough for a family of four and was lived in up till the 1960s. The booking hall is in the centre and within it was a waiting room, with a fireplace, and a ladies room. To the left is the porters' room, the gents toilet and the station masters office. He had a fireplace also, like the platelayers hut, all coal fired of course. As late as the 1950s there was a full staff of clerk, three porters, three signal men and the station master himself.

A known fact, confirmed by Peter's research, was that the station and its function was very successful, something that seems to have been forgotten. Villages like Horndean, Chalton and Compton, to give you an idea of the area, relied upon it for many goods. This is much as you might expect, but when the Meon valley villages come into the same category, you realise just what area we did cover; after all there was a line and stations along the length of that place. Similarly, why were race horses

delivered here when Chichester and even Lavant must have been closer to Goodwood?

Here follows a brief history of the early days of the railway as recorded by Peter, but generally known to other researchers also. It may not be entirely relevant but is worth mentioning. The line through the village was a speculative construction, a business venture if you like, with the aim of selling it, at a profit of course, to one of the major established companies. In this case the London and South Western (LSWR) or the London, Brighton and South Coast (LBSCR). Despite this, the government of the day was interested in a direct route to Portsmouth, for national security. The same government was also somewhat worried about breaching the Hilsa Lines, for much the same reason. The general public also wanted this shorter route. It must be stressed that this contractor's line was only the part from Godalming to Havant, some 32 miles; the rest was already built. Whatever the ins and outs the two railway companies mentioned showed little interest, until a third company, the South Eastern, threatened to take the line, forcing the LSWR to buy it. Peter concludes with the statement, This event has been over-dramatically described as the Battle of Havant; possibly the first person I have met who agrees with me.

The more you look at the model, the more you notice, and upon checking you find that the model is correct. However, the act of checking means you look and notice more.

The Railway Hotel (now the Robin Hood) has had many alterations over the years but most have been interior. It was a long time ago The Rowland's Castle Tavern but became the Railway (and many villagers still call it by that name) when a landlord, a Mr Blake I believe, purchased the franchise for sending goods, more likely only private parcels, by rail. Look around and you will see a Railway Inn or Hotel in many towns and villages. This of course dates the name change to after 1859 when the line through the village officially opened. It changed its name again to the Robin Hood some one hundred and ten years later.

A glance at the windows at the back of the Railway Inn shows it is at least three different buildings. The small house, No. 26b is nearer in style to No. 26c than it is to the pub and No. 28 matches 26c. The whole unit then is five maybe six buildings, not unusual of course but as mentioned, generally un-noticed. The current dining room, the restaurant that is, is known to have been added in or about 1908. Behind the two pillars at the front can be seen two engraved windows, once doors leading into the public bar. Legend has it that once a regular rode his motor-bike through that area. Once again it is Peter's excellent drawing we see here.

The parapet above the Fountain Inn advertising it as a Family and Commercial Hotel does not appear on photographs later than 1953. The new roof comes to the edge of the building so the parapet must have been demolished. Older photographs show it to be shorter, the words Fountain Inn being added when the original building was extended into the properties next door. This was probably no later than 1905. At the side of the building, in the narrow gap between the end on terrace, there are unexplained patches, a door and a window and above them a cornice. As said, the more you look.

Not on the model, but noticed when checking the Fountain, it was discovered on an old map that the terrace, Nos 36, 38 and 40 The Green was originally just two. That was in 1878; by 1900 there were the three we see today. The maps clearly show that a boundary fence of the Fountain was moved to accommodate this extension. The join in the brickwork can be seen, but it is nonetheless well done. At the time of the model, 1944, this terrace was known as 1, 2 and 3 Wyndham Villas. A villager who was a child there at the time can remember the Landlord of the Fountain banging on an old tin bath to celebrate Victory the following year. At the rear of the terrace is a high brick wall where their gardens meet the footpath. There is no gate onto the footpath, maybe a planning restriction from all those years ago.

The maps, of no merit for they are my own, attempt to show the changes in the area of the Fountain Inn and to the south. The many boundaries of the

houses in Elizabeth Terrace are not shown. The land to the top of the map in 1820 was open land, in that it had recently been enclosed for the new farming ways of the landlords of the day. By 1880 it was allotments and so it remained till the houses were built there (The Fairway). It is tempting to think that the solitary house on the 1820 sketch was the one lived in by the Rev. Slatterie, curate or pastor of the Chapel, but he only came to the village some ten years later. By 1940 the houses, Nos 58 and 60 had been built and are still known in the village as the Police House (No. 60).

Elizabeth Terrace is a wonder. It has been believed for many years that the red and white 'harmonic' front we all know is just that, a front. It was thought that this was done in about 1870 but an old photograph, but not as old as 1870 shows that to be wrong. A very simple look at the roof line tells us that the terrace is, once again, three different buildings. What the model showed we would have noticed ourselves if we had looked closer, or as professionally as Peter. The give-away, apart from the roof, is the position of the front doors. Nos 42 to 48 are one, 50 and 52 another and 54 and 56 the third. The last mentioned is also obviously somewhat larger.

It is 50 and 52 that are the wonder, or just a mystery. Look at the rear from the footpath. They are an early 19th Century industrial town house design here in the village. They can be seen in then-dozens from the train as you approach Fratton station, but what are they doing here?

An estate map of 1840, similar to the one shown, shows a house on this site but marked as a single dwelling. There is no scale on that map but the next building marked is labelled the Fountain Inn so it could be the same house. Not so obvious (but look at the back), is that the terrace the other side of the Police House (No. 60) is also of different styles. Nos 62 and 64 are of flint and 66 and 68 of brick. That 62 is bigger is shown on the 1878 map so possibly it always was (similarly No. 36 is shown as larger than 38 and 40). As said they are shown as a block on old maps but the change in materials is another mystery that perhaps has a simple explanation.

The houses opposite the Parish Hall have a similar mixture of materials and styles, mostly brick at the back and flint in the front.

So what of the Green itself? What could be better than to quote Peter:

In the summer of 1944 during the Second World War Rowland's Castle was used as just one of the detrainng stations for Commonwealth and Allied troops and their equipment arriving from other parts of the United Kingdom in preparation for D-Day. Rowland's Castle hosted both Canadian and British troops during this period.

Portsmouth and Southampton docks were used as the primary ports to launch the D-Day invasion, and as Rowland's Castle is located only 8 miles north of Portsmouth it was ideally situated to conceal troop movements, hiding them amongst the woods and forests in the area.

During this period the village green was covered in brick rubble brought up from Portsmouth and it was used as an ammunition dump and tank repair depot.

Also on the green, towards the arches end, were a pillbox and a water tank. There is no trace of these and very little mention of the pillbox at all. The water tank or dam is recorded as belonging to the National Fire Service and was for emergency use in that area, presumably by our own fire brigade - for such a service was here. An entry in the records of the Horndean fire brigade from March 1940 tells us that they sent their old Ford tender to us then. Peter states that both of these structures would have been built early on at the start of the war. In April of 1945 the Parish Council wrote to the NFS asking them to remove the static water tank, 'as soon as possible' so the tank was certainly there. The fire station was at the rear of No. 50 The Green, apparently in a purpose built hut. The Rural District Council suggested we erect a siren as early as 1940 but there is no record of the Parish Council doing this. However, memories suggest the siren was on a pole at the entrance to the hardware shop, the same entrance as is there now. There is of course no doubt that the sirens from Horndean and Havant would have been heard in the village, as they were when those

fire stations used them up to the 1960s. An apocryphal tale of our own relates that one of the Misses Stubbington rode through the village on a bicycle ringing a handbell to warn of approaching enemy aircraft. If that happened it must have soon been stopped for bell ringing, church bells in particular, were forbidden during the war being reserved for an actual invasion. (Churchill allowed them to ring to celebrate victory at El Alamein). Therefore it is likely that the firebell, mounted in the same spot as the siren, was also silenced and replaced by the siren itself. It is also likely that the Miss Stubbington actually used a rattle, of the sort popular at football matches; this was apparently a standard item issued by the government.

In the same year, 1940, the order to collect scrap iron (always referred to as iron railings) was made, and the Parish Council took it on with some enthusiasm, at first. By the end of July 9 tons 2 cwts had been collected and dispatched by rail. This collecting of scrap iron was compulsory but there were hitches. A second pile, estimated at 4 tons, remained against the Deerleap wall till the November of 1941. Despite the compulsory order mentioned above, and the Council's enthusiasm as recorded in minutes, they, the PC, only made a survey of iron railings in that November of 1941. In June 1942 they were maybe still dithering; they wrote in protest that the railings protecting the trees on the Green were included in the 'cull'. These trees celebrated the Silver Jubilee of 1935. It makes you wonder who outside the village knew about them. However iron railings were taken away, a pre-war photograph(s) suggest there were railings outside the Nook at the end of the Green and the ones around the village war memorial also went. Possibly the iron gates leading to Glen House also joined the heap.

This brings up a question, if iron railings why not the ones made at Finchdean ironworks? Samples of these are still quite common in the area, certainly along Durrants Road and at the very top of Woodberry Lane. On Whichers Gate Common there is still an iron kissing gate. The style is flat

uprights and round ties. By 1941 these railings would have been old, so maybe that is the reason why they were not taken.

Another apocryphal tale says that some aluminium from a Messerschmitt found its way onto the pile - it disappeared overnight. From memories of the time, mostly boys', those that took part in the collecting did so with gusto. One Battersea boy remembers going as far as Finchdean with a pram on a 'raid'.

On a similar theme, a factual account (no name alas) tells that as late as 1949 there were still remnants of the mass of military equipment from the D-Day preparations on the Green. The same account implies that these tanks and lorries had actually taken part in the invasion and returned. They were dispatched north by train.

We all know about the Battersea Boys that were evacuated here during the war and indeed some still return annually for a reunion. The same lad who went on the raid to Finchdean remembers getting his haircut in a house in Elizabeth terrace, and a blacksmith 'by a wall'. This was most likely a temporary forge opposite the Castle Inn. However, other young children were sent here from Portsmouth. These children did not usually stay for long but there were always some here. A lady who was only four years old herself remembers the house was always full of them, just a few years older than herself. She clearly remembers that the mothers went home, back to Portsmouth that is, during the day and that nothing would persuade them not to. Presumably some sort of train service was still running for non-military use or maybe they caught the hourly bus service, Nos 48 or 48a, that ran from the Fountain Inn via Horndean. The same lady relates that it is a mystery how her mother managed to feed all those extra children, but she also remembers a regular food parcel from relatives in Canada. This sort of gift was common.

Another evacuee came from Foxhill, by way of an Auntie, a complete stranger, at Petersfield. This was 1940 and he had never been in the countryside before. He came here to see more relatives and was here

during the build up to D-Day. He would bang on the side of a tank and the lid would open and out popped the head of a black Canadian; he had not seen coloured people before either. He was given chewing gum, but that was new to him also, so he swallowed it. He remembers the troops moving off and others replacing them.

When the village prepared to celebrate the 50th anniversary of D-Day the Parish Council made enquiries to try and establish just who was here at that time. They never received a complete response but with a lot of help from Peter we can make a list. The 3rd Division 185 Infantry Brigade, the 2nd Battalion Kings Own Shropshire Light Infantry, the 2nd Battalion Warwickshire Regiment, The Somerset Light Infantry, The Kings Own Scottish Borders, the Royal Artillery, the 3rd Tank Regiment and of course the Canadians. What is really sure is that the Green was a tank repair depot and that the tanks were British Churchills.

To quote more from Peter: 'In 1944 Rowland's Castle was chosen as one of the de-training stations and was known in military terms as "Area A, sub area X" and served 5 local transit camps. Each transit camp had 50 tents sub divided into villages of 10. Each tent held 10 men. From the railhead detraining station, convoys of lorries shuttled along designated roads carrying the men into the rural camps. What Peter is emphasizing here is that men and goods arriving at our station were not just for the village but towards the war effort and D-Day preparations for a large surrounding area.'

Peter continues: 'As the invasion drew nearer security measures turned residents into permit holders. A restriction shared with civilians living within the whole of a 10 mile deep coastal strip from Lands End to the Wash. In all by April 1944 the whole Southampton area had become one vast camp, ammunition dump and airfield. As final preparations for the assault were made the permit restriction turned into a coastal ban, and any persons who were not resident within the protected area were banned from entering or leaving the area after 1st April 1944. The ban lasted until 25th August 1944. The whole district was cut off from the rest of England.'

Checks were made at railway stations and on buses. Any persons not carrying an identity card was liable to arrest.’

As written earlier, tanks were on the Green but in Stansted Forest were the Canadians. They came into the village, and Finchdean, whenever they could to sample whatever social life we could provide, and they could contribute. All village shops, pubs and cafes can remember them although they were supposedly out of bounds. Rickards tearoom was popular - their favourite meal being sausage, egg and chips.

The Chapel on the Green can also remember providing teas and refreshments and the singing of the Canadians at services was welcomed and of a high standard. This leads in a way to another busting of a village myth. It was thought that the tattered Union Jack in the corner of the Chapel was presented by these grateful soldiers on their return after the invasion. The myth or legend being that it was the first one planted on the beach on D-Day. It was in fact presented by the War Commission, just as gratefully we should imagine. Sadly the flag has disappeared.

We have already mentioned the brick rubble from Portsmouth used on, or under the Green to provide a base for the tanks. Some of the paths through Stansted Forest have a definite solid feel to them and in places a brick base can be seen. However it is just as likely that these bricks came from many of the buildings erected in the forest and demolished soon after 1945; perhaps it is a bit of both. Certainly until recent times the foundations of these buildings in the forest, and alongside Woodberry Lane, were easily spotted. Also the trenches, dug as Peter says as protection against air attack, are slowly disappearing as they are naturally filled in by over 65 years of nature. Incidentally, the building of firm bases seems to be a lost art for concrete bases laid down during the war for searchlights, anti-aircraft guns and tank repair still exist after all that time. Look around and you will see them off Woodberry Lane, Teals Lane (Prospect Lane), the road to Emsworth and Manor Lodge Road.

Finally, in appreciation of Peter's hard work some notes of his own on the model itself.

Constructing the buildings could simplistically be divided into 12 stages. Before beginning it is useful to draw out every elevation of each building. Stage 1: It is useful to have a small A3 drawing board to hand and set square, together with drafting tape, fine nib disposable drawing pen, pencil, scalpel, Stanley knife, safety rule and A3 cutting mat... Stage 2: I use proprietary half round plastic strip for all gutters. Glued with Evostick directly under the first row of tiles onto the exposed mount board or onto a piece of plasti-card fascia. Corners must be mitred. Paint finishes are normally just Humbrol enamel using wet wash and dry brush techniques.

Military figures and vehicles are also sourced from war games suppliers. Most of the armoured vehicles are resin cast models and some of the plastic lorries have been converted from kits. Trees are finished with woodland scenic course turf stuck onto non-rubberized horsehair twigs on opened out steel cable lengths which have been sprayed with brown paint and painted over in a wash of greys and browns with a bit of green. All roads and hard surfaces are generally sand filtered onto pva and sealed and painted in household emulsions.

There are even more pages of detail and modifications made to train kits and research. All to get it right.

Photographs credit to Steve Flint *Railway Modeller Magazine*.



A War Department 2-8-0 Austerity locomotive heads a van train. The locomotives were based on a Stanier 2-8-0 design. In 1944 it should have been painted either khaki (1942 desert use) or later locomotives would have been military green (European theatre). The idea being that Austerity's were on loan to the railway company but owned by the Government. A number survive in preservation. The khaki livery was for when the locomotives were shipped to Africa for war work. But as the war in Africa did not last long attention was turned to Europe. The model, unfortunately, is in the later BR black.



An Austerity locomotive in khaki livery.



Canadian troops camped in Stansted Forest.



A slow Waterloo service leaves the station. The goods yard is on the right.



The static water tank and pill box on the green in front of the Fountain Inn and Railway Hotel.



A Southern 'N' class locomotive No. 1406, *Exmouth*, heads a troop train away from the station. The carriages are LNER teak type.



A Great Western Railway Hall class No. 4938, *Liddiddington Hall*, leads a train loaded with Churchill tanks. Troops are on the station and the section post is on the right.



Section posts were essentially hardened trench works. Constructed to bullet-proof standard, they were long and had a large number of embrasures. Shelves of wood or concrete were fitted below the embrasures in the principle direction.



A Southern Railway 'N' class engine No. 1829, *Eastleigh*, in war time black heads a mixed train of goods vans and carriages.



The Fountain Inn

Rowland's Castle Model Railway circa 1944

Peter Goss' modelling notes

I have based military vehicle markings on elements of the 11th Armoured Division with the black bull and yellow rectangle divisional symbol. The 11th landed in Normandy from 14 June 1944. Maybe not entirely via the Rowland's Castle de-training station but some units must have passed through it at some stage to get to the south coast embarkation docks. Cromwell tanks are entrained on war-flat railway wagons and three troops of Shermans and Priests will be parked on a brick rubble area on The Green.

Troop Train Head Codes

The number and letter code boards attached to locomotive fronts are troop and military train movement codes. Looking through reference books these come in different formats. The LNER and LMS appeared to use boards with white lettering on black background. Examples found include W/632, W/520, W388, W/524 and W/254. The codes could also be simply chalked on the front. Example W161. One of the picture booklets listed below from 1945 shows a loco front with a board about to be fitted by a railway worker showing black printed lettering on a white background. The codes themselves signify start and finish points for a working and would relate to master plan somewhere on the system.

The Blackout

To prevent enemy paratroopers or low flying enemy aircraft from identifying town and village locations on the ground during daylight, station signs were either removed or had their names painted out in dark grey paint. Road signs were generally removed and placed for safe keeping in council depots. Shop signs with place names on were removed. At night time all lights were either kept off or hidden from view to prevent enemy bombers locating likely bombing targets. White marks were painted on most static obstructions on roads, footpaths, kerbs and platform edges. Road vehicles had white marks added to bumpers, protrusions and lower edges to assist being seen. Buildings with frequently opening doors had light lobbies added inside or outside so that the two doors prevented light escaping. Train lighting was reduced to using low power blue bulbs and switched off during an air raid.

Locomotive Blackout

Drivers, firemen and guards were all supplied with tin hats. To assist with camouflaging the firebox glare on engines at night from enemy air activity, tarpaulin screens were fitted to open cabs. Cab side windows were either sheeted over in steel sheet (GW) or just painted black all over the window. Variations of this theme appear from different reference sources. The Great Western appear to use tarpaulin sheets fastened from inside the cab roof extending onto the tender top with large springs. Side curtains were fitted separately. The sheets were manufactured to fit relevant locomotives and had formal GW markings applied. Southern tender engines had a curtain and rail arrangement. Daytime photos of SR locomotives show the exposed rail at each side of the cab with the curtain pushed back into the tender front corners. LMS and LNER loco's had their tarpaulin sheets neatly folded over the cab roof during daytime, presumably fastened down at the sides so they didn't blow away.

Military Units Modelled on the Layout.

(It has since been revealed that the tanks on the green were possibly Churchill tanks and not Sherman tanks as modelled. This places the tank unit on the green belonging to an independent tank brigade of Churchills. Unit reference not known.)

Part of the British 4th Tank Brigade (Shermans) has arrived at Rowland's Castle from its billeted quarters around Worthing. The vehicles displayed belong to part of 'A' squadron, The 3rd County of London Yeomanry and are being waterproofed and, marshalled into landing craft packets ready for the eight mile drive down to the Gosport hards for loading onto landing craft.

In June 1944, the British 3rd Infantry Division were in camp around this area of Hampshire. The station was used as an infantry 'de-training' station with lorries transporting troops into surrounding camps. The infantry figures in camp and at the station depict the 1st King's Own Scottish Borderers, and are known to have camped in Denmead Forest nearby.

The artillery unit on the road by the bridge is a troop of US built M7 Priest self-propelled 105mm howitzer vehicles from the 7th Field Regiment, Royal Artillery and are known to have been at nearby Waterlooville on 1 June. The

British 3rd Division landed at Sword beach in Normandy on 6 June 1944.

There were several airfields in Hampshire, some only grass runways. One airfield to the north of Rowland's Castle, Hartford Bridge, later named Blackbushe, hosted RAF 322 squadron between 23 April and 20 June 1944. 322 squadron flew Spitfires, mark XIV to begin with, replaced with mark IX's later in the same period. I am adding two Spitfire mark IXs from 322 squadron to the layout at altitude. Squadron fuselage mark was VL.

Tanks on the green are mainly Milicast resin cast models from their Battlefield series. Priest SP guns by the bridge are Raventhorpe Miniatures 'ready to roll' cast resin models. Trucks are a mix of Milicast resin Fordson, Britannia metal Bedford QL troop carrying and converted Airfix RAF re-fuelling set Bedford QL. Bren gun carriers are Britannia metal cast. All military figures are mainly AB metal cast wargames figures, hand painted with a few Milicast resin ones. Spitfires mark IX and Churchill mark VII tanks are Airfix conversions.

Rowland's Castle Locomotive and Rolling Stock Schedule

LNER Troop Train

Bachmann GWR Hall in GW wartime black, firebox screens 4900 Class no. 4938 Liddington Hall (Bristol).

Hornby Southern class N15 King Arthur in SR wartime black, firebox screens no.788 Sir Urre of the Mount (Stewarts Lane)

Parkside CCCT kit LNER Stores van

2x Hornby LNER teak coaches Bk third,

3x Hornby LNER teak coaches, Third corridor. All coaches occupied with passengers.

Hornby NAAFI in green, converted from a Pullman car as the prototype was. Based on a first hand account of a troop train at Rowland's Castle by local author Alan Bell.

Coal Train

2x Hornby Southern class Q1 0-6-0 tender locos in wartime black.

No. 4 (Guildford) No. 12 (Eastleigh)

20x coal wagons Parkside kits, coaled, 3 link couplings. Some with coke extension boards

Bachman Queen Mary bogie brake van.

Government pooled coal train

Warflat Train

2 x Bachmann modified, repainted WD 2-8-0 Austerity in WD sand livery and re-numbered

2 x Brake third SR coaches, brass kits, passenger occupied

SR stores van, brass kit

Ramp wagon with jacks. Converted Parkside kit.

6x warflat wagons, Gramodel resin bodies, Diamond frame bogies, metal spoked wheels

6x Airfix converted Churchill tank loads, chained down.

Churchills supported the infantry divisions and war diary evidence places several independent tank brigades in the area, sailing from Gosport.

Independent tank brigades used Sherman and Churchill tanks.

Double 2BIL EMU

2x 2BIL (Bi Lavatory) electric multiple passenger units. Colin Ashby plastic kits, in original SR Maunsell Green with passengers. 2x Black Beetle motor bogies. These trains were the common stopping trains on the line from 1937. During the war EMU services were reduced by 30% rising to 60% in non business hours. The model coaches are rigid coupled together to prevent visual slack when starting off from the station.

Southern Troop Train

Hornby GWR Castle in mainline green with firebox screen

Hornby SR Schools in wartime black.

SR Stores CCT, plastic kit

SR equip van, proprietary SR dark brown van

4x Bachmann Maunsell SR coaches, with passengers. 2x Bk third, Comp corr, Third corr.

Goods Train

2x Bachmann Southern N Class locos, 1829 (Eastleigh) in black 1406 (Exmouth) in green

16x wagons, Parkside kits and some scratch built for the earlier SR types, Single cab brake van. Specialist plastic kit

A mix of box vans and covered open wagons. The ammunition wagons are open wagons covered with bauxite coloured sheets and placed central in the train. If travelling in a mixed train only 5

4COR EMU

4 car Portsmouth Direct electric multiple passenger unit scratchbuilt with assistance from Pheonix aluminium kit jigs to cut the sides in plasticard. Cast metal cab ends and metal underframe detail all on standard Bachmann Maunsell coach chassis. 2x Black Beetle motor bogies. Full passenger complement. Maunsall Green livery.

Engineers Train

2x Hornby Southern class M7 tank locos in wartime black.3

No. 56 (Guildford) and No. 54 (Fratton)

4x 3 plank open ballast wagons, kits

SR tools van, scratchbuilt. SR ballast brake, scratchbuilt. SR bogie rail scratchbuilt. SR crane and match truck scratchbuilt. SR sleeper wagon and bogie sleeper wagons, Scratchbuilt. SR long wheelbase brake. Scratchbuilt.

Pontoon Train

2x Hornby T9 locos in wartime black

9x open wagon Parkside kits with 9x Pete Goss resin pontoon float loads

5x 1 plank Parkside kits with resin universal kit carrier loads

LMS brake van. Parkside kit

Petrol tank train

OO Works Class 700 060 tender loco No. 693 (Basingstoke)

2x open trucks, modified proprietary

10 x modified Bachmann petrol tankers in wartime company livery

2x vans, modified proprietary

1x road van brake. Plastic kit

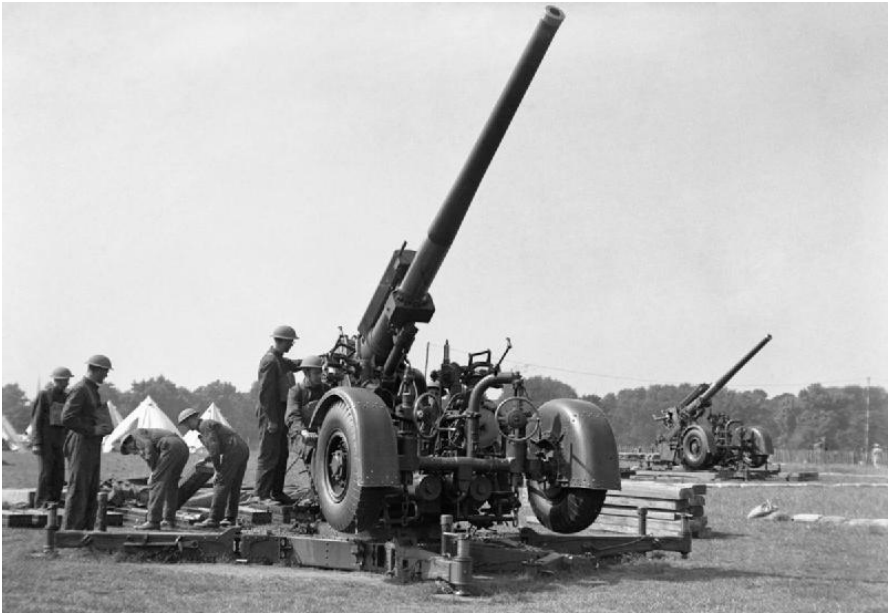
Petrol tankers were pooled by the government , repainted a grey colour and re-numbered but retaining original company ownership prefix letters.

Pick Up Goods

A mix of kit and scratchbuilt wagons with Peco Simplex couplings and a coupling conversion



Great Western Railway engine 4096, *Highclere Castle*, fitted with a typical blackout sheet.



Illustrations of Ack-Ack guns and a searchlight.





A half-track



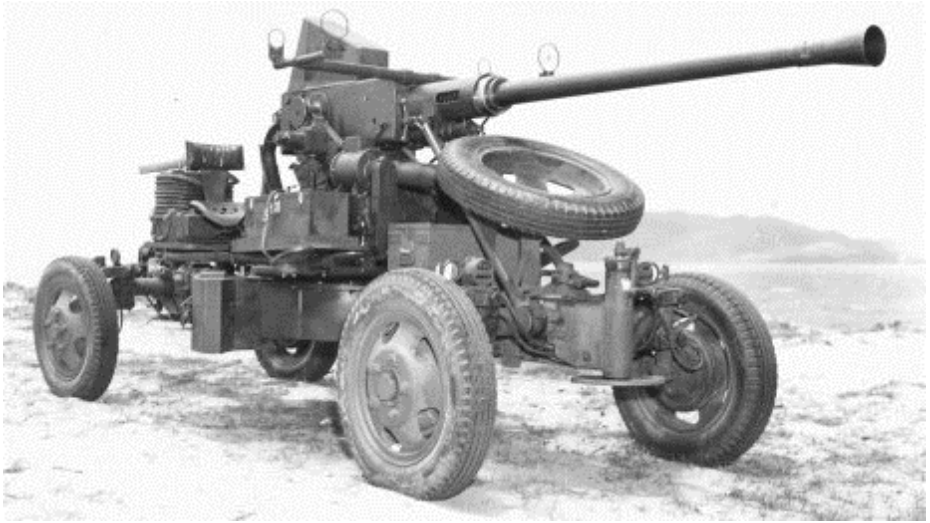
Bren-gun carrier



Crurchill tank



A troop carrier



A mobile Bofors gun



M7 Priest self-propelled gun



The Railway Hotel



The Green in more tranquil times.



The arches



The station



Waterloo to Portsmouth train



The signal box – the goods yard was behind.



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