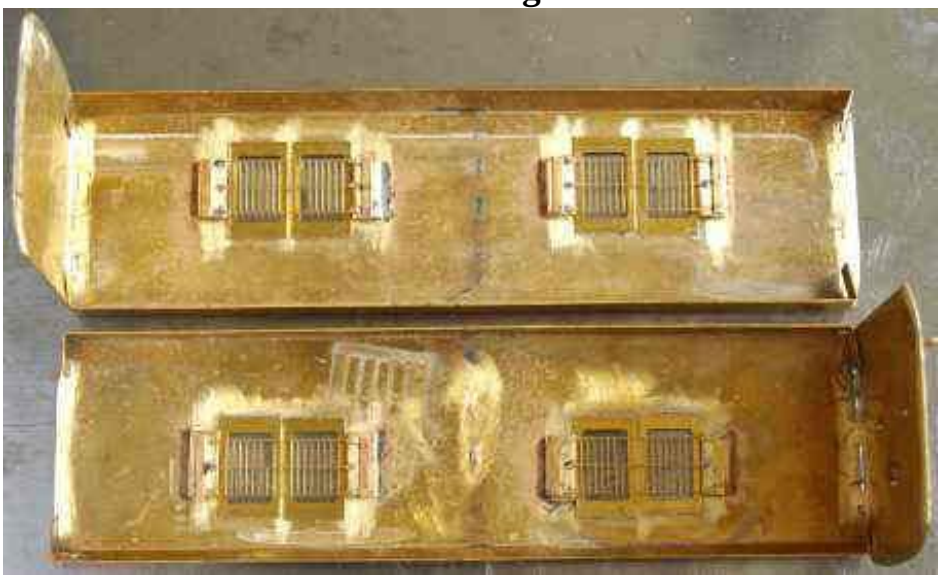
WR 4 Wheel Parcel Van, Diagram W1

From a Colin Waite bodyline kit with a scratch built underframe

April 2013. While recovering from a very nasty cold and not feeling much like doing anything I was idly tidying out a cupboard and came across a pair of part built van bodies. Eventually I discovered that they were from kits I had bought many years ago at different times from 'bring & buy' sales; two Colin Waite bodyline kits for a diagram W1, 4 wheel parcel van. They had been salted away for a c1900 train and then forgotten. I was spurred on then to do some research on the W1 and discovered that (like the Waite N1 horsebox), the GWR had built only one vehicle to this diagram and so the second will eventually be completed and sold on.

Part of a Train for the Armstrong to Haul.



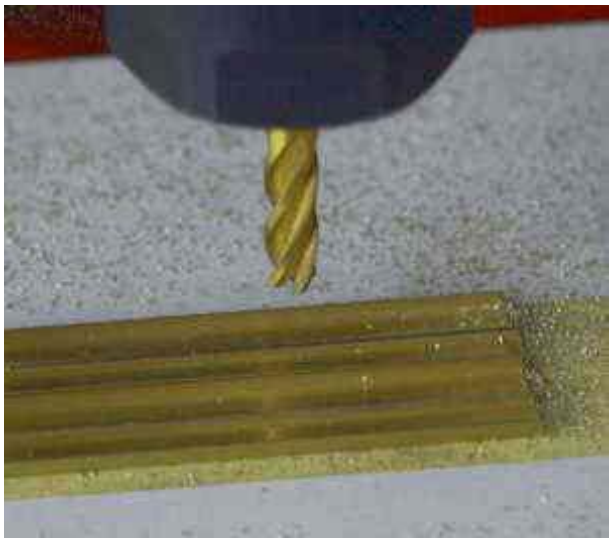
Having assembled the body long ago and consigned it to a cupboard until I 'got around tuite', when it was disinterred I decided that the standard of soldering was no longer good enough and I took them apart, cleaned up the parts and assembled them anew. Here are the sides and ends of one ready for the final fitting.

The window bars are from CPL and mounted on scrap brass spacers to leave room for the glazing to be slid in after painting. The original bars were incorrect for this type of vehicle.

Here is the rebuilt body cleaned up and ready for an underframe and roof. Considering that this kit goes back to the eighties, the standard of etching is superb, which means that the drafting must have been of a very standard.

The Underframe

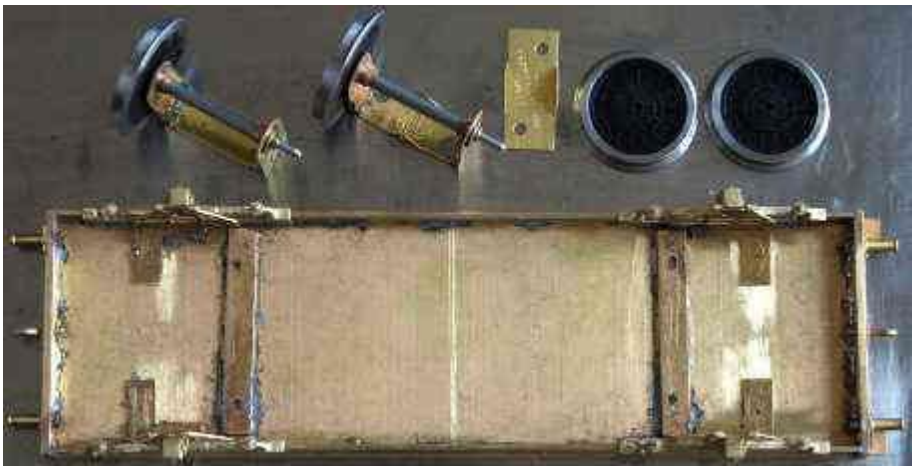
The underframe had to be scratch built, though I hesitate to use the term since many of the parts are bought in and not made by me.



The solebars on early vehicles were made from bulb section beams so, the milling machine came in handy for removing a good portion of one of the legs of the ‘U’ beam used to represent 9" channel. The picture shews two pairs of solebars being milled; I have two bodies so need two underframes.

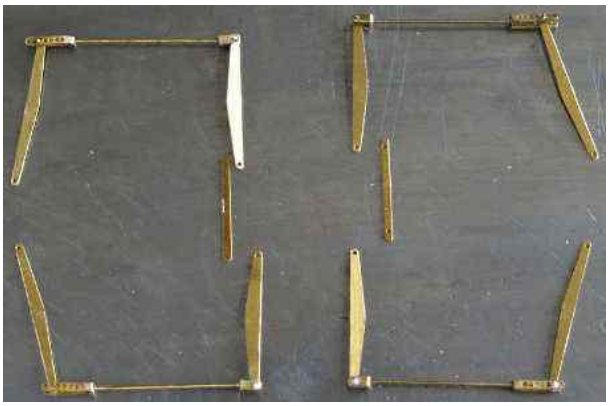
The buffer beams were soldered together, the ends shaped and then drilled for buffers and coupling hook, which was soldered in solid after cleaning up and ensuring that the couplings would easily fit later.

The parts for the chassis were then assembled on the steel plate in a magnet jig and soldered up at the corners. This made for a potentially very flimsy unit so a floor of thin brass was soldered on, which solved the problem and provided a surface on which to mount all the underframe gear.



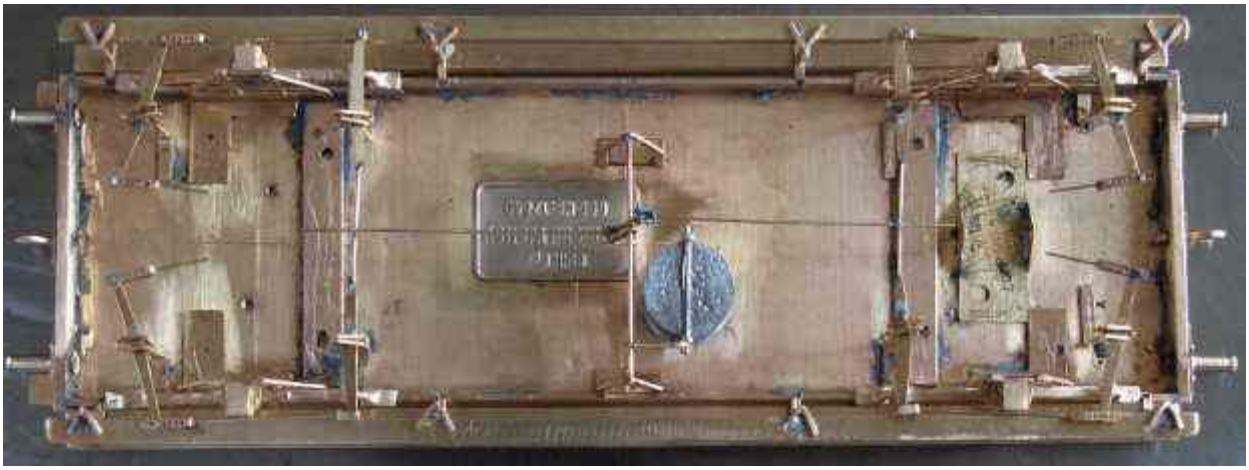
I wanted the body to be removable so two pieces of brass were soldered into the base of the floor and drilled out 10BA clearance. Two more pieces, long enough to fit the full width of the body, were marked up through the holes, drilled and tapped 10BA. I used the parts then to clamp the body to the floor ensuring that both parts were properly lined up, the inside cross members were soldered to the turn under on the sides. They are deliberately off centre so that the body can only go on one way.

A set of spare W irons from a Slater's Cleminson underframe were suitably modified and soldered in behind the CPL long J hanger springs. These can better be seen in the next two pictures. The axle box is soldered to the W iron. The integral, sprung buffers were liberated from a Slater's Dean clerestory kit lurking in the cupboard; I shall have to remember to buy a new set for it.

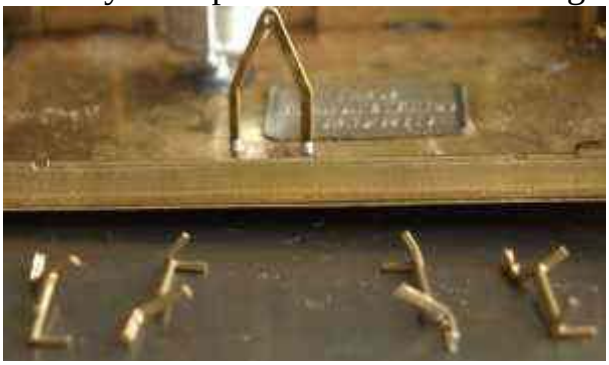


The Brakes

These vehicles I believe had outside operating clasp brakes and for these I used parts from an IKB etched sheet, still available from the Broad Gauge Society item No: S7100. The parts go together easily with 0.5mm wire 'hinges' and fit through the etched, fold-over, brake shoes. I had to fabricate the legs for the shoes to hang them at the right distance from the floor, (IKB underframes have integral parts to which they fit) which was a bit of a fiddle but worth it.

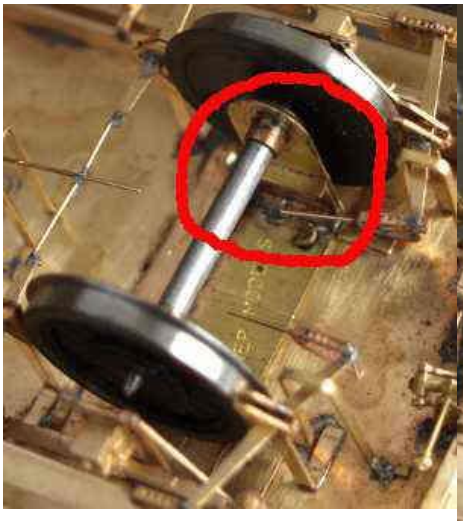


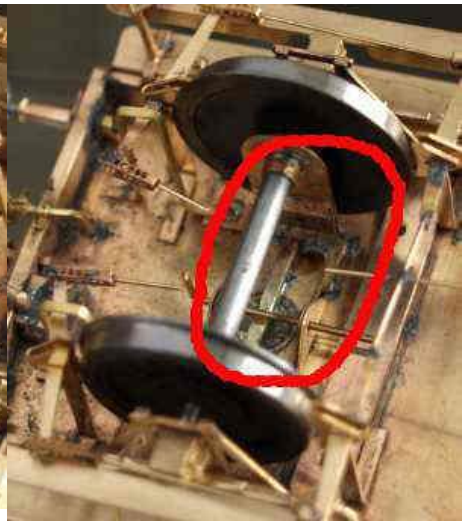
The rodding was then fitted so that the wheels could be removed. The compensation units are from WEP but I have heavily modified them (shewn later) so that they can be removed. One set is held in by its pivot wire and the other by a couple of 10BA bolts through the floor.



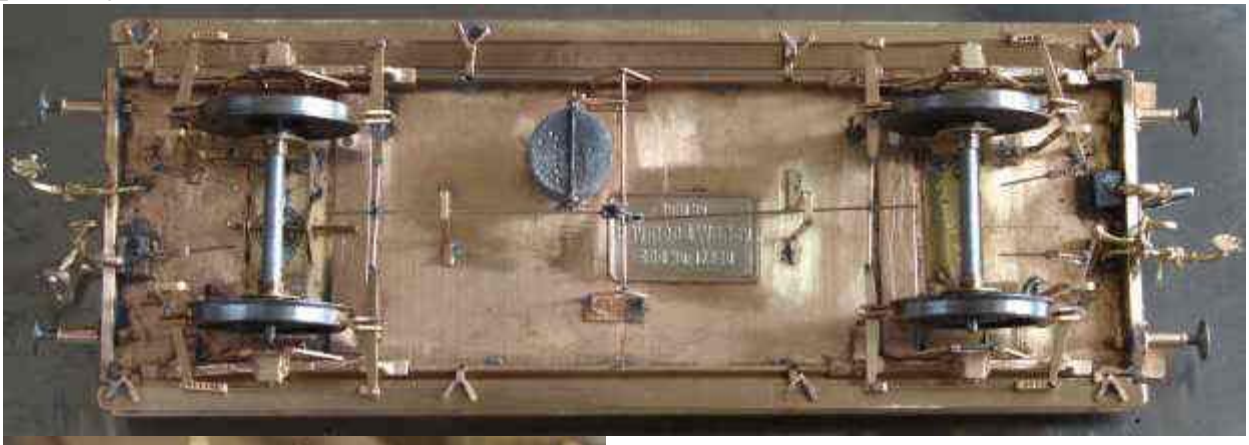
The step board supports are from Slater's and it was necessary to file away a small portion of the lower bulb section to get them to seat properly and shorten the tops slightly. The lower step boards were milled to size from L section and all the edges rounded off.

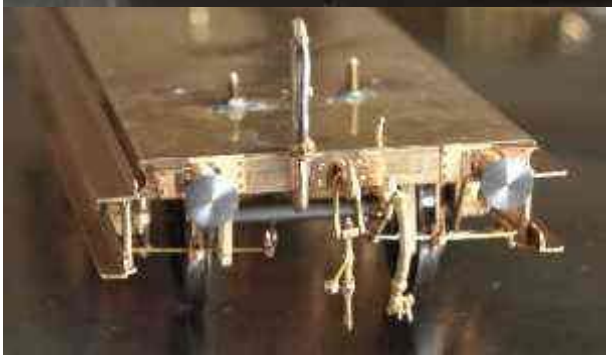
The vacuum cylinder is from Cavalier; the Vees from the IKB sheet. The safety loops were made up from scrap etch.



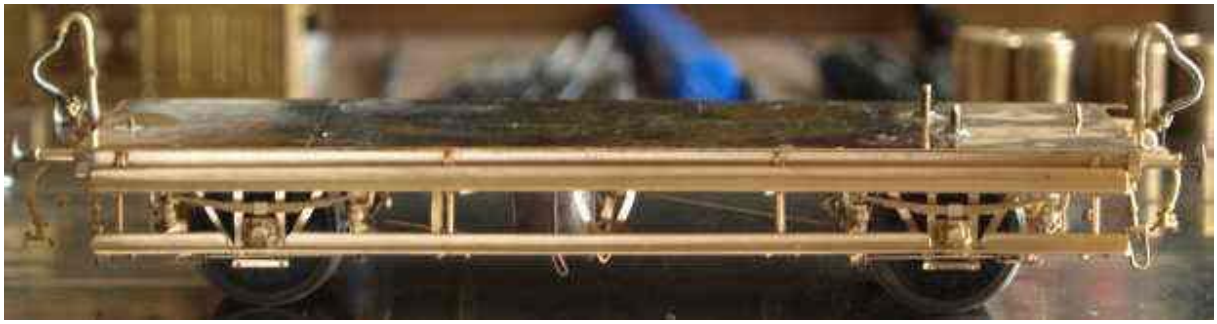


The WEP compensation units were modified to make them more rigid and removable. The rocking unit, on the left, was strengthened to ensure both lateral and vertical rigidity. The 'fixed' unit was modified to keep the verticals rigid while the horizontal plane is kept in place by the 10BA bolts that run in nuts soldered inside the floor.





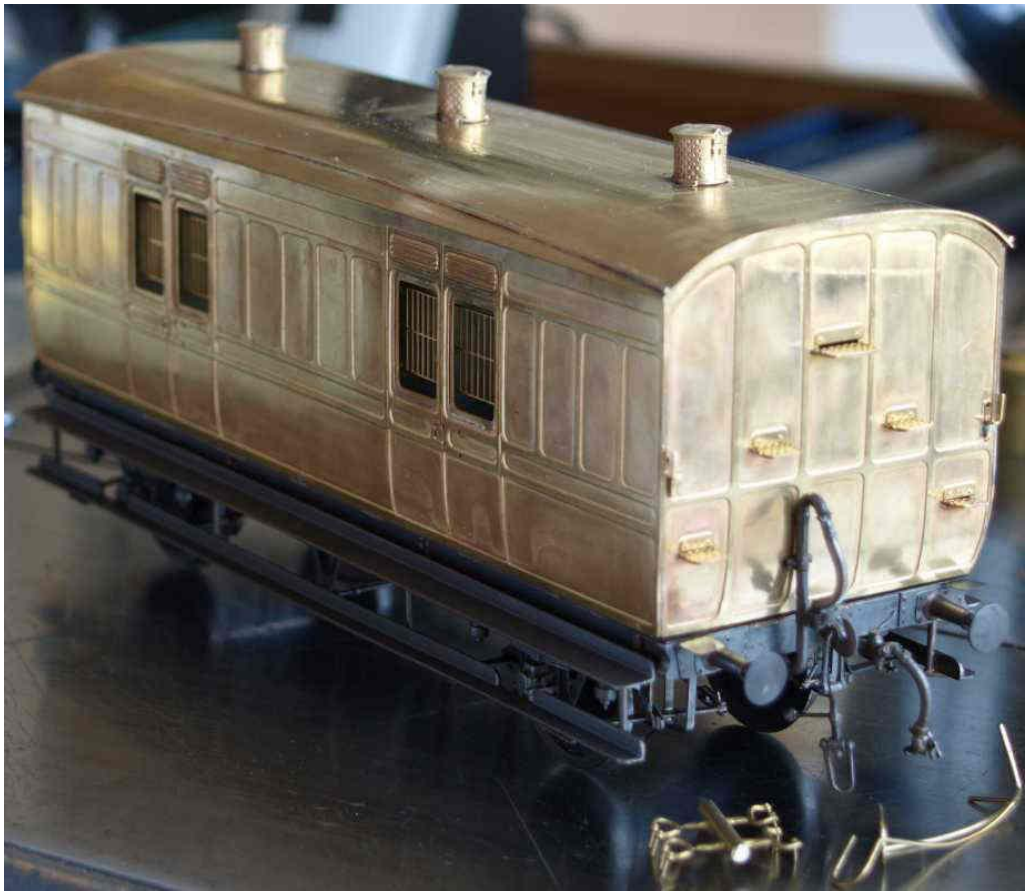
A thorough clean in the ultrasonic bath, followed by a dunking in Viakal and another session in the ultrasonic cleaned the whole thing up nicely.



Here are three pictures of the completed underframe ready for the body to be fitted. I decided that a frontline vehicle would have had through steam pipes fairly early on but the oil lamps will remain.

There remains now only the roof to complete, which awaits suitable oil lamp fittings from the BGS, lamp irons and the end handrails then it can go to the paint shop. Altogether a most satisfactory build so far and helped get rid of the dregs of the cold.

Now complete with almost all fittings, it remains to fit the handrails, door handles and grab irons when it comes back from Dennis' paint shop.
Returned from Dennis's paint shop it looks the part, except for the too clean roof, which I will get Ian Hopkins to tone down for me and paint the handrails black too.



One of the steam heat pipes had become bent in transit and while straightening it, it broke off!

To get round it I carefully filed the parts where they should meet flat, drilled them out 0.5mm and fitted them together with some wire super glued in the hole, we shall see how effective that was over time.

All that was left to do was fit the glazing, door handles, commode handles, buffers, couplings and step handrails. I am pleased with the result. It will go together with the V5, N1 Horsebox, Scorpion carrying a horse carriage and, a yet to be built passenger vehicle to make up a special train hired by a wealthy man to take his family on holiday.