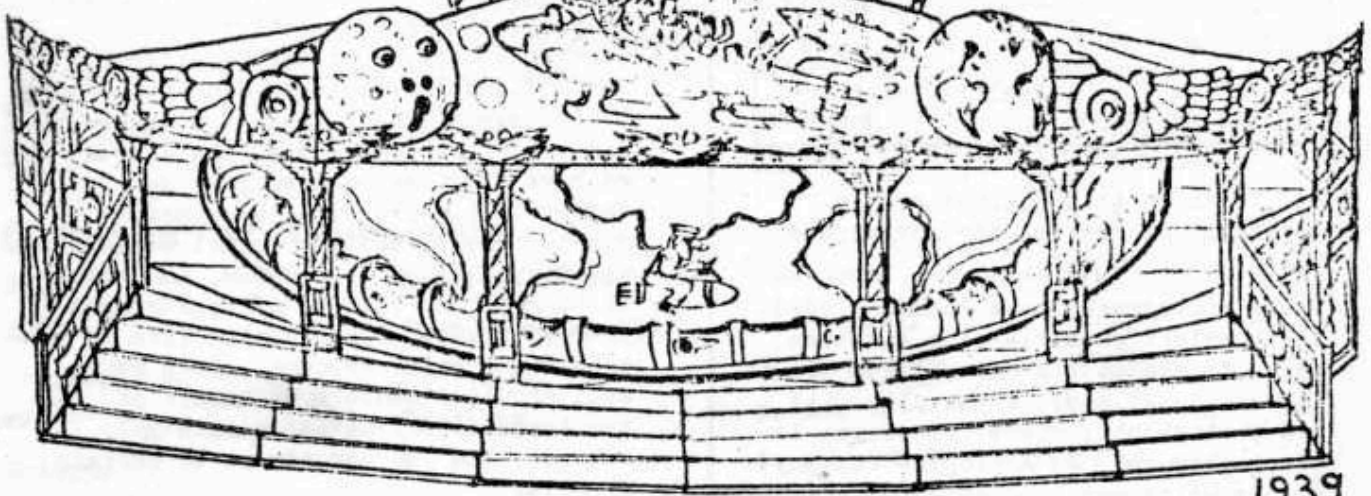
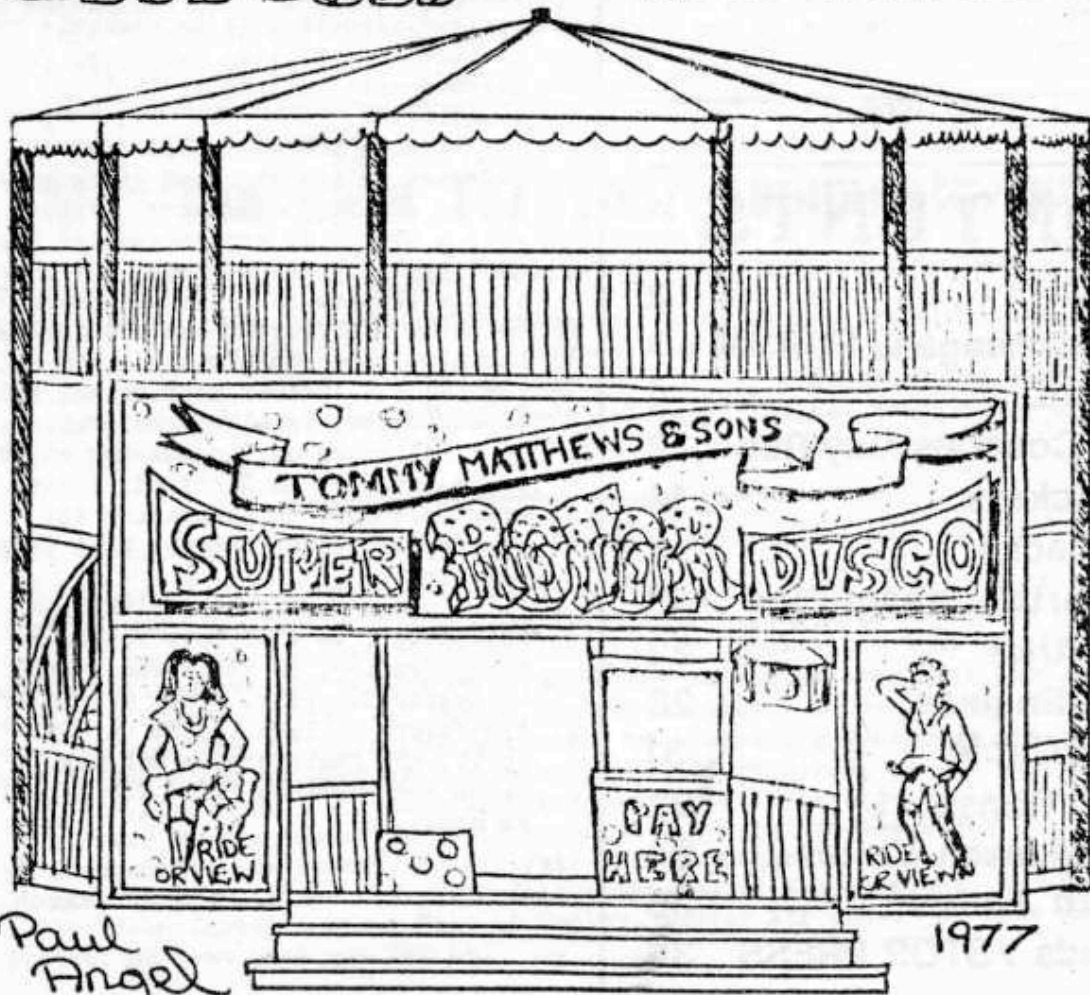


THE F.A.G.B PRESENTS
MOONROCKET



CENTURY of TOBACCO



The Fairground Association of Great Britain

NEWSLETTER

Volume 1

No. 3

Edited by Michael A. Smith

All items in this journal remain copyright of contributor and/or the F.A.G.B.

Where photographs have been included the greatest possible care has been taken to credit them correctly; this is not always easy, especially with old photographs, where the origin is often obscure. We apologise for any errors which may have appeared.

APRIL 1978

Please address all correspondence to:

Flat 2,
28 Buxton Old Road,
Disley,
Cheshire,
SK12 2BB.

Telephone: Disley (066 32) 4925.

• CONTENTS •

Editorial	2
Machine changes / FORUM	3
Gallopers	4
Border Counties May Run	12
Moonrockets	14
Switchbacks	16
Holdsworth's Steam Pigs	21
Noah's Arks	22
Fowler Engines	28
A Fiery Circle	31
Crows' Transport	32
Jack Wilkinson Writes...	34
Northern Notes	35
Small ads / STOP PRESS	36

EDITORIAL

Well, here we are again, with the 3rd edition of "Century of Toppers". Much has happened since I wrote my last editorial: the most important event being the meeting at the Birmingham and Midland Institute in January. It is, surprisingly, only two months since that memorable day, and already we have over one hundred paid up members! I would like to extend my own personal gratitude to all those who travelled to Birmingham, and helped to get the F.A.G.B. off the ground in real style. I would also like to extend a special welcome to our several showland members on behalf of the Association; we appreciate your support, and you can always be certain of ours.

You will probably have already noticed a further increase in the number of pages this time! This is due to the wonderful response which we have had to our request for articles - please keep it up. I feel, though, that this is probably the maximum size it will be possible to produce for the time being, so future improvements must be to quality, not quantity.

I hope you will also find an increase in the standard of reproduction of the photographs. There were a number of criticisms of the quality in the last issue, but I hope this will have been largely overcome, by using a different method. There has also been some "tidying up" in the layout, but further criticism, if constructive, is always helpful.

Following our appeal for an area representative in Scotland, I have great pleasure in announcing the appointment of Mr Stewart Thom to the position.

By the time you receive this newsletter, we will have held our first "rally", on Hampstead Heath, on Easter Saturday. Ones planned for the future include Ludlow on 29th April, and Knutsford on 6th May. Watch the "World's Fair" for details as usual.

Michael A. Smith
March '78

MACHINE CHANGES

New Machines -

Meteorites (Round Ups)	John Murphy	Leisure Sales	11/77
	A. Price	Wards	1/78
	W. Roberts	Codoxton Eng. Co.	2/78
	C.P. Evans, Porthcawl	Ditto	Spring 78
	T.H.F., Rhyl	Ditto	Spring 78
Paratrooper	L. Bishton	Bishtons	Spring 78
Twist	Traylens	Church (?)	1977/8

Changes of Ownership -

Ride	Previous owner	New owner	Date
Ark	Goss, Clacton Pier	E. Percival	1/78
Chairoplanes	M. Taylor	R. Richards	1977/8
Twist (Edwin Hall type)	Traylens	F. Cox	1/78
Octopus	E. Percival	C. Bishton	1/78
Calypso	Goss, Clacton Pier	H. Manning, Wyboston	1977

An error in the last issue: M. Waddingtons waltzer came from Carters at Saltburn, not Seaburn.

The Easyrider ark purchased last year by Lord Bros. (Mablethorpe) has been resold, but it is not yet known whom to.

In newsletter no. 1 a new Twist, belonging to W. Davis, was mentioned. I am now told that Mr. Davis built this machine himself, and it was sold March, 1978, to a new owner in Scotland.

FORUM : The page for your comments/queries

Mr. M.J. Jones, of 39 Clifton Street, Norwich, NR2 4NE, asks:

Could anyone supply me with information on the rides and transport attending Tyldesley and Astley fairs (Lancashire) between 1946 and 1958, especially the last Tyldesley Ox Roasting, 1956? I would gladly pay for any photographs of such rides and transport, especially Silcock Bros. Foden showman's diesel tractor, or any of Silcocks' equipment.

Mr. Roy A. Cave, of 39 Little Green Lane, Farnham, Surrey, writes:

I am pleased to be a recent new member of the Association, and wish to make it known that we operate a hot dog and candy floss trailer, as well as a side stall sometimes. I have fixed a name plate on our trailer, indicating that we are members of the Association. We are not Guild members, but sometimes open with them. We open mostly in Sussex, Surrey and Hants., and occasionally in Berkshire. We would be pleased to know any fellow member who might be visiting anywhere we are open.

Our trailer could be used as a meeting point, if required, at any proposed gathering, if we were open at the time. Any member could easily locate our trailer, which is painted orange and white, with our name displayed on the sides.

For information, we attend the big fair on Southampton Common each holiday; we shall also be open at the following fairs: Chichester Air Festival, Horsham Hist- orics rally, John Carter's Steam Fair at Henley, Booker Air show. We have many other places, so just look out for us!

GALLOPERS PROJECT

Part Two:

Firstly, I would like to thank all of you have written to me on the subject of Gallopers. With your help I have been able to make several amendments to the details published in our last issue. Before going on to cover some of the sets on permanent sites I would like to mention some of these corrections, and also give you any up-to-date news on Gallopers.

Of the sets for sale mentioned last time, I believe both Jacksons and Collins sets to still be unsold. I am told that Collins were asking no less than £60,000 (yes, the comma is in the right place!) for their Savage set at Alton Towers.

Sets to come on the market recently include Nelson Smith's, and Pat O'Neill's. O'Neill's set was at Battersea for several years, and was used a few seasons ago at the Kursaal Park, Southend. It has been in store for the last 18 months.

Stories I have heard of Soreetons acquiring the set of Gallopers from the Wonderland, Cleethorpes, are not true. I visited the site recently, and the set is still there; I was told there are no plans to sell in the near future. A dummy organ has recently been constructed, and installed in the centre.

Queries ???

What happened to the ex-Alf Peters set, formerly housed at Eutlins, Bognor Regis?

What happened to the set from Maldon, Essex, that was sold in very poor condition to someone in the Kent area, c.1963?

Does anyone know anything about any sets owned since the War by Barlows, Lincs?

Travelling Machines - additional information

G4 J. Downs

An alternative history to the one given has come to light. No doubt parts of the Penfold set were used, but the set bears a strong resemblance to the one owned by Cushi Manning. This set had a centre engine placed "end on", switchback style. It also had the peacocks that are now on Down's set. I think that this ride went to George Beach, then Sammy Mayne. The 87 key Gavioli came from a Tunnel Railway owned by Bert Ayers. This was previously owned by Whites, the organ being taken from one of their Bioscope shows before being placed in the Railway.

G10 Pelham Brothers

The three-abreast was acquired from James Harris in 1938. The original steam drive was replaced by electric in 1943. The original mounts consisted of horses and peacocks, the latter being replaced by more horses 1956/7.

G11 Pettigrove Brothers

This has been owned by the family since new. Apparently the centre engine has had a fire in the box in recent years, although has not been used to power the ride. As regards the horses; the outer row are by Orton & Spooner, and one horse still bears their inscription under many coats of paint. The inner horses are not typical of any English carver, so may well be of German origin, as previously stated.

G13 Nelson Smith

Bill Oswald writes:

The centre engine is Savage 6 no. 573, built in 1893 for Murphy & Hoadley's four abreast centaurs. This machine later passed to Walker Hoadley, then to Wattie Wilmot, then Michael McArdle, in whose ownership I photographed the set in 1957, at Portobello. The centre engine was then still in the machine,

although it was electrically driven. The name "GEN" was painted on the boiler. The machine was later broken up in the Midlands (presumably at this time the engine was transferred to the set now owned by Nelson Smith. The organ engine fitted was a Savage 3 no. 579, and the original works order no. 208.

G16 J. Wilmot

Bill Oswald writes:

This was old John Wilmot's first machine. It was built in 1885 by Savages, with 5½ centre engine no. 335 (works order 1338). This was built as a platformless swing out set of Dobbies, which had top motion for the horse legs (Reynolds & King idea). John Wilmot had the machine converted to top motion, and platforms were fitted, later on. The centre drum was very elaborately carved.

John Wilmot presented this machine to his son Wattie on the occasion of his marriage; it is still travelled by the Wilmot family, though the present generation have tried to modernise it with almost disastrous results.

The centre engine of this machine is now owned by Dr John Middlemass, of Godmanchester, and it was the star at the Savage exhibition held at King's Lynn a couple of years ago.

3-ABREASTS on PERMANENT SITES: Eastern England



This fine set started its life as a set of jobbies, being later converted to crank action. Since its acquisition by Crows in the early sixties, it has slowly been rebuilt, and it is probably this work which has led to some confusion as to its origins. For instance, there are those who claim it is a cut down 4-abreast; in fact the swifts were lengthened by Mr. Crow, one of the reasons being to keep those waiting to ride dry when the weather was bad.

Unfortunately, I do not have a detailed history of the ride, but some of its previous owners included Thompsons, Danters, Hammonds, and Stokes & Cowie. The fine rounding boards are, surprisingly, only fibreglass replicas! The originals were acquired from Potton Bros. (Great Yarmouth), along with an equally fine set of Anderson carved horses. The horses have also been copied, and are now in storage, for safe keeping. Mr Crow tells me that he wants to see them kept, and if they were in regular use would not stand up to the rigorous seaside conditions well, a point underlined by the sorry state of many a seaside lot.

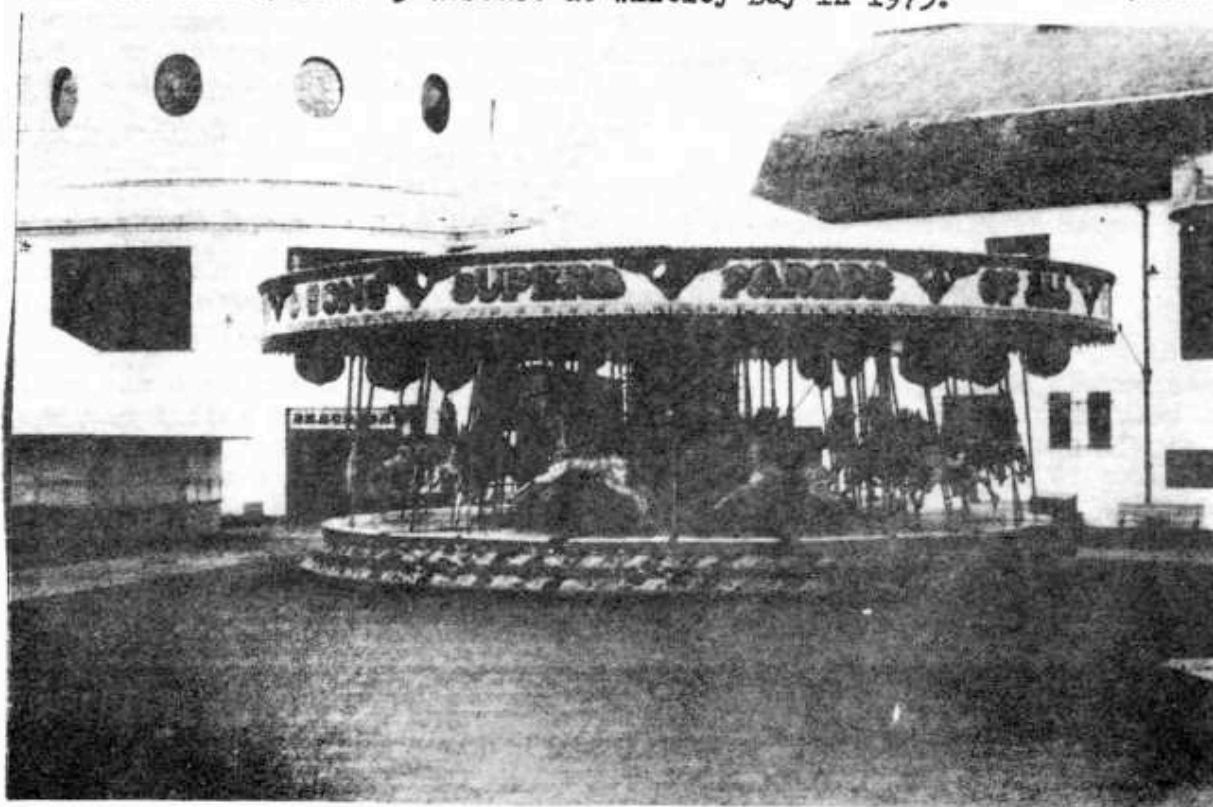
The lively little 61 key Verbeeck organ was purchased a few years ago from Whites of Glasgow. It was restored in 1975 by Tony Cragg. As only part of one book of music has survived (this was the last book played before it was packed away, and was left on the key frame), all new books have been purchased, by both Chiappa and Prinsen.

If I call this a made up set then I shall probably be in trouble again, however I do not know its origins, and I am told it has bits of several sets in it. It does bear a strong resemblance to a set travelled in the Midlands in the mid 60's by Pat Collins - this may give someone a clue to its true origins? Horses are by Savages.

This set was one of the few built by Howcrofts of West Hartlepool, and is probably the only set surviving. It was delivered new to Hollands, and has since been owned

James A. Crow & Sons' 3-abreast at Whitley Bay in 1975.

(M.A. Smith



by Silcocks, passing to Lowes, at Seaton, in the late 60's. The Seaton Carew park was taken over by Fairworld Ltd. about eighteen months ago, and the Gallopers have received an overhaul as part of their "tidy-up". The fine set of horses were carved by Andersons of Bristol.

G20 George Warrington Flamingo Park Walker 1924

An interesting lot, being the last set built by Walkers, in 1924. They were delivered new to Redheads (Salisbury), but never travelled by them. The set was returned to Tewkesbury, and then sold to Hibble & Mellors, who were the first to travel the ride. A string of owners included Bretts, Rutlins (the set was at their Filey Camp for some time), A. Corrigan at Scalby Mills, and finally Warringtons. The original 87 key Gavioli organ was still in the ride when it went to Rutlins, and this was rescued from Filey by Zeke Myers, who has since restored it.

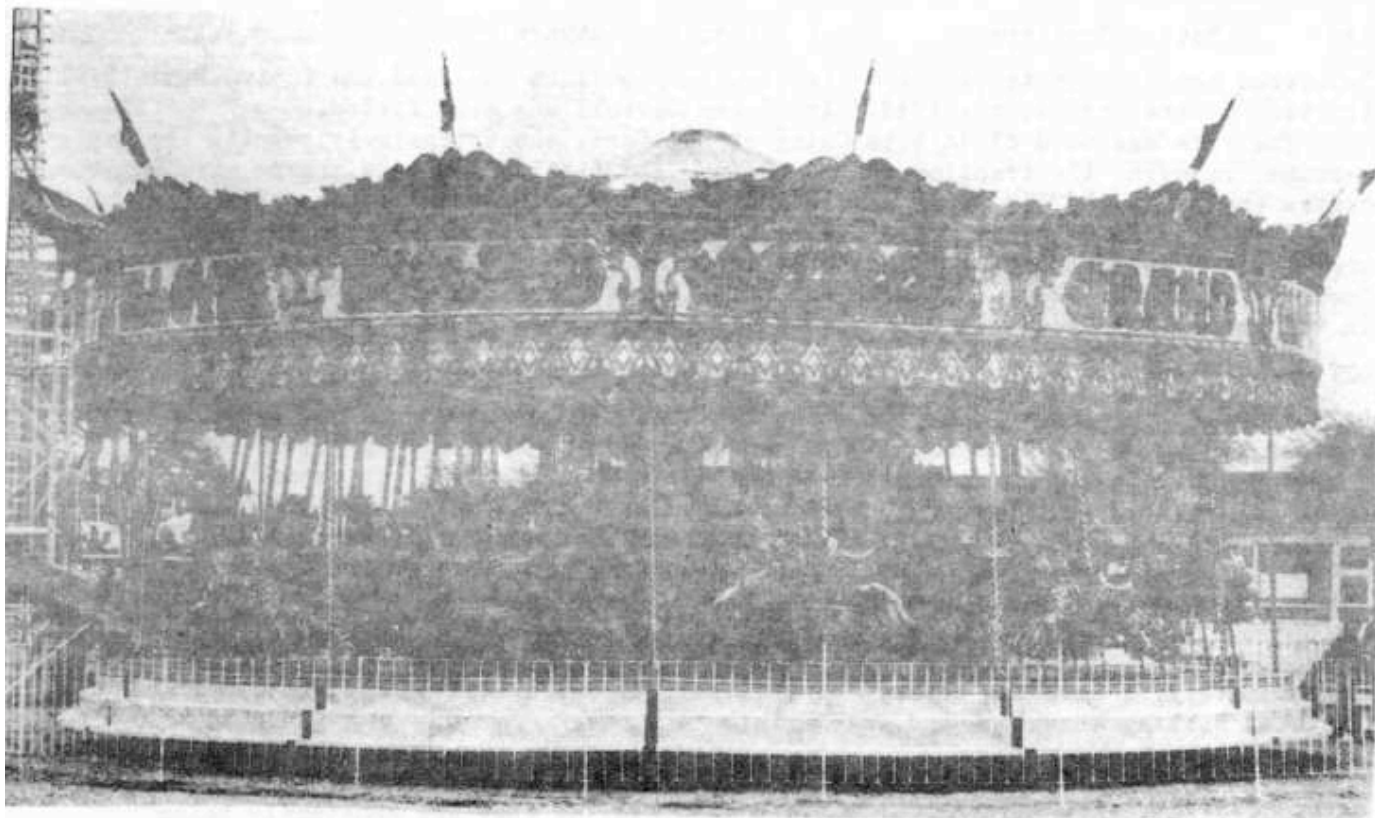
G21 Mrs. Fellecey Cleethorpes ?

Whatever else it is, it certainly isn't a made up set, as apart from parts being replaced, it is still fairly original. The original centre truck stands in the centre, with its steel-tyred wooden wheels. There are no clues to its origin though as there are no cast hub caps bearing the makers name, etc. It certainly would be interesting to unearth its history though.

The rather strange rounders were built by local joiners to match the set fitted to another machine owned by the same family, at Mablethorpe. The one-, two-, three-, and occasional four-legged horses appear to be the remains of a set carved possibly by Charlie Spooner, but again there are no inscriptions or initials to be found. A few of the outside horses have been replaced by fibreglass mounts, a few of which are similar to the originals, a few being Anderson-style. Two sections have been removed, and replaced by chariots, also built by local joiners, I believe. This winter a mock up organ has been built and installed to replace the original 87 key Gavioli, acquired by Screetons.

G. Warrington's 3-abreast at Flamingo Park Zoo.

(M. Slater



G22 Gray Brothers Mablethorpe Savage ?

This set was travelled by Grays prior to it coming to rest here. The original 87 key Gavioli was swapped with Dan Shorey for a small Bruder Sohne organ. A second Bruder organ case forms the paybox! Extensive rebuilding has resulted in the loss of most of the original machine; the horses, roundings, "carvings", etc. now being all fibreglass.

G23 Seaton & Smith Mablethorpe Walker ?

Mablethorpe is one of the few seaside resorts able to boast two sets of gallopers now! The set owned by Seaton & Smith are a very small lot, built up inside a large building, not far from the sea front. I was told that this is the Walker machine delivered new to Smith & Warren at the turn of the century. It laid in store at Boston for many years before being acquired and built up here. Apart from the loss of the roundings (see G21) it is a tidy little lot, with Savage no. 5 centre engine (no 692) and an 87 key Gavioli organ in the centre. This engine was delivered new to Holmes in 1897, but what happened to it in the intervening period I do not know. There is also an excellent set of mounts - a mixture of small horses and cockerels.

On comparison, it bears little resemblance to Smith & Warrens set, but is identical to a set owned by Johnny King c.1953 (NOT the set now owned by J. Carter).

G24 Botton Brothers Skegness Savage

A fairly standard, but very clean, Savage set. It was purchased, probably in the late 50's, from John Cole, at Barry, being previously owned by Bert Stocks. An 89 key Gavioli organ, in quite fair condition, plays in the centre.

G25 Triangle Amusments Hunstanton Savage 1895

Delivered new in 1895 to William Partridge, with a Savage no. 6 centre engine no. 638, no. 3 organ engine no. 640. Owners to date include Mrs E. Wright, Barnes, Pont, T. Buggs, and Billy Munn. It is thought that the set may have been packed away for a while before opening at Hunstanton, during which time the centre and organ engines were sold to J. Downs for his 3-abreast.

G26 Botton Brothers Great Yarmouth Savage 1896

Delivered new in 1896 to George Baker (Southampton); he modified and fitted Burrell traction centre engine, no. 1934. An 87 key Gavioli was also fitted.

The ride was sold c1914/5 to Cains of Deptford, who extensively rebuilt the machine, removing the traction centre engine, and fitting a Savage centre with 5½ centre engine no. 869, 3 organ engine no. 870. New rounders were also added.

It was again sold, some time later, this time to Botton Bros., without the organ, which lay derelict for some time in Cains yard. The ride has now been at Great Yarmouth for about 25 years, and still has the remains of the centre engine in the centre, along with a Chiappa-rebuilt, glass-cased 89 key Gavioli organ.

G27 Mrs Flora Bloom Bressingham Hall Savage 1900

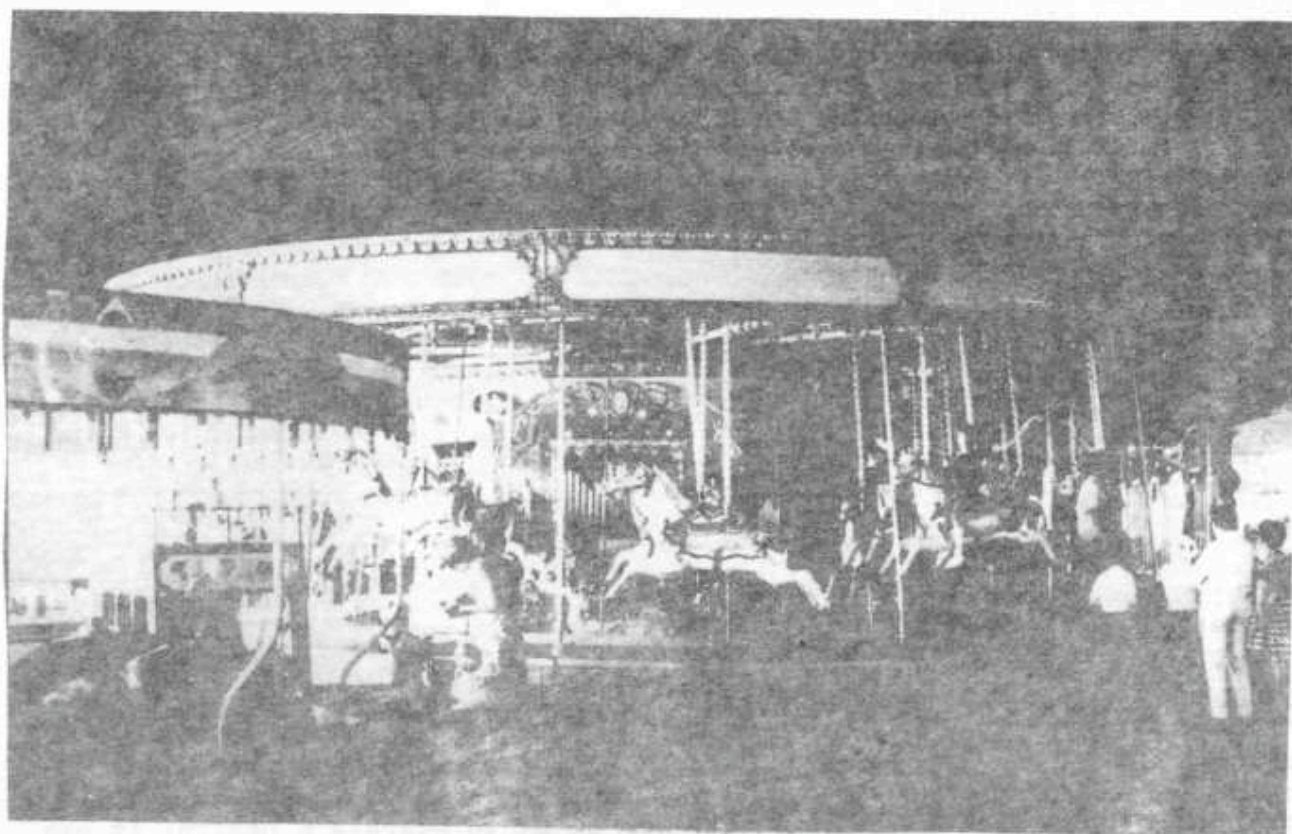
Delivered new in 1900 to Henry Thurston, with Savage centre engine no. 769. It was managed by his son William from 1901, and taken over completely by him in 1917. Thurstons sold it 1933/4 to Davis & Stroud (Bexhill), from whom it passed to H. Smith, being acquired in 1959 by Percy Sheeran. Mr. Sheeran added the 1895 46 key Bruder organ, which had previously been fitted to H. Silcock's Skid. It later passed to Blooms, at Bressingham Hall Steam Museum, and since going there a Tidman centre engine has been added.

G28 Walton Fier Co. Walton-on-the-Maze ?

Unfortunately, I have few details of this set, except that its previous owners included William Thurston, and Col. Frint.

G29 Butlins Ltd. Clacton-on-Sea Savage

It is difficult to keep track of Butlins machines, as they are constantly being



The Walton Pier Company's 3-abreast.

(G.G. Downie)

moved about. I believe the set at Clacton to be the ex F.J. Morley lot, but confirmation of this would be helpful, also some details on the previous history of the set are needed.

G30 Raymond Beardow Woburn Abbey Savage 1920

Delivered new to George Thomas Tuby, of Doncaster, in 1920, with Savage 6 centre engine no. 876, and 4 organ engine no. 875. This is a very heavy, ornate machine, which was known as the "Victory Horses". During its life it has had several changes of ownership, passing from Tubys to T. Drakeley in the 1930's, and then to Tofts, and Bob Wilson, who travelled it extensively in the Midlands.

Raymond Beardow acquired it for preservation, and it is now permanently housed at Woburn. I believe the 1923 85 key Van der Beeck organ was fitted by Mr. Beardow.

G31 James Lovett Burnham Beeches Walker

An extremely interesting, and formerly well-known set, this ride was originally owned by George Beach, of Kew Bridge. Although a Walker machine basically, it is built around a Savage centre, and boasts a really magnificent set of mounts, including cockerels, ostriches, and dragons by Orton & Spooner. It did have the ex Switchback organ of Beach's in the centre at one time; this was an 87 key Cavioli, but was retained by Beach's when the ride was sold to Lovett. They still have it in store. After acquisition by Lovett it was taken to their park at Carlyon Bay, in Cornwall, but after the set at Burnham was sold to John Carter late in 1976, this set was moved there to replace them.

G32 Marks Brothers Dymchurch ?

I know little about this very small set, except that is believed to have come from Sid Squires. I have been asked what became of Squires old set on several occasions, so perhaps someone will now be able to furnish details of the sets early history.

G33

T.D. Nightingale

Margate

What I said about this machine under G5 (Forrests) in the last newsletter has, in fact, proved to be incorrect. As stated, the set was previously Emerson & Hazards, and Jack Wilkinson has been kind enough to supply details of its history.

Mrs Hoadley's gallopers travelled the Lake District at one time; Emersons were much impressed by it, so arranged to have one built like it, but what a mixture! The boiler was made by Beasley of Barrow-in-Furness, and the top motion by Stephenson of Preston. The 3 Savage organ engine, ex J. White, had a chain drive governor. Horses were by Crton & Spooner, but there were originally some Belgian made Hounds, since replaced by cockerels. The organ fitted when new was a 46 key Gavioli, but this was later replaced by a 65 key Gavioli - identical to Hoadleys - acquired from Ireland. It used to be said that you could listen to this organ from noon till closing time without hearing the same book of music played twice. Unfortunately, some of the books were destroyed in the Barrow blitz, but there is still ten hours playing time without repeats. When the set was sold, the organ was retained by Ernest Emerson, and is still owned by him.

G34

Butlins Ltd.

Bognor Regis

?

Not a particularly well documented set, if it is even still here at all! The last set which I know to have been used here was moved to Bognor from the Skegness no. 2 park by Butlins, and was originally the machine owned by Phil Phillips.

G35

J. Baldock

Hollycombe

Walker 1920

Built by walkers in 1920 around an old Tidman centre, with a Tidman centre engine, for George Rogers of Chipping Sodbury. It was packed away during the 1930's, and finally sold, in the late 40's, to McArdle & Dawson; it was travelled around Scotland by them. The next owner was J.J. Collins, who used it for most of the year at Seaton Carew. Commander Baldock acquired the machine in about 1960. At this time the Tidman engine was still fitted, but was decided to be beyond repair, and replaced by a no. 6 Savage, no. 899, with a 4 organ engine no. 900, ex Harry Gray's 4-abreast. The machine has been extensively restored, and is now fitted with an 89 key Gavioli organ. The carved work was originally by Andersons of Bristol, including the horses; at least the outside row is original, one bearing the inscription "R & Sons".

G36

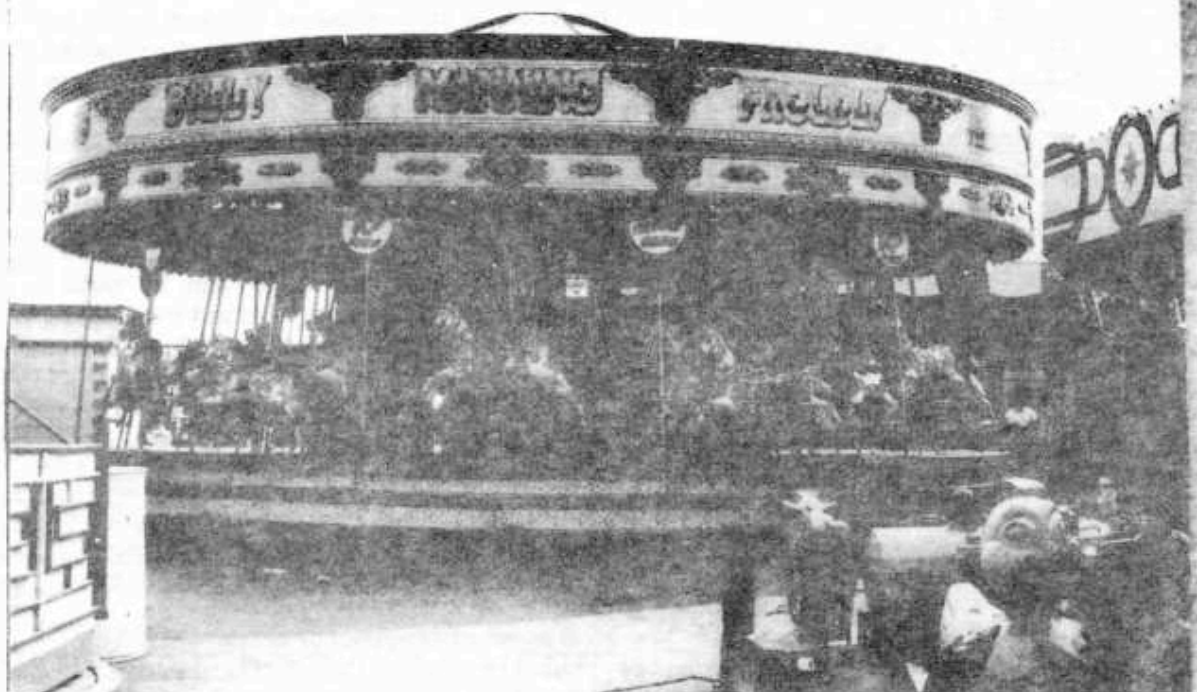
William Manning

Southsea

Savage 1922

Delivered new to Chris Johnson & Sons of Wakefield in 1922, it was a heavy, ornate Savage machine, fitted with a no. 6 centre engine no. 894, named "Who'd Have Thought It", and 4 organ engine 898. The rounders carry extremely deep droppers, and it is said that the overall width is five feet. When owned by Johnsons, decoration was in pastel shades of cream & blue, with all carved work gilded. The lettering on the rounding boards was "C. Johnson & Sons' Golden Cocks and Leaping Horses. Safest and Easy Riding." The outer row of mounts consisted of twelve rather ugly double-seater cocks originally, the inner two rows being horses. The organ originally fitted was a sweet-toned 87 key Barrel action Gavioli, with three figures.

The machine last opened with Johnsons at Harrogate in August, 1939, and was packed away at Wakefield until collected by Billy Smart in July, 1941. Mr. Smart purchased the machine in 1940. The first opening with Smarts was at Bronsbury, in July, 1941. The ride made no more appearances in 1941, and only three in 1942. During 1942 a new green tilt was added, and that winter the platforms and steps were redecorated. The ride only appeared at three fairs in 1943, but during the next winter several alterations were made: the twelve cocks were replaced by double seater horses, and the remainder of the horses redecorated to bring them into line. The transport for the ride was extensively revised at the same time. Despite all this hard work, the machine opened only twice in 1944, but the following winter the work continued! The entire top and centre was redecorated; the original colour scheme was mostly retained, but the lettering was in red, elaborately shaded in gold



Billy Manning's 3-abreast at Clarence Pier, Southsea, 1976. (M.A. Smith)

and black. The roundings now read "Billy Smart and Sons Provide the Biggest and Best Jollity Ride in England". The 87 key Gavioli, which was the one removed from Aspland's Gondolas when the 98 key Gavioli was added, was put onto a new truck. The machine made five appearances in 1945, at each one it was fully built-up, with its brasswork well polished. The last of these was at Southall Park in October, 1945, and early in November the loads were taken to Southsea by Billy Manning, the new owner. That made a total of only fifteen openings in five years!

The ride has been open at the Clarence Pier Amusement Park, Southsea, each summer since, except 1952 when taken to Battersea Park, for the Festival of Britain fair. The centre engine was removed by Billy Manning, and the old organ has been replaced by an 89 key instrument with "Art Nouveau" front, previously in W. Connelly's 3-abreast. This no longer plays, and is unfortunately in appalling condition. The machine itself still looks quite smart, being repainted and redecorated in recent years by John Martin, of Gloucester.

CENTURY OF TOBERS

Back copies

These are still available:

No. 1 - 10p
No. 2 - 25p) prices are inclusive of p&p to members.

WANTED for forthcoming editions: articles (with or without photos), reports, letters, reviews, advertisements..... ANYTHING!

Photo library

Please send your spare prints/negatives to the Editor, or Paul Angel, 10 Norton Avenue, Putson, Hereford, HR2 6DN. All loans or donations welcome!

THE BORDER COUNTIES MAY RUN

by David M. Wood

We must all have heard of the "back-end run", the time of the showman's year when he has come to rely on a run of short stay and hopefully profitable fairs, the proceeds of which will see him through the winter, and help towards the maintenance and very often redecoration of his machines and equipment. The "back-end" is of course one of the most popular times of year for fairground enthusiasts as well, with such fairs as Oxford, Nottingham, Hull, and the Midlands Mop fairs drawing us like magnets.

However, there are parts of the country which have runs at other times of the year as well, and one of the busiest of these is the run of fairs which takes place during May along the border between England and Wales. This particular run is held in affection not only by the showmen who attend, but also by the inhabitants of this border country, and area steeped in enough history and folk-lore to fill a library of books. For a couple of days a year, the May Fair becomes the talking point of the entire village or market town.

As would be expected, the local showmen are prominent when it comes to these fairs, but it should not go unmentioned that many who attend are a long way from their normal territory. Edward Tuson Studt and Sons, for example, are more used to the Swansea Valley than the steep, rugged hills of West Herefordshire and Radnorshire. The Wynn family, who now run Hill's fairs, are more at home around the centre of Bristol than in the tiny town centre of places like Ludlow, and Wilsons Amusements (Redditch) Ltd. are more used to the villages of Worcestershire than the forested hills around Knighton. Yet year after year they haul their attractions around this strangely beautiful area, bringing pleasure to thousands.

In recent years, the May Run has in fact started in April, with Tenbury Wells fair usually kicking off the run. This fair has grown in size recently - there is usually at least one big ride at the fair in this tiny Worcestershire town. I think the honour of the farthest travelled attraction here must go to Johnny Coneley of London and the Home Counties who brought his Dodgem track here a couple of years back. Other visitors have included Billy Danter and David Wynn. Tenbury is closely followed by two of the largest fairs on the run, namely Ludlow and Leominster, the former of which is still held in the streets. Ludlow was for many years under the control of the Hill family, and now of course it is presented by the Wynn family. Castle Square forms the centre of the fair, with Hill's immaculate Dodgem track and Wilsons' Waltzer occupying positions they have done for many years. Until recently, the ex J. Corger Maxwell Waltzer attended, running believe it or not as an Ark-Speedway, which sported a beautiful set of mounts. Other visitors to Ludlow in recent years have included Percy Rogers with his Wheel, Mike Phillips Round-Up, Alf Whitelegg's Gallopers, and Joe Wilson's Kansas City Ghost Train, so as one can see, it is usually worth a visit!

Leominster fair was moved from the streets of this Herefordshire market town a few years back to the big car park just outside the centre. The lessees are the Morris family, who last year took both their Ark and Paratrooper to the fair. Billy Danter provides most of the big rides, however, and visitors to the fair I have seen in recent years have included Arthur Steven's Slip, Johnny Lock's Ghost Train, and Daisy Squires' Rotor.

The May Run comes to a halt on the first Tuesday in May, when the streets of the biggest town in the area, Hereford, are taken over by the showmen and thousands of punters, who seem to turn up whatever the weather. Sadly, Hereford May Fair can no longer be called the "big one". A couple of moves over the last decade has resulted in the loss of many positions, and the drop in the number of big rides and shows has been dramatic. The showmen have put up a magnificent fight, and with the support of certain councillors have succeeded in regaining some positions. Many famous rides have attended Hereford - Deakin's Ben Hur, Wilson's Victory Gallopers, Teddy Danter's Moonrocket, and Wynn's Rotor, to name a few. These days the famous names of Welsh and English showmen still attend, even if only with a juvenile ride, and the crowds still pour in.

It is after Hereford that the May run really gets under way. After pulling down overnight, the showmen depart in many different directions from Hereford. Denzil Danter to Monmouth, Alf Deakin and Billy Watkins to Abergavenny, Chris and Abie Morris either go back to the Midlands or attend a couple of the smaller fairs in the area, and Billy Danter moves off to Woobley and Presteigne. The weekend after Hereford is particularly busy, and particularly tiring for any intrepid fair-ground fan who attempts to get to all the fairs which are held then. It has become especially busy in recent years with the revival of Presteigne fair by Billy Danter. To recap, the following fairs have been known to be open on the weekend after Hereford fair, all of them in just three small counties - Woobley and Presteigne (Billy Danter), Kington (E.T. Studt), Craven Arms (Wynns), Monmouth (Denzil Danter), and Abergavenny (Alf Deakin). However, there are no hard and fast rules, and this year, for example, I note that Monmouth and Abergavenny do not open until the 11th and 13th respectively. This is due to the fact that Hereford fair is particularly early this year.

Kington fair is worthy of a special mention, because it is a most attractive little fair held in a corner of the West Herefordshire market town's recreation ground. At least three big rides have attended in recent years, but the atmosphere at this fair is really tremendous. Another fair presented by Teddy Studt is Hay on Wye, which I have vivid memories of when it was held in the extremely steep streets of the town, necessitating a great deal of packing. Teddy Studt also presents fairs at Builth Wells and Rhayader at this time of year, I believe. Pembridge fair is another of my favourites. Presented by Billy Danter, it is held on Shobdon Airfield, about a mile out of Pembridge itself, making a really splendid sight as one approaches it from the village.

Knighton fair, in Radnorshire, is one of the last fairs on the run. It remains one of the Hill Bros. most famous fairs, although it is presented by Wynn's these days. The gaff itself is very difficult to get to, as one has to climb a steep hill before descending another steep hill to get onto the ground. Many an old character in Knighton will tell you of the days when Hill Bros. Big Shows pulled into the town, with their engines struggling up the bank. Mind you, I have heard the tale of the year when one of the engines actually overtook a newly acquired diesel lorry which was having all manner of problems getting up the hill, but more of that another time! The site is really breathtaking, with a backdrop of steep, densely forested hills.

There are fairs I haven't mentioned - Brecon and Montgomery for example - and to be perfectly honest, it would not surprise me in the slightest if there are some which I do not even know about!

I should point out that no-one should go to these fairs expecting to find huge extravaganzas with the best rides in the business. Nine of the fairs have more than six rides - the average is nearer three or four - but what the visitor will find is a tremendous spontaneous atmosphere of happiness and friendliness. Don't forget, to the people of these villages and little towns, the May fair is a yearly highlight, and to many of them, the fair is a great extravaganza.

I hope other members will write in to tell us of similar runs in their own areas. They are a part of fairground history which remain as relevant and exciting today as they have always been, and for this reason I feel we need have no fear for the future of our fairs. If I have whetted anybody's appetite for exploration and they are considering venturing into the edge of beyond, as the area is affectionately known, in May of this year, then I would be delighted to furnish them with details of the best time to go, what they are likely to see, and how to find the fairs.

NEW WALTZER AT SOUTHPORT

Jacksons, of Congleton, recently completed a new 10 car waltzer, for their own site at Southport. It is of modern design, having a flat front which extends over six full sections of the 24 section bottom. The machine was expected to make its debut opening at Southport about a week before Easter, without rounding boards or front flash, which are still being finished off in the firm's workshops.

The old machine at Southport has been sold to Dawsons of Bray, Ireland.

MOONROCKETS -

A brief introduction:

Over the past year or so, myself and Kevin Scrivens have been busy amassing information on Moonrockets - in our opinion, one of the finest riding devices ever produced.

The Moonrocket is of a rather dubious origin. The majority opinion is that the ride was a German idea - certainly the first machine to open here came from Germany - although the only relevant patent I can trace is that of Charles Openshaw, of Reading (no. 482000 of 1936). Mr. Openshaw also set up a company, "Rocket Rides Ltd", in 1937, with himself and Miss H. Openshaw as co-directors. It would appear that this company was to develop and produce the ride described in the patent, although there appears to have been no further connections between Mr. Openshaw and the Moonrocket.

The first Moonrocket to be seen in this country was John Collins'. An open top machine imported from Germany, one of its earliest appearances was Newcastle Town Moor, 1937.

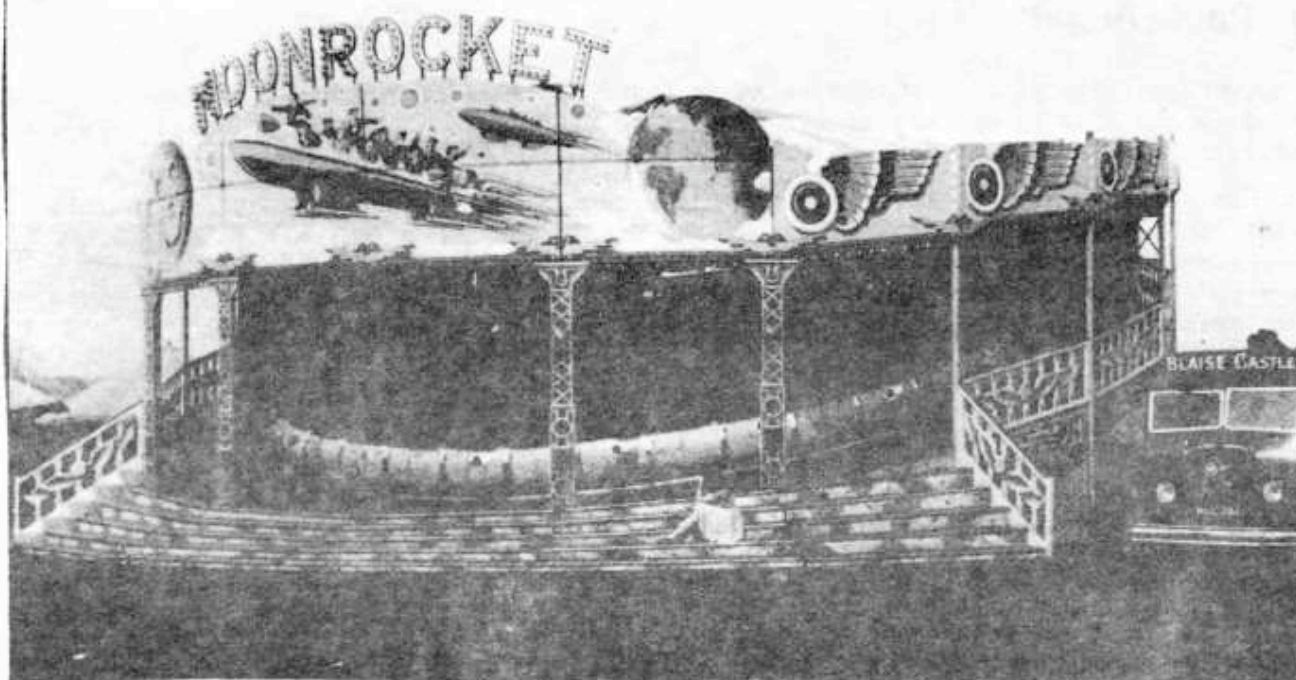
The first British built Rocket was John W. Hoadley's, built to his special order by Maxwell/Lakin. The story goes that Mr. Hoadley first saw a German Moonrocket at a fair on the continent, in about 1936, and on returning immediately placed an order for one to be built for himself. This machine made its debut at Hull fair, in October, 1937. Surprisingly enough, there was little said about the machine in the "World's Fair" at the time - unlike today, when virtually every new machine attracts a fair amount of publicity.

It is thought that approximately fourteen more Maxwell/Lakin rockets followed; and at least one further imported German machine appeared; namely Hill Bros., which made a few appearances 1938-40, after which it was sold to Ireland. The Maxwell Rockets built are listed below, in approximately chronological order:

Delivered to:	Date:
J.W. Hoadley	10/37
J. Ling	4/38
Wm. Codona	4/38
J. White (Scotland)	5/38
Chas. Neal	/38
J.C. Procter	6/38
J. Farrar	6/38
M.A. Collins	9/38
E. Dexter	12/38
Butlins Ltd.	early 1939 (two machines)
Arthur Holland	3/39
J.H. Shaw	4/39
Albert Holland	4/39
Wm. Manning	12/49

Apart from being one of the largest standard machines to travel in this country, it was also one of the fastest. The circular rocket cars rotated at 12 rpm, whilst the centre dome, complete with Popeye figure, spun in the opposite direction (anti-clockwise) at 6 rpm, thus giving an impression of a speed of 18rpm (although, by my calculations this is only about 30 mph!). However, there is no doubt that the ride was way ahead of its time, by any standards.

One of the most surprising features of the machines, possibly, was that none bore the owners name on the machine itself. They can, however, all be identified by other means, as every one had its distinguishing features. A booklet on Moonrockets is at present being planned, and detailed histories, descriptions and photos of every machine will be included. This is largely completed already, but information on any Rockets would be gratefully received, as it is possible that it might add to, correct or confirm details we already have. For completion, details of the following machines are needed, as they do not fit into any of the histories so far compiled:



Charles Heal's Moonrocket, Mitcham Common, April 1960.

(P. Bradley

Alf Harker (travelled c1947-9)
 R. Grandison (for sale 1949)
 Belle Vue A.P., Belfast (for sale 1949)
 Webber Bros., Rhyl (operated c1950; a German machine)
 Myers Amusements, IoM (broken up c1968)
 Carter
 J. Crole, Porthcawl (for sale 1958)
 Kursaal A.P., Southend (acquired by J. Ling, early 50's)

Also details of any of the machines owned by Butlins, and the fates of the following machines would be appreciated.

John Collins
 E. Brennan (Tower A.P., New Brighton)
 R. Gilham (based in Southampton)
 A. Toogood (last heard of, Battersea A.P. 1955)
 A. Stokes (ex Mannings, Southeea, fitted with swinging cars)

In 1953 a patent (no. 717695) was granted to William Codona for his swing-out car modification to the Moonrocket. His own machine was converted, and in 1954 Maxwells converted Walter Shaw's ride. The rejuvenated machine was known as a "Stratorocket" or "Stratocruiser". Shaws' is now the only travelling rocket, being recently redecorated by member Pete Tei. The only other Rocket known to have definitely survived is John Ling's. Several British Rockets were exported in the 1950's, and some of these may still exist?

Again, may I appeal for any information on Rockets; also photographs - I would be pleased to buy copies of photos anyone may have, or to borrow copies if no prints are available. All prints borrowed would be returned undamaged.

SWITCHBACKS & SCENIC RAILWAYS -

An introduction

by Paul Angel

Today, the variety of riding devices to be found on our fairgrounds seems endless, but as we all know it was not always so. If we go back to the early years of this century, a very different picture is to be seen....

The rides which were seen in these years could almost be counted on the fingers of one hand: Gallopers, Steam Yachts, Razzle Dazzle, Mountain Ponies and Steam Condolas. The Condolas, with their later variation of Steam Motors, Electric Motors, Dragons, Whales, Peacocks and Dolphins are the subject of the research I am currently undertaking. In the search for truth, I have encountered many machines whose histories have entailed several rebuilds and redecorations, as new ideas and fashions came and went. And the whole story of many machines will probably never be uncovered but I feel it is important to collate this information and record it for the use of future generations.

Possibly the best known and loved versions of these machines being the final refinement and most elaborate and ornate type, built by George Orton, Sons, and Spooner Ltd., of Burton on Trent; accordingly it seems that details of these rides are most forthcoming.

Seven Dragon rides with massive four pillar extension fronts featuring five figures and attending cherubs were built and delivered new to the following showmen: Dagnalls of Cricklewood, Charles Thurston, White Bros. (Cardiff), John Green, E.C. Farrar, jr., Pat Collins, and Anderton & Rowlands. Whale cars were introduced later, and Ortons produced a version of the "Super Scenic" having Whale cars and an extension front depicting Britannia in a boat being towed by two whales; as far as I can ascertain only one of these was built new, for Farrar Bros., although other Switchbacks were converted by Ortons to this type of Whale Scenic and will be described later with the Switchback histories.

Here then are details of the seven Dragon and one Whale scenics built new by Orton & Spooner. I must at this stage point out that none of the details given are from my own memory, and I cannot be held liable for any inaccuracy or omission; this applies also to the Switchback details which will be published in due course. However, I hope that if you have any details to add to these, or to correct those stated they will all be greeted with the greatest thanks. Please address them to the author at 10 Norton Avenue, Putson, Hereford, HR2 6DN.

(Note: the prefix SC has been adopted for reference purposes for all electric Scenic Railways built as such).

Dragon Scenics (7 machines)

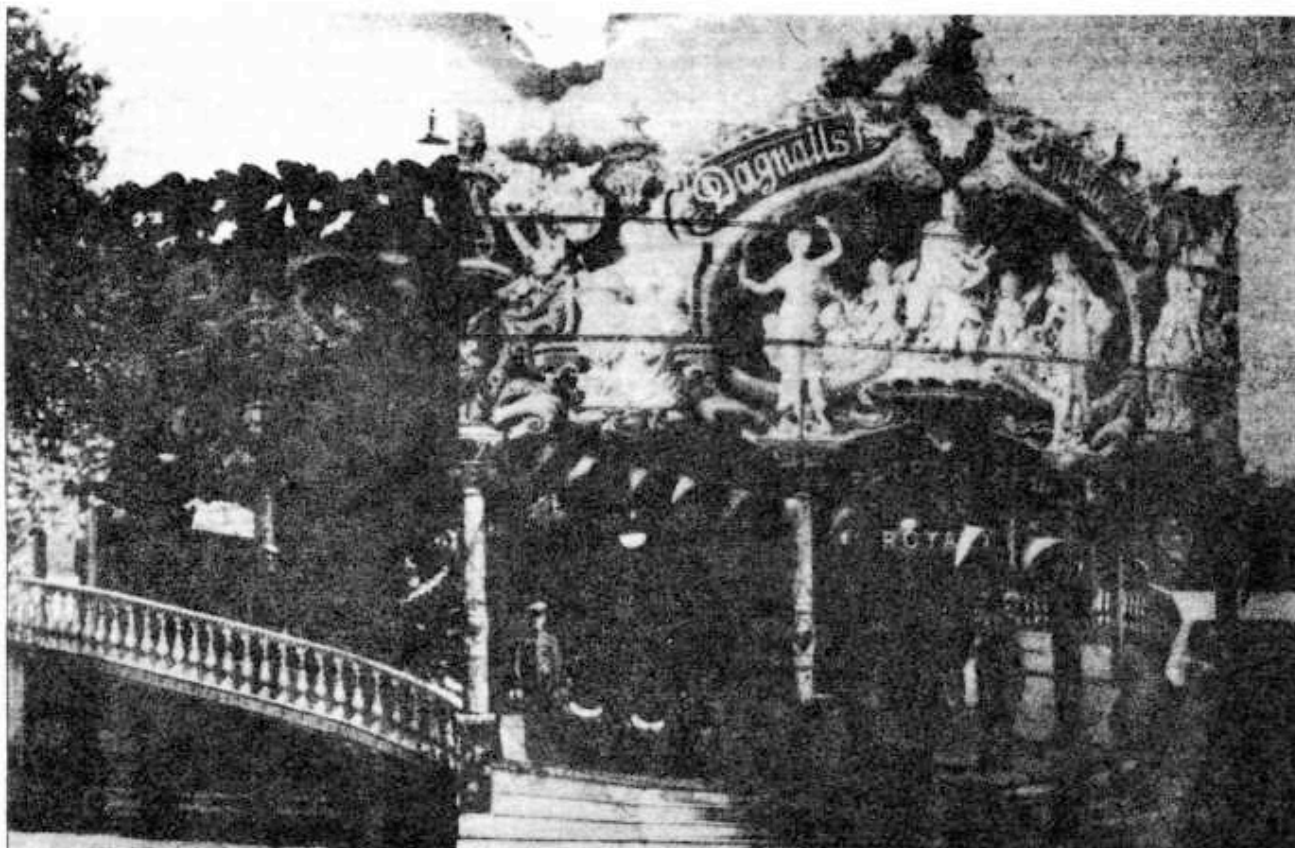
SC1 DAGNALLS OF CRICKLEWOOD

The first of the new generation of Scenics was new to Dagnalls of Cricklewood, London, in 1918. Ortons actually used a switchback bottom built pre-1914, which explains the unusual run-ups outside the uprights of the machine.

Approximately 1919 it was sold to O'Brien Bros. and used up to 1935, when it was packed away, and allowed to deteriorate.

The pillars from this ride are said to have been used later on J. Rose's Dodgem track. Some confusion seems to have arisen regarding the original ownership of the ride, but I suggest as a photo is available of this ride with Dagnall's name clearly signwritten on the front that the above is correct.

Engines used with the ride were Burrells 3659 "Lord Kitchener" & 3470 "The Hope" and Foster 13076 "Surprise".



Dagnalls' Dragons, location unknown, c. 1918.

(The Fairground Society

SC2 CHARLES THURSTON

Charles Thurston's Dragons were new at King's Lynn Mart in February 1920, and Princess Victoria was one of its first patrons. For the first six months of travelling an 89 key Gavioli from the Royal Show was used until the massive 104 key Marengi from the Great Show was fitted in a cut-down form, at Watford the same year.

Burrell Scenic-type 3827 "Victory" was new to drive and crane the cars on the ride, and was assisted by Burrell 2780 "King Edward VII" which was converted to scenic specifications by Burrells.

In 1924 the Dragon cars were damaged by fire on rail at Bletchley, and a set of Peacocks were fitted. A Garrett tractor 33111 "Prince" was used to haul the living wagons, and for shunting trucks.

After the death of Charles Thurston, early in 1928, his wife, assisted by Mr. C.W.R. Thurston, continued to travel the machine. By the end of 1929 the firm had acquired two modern rides, and Mr. J. Thurston took over this machine early in 1930.

After Norwich Christmas fair 1930 it was packed up and after lying idle in the firm's yard at Kett's Hill, Norwich, it was sold to Butlins who used it at their Skegness and Clacton parks, where it gradually deteriorated until eventually broken up about 1952.

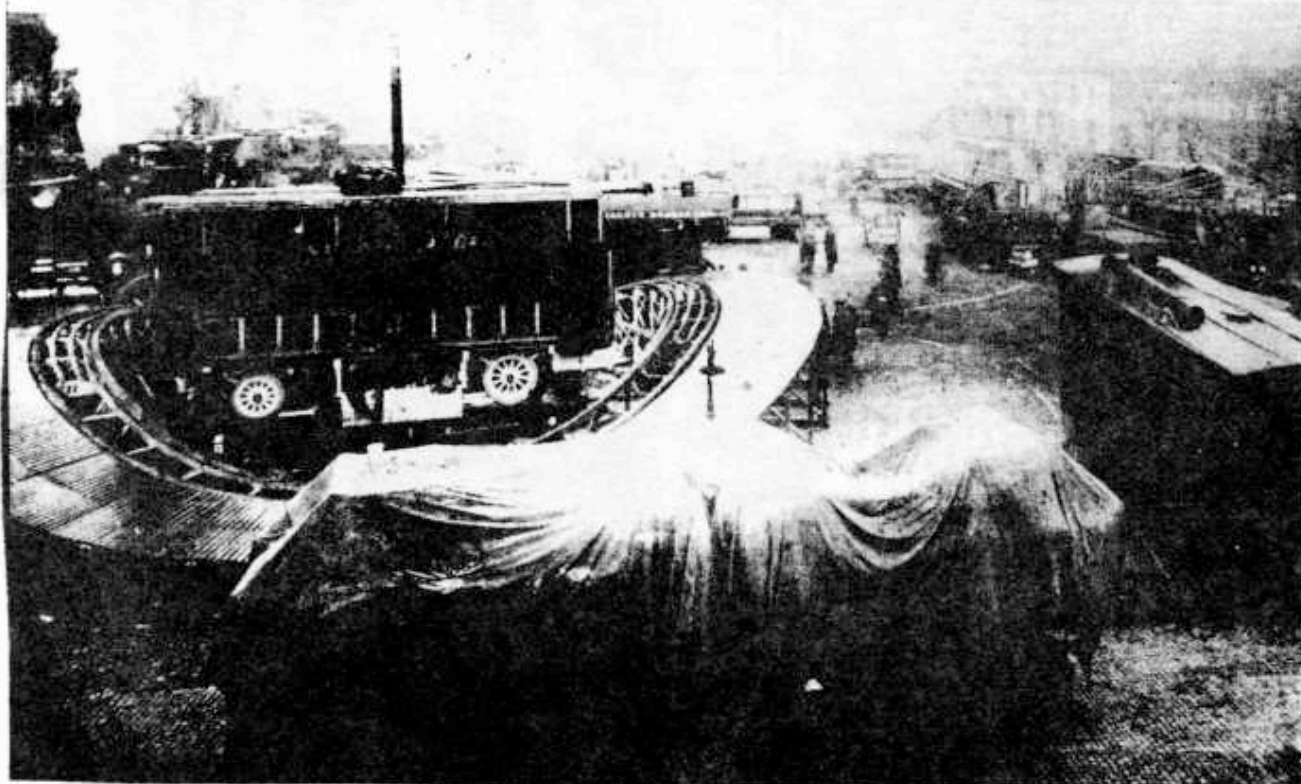
SC3 WHITE BROTHERS

White Bros. Welsh Dragons were new in 1920, and after appearing at Wanstead Flats Easter fair that year were taken to Paris for a short season. It had the 112 keyless Gavioli from the Coliseum Bioscope cut down to 98 key fitted in its centre (see GV26). It travelled Wales until it found a permanent home at Whites' Cosy Corner Amusement Park at Barry Island. From 1940 it was unused and in skeleton form only, although it was well sheeted against the elements.

Botton Bros. had an option to buy it in this condition, and even acquired a Burrell engine, 3610 "William V", and had a pillar crane fitted for the ride. However this deal fell through when Bottons were unable to secure the organ also.

The ride was reputedly broken up in 1952; the organ, in a terrible state of repair, was thought by John Rehorn to be beyond economical restoration, and was given on permanent loan to Mr. George Parmley of Co. Durham, and has been beautifully restored of course. Other parts of the ride do exist, including the four Ancient Briton figures, which were only used at some fairs, as in some areas the punters were rather prone to using them as convenient tools to break open coconuts.

Engines with this ride were Burrells 2871 "Goliath" and 3715 "City of Cardiff".



Farrar Bros. Whales building up, King's Lynn Mart, 1929.

(L&DTEC

SC4 JOHN GREEN & SONS

New in 1920, with 112 keyless Gavioli (GV24) identical to White Bros. (GV26).

The car crane engine was Burrell 3846 "Queen Elizabeth", whilst Burrell 3444 "His Lordship" did lighting duties.

The ride travelled up to 1930, when it went to the Tower Park, at New Brighton. In 1940 it was sold to Middlesborough Corporation who used it in their park during the war. In 1947 it was sold to John Collins, who took it to Barry Island. It was fully built up with roundings and scenery, but the organ was not in play. In 1949 the ride was moved to a different pitch in the park, and was erected minus the roundings. The organ, now a 98 key Marengi, was taken to a field at the back of the railway station where it remained until 1951. A plaster mountain was built in the centre of the ride, and this remained until 1952.

The ride and organ were later broken up. The organ truck was used as a carnival float, and one of the cars as an ornament.

SC5 ENOCH C. FARRAR, JR.

This was new at Grantham in March 1921, with a 98 key Marengi organ. Engines used with the ride were Fowler 11991 "Venturer" and Foster 12573 "Thunderer".

When the Orton Whales appeared in 1923 the 98 key Marengi was transferred to them; it was replaced by the 112 keyless Gavioli (GV27) which was taken from the Motors.

In 1924 a new special Scenic type Burrell engine 3969 "Majestic" was purchased. The last year the ride travelled was 1931, but it is said that Billy Butlin used the Dragon cars as seats in one of his parks.

In the summer of 1921 Pat Collins No. 1 Scenic was opened for the first time at Burton on Trent market place. When new it was fitted with Dragon cars, and managed by Miss Clara Mullett, who later became Pat Collins second wife. It was fitted with Whale cars in 1922, and was known as "Whale Island". The Whale cars were removed in 1933/4, and four Dragons and four Peacocks fitted which then remained with the machine to the end. The ride featured the Marengi organ front from the No. 2 Wonderland show, with an ex-Tuby 98 key Gavioli behind it (3V22). The ride travelled extensively during the 1920's and 30's, until about 1937 when taken off the road and laid up at Collins depot at Bloxwich for several years.

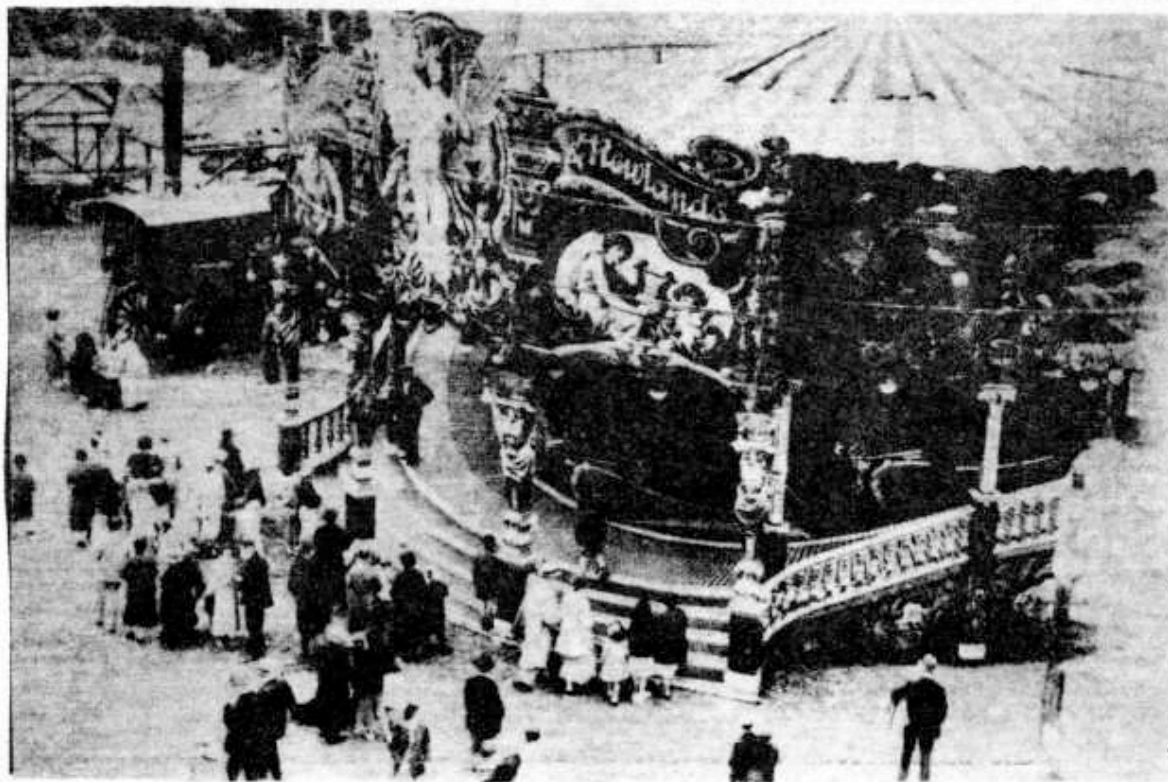
It was brought out in September 1946 for Birmingham Onion Fair, and after the fair was left built up until the carnival fair six weeks later! It was then packed away until Birmingham Onion Fair 1948. This time Burrell 3865 "No. 1" was driving and car lifting. From Birmingham it went straight to Hull Fair, and Burrell engines 2804 "The Griffin" and 4021 "Lord Curzon" went with it. To dismantle the machine John Collins hired a crane from Hull Corporation. After Hull the ride was taken to Collins' famous Crystal Palace Amusement Park at Sutton Coldfield. An order was placed at this time for a new 98 key Chiappa organ.

Early in 1950 the ex-Tuby Gavioli organ was removed and the new organ was fitted behind the Marengi front. During 1951 the scenery of the ride was dismantled and redecorated whilst in operation, closely following the Orton painting. Over the next few years the ride gradually deteriorated, pieces falling off and never being replaced. The organ suffered badly, and only through the efforts of T.W. Hunt it was kept playing.

Before the end of the 1950's the ride was in a sorry state, and it was decided to dismantle it before the lease of the park ran out in 1962. It is believed that Mrs. Pat Collins intended to preserve the Scenic in a museum, but sadly her death about this time put an end to that. The organ was saved by Mr. T.W. Hunt, but the rest of the machine was destroyed when the park was closed in 1962.

Anderton & Rowlands' Brooklands Racers, c. 1937.

(B. James



In August 1921, A&R took delivery of their Golden Dragons, first opening at Newton Abbott, Devon, in skeleton form, the roundings and scenery being delivered to Bridgewater St Matthews Fair the same year. The 98 key Marenghi was taken from the firm's Venetian Gondolas. In 1926 the cars were changed to Dolphins and in 1934 the ride was overhauled, which involved regilding all the carved work.

In 1937 the ride was given a new lease of life; all the heavy cars and fittings were removed, the organ entry done away with, and the organ stood only on sleepers. The rafters and tilt were lowered, and high-speed, streamlined, chromium-plated sports cars fitted. The waterfall disappeared, and two motor cars were painted on the rear of the organ truck. The machine was now known as "Brooklands Racers".

Unfortunately, even this gallant attempt could not stave off the march of time, and the ride was packed away again in 1938.

The organ was brought out again in 1950, and after a complete rebuild was used with the Cornish section of the firm's amusements.

Burrell 3206 "Earl Beatty" was new for the machine, and Burrells 3443 "Lord Nelson" and 2471 "John Bull" assisted. Burrell 3912 "Dragon" was delivered in November 1921, and replaced "John Bull" in 1922.

Whale Scenic (1 machine)

508

FARRAR BROTHERS

Epoch, jnr., Clifford and John took delivery of their new Orton & Spooner Whales and first opened them at Wadsley Bridge Fair, Sheffield, in June 1923, with the 98 key Marenghi organ from the Dragons.

The ride and organ were partially destroyed by fire at Wisbech Mart, on 6th March, 1925. The remains of this ride were rebuilt into an almost identical machine, known as the No. 2 Whales, which appeared at Dewsbury on 25th July, 1925, with a small organ. At Kirkstall in August, 1925, a new 98 key Gaudin minus front was fitted, this was fitted at Woodhouse Peast by French craftsmen the same year. They then travelled regularly up to 1930, after which the ride was open at Hull Fair in 1931, and not seen again until Sheffield Christmas Fair 1935, when open in skeleton form only.

Crane engine was Fowler 15845 "Reliance" with Thompson & Walton Peast crane, this being removed in 1930 when the Whales ceased to travel.

In 1931 the organ was converted to the Hands-Liddell paper roll system.

DEAKIN'S CORONATION SWIRL

Anyone visiting the Bristol area over the Easter holiday may well have got something of a surprise, as I did; for at Shirehampton Park, making what I believe to be only its second appearance in twenty years, was the ex-Deakin "CORONATION SWIRL". This magnificent machine, formerly the Pride of Wales, was acquired last year by R. Edwards, of Yate, and much hard work has been put in to bring it up to travelling condition. It was only in skeleton form at Shirehampton, as most of the work so far has been to the mechanics and basic structure, but it is planned to restore the ride to its former glory, and the rounding boards, currently being rebuilt, and all the scenery, will be redecorated in original style and refitted in the future.

David Wood will be covering the history of this, and all other "Coronation" machines in forthcoming editions of "CENTURY of TOBERS", and he would welcome information on these machines. Photographs are also required, and one of the Deakin Swirl in original state would be much appreciated - surely someone must have one!

Any member getting a chance to visit the Bristol area, and see this machine should certainly do so - it will normally be seen with Rogers'. When the restoration is completed it will hopefully be the Pride of Wales again!

Holdsworth's STEAM PIGS

by William Pearce

An old time ride frequently mentioned in the "World's Fair", and also an old favourite of mine, is Reuben Holdsworth's Steam Pigs; or, as it was called when I first saw it around 1929, Flying Pigs and Waltzing Balloons.

It was the old type platform ride of twelve sections: thirty pigs and two balloons. Each section was a two-wheeled trailer, with cart type wheels. These ran on the circular trams, and gave the cranking movement which moved the pigs in a forward and backward fashion. The unusual feature was that the top roundings went clockwise whilst the ride travelled anti-clockwise. This gave the impression that it was of continental origin, although it was driven by a Savage make centre engine. I don't really know any details of the organ, but it was of the 87 or 89 key class, maybe Jack Wilkinson ("Cyclist") can furnish these details.

In attendance was the famous Burrell no. 3038 "Prince", originally the engine which crashed into Lake Thirlmere in the Lake District. It was then no. 2979 "Reliance"; this was in 1908. It was recovered and returned to Thetford, and rebuilt as no. 3038. They also had a Fowler "Princess", but for how long a period I'm not sure.

When on the move the two wheeled sections mostly travelled by rail, as they were difficult to tow, but I remember them making the journey from Burnley to Nelson by road, in a train of 6 vehicles; a distance of four miles. I know when they arrived in Burnley for the midsummer fair, they arrived by rail, and the Burrell towed the centre truck, scenery truck, and either living wagon or sleeper truck. Then off to the local station for the 12 sections, making of course two journeys.

The rounding boards were really outstanding; they were of a unique shape, and depicted scenes of children, one of which was a kind of skating scene.

Of course these types of old ride were rather overshadowed by the massive scenic railways, and three and four abreast gallopers, but this particular ride will always be an affectionate part of my fairground memories.

R. Holdsworth's Pigs & Balloons, Hull Fair, 1908.

(L&DTEC)



NOAH'S ARKS - A Short History & Survey

by Kevin Scrivens

The first ever ark opened at Hamburg Dom fair in 1929, owned and built by Messrs. Fritz Bothmann, of Gotha, Germany, who were previously well known as importers of chairplanes to England. The machine was called the "Merry Forest Idyll", and was offered for sale at £800.

F.R. Collins (Young Pat) claimed to have invented a similar ride, with hinged platforms running over four hills, but with mushrooms for the riders to sit on, some years earlier. It opened at the first Wembley Exhibition, and was sold to Laycock and Bird, but apparently the idea came to nothing.

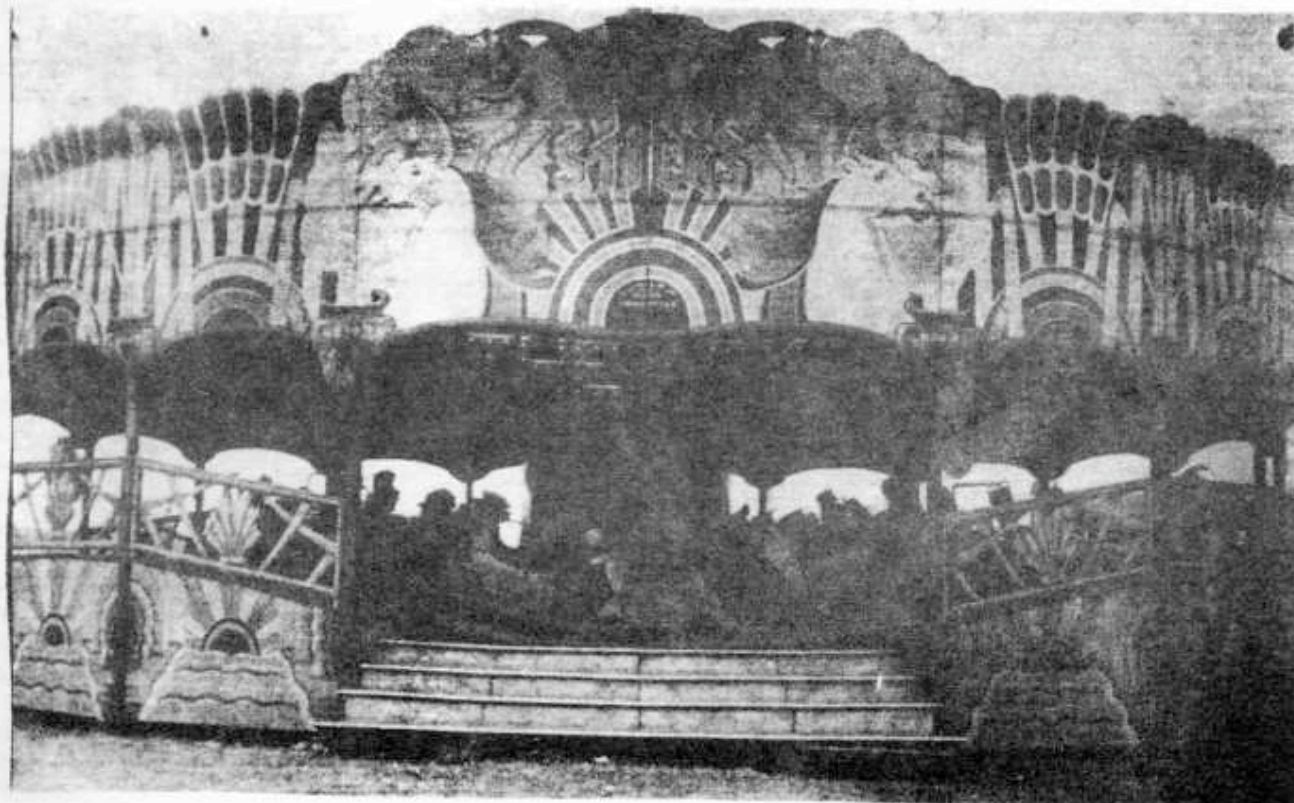
William Wilson imported the first Ark to England from Germany. It was an improved version of the 1929 machine, having 18 platforms. Its debut was at Mitcham in 1930. A larger 22 platform machine was delivered the following month, and both opened at the 1930 Birmingham Onion Fair, accompanied by Burrells 1887 "Empress of India" and 3938 "Quo Vadis". At the end of the fair, Henry Irvin bought the 18 platform set, and sent it by rail on the following day, Sunday, to Dumfries, where it opened on the Monday at the Rood Fair. It was travelled by his son, James, with Foster "The Scotsman", passing later to George Blockley, and eventually to John Collins of Manchester, just prior to the second World War.

Soon after the importations, Ortons began building Arks, quickly followed by Bob Lakin, of Streatham. The first Orton-built machines were about 40 - 45 ft. in diameter, with narrow rounding boards and no extension front; most had the steps let into the platforms, at this time most carried a small organ in the centre.

At the 1930 Nottingham Goose Fair Miles Jervis had an Orton machine, and also present were the German-built machines of Arthur Holland, and William Wilson (the 22 platform lot) - presented by Pat Collins.

(McConville)

Frank McConville's Lakin-built "Over the Sticks", with organ in centre.





Chris Johnson's early Orton & Spooner ark, at Harrogate.

(L&DTEC)

Pat Collins had his own Orton Ark in 1930. Described as a 45' diameter machine, it had the usual narrow rounders, rustic handrails and uprights, and with a rising sun motif on the shutters. There was a small trumpet organ in the centre. A few years later Pat Collins was travelling another Orton machine, with an extension front. Both machines were known as "Over the Sticks".

In late 1930, Charles Openshaw was advertising in the "World's Fair", "Best German made Noah's Arks" of 42' diameter, seating 99 people, at the price of £750 from London Docks.

The second William Wilson Ark was sold at the end of 1930 to Frank Codona, who opened it at the Kelvin Hall, Glasgow, for Christmas and New Year. Immediately afterwards it was offered for sale; stating it had 99 animals, 11 of which were double seaters.

To replace the machine William Wilson imported another Ark, which had "easy drive". This opened at the 1930 Christmas Fair, in the Agricultural Hall, Islington. A similar machine was travelled the following year by J. Herbert, son-in-law of George Beach. This machine opened at Kirkcaldy Links Mart in 1932 as Hornes'.

At the other London Christmas Fair, in Olympia, in 1930, Billy Lennards had a new German Ark, which later went to Edward Danter of South Wales, and eventually to Charlie Strong, of the J. Cole firm.

In the North of the country at Christmas, 1930, Crichtons imported a new German Ark. It was delivered to Birkenhead, and opened on the Market Place over Christmas and the New Year. It was reported in the "World's Fair" as a very impressive machine. It was later sold to Miles Jervis.

1931 saw many new German and English Arks, including Herbert Royles, Sam Crows, Reuben Holdsworths, Silcock Bros., and Thurstons.

By 1932, the Orton machines had become larger and more elaborate; one such machine was Arthur Bates Jungle Speedway. Lakin machines also improved; in the mid 1930's Arthur Holland's machine was built. It was a 50' diameter machine, with very deep roundings, and a large extension front. The uprights and handrails were carved,

and it had tropical type decoration: from a distance it could be mistaken for a Scenic Railway. It was so large it needed three box trucks and two flat trucks to transport it.

Over the years the types of mounts, the decoration, and the names of Arks have changed; from the early "Over the Sticks", "Noah's Arks", "Jollity Farms", and "Wooden Zoos", with their animal mounts, to the magnificent "Ben Hurs" with horses and chariots, and their wonderfully painted extension fronts. Later, Motorcycle Speedways, with motorcycle mounts, and equally impressive fronts. There was one example called a Rocket ride, with small rocket mounts, and a space city front, at one time owned by Marshalls.

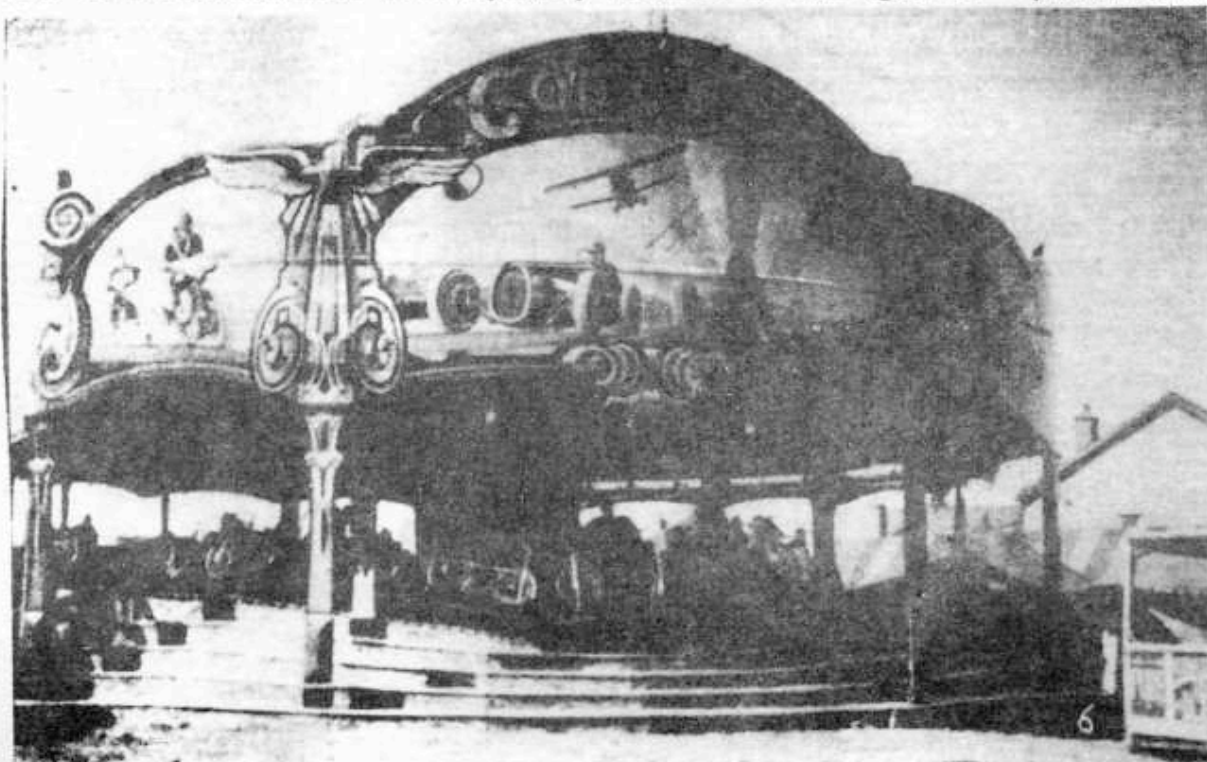
Several special Coronation Arks were built in 1937, "Ben Hurs" and "Motorcycle" types, which had carved handrails featuring crowns.

Today, most kinds of Arks can still be seen travelling; a lot of the smaller Noah's Arks have had the outer row of animals replaced by motorcycles in an attempt to rejuvenate them, but there are some fully original ones. There are few left with their original twelve board extension fronts. Speed of building up and pulling down now being thought more important, along with labour difficulties.

Quite a few Arks have been converted to Waltzers, which are now a more popular ride than the Ark, the previously mentioned Arthur Holland and Arthur Bates Arks were both converted prior to 1950. A full conversion usually involves the levelling out of the rear section between two hills, several machines now travelling can operate as either. One example is Harry Marshalls Maxwell, which when operated as a Waltzer has the rear levelled, but as the shutters and steps are too low it operates with the rear half of the machine sheeted. Other machines have two lots of shutters and operate freely as either type of machine.

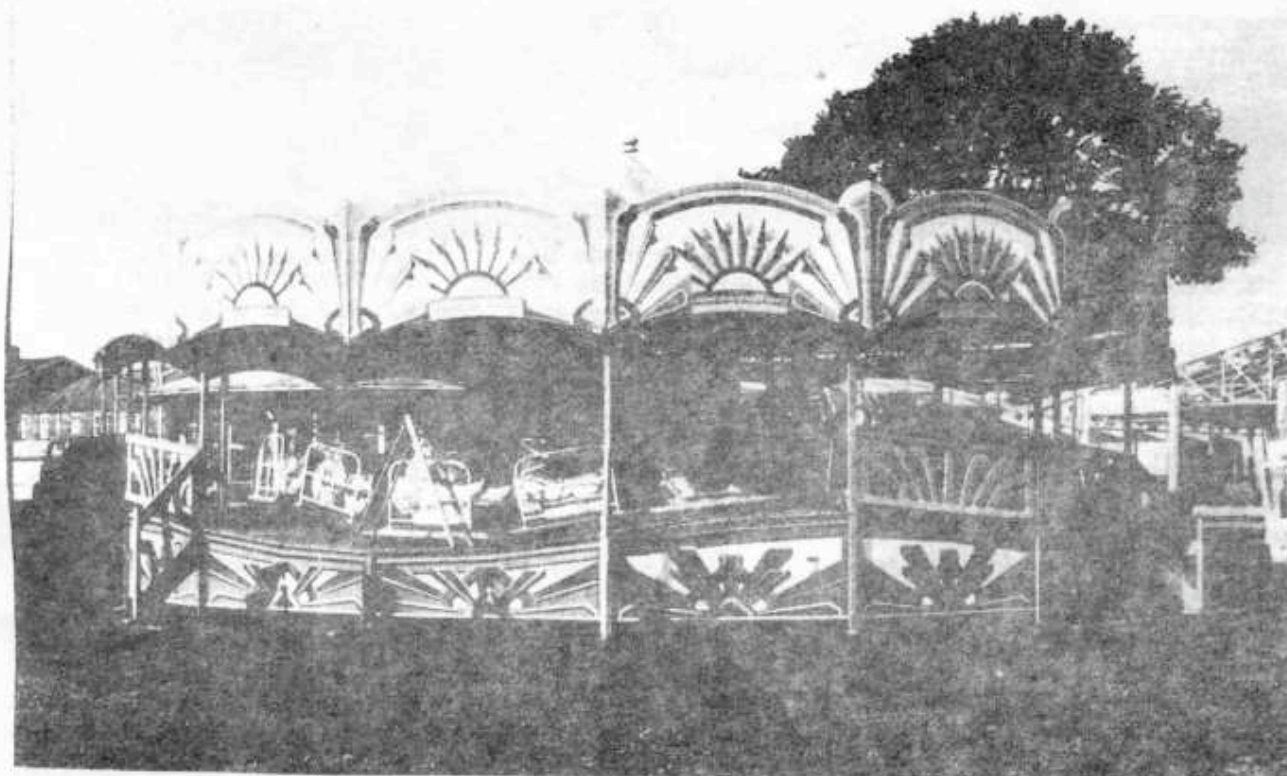
A recent change of theme for the Ark came with the introduction of customised Motorcycles, known as "Easyriders", which many showmen have fitted to the platforms replacing the old style motorcycles such as A. Hollands. David Ling's Ben Hur has the outer row as Easyrider bikes, but the inner two are still the original horses.

E. Corrigan's No. 2 Speedway, built by Ortons, and possibly the first machine to be fitted with Motorcycles, an idea of Corrigan's. (late J. Mellor



Almost fifty years since the introduction of the Ark, new machines are still being manufactured. J.W. Shaws Maxwell Bigsby is a recent machine (1974), and a very impressive machine it is too, the decoration is very striking, and an entirely new feature are the sheets of orange perspex, complete with plastic stars, which are fitted between the handrails and canopy. One the whole it is equally as impressive as the big Arks of the late 1930's.

With the help of members of the society I would like to collect information on as many arks as possible that have operated in Britain, as well as compiling a list of machines at present travelling. A list of machines currently travelling is included, any information on these machines, such as dates of manufacture, and previous owners would be most helpful, as well as information on the machines missing from the list. No doubt some corrections are needed where machines have changed hands. Once information on the present machines has been documented I would be pleased to have any information on earlier Arks which have since been destroyed or converted, so that a full history of Arks can be published at a later date.



Still in near original state, this beautiful little Orton ark, built c. 1932, is still regularly travelled by Albie Rogers, of Bristol. (G.G. Downie)

List of Arks currently travelling:

Ref.	Owner	Builder	Date	Type	Details
A1	Adlams (T. New)	Lakin		Speedway	
A2	J. Allen	Orton		Jungle speedway	Ex Silcock, Wroot, Frateley.
A3	Anderton & Rowland	Orton			
A4	E. Andrews	Orton	1936	Noah's Ark	ex Wm Thurston, jnr.
A5	E. Atha (No. 1)	Orton			
A6	E. Atha (No. 2)	Lakin		ARK/WALTZER	
A7	F. Beadle	Orton		Noah's Ark	ex Osbourne
A8	T. Benson	Lakin	1936	Ben Hur	Modernised 1961
A9	L. Bibby	Orton	1939	ARK/WALTZER	Ex Corrigan, Brennan
A10	L. Bishton	Orton		ARK/WALTZER	Spinnin; top; ex Studt, Morris, Way.

Ref.	Owner	Builder	Date	Type	Details
A11	R. Burr	Maxwell	1958	Sputnik chaser	Ex J. Stevens
A12	P. Burnett	Orton		Speedway	Ex P. Remblance
A13	V. Briggs			Easyrider	
A14	F. Codona	Lakin		"Rodeo"	Ex W. Bastable
A15	N. Codona	Lakin	1936	Rock'n'roll s/w	
A16	R. Codona			Disco Speedway	
A17	W. Codona	Lakin		Noah's Ark	
A18	M.A. Collins	Maxwell	1976	Easyrider	
A19	A. Cole	Orton	1932	Jungle Safari	Ex Rose Bros.
A20	F. Cox			ARK/WALTZER	
A21	S. Crow	Orton	1937	Coronation Speedway	Ex J. Barker
A22	H. Cubbins	Maxwell	1961	Speedway	Ex Marshall, Wallis.
A23	Culine Bros.	Orton		Silver Rodeo	Ex Corrigan
A24	A. Danter	Lakin	1935	Easyrider	Ex Deakins (Ben Hur)
A25	J.T. Danter				
A26	G. Eddy (No. 1)	Lakin		ARK/WALTZER	Ex McConville
A27	G. Eddy (No. 2)				Ex J. Codona
A28	R. Edwards	Orton	1932	Chariot Racer	
A29	A. Franklin	Maxwell	1962	ARK/WALTZER	
A30	G. Gray	Langwheel	1936	ARK/WALTZER	
A31	G. Guyatt	Maxwell	1964	Easyrider	Ex Waltzer! Ex J. Cooper
A32	F. Hall	Maxwell	1962	Merseyside S/w	Ex Cubbins, M.A. Collins
A33	D. Huser	Orton		Noah's Ark	
A34	J. Harlman	Orton		Noah's Ark	
A35	T. Harriess	Orton	1932	Noah's Ark	Ex W. Bates
A36	Harris Bros. (Herts)	Lakin			
A37	Harris Bros. (Sussex)	Jackson	1931	Noah's Ark	
A38	Herberts			Jungle Speedway	Ex Freeman, Day
A39	W. Holden	Lakin		Noah's Ark	Ex W. Barker
A40	A. Holland	Maxwell		Easyrider	
A41	Hill & Mander	Lakin		20th Century s/w	Ex Morley, Davies
A42	L. Horne	Lakin			
A43	F. Jennings	Lakin		Noah's Ark	Ex Simons, Thompson, Copeland.
A44	Jennings	Orton	1937	ARK/WALTZER	Ex North.
A45	W. Lace	Lakin		ARK/WALTZER	Ex Shipley
A46	D. Ling	Lakin	1936	Easyrider	Ex Ben Hur
A47	V. Mander	Orton		Speedway	Ex Hibbert, Morley, North
A48	A. Manning	Maxwell	1962	Orbit Chaser	Ex Rose Bros.
A49	H. Marshall	Maxwell		ARK/WALTZER	
A50	J. Meakin	Orton		Noah's Ark	Ex Turville
A51	C. Morris	Jackson		Easyrider	
A52	W. Nichols	Lakin		Ben Hur	
A53	J.T. Pearson	Langwheel	1937	Speedway	Ex Stocks (Coronation Ark), J. Hammond
A54	G. Pelham	Lakin		Jungle Speedway	
A55	E. Percival	Orton	1936	Speedway	Ex Thurston, Sedgwick Currently For Sale.
A56	E. Percival	Maxwell	1963	Speedway	Ex Botton, Evans, Goss.
A57	A. Presland	Orton			
A58	N. Print	Lakin		Ben Hur	



J.W. Shaw's 1974 Maxwell "Easyrider" Speedway, at Hyde Spring Fair, 1976:
an example of the latest type of machine. (M.A. Smith)

Ref.	Owner	Builder	Date	Type	Details
A59	J. Robertson	Lakin		ARK/WALTZER	Ex Evans, Patterson
A60	S. Robinson	Lakin		ARK/WALTZER	
A61	H. Rogers	Orton		Noah's Ark	Ex Manning
A62	J. Rowland	Lakin		Ben Hur	Ex Gilham
A63	J. Shaw	Orton	1935	ARK/WALTZER	Ex C. Johnson
A64	J.W. Shaw	Maxwell	1974	Easyrider	
A65	B. Shufflebottom	Orton		Noah's Ark	Ex B. Morley
A66	A. Silcock	Maxwell	1972	Speedway	
A67	Silcock & Jeffries	Maxwell	1966	Speedway	Ex Mitchell
A68	J. Smith, jnr.	Orton		Jungle Speedway	Ex N. Smitham, Reid.
A69	K. Smith	Orton		Speedway	Ex Sedgwick, Ball & King, W. Steevens.
A70	M. Smith			Speedway	Ex Duke
A71	T. Smith	Langwheel		Speedway	Ex Symonds
A72	Slaters	Orton	1932	Noah's Ark	Ex Wm. Shaw
A73	S. Squires	Lakin	1934	Noah's Ark	Ex Sutton
A74	G. Stirling			Carousel Ark	Originally an Autodrome. Ex Corrigan, Brown, Corrigan, Weston, Robinson, Thompson.
A75	Stokes Bros.			ARK/WALTZER	
A76	W. Swift	Orton		Speedway	Ex H. Hall
A77	W.A. Taylor	Orton		Noah's Ark	
A78	F. Thompson	Orton	1933	Jungle Safari	Ex Collins, Wigfield, Smith, Butlins, Dean.
A79	S. Thurston	Lakin		Ben Hur	
A80	G.T. Tuby	Orton	1932	Ben Hur	

Cont. on foot of page 28...

FOWLER SHOWMAN'S ENGINES: Part 2

by Stephen Smith

Since publication of my last part certain information has come to light. Mr. P. Wells, of King's Lynn, tells me Reynolds & King had Fowler engine 4765 rebuilt by Savages as a traction centre for their patent overhead crank action gallopers. If one studies the photograph on page 47 of "Fairground Architecture" (Braitwaite, Evelyn, 1968) the engine certainly resembles a Fowler loco. Perhaps some member could help here?

Fowler 8725 is the first engine we deal with in this article, being built in 1901 for Jacob Studt. Studts used more Fowlers than any other showland family, I suspect. This B5 class engine later passed to W.H. Marshall and travelled with his Walker-built gallopers. It continued to travel until 1947, when scrapped at Shipley. The name plate is, I believe, in the possession of Mr. Jack Wilkinson.

J. Sander's Fowler 9961 "Surprise".

(L&DTEC)



Ref.	Owner	Builder	Date	Type	Details
A84	R. Tucker	Orton	1933	Noah's Ark	
A82	R. Townsend	Lakin	1934	Chariot Racer	
A83	M. Waddington	Orton	1936	Speedway	Ex 'Im. Shaw
A84	M. Wallis	Maxwell	1966	Easyrider	
A85	J. Watson-Hirst	Orton	1931	Speedway	Ex S. Crow (Swanee)
A86	J. White	Maxwell			
A87	T. Whitelegg	Orton		Noah's Ark	(formerly the "Elite")
A88	T. Whitelegg (op. by D. Rowland)	Lakin		ARK/WALTZER	(formerly the "Olympia")
A89	J.E. Whiting	Lakin	1933	Noah's Ark	
A90	W. Whiting			Speedway	Ex W. & V. Barker
A91	Wilson & Mason				

No. 9381 "LADY BETTY", used by Johnsons Amusements of the West Riding, is today preserved by Mr. H. Chilvers, president of the Leeds & District Traction Engine Club. She was built in 1902. Another engine preserved which was featured in the last edition is 9384 "SIR JOHN FOWLER". This engine has an interesting history, having at sometime lost its number plate, and consequently its number is not known, but of the numbers quoted 9384 is the most likely one. It was new to Lalonde Bros. & Parnham at Weston-super-Mare, and was used in showland by Anderton & Haslam, and later Nelson Noyce.

The oldest original showman's road locomotive preserved is next in the list, and was Haggars' "MAID OF CEFN YDDFA" which was later Sid Squires' "LORD NELSON". It is now owned by Dr. Williams.

Worthy of a mention is no. 9817 "PROGRESS". This engine was new to J. Bassett at Trentham and owned consequently by T. Simmonds and T. Wood & Sons of Crockenhill, Swanley. A recent letter from Mr. E. Wood, who now runs the firm, tells me that he is trying to trace the history of his firm, and if anyone can help please let me know. "PROGRESS" was sold in 1929 to J. Waddington for £100 to replace their Molaren. In 1929/30 it was converted to showman's specifications, although no brass fittings were added. On Waddington's death it passed to A. Bird who also took over the Yachts-with which it travelled.

Another famous Fowler used by W.M. Marshall in West Yorkshire was 10318 "SUNNY BOY No. 2". This B6 class engine spent its showland life with rides of Marshalls such as their Switchback, Dodgems, and Hey Dey. It was one of the earliest engines to have a post crane fitted. Since being cut down to a Road loco for Boxes it has stood derelict at Hyde, but has now been purchased for preservation, and latest reports say it should be ready for rallying in the near future.

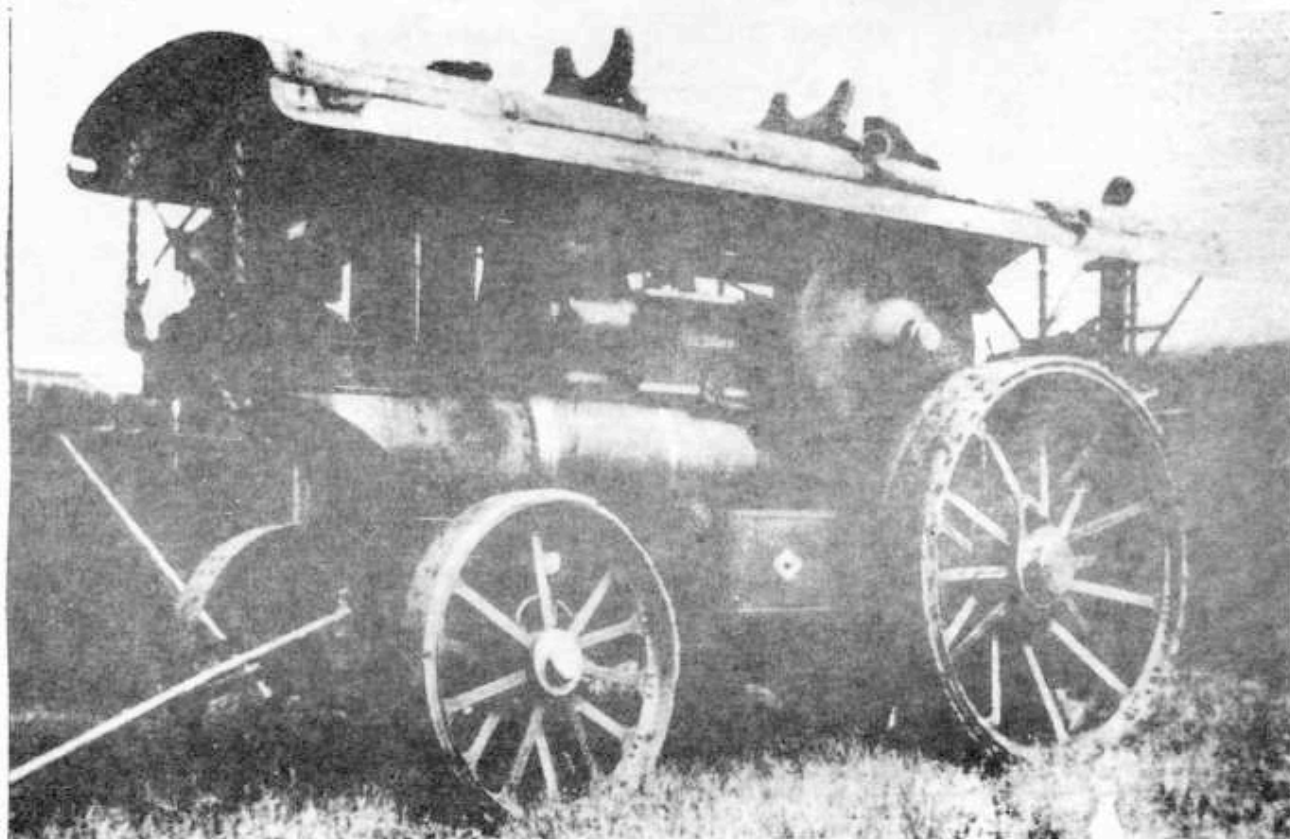
Engine list: engines built 1901 - 1906

Makers No.	Class	Date	Name	Owners
8725	B5	1901	GENERAL BULLER	Jacob Studt
8903		1901	-	W.H. Marshall Hill Bros. P.W. Cole
8919		1901	KING EDWARD	A. Ware C. Ive
8922		1901	RAMBLER	Jamen Cole Mrs. J. Cole
8924	B5	1902	CORONATION KING OF THE ROAD	John Studt W. Pruett
8927		1902	DORIS	W. Wright
9010		1902	-	Hill Bros.
9020		1902	-	W. Wilmot
9126		1902	GOODBYE	R. Godley
9174		1902	STAR OF KENT	J. Pettigrove
9177		1902	-	R. Edwards & Sons
9180	B5	1902	JUBILEE	Mrs. C. Bailey Earness Bros. W. Starr
9273		1902	INDEPENDENCE	Wall Bros. Horne Bros. J. Knowles
9290	B5	1902	-	Mrs. S. Forrest
9292	B6	1902	LORD KITCHENER	Harry Hall
9293/5?		1902	OLD PALL SWIFT	M. & E. Stokes W. Irvin

No.	Class	Date	Name	Owners
9296		1902	BLERIOT	A. Martin H. Searle
9391	B5	1902	LADY BETTY	Chris Johnson
9383	R1	1903	QUEEN ALEXANDRA HER MAJESTY QUEEN MARY	J.T. Danter Charles Heal S. Smart
9384	A5	1903	SIR JOHN FOWLER	Anderton & Haslam Nelson Woyce
9386	A5	1904	MAID OF CEFN YDFFA LORD NELSON	W. Haggar S. Squires
9387	A5	1904	QUEEN ALEXANDRA KING GEORGE VI	John Studt Biddall Bros. Whites
9391	R1	1905	HIS MAJESTY	Henry Studt
9393	R1	1905	-	Anderton & Rowland A. Haslam
9456	A5	1905	MARINA	F. Harris T. Smith
9487	B6	1905	DUKE OF YORK KING GEORGE VI	Miles Jervis G. Ryan J.P. Collins R. Edwards
9491	B6	1905	-	Stroud & Davis P. Penfold
9495	B6	1905	THE LION	H. Benty R. Holdsworth
9501	B6	1905	QUEEN ALEXANDRA	Jacob Studt H. Symonds

Fowler 9984 "The Showman".

(L&DTEC



A FIERY CIRCLE

An anecdote by Graham Downie

The mention of the Fowler traction centre engine "WHIRLIGIG" in Stephen Smith's article in the last issue reminded me of a chance encounter four years ago with a Mrs. Taylor of Pickering.

Mrs. Taylor is the niece of the engine's one-time owner, Mrs. Harriet Baker (previously Mrs. Harriet Winter), and in fact travelled with her aunt, who, at different times in her life, had yards at Kirkby Moorside and Thornton-le-Dale.

The Fowler powered a set of Gallopers which Mrs. Baker has purchased in the Leeds area - presumably from John Crampton. The ride, together with a small amount of sidestuff, was travelled on the circuit of North Yorkshire Moorland shows (such as Castleton) during the summer months.

One memorable incident recounted by Mrs. Taylor occurred at the Rosedale Show of 1926, then held in the Abbey grounds. Late in the evening, when the fair was in full swing, the lighting on the Gallopers failed. The only form of illumination immediately to hand were the naphtha flares on the panam on which Mrs. Taylor (then a young girl) was working. Without more ado the flares were removed from the joint, and fastened to the rounding boards of the ride. The effect when the ride started up again was quite dramatic, and fairgoers approaching the showground from off the surrounding moors were startled to see what appeared to be a whirling ring of flames below them in the Abbey grounds. Doubtlessly they quickened their pace to investigate the source of this fiery circle, and, in consequence, the ride enjoyed a "burster" that night.

The Cottam referred to by Stephen Smith was, in fact, Thomas Cottam, Mrs. Baker's son-in-law who helped manage the ride. Mrs. Taylor thought that when her aunt sold the ride it went back to Leeds, but was incomplete - "due to a smash" - no doubt the accident at Loftus Bank mentioned. Mrs. Baker died in 1929.

No.	Class	Date	Name	Owners
9502	B6	1905	EMPEROR KING EDWARD	Jacob Studt H.P. Studt
9817	B5	1906	PROGRESS	W. Waddington A. Bird
9878		1906	PERSERVERANCE	G.A. Whittle
9887	A4	1903	THE MEXICAN	Biddall Bros.
9911	B5	1904	KING EDWARD BLUE BEARD HAIG)Jacob Studt H.P. Studt Col. Print
9961		1904	SURPRISE	S. Sanders
9971		1904	-	J. Coneley
9984	B6	1905	THE SHOWMAN	R. Williams T. Miller J. Evans S. Stokes
10282		1905	PRINCESS MONS QUEEN MARY)A. Downs
10291	R1	1906	DREADNOUGHT	Matilda Hoadley
10292		1906	PERSERVERANCE	S. Forrest Mrs. Creecraft
10302	A5	1906	NORAH	J. Sutton J. Botton
10318	B6	1905	SUNNY BOY No. 2	S. Smart W.H. Marshall

To be continued...

CROW BROTHERS' TRANSPORT

by Barry Brown

The Crow family are probably the most well known of North East travellers, not only for their immaculate rides, but also for their superb fleet of lorries and tractors, which are the smartest to be found in the North East.

Over the years, Crows have operated some interesting vehicles, most of which have long been scrapped. An early Foden S type diesel lorry was used until 1956, and was equipped with a diesel generator. Its registration no. was UP 7486. A 1949/50 Foden D66/10 six wheeler has also been used, registration no. LAL 329, and this was also fitted with generators. The ex-WD AEC Matador, reg. no. DPY 878 was interesting as the original cab was replaced by a homemade one, which incorporated a dummy Foden grille. The WD body was replaced by a smart, sided one, which contained two generators. The Matador was withdrawn in 1972, but stands in Crows' North-allerton yard, minus generators. Another ex-WD tractor to be used by Crows was an Albion CX22S 6 wheel gun tractor, reg. no. PPY 83 G, which is now used by Yorkshire showman Ronnie Church with his Dodgems. An ex-BRS Bristol tractor, reg. no. 5721 UB, is another tractor that Crows have used, it was fitted with a smart body which contained a generator. The tractor lasted until 1975, and is now in Crows' yard, minus body. Crows still use a large tractor fleet, but these are all modern type ERF's and Fodens.

Besides using tractors, Crows also operate some smart Atkinson 8 wheelers. The three Atkinsons were obtained from the haulage firm of Pollocks from Musselburgh. They have retained Pollocks turquoise and red livery with the hand painted tartan decoration. With the arrival of the above Atkinsons, Crows were able to cut down on the drawbar loads, and also an old 1955 Atkinson, reg. no. MPY 353, was retired. A Foden F16/15 8 wheeler, reg. no. SLP 101, has also been used; this lorry came from Fred Gray of Mitcham. This lorry was replaced at the end of last season by a superb Foden 8 wheeler, reg. no. FTK 958 E, with a large aluminium box body. Worthy of a mention are Crows old boxvans, which were always kept smart, and with the slogan "Something to Crow About" and the large cockerel emblazoned on the side. They were a nice sight when being towed along the road by one of Crows tractors. Even these old boxvans are slowly being replaced by more modern ones, a "new" long wheelbase boxvan was commissioned last season and as usual was up to Crows smart standard.

This is just a short article about some of the Crow family's more interesting vehicles. I have been largely unsuccessful in tracing Crows early diesel transport, any information on this would be gratefully received.

F.A.G.B. RALLY NEWS

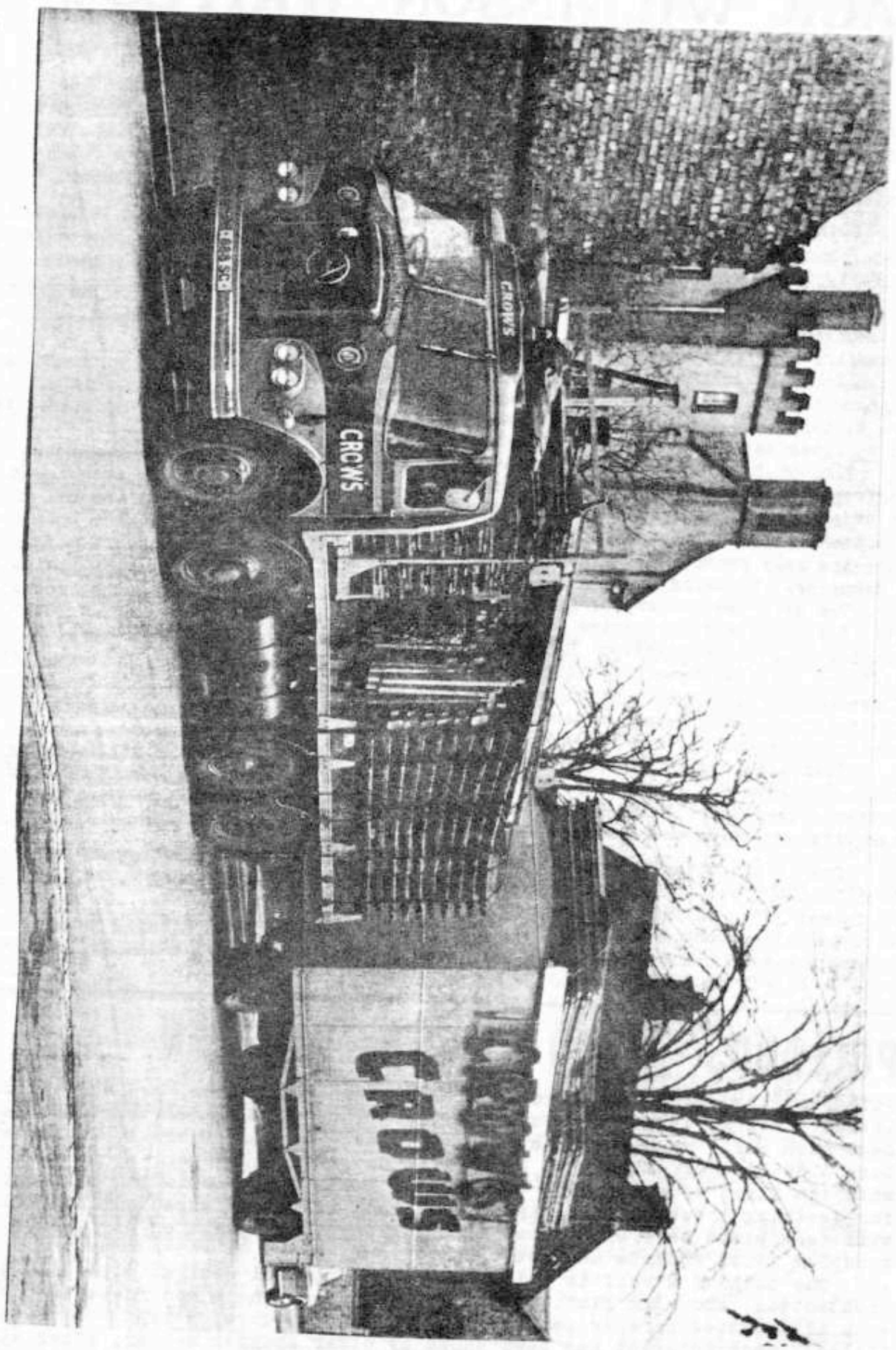
The Rally on Hampstead Heath on Easter Saturday proved a success, with ten+ members enjoying a get-together, looking at photos, and exchanging news, etc. Those present included Chairman Graham Downie, Treasurer David Wood, Secretary Michael Smith; Charles Gee from Hull, Alison Hopkins from Cheshire, Chris Russell from Devon, Paul Angel from Hereford, Rod Spooner from Warwickshire, Paul Middleton from Kettering, and "locals" Seamus Duggan, and Arthur Bishop. Among the people we chatted to on the Heath were Alfred Gray, and Frank Edwards who extended an invitation to us to visit their Swindon yard next winter - watch out for further details!

FORTHCOMING EVENTS - for meeting times and places watch the "WORLD'S FAIR".

At present the following rallies are planned:

Ludlow / Leominster May fairs	29th April
Knutsford / Chester May fairs	6th May
Canon Hill Park, Birmingham	27th May
Newcastle Town Moor	17th June

*please note, these dates are subject to alteration.



One of the ex-pollocks 8-wheel Atkinsons presently in service with Crows, seen here at the pull-on for Northallerton May Fair, 1976, with the loads of their famous "Coronation Speedway".

(Malcolm Slater

JACK WILKINSON WRITES...

...Giant Bantams, Car lifting cranes...

I never saw Green's parcel topped machine, and it went to America before the 1914 war. The ride was known as Giant Bantams. Note the novel "spinning car" in the foreground. There were some similar on Waddington's Steam Cocks, and were known as "spew pans" as riders were often sick. R. Holdsworth and Crowther & Johnson travelled Steam Pigs, but on them the revolving tubs were Waltzing Balloons.

Owing to losing parks in Hull, Gallaghers sold their waltzer, and it opened with Johnny King early in the year (1977) at Charlston. I believe it now belongs to Percy Johnson and son Philip.

As regards the car lifting crane. I don't like reading that it is SUPPOSED to be the idea of Goldthorpe Marshall. A year or so before I left school in 1920 I saw the car-lift crane for the first time: on Marshall's "Sunny Boy No. 2" at our local feast. Right through the years, no-one seems to know how it came about, and I thought it was started by Fowlers. Then one day when taking Frank Oriss out in the Mini he told me about Goldthorpe Marshall introducing it - and I mentioned it in my notes at the time. Since when it has "mushroomed".

"Envoy" had the crane pillar fitted to the rear by Thompson & Walton, an engineering firm at Frighthouse. It delighted everyone when tried out at Bowling. In order to test its capabilities, an empty flat truck was fitted to the end of the crane cabling. But when "Envoy" took the load its front wheels shot into the air, and only prompt action on the part of the driver saved what could have been a disaster. So being on the "safe side", Fowler decided on a 30 cwt weight limit.

The extended bunker for the crane was not developed by Burrell; they copied it! I think the first engine to have this feature was Dagnall's Foster 14401 "Sir Douglas Haig", new 14/8/19. Burrells' first was 3827 "Victory", for Thurstons, on 11/5/20. Besides Proctor's "Albert" having extended bunker plates, Collins 14424 "Dreadnought" also had. Acquired by Sage & Ford for preservation, and renamed "Goliath", but the latest owner cut them off. I would not refer to extended bunker plates as Burrell type!

Post type cranes required more fixing up, due to the addition of steadying chains to give additional support. In order to avoid this extra work I noticed Farrar's used Burroll "Majestic" and Marshall's used Foster "James Walter" for car lifting duties in later years.

One of the oldest engines I remember seeing on the fairgrounds was Fowler 6635 "Jumbo", new in February, 1892, for Bostock & Nombwell's menagerie, but "out of favour" when involved in an accident in the Highlands that year. So it was sold to Waddingtons after Hull fair that year. It had a spoked flywheel and dynamo bracket, but no cab. Also, it had a dome. I think I last saw it in 1921 at Bowling with Waddington's steam Cocks.

POLLARDS BUILD FIRST WALTZER

Pollards, the well-known Ilkeston based engineering firm, are nearing completion of their first ever Waltzer ride. The original delivery date was to have been early March, so that its new owner, Raymond Roberts, would have been able to open with it at Easter, at Coventry. However, as is inevitable with the first of a new run, things have taken a little longer than expected for teething troubles to be ironed out, and it is now expected that delivery will take place before the next Bank Holiday. The position at Coventry was occupied by W. Roberts new Meteorite.

The machine itself is built to the traditional design, with a 24 section bottom, and back flat. There are ten cars, and a modern-style paybox with illuminated perspex panels. As usual these days, a flat roof has been fitted. Much interest has been shown by other showmen so far; after all, there are few companies turning out first class machines at competitive rates.

NORTHERN NOTES

from Jack Redpath

In the STOP PRESS of the second "C of T" it was stated that one of G. Stirling's Arks had been sold to a member of the Slater family; this is not so: the machine was to be bought by Ronnie Slater, but the deal never came off. The ex Hughie Morrison Ark, also mentioned, was sold to Northern Showman Laurence Nicholls, and is at the moment lying in a car park at Hexham, Northumberland. Nicholls' Lakin Ark/Waltzer conversion is also there, together with Nicholls' other stuff, which consists of a Leyland 8-wheeler with his original Ark centre, an 8 wheel Foden (ex J. Hammond and quite smart), an 8 wheel ERF with the Morrison Ark bottom, a box truck containing Ark animals, a Ford box van, and various car trailers.

A few weeks ago I was in Glasgow and called in at George Stirling's house, however there was no one about, but there are two Arks here. One centre was minus its axles, and looked as though they were going to set out the bottom, as it was packed up level. This centre was of the Langwheels' Autodrome type, having no cheese wheel, gearing, etc., just the heavy brass bands. (This is presumably the ex-Thompson Carousel Ark). The interesting thing was the lack of transport. The only lorries were an Atkinson 8-wheeler and a Leyland 8-wheeler (with Albion type cab long door). The Leyland had on it almost the whole of one Ark, except the centre! Platforms, gratings, gates, etc. on the bottom, with bikes, etc., on top of the steel framed body. The Atkinson had what appeared to be the complete bottom of the other machine. The more normal Ark centre looked a bit rough, though the other had had a neat paint up. The only other transport was a box truck with "Lots of Fun" painted on the side. It looked as though it would never take to the road again.

Another new ride is John Murphy's Round Up which made its debut at Alnwick, Northumberland, last November. It was built by Leisure Sales of Ilkeston.

I recently visited my first proper fair of the season, at Dumfries. Machines were Billy Codona's Dodgem (with a fresh set of cars), Norman Codona's Ark, and Douglas Codona's Waltzer (with new paybox).

Not yet complete, although it should be ready for opening at Whitsun is Alan Slater's Mystic Swing - built by J. Redpath!

THE VENICE WALTZER

All fairground enthusiasts visiting the Lancashire Section over the last 40 years must remember having seen the infamous "VENICE WALTZER". This machine was built in 1935 for Hibble & Mellors, being one of the first batch of 8 Lakin/Maxwell Waltzers. It passed to Silcocks in February 1936, and opened for the first time with them at Garston, in Liverpool. They continued to travel the ride until early in 1976, when it was laid up. Robert Franklin purchased it late last season, and it opened with him a couple of times before the winter. I recently saw it at Grimsby fair, but sadly only in skel-eton form. The paybox has now lost its Venetian-style decor; I was told Mr. Franklin has just finished scraping the incredible paintwork off the rounding boards and front. The shutters do still bear the old scenes, which I was fortunately able to photograph, but these will shortly be the next victims of the paint stripper. A sad end!

In earlier days Silcocks used Burrells 3334 "The Baillie" and 3444 "His Lordship" with the ride; an 87 key Gavioli from Mitchell's 4-abreast, converted to barrel operation, was featured in the centre. This was sent to Chiappas in 1950 for conversion to book operation, but removed shortly afterwards. Franklins are still using an 8-wheel Foden (CED 168 C) and box truck which came from Silcocks with the ride, and still bear their livery. An Atkinson Challenger 6-wheel tractor (RHU 350 G) carries the generating sets.

SMALL ADS

WANTED: COLOUR slides of Percy Cole's Gondolas, and the ex-Wilson Rodeo Switchback. Price and particulars to T. Pearce, 87 Farnmore Street, Burnley, Lancs, BB10 3EU.

START A collection of fairground ride and transport photos (Circus transport also available). Rides are constantly being replaced, sold, and vehicles either change hands with rides or are replaced with more modern vehicles. Write now for my current lists, enclosing a SAE to: A.L. Davies, 64 McMinnell Crescent, Rugby, Marks., CV21 4AU.

FAIRGROUND PHOTOS - Superb colour prints of many machines in many different parts of the country. Please send large SAE for extensive lists - P.A. Angel, 10 Norton Avenue, Putson, Hereford, HR2 6DU.

OUR LATEST "Showland Transport" photographic list is now available, price 15p, which includes a sample print. Roadrunner Productions Ltd., 3a Alma Square, London, NW8 9QD.

ROUND STALL wanted, approx. 14' - 16', preferably with tilt, must be sound condition structurally, but paint not important. Please phone 07737 62922 with further details and price required.

SCOTTISH AREA REPRESENTATIVE:

Stewart Thom,
Drummond Park,
Logiealmond,
Perth,
PH1 3TJ.

Layout, design and typing by Michael A. Smith.

Printed by UMIST Union.

STOP PRESS

Jack Hammond (Scotland) is believed to have acquired the Ark which C. Noble was offering for sale last year.

The 1967 Jackson Ark offered for sale last back end by W. Testo (Tyne mouth) is believed now owned by H. Danter, and is again for sale. If no buyer it may go on the permanent site which Danter's have at Symonds Yat, Gless.

AMENDMENT - G29 Butlins, Clacton. Savage, delivered new in 1920 to Harry Hall (Derby) with Savage CE 6 no. 881, 4 OE no. 882. Heavy set with deep rounders, etc. The set was sold to Furboroughs late in the war, and later to Roberts, who had them at Ruddyard Lake. They were acquired by Morleys in about 1956, and extensively renovated. Only the centre and top frame remained of the original set. The rounders used in renovation were from one of the Hibberts famous sets, but these were later replaced by fibreglass replicas, and the originals sold to a collector. Centre engine/organ removed before being bought by Morleys.

John Cole (of Switchback fame) has acquired a Caterpillar from Pat O'Neill to replace the Gondolas! The machine was open at Rodway Hill in Bristol at Easter, but was not fitted with the canopy. The Scammell Pioneer (837 TYD) formerly used with the Gondolas is now in service with this machine.

On the Winter Gardens site at Morecambe the old Walter previously travelled by Raymond Roberts has replaced the Jackson machine formerly on this site. I believe the Roberts machine was at Barmouth last season, but don't know as yet where the Jackson-built ride has gone?

It is believed that the old Ashley waltzer is to be travelled again this season - by Arthur Armstrong.